

EASTER HILL VILLAGE, BUILDING NO. 37
North side of Foothill Avenue, east of South Twenty-sixth Street
Richmond
Contra Costa
California

HABS CA-2783-AD
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1111 Jackson Street
Oakland, CA 94607

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- Location:** North side of Foothill Avenue east of South 26th Street
- U.S.G.S. Richmond Quadrangle (7.5'), Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: northwest corner 10.4197417.557557; northernmost point 10.4197464.557687; northeast corner 10.4197354.557875; southeast corner 10.4197235.557872; southwest corner 10.4197233.557673.
- Present owner:** Richmond Housing Authority
- Present use:** Demolished in 2004.
- Most recent use:** Public housing project (until late 2003)
- Significance:** Easter Hill Village has been determined eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C. Easter Hill is eligible under Criterion A because of its local significance as part of the effort to address the critical Post-World War II housing shortage in City of Richmond. Easter Hill Village was the most significant public effort to provide affordable permanent housing for many families displaced by the demolition of temporary war housing. Easter Hill Village is eligible under Criterion C because it had significant influence on the design of multi-unit housing. Easter Hill Village was the first multi-unit residential development to combine the twin themes of the planned unit development with the individuation of units. The design was also unique for its time in the care given to integrating a multi-unit residential development to its site. Easter Hill Village also is an important design by master architects Donald Hardison and Vernon DeMars, and landscape architect Laurence Halprin. The design of Easter Hill Village had at least statewide, if not national significance and influence. The period of significance under Criteria A and C is 1953 to 1954. The boundary of the eligible resource is the boundaries of the original Easter Hill Village project except Buildings 2, 3, 4 and 6 that have lost their historic integrity.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.

B. Historical Context

Please refer to the " Narrative " report, HABS No. CA-2783.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

Building 37 is one of forty-one surviving buildings in the Easter Hill Village complex. As originally built in 1953-1954, the complex consisted of forty-eight buildings that were similar in construction, finishing materials, and general architectural character. All buildings were one or two stories in height and consisted of one or more modules that were linked end-to-end. The buildings varied principally in the finish of their second stories and in the number of modules that they contained. (The basic modules are identified on original plans with a letter from A to E; variations are indicated by a number suffix, and by the letter "R" for reverse plans.)

Building 37 consists of two modules joined at their sides. The more western of the two modules is setback relative to the other, creating a staggered or stepped footprint. On the original plans, these modules are labeled as (from east to west) modules E and ER.

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783, for a description of the elevation, plan, and architectural character of these modules, and of the Easter Hill complex as a whole.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions

Building 37 is nearly identical to Building 13, and is built with the same east-west orientation. There are two differences. One is that in Building 37 the western module is set back relative to the eastern module, whereas in Building 13 it is the eastern module that is set back. The other is that in Building 37 the setback is 8'0" instead of 10'-0". Please refer to the Outline Report for Building 13, HABS No. CA-2783-F, for a description of the plan and dimensions.

2. Foundations

Building 37 has a reinforced concrete perimeter foundation.

3. Walls and structural system

Please refer to the Outline Report for Building 13, HABS No. CA-2783-F, for a description of the walls and structural systems.

4. Porches

Each unit in this building possesses its own entrance porch. Each porch has a concrete deck, wooden railings, and wooden posts that support a shed roof. A concrete sidewalk leads up to each porch.

A rear porch can be found in the north elevation of each unit. These porches fit into the angle of the rear wall and an ell that is formed by the storage room.

5. Openings

Please refer to the Outline Report for Building 13, HABS No. CA-2783-F, for a description of the door and window openings.

6. Roof

Please refer to the Outline Report for Building 13, HABS No. CA-2783-F, for a description of the roof.

C. Description of Interiors

1. Floor plans

a. Basement

Building 37 contains no basement.

b. Apartment floor plans

Please refer to the Outline Report for Building 13, HABS No. CA-2783-F, for a description of the apartment floor plans.

2. Flooring

Floors are covered with non-original twelve-inch vinyl tiles.

3. Wall and ceiling finish

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

4. Openings and trim

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

5. Doors to bedroom and linen closets, storage rooms

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

6. Kitchen fixtures

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

7. Bathroom fixtures

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

8. Lighting and heating fixtures

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation

Building 37 is located on the north side of Foothill Avenue, a short distance east of South 26th Street. Building 36 is located directly to the west, and a small parking area is located to the east. Three small boulders can be found in the yards adjacent to this building. Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783 for more on the general setting at Easter Hill Village.

2. Historic landscape

See "Narrative" report, CA-2783.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings

The original 1953 Easter Hill Village plans and specifications are on file at the architectural firm of Hardison, Komatsu, Ivelich & Tucker, 538 Ninth Street, Suite 240, Oakland, CA 94607.

B. Interviews

Hardison, Donald. Personal communication with Marjorie Dobkin. January 2003.

_____. Personal communication with Ward Hill and William Kostura.

October 2003.

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783, for more interviews.

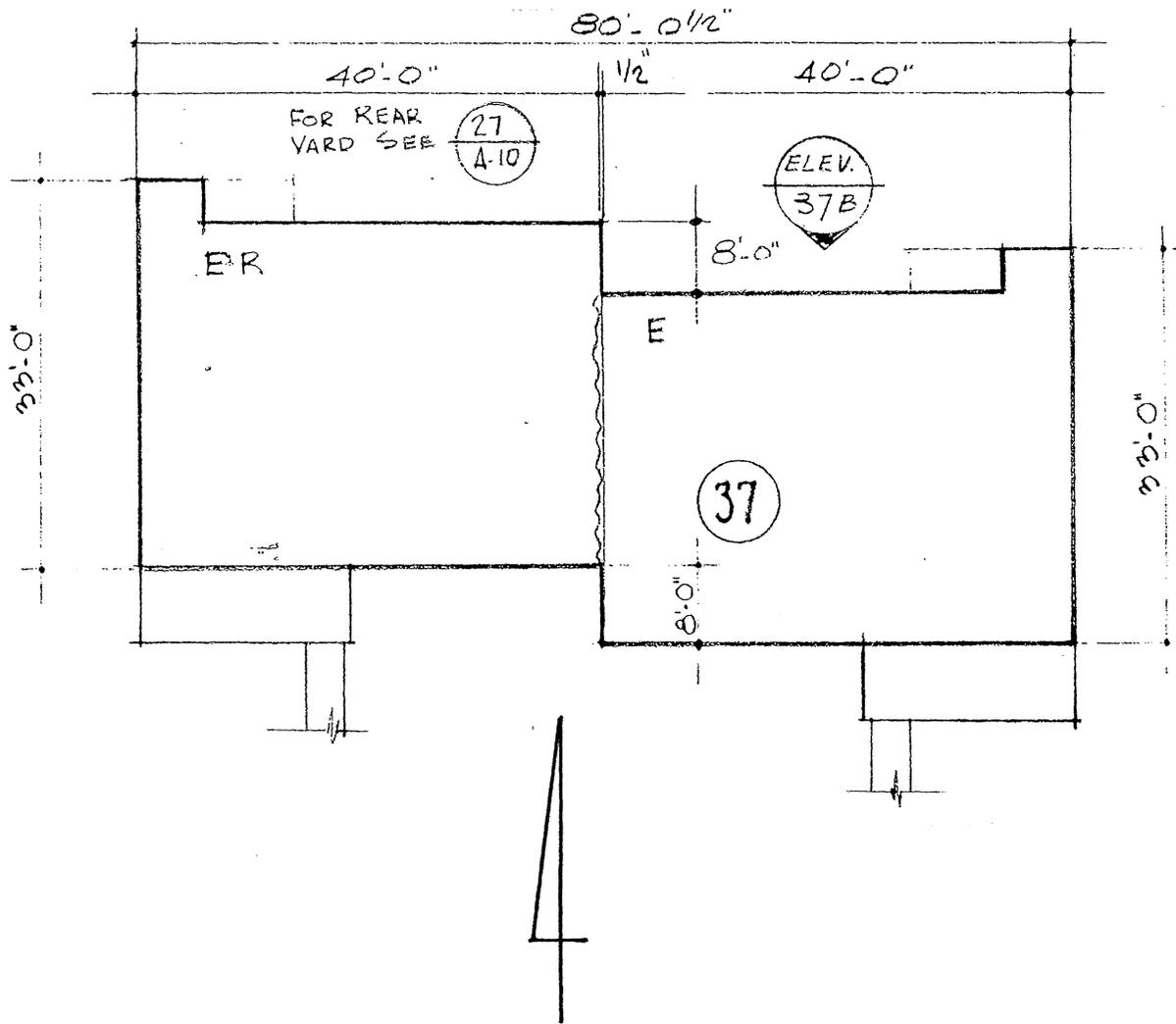
C. Bibliography

Please see the "Narrative" report, CA-2783.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Historic American Building Survey documentation was undertaken as a mitigation measure as per the Memorandum of Agreement between the Richmond Housing Authority and the California State Office of Historic Preservation. The City of Richmond Housing Authority as part of the Hope VI Revelopment Project demolished forty-one (237 units) buildings of the existing forty-five buildings in the Easter Hill Village complex (including removing existing landscape features) in May 2004 for the construction of 219 new multi-family rental-housing units, thirty for-sale detached houses, and fourteen for-sale town-homes would be developed. On a vacant site just east of Easter Hill Village, an additional forty for-sale detached houses would be developed. A total of 303 new housing units will be constructed as part of this project.

The documentation was prepared during the period of October 2003 to July 2004. The narrative report is a collaboration of three individuals: Historian Marjorie Dobkin prepared the sections on social history regarding Richmond during and after World War II and on Easter Hill Village and the section on the history of the Easter Hill Village design; Landscape historian Denise Bradley prepared the description and historic background sections on the Easter Hill Village landscape design and the biographical material on landscape architect Lawrence Halprin; Architectural historian Ward Hill prepared the sections on the Modern Movement in architecture, the Bay Region Tradition and the general historical background of the City of Richmond. Architectural historian William Kostura prepared the Outline Format reports on the forty-one individual Easter Hill Village buildings (original building numbers 8 to 48) demolished for the project.



Sketch plan for Building No. 37, showing the arrangement of modules. For module plans, please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.