

EASTER HILL VILLAGE, BUILDING NO. 41
South side of Foothill Avenue, opposite South Twenty-eighth Street
Richmond
Contra Costa County
California

HABS CA-2783-AH
CA-2783-AH

HABS
CA-2783-AH

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Easter Hill Village, Building No. 41
South side of Foothill Avenue opposite South 28th Street
Richmond
Contra Costa County
California

HABS No. CA-2783-AH

HABS
CA-2783-AH
(page 1)

- Location:** South side of Foothill Avenue opposite South 28th 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 41 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 indicated by a number suffix, and by the letter "R" for reverse plans.)

Building 41 is the largest in Easter Hill Village and consists of seven modules linked end-to-end. The modules are setback relative to each other, creating a staggered or stepped footprint. Although most long buildings at Easter Hill are clad in more than one kind of material on the second story, creating variety in texture, this building is clad entirely in stucco. Accordingly, this building might be said to have less visual interest than the other long buildings in the complex.

On the original plans, the module at the southeast end is labeled as C-3R, the module at the northwest end is labeled C-3, and the five modules between them are labeled C-1. There are two townhouses in each module, for a total of fourteen units in this building.

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 41 is two stories in height and 231'-3" in length, from southeast to northwest. In its plan, Building 41 is divided into seven modules. The

module at the southeast end is a C-3R module, the module at the northwest end is a C-3, and the five modules between them are C-1 modules. Each of these modules is 26'-0" in depth and 33'-0" in length and contains two living units. The two modules at the southeast end form a group closest to Foothill Avenue, the next module to the northwest is set back 6'-6" from these, and the next four modules, those at the northwest end of the building, form another group and are set back the same distance. The result is a staggered composition.

2. Foundations

Building 41 has a reinforced concrete perimeter foundation.

3. Walls and structural system

Like all buildings in Easter Hill Village, Building 41 is stud-framed in construction. Both stories of this building are clad in stucco on all sides. The second story overhangs the first story by sixteen inches in both of the long elevations.

The main façade is along one of the long sides, that facing northeast. Entrances to twelve of the fourteen units can be found in this façade. Another entrance is in the southeast façade, and the other is in the northwest façade. The rear of the building is in the other long façade, that facing southwest. Each unit has a back door on this side of the building.

The stucco surfaces are painted salmon-beige. This coloring is not original.

4. Porches

Each unit in this building possesses entrance porches consisting of a concrete deck raised several inches off the ground, and plain wooden railings supported by plain wooden posts. The posts rise to support a wooden trellis over each entry. The trellis and railings are non-original. Each porch measures about six feet by eight feet.

5. Openings

All exterior doors are wooden hollow core doors, opening inward. Over each door is a security grille with dense metal screen that opens outward. Both the doors and the security grilles have deadbolt locks. These doors and grilles are non-original.

As is the case elsewhere in Easter Hill Village, all windows in this building are of three types: single windows measuring about three feet in

width by four feet in height, paired windows measuring about seven feet in width by four feet in height, and bathroom windows measuring about three and one-half feet in width by two feet in height.

In the main (northeast) façade, fenestration in the second story consists of twenty paired windows and one single window, the latter at the far eastern end of the building. The first story contains seven paired windows, fourteen single windows, and doors to twelve units. The pattern in this story is usually, but not always, that of a window pair followed by two single windows. Doors are variously placed next to single and paired windows. In the rear (southwest) façade, the second story fenestration consists of twelve paired windows, seven pairs of bathroom windows, and two single windows, the latter at the far ends. In the first story are fourteen single windows, each adjacent to a back door. The southeast and northwest façades are the same. Each is nearly symmetrical, with two single windows in each story, plus a central doorway in the first story.

6. Roof

The roof is gabled, with extended eaves. There are breaks in the roofline where modules are set forward or back from each other, creating the impression of three separate roofs on this building. The eaves have exposed rafters. Metal gutters run the length of the roof on each of the long facades.

C. Description of Interiors

1. Floor plans

a. Basement

Building 41 contains no basement.

b. Apartment floor plans

From southeast to northwest the module floor plans in Building 41 are as follows:

Module C-3R contains two townhouses. It has a three-bedroom unit on the left (southeast) and a two-bedroom unit on the right (northwest). The entrance door in each of these townhouses opens directly into the living room. In each townhouse the staircase to the second floor divides the first floor plan into two primary spaces - a living room in front, and a kitchen area in back. A rear door in the kitchen opens out to the back yard. A storage room opens off of one side of the kitchen. In the second

floor, the bedrooms and bathroom open to the landing at the top of the staircase. The bedrooms vary in size from about nine feet by eleven feet to eleven feet by twelve feet.

The five C-1 modules each contain two townhouses. The entrance door opens directly into the living room. The stair to the second floor divides the first floor plan into two primary spaces - a living room in front, and a kitchen area in back. A rear door in the kitchen opens out to the back yard. A storage room opens off of one side of the kitchen. In the second floor, the bedrooms and bathroom open to the landing at the top of the stair. The bedrooms in both units vary in size from about nine feet by eleven feet to eleven feet by twelve feet. The right (northwest) unit has 3 bedrooms and the left (southeast) unit has two bedrooms.

The module at the northwest end of the building, C-3, contains two townhouses, with a three-bedroom unit on the right (northeast) and a two-bedroom unit on the left (southwest). The entrance door in each of these townhouses opens directly into the living room. In each townhouse the staircase to the second floor divides the first floor plan into two primary spaces - a living room in front, and a kitchen area in back. A rear door in the kitchen opens out to the back yard. A storage room opens off of one side of the kitchen. In the second floor, the bedrooms and bathroom open to the landing at the top of the staircase. The bedrooms vary in size from about nine feet by eleven feet to eleven feet by twelve feet.

Each bedroom in the building has its own closet. A coat closet can be found on the first floor of each unit, beneath the staircase. A linen closet is on the second floor of each unit, near the stairway landing and adjacent to the bathroom.

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 41 is on the south side of Foothill Avenue opposite South 28th Street. Parking lots can be found directly to the northwest and southeast of the building. Eight two-story buildings of varying length can be found very near to this building, located just beyond the parking lots, across the street on Foothill and South 28th, or behind it, facing South 26th Street. Many boulders can be found near this building. Ten are distributed around the northwest end, five are at the southeast end, and six more are in the front yards of middle units. One large tree can also be found at the southeast end of the 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 the "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.

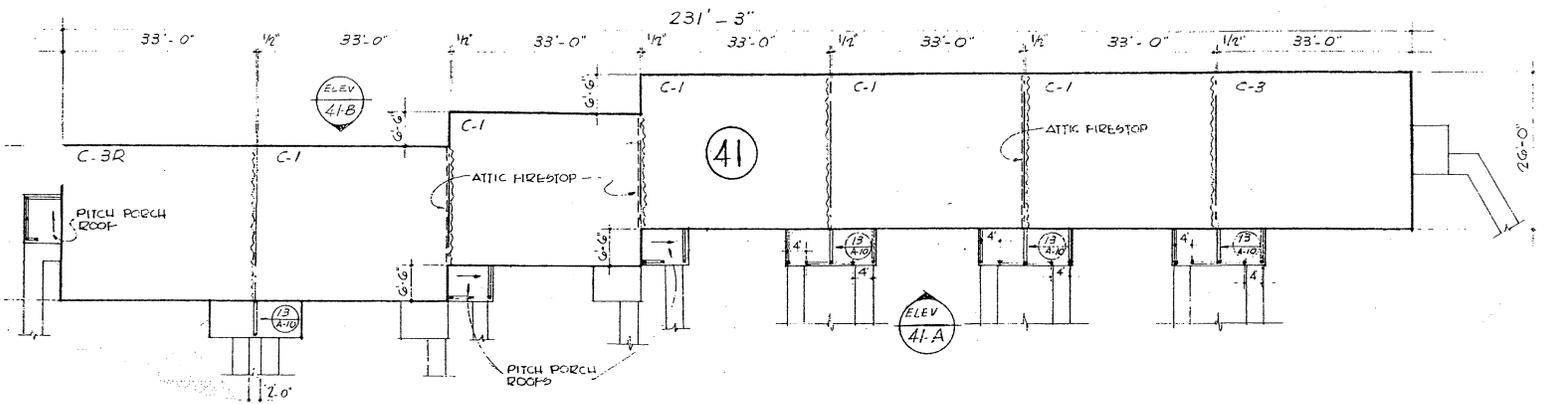
C. Bibliography

Please refer to 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. 41, showing the arrangement of modules. For module plans, please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.