

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name: Richard P. Doolan Residence and Storefronts

other names/site number: Norman T. Larson Residence and Storefronts

**2. Location**

street & number 557 Ashbury Street/1500-1512 Haight Street N/A  not for publication

city or town San Francisco N/A  vicinity

state California code CA county San Francisco code 075 zip code 94117

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

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### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic and Commerce--organizational

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival, (20<sup>th</sup> Century)

(mixed-use property: residence over storefronts)

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### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: brick

roof: shingle

walls: wood

other: metal entry gate

other: marble at corner storefront

other: mosaic tile at corner storefront

other: glass fenestration and doorway

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 7 (attached)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 8 (attached)

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Events and Social History

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Architecture

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"Hippie Movement"

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### Period of Significance

1903-1969

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### Significant Dates

1903,1907, 1965, 1969

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### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

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### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

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### Architect/Builder

Doolan, Frank T., architectural draftsman

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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SEE CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 9 (attached)

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

## Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

San Francisco Public Library, History Room

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** Less than one acre, Lot 09 in Assessor's Block 1231

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	552		3		
2	10	552		4		

See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**SEE CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 10 (attached)**

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**SEE CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 10 (attached)**

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Vincent Marsh, Principal

organization Marsh and Associates, Historic Preservation Consultants date: July 27, 2009

street & number 2134 Green Street, Suite No. 3 telephone: (415) 921-8316

city or town San Francisco state: CA zip code 94123

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

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**Photographs: Required black and white photographs and digital images** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Norman T. Larson

street & number: 557 'B' Ashbury Street telephone (415)621.1996

city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94117

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain

a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form.

Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect

of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, D.C. 20503.

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**Description:**

This Colonial Revival residence with its storefronts is located on the northwest corner of Haight and Ashbury Streets, in the heart of a famous neighborhood is noted for its social history and its architecture. The structure retains a high degree of integrity of location, materials, design, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association.

**Architectural Description of 557 Ashbury Street**

The structure at 557 Ashbury Street/1500-1506 Haight Street is a fine Colonial Revival style mixed-use building that displays a high degree of integrity. Several other buildings on Haight Street from Masonic to Stanyan Street also possess architectural distinction, but this one is nevertheless of high quality and is important in the way it contributes to the streetscape. It occupies a corner at the intersection of Haight and Ashbury Streets, the intersection that gives the neighborhood its name. It is a rare example of a mixed-used adaptation of the Colonial Revival style in the City. The period of significance is 1903 and 1907, when the building was constructed (1903) and lifted to insert storefronts (1907).

The residence and storefronts at the northwest corner of Ashbury and Haight Streets are an atypical and unique version of the Colonial Revival in San Francisco and the Bay Area, in part because it is a mixed-use property, with a single-family residence at Haight and Ashbury Street situated over a series of storefronts. The first floor of the residence was positioned about 6 feet above ground level when it was built, in 1903. In 1907, it was raised up a further 6 feet, and moved 22 inches east, to the property line, in order to allow shops to be built at ground level. In the same year, a separate, solely commercial, building was built on the western part of the property, down Haight Street. The raising up of the residence necessitated other changes. Originally, there had been a recessed main entry on Ashbury Street. The entry was flanked by oval windows, with festoons above, facing the street. In 1907, after the building was raised up, the gap where the recess was eliminated was filled in with new siding, and a large window.

However, the oval windows and festoons remain. The lines joining the in filled siding to the existing are still visible between the oval windows and the large added window.

Another change from the original residence is that the original had cornice line brackets, evident in the circa 1908 photo of the building. (See the Westerfield photo) .They were eliminated at some unknown time. On the south elevation of the building there are three small windows that were most likely added to light closets put in at the time that the

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building served as a rooming house—from the 1930s until the 1960s. Despite these changes, much of the old house remains intact. The façade is plain, with shiplap siding. Some of the distinctive features of the residence include: a dentillated crown molding at the top of the façade; also, a hipped roof with centralized projecting dormers—a semicircular one on the south elevation, and pedimented ones on the east and west elevations. Major architectural features are Palladian windows on the first level of residence on both the Haight and Ashbury Street elevations. They have projecting shelf moldings. There is architectural tension created by both symmetrical and asymmetrical placement of the original windows on both the Haight and Ashbury Street elevations. Symmetry on the Ashbury Street elevation comes from four equally sized and spaced rectangular windows on the second floor. These have a Georgian reference.

On the Haight Street, south elevation, the first-floor Palladian window is centered, with a rectangular window centered above it on the second floor, and a dormer with a semicircular roof directly above that—all comfortably neo-Georgian in style. However, on the same elevation the asymmetry is powerful. To the west of the Palladian window, there is a pyramidal composition of two rectangular windows on the first floor with a single rectangular window on the second floor, centered above them. To the east of the Palladian window, there is just a single rectangular window on the first floor near the corner, with another single window on the second floor, directly above it. The south facade also has two original conical vents to ventilate the original (though no longer functioning) gas heaters within the residence, which were disguised as fireplaces and set within classical mantelpieces. When raising the residence in 1907 required the removal of the recessed entry, since the recess was too far above the street, a new entryway had to be created for the residence. The entrance is now at the north end of Ashbury Street elevation. It has a narrow stairway up to the first floor, undoubtedly designed that way as a space saver. At the street level entry, a decorative iron gate for the residence, designed by J. David Modell, was installed in 1985. A large wood and glass framed door located behind the gate—oversized for the small entry area—provides access to the dwelling unit. It may be the same door that was used as the front door in the recessed entry to the residence in the 1903 version—before the building was raised in 1907. Above the door, in the transom window, “The Evelyn”—once the name of a rooming house that occupied the residence, is announced in gold letters (this is a restoration—not original). Marble is used as baseboard in the entryway to the residence. This, too, may have been recycled from the 1903-recessed entryway after it was eliminated in 1907.

The ground level of the corner building, now used for shops, has historic features as well. Original saloon windows are located on the Ashbury Street elevation of the corner

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storefront at 1500 Haight Street even though there has not been a saloon at the location since the beginning of Prohibition. Today through the transom windows of the corner shop one can see the corner post which supports the southeast corner of the building and which allowed swinging doors for the saloon to be placed inside the post, on the diagonal. Later, the corner space served as a jewelry store. Marble facing from the jewelry store days is intact. 1504 Haight Street, once a shoeshine shop, is remarkable for its narrowness: it is only 7 1/2 feet wide. The 1506 Haight Street shop façade, including its fenestration and the parquet floor for the display window, is original to 1907.

The second, western, building on the property, with the shops at 1508, 10, and 12 Haight Street, was built in 1907 in what had been the rear yard of 557 Ashbury Street.

In 1984, the property owner restored the building to the original three shops, using a 1952 photo from the San Francisco Assessor's Office as a model. A feature is the use of brass posts at the corners where two plates of glass join together. The posts were restored to the building following the discovery of a single remaining brass post intact at the building in 1984. (The anodized metal transom windows are not in the original style. The original transom windows were fixed, with wooden sash. Metal was used instead of wood in 1985 in order to allow the windows to open. Operable wooden window sash windows would have had too little glass to be functional).

**Interior Features**

The first level of residential occupancy consists of a series of four public rooms. These restored spaces include a foyer, a formal parlor, a family parlor, and a dining room. The latter three are in enfilade, and each of them contains a fireplace, which provides a visual focus for the room. All three mantels are dissimilar in decorative style. However, all have moldings and appliquéd designs with Classic motifs, and all have beveled over mantel mirrors. Each fireplace was served by a gas heater in the hearth, all three, of which are in place, but disconnected. The three original fireplace cast iron surrounds, of two different designs, are also intact. All of the door casings in the four rooms (except the non-original front door in the foyer) have crown moldings that echo the dentillation on the cornice of the exterior of the building.

All four rooms open to one another by pocket doors. Pocket doors separating the rooms, arranged enfilade, are original. Their replacement hardware matches the doors in size and is of the period. The pocket doors between the foyer and the formal parlor



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are non-original, but period, five-panel doors, with appropriate period hardware. The entire pocket door casing is replacement, copied from fragments of the original. All of the rooms contain softwood floors of Douglas fir. The surfaces of the foyer have been treated differently from the other three rooms. The original wood in the foyer has been stripped of paint, and the woodwork is dark. In the three rooms in the enfilade, all the walls and woodwork except the mantels are painted off-white. The floors in those rooms are painted a light brown. The moldings would seem to be stock moldings, and are simple and straightforward in design and execution. Three of the rooms contain non-original baseboard heating. All the woodwork in the foyer is dark and stained, including the floor. The residence provided both gas pipes and electric wires for the center light fixtures. The lampshades in both the family parlor and dining room have non-original, but period, white glass shades, which were chosen by the present owner after he determined that the white glass shades at the intersections of the box beams in the dining room appeared to be original.

The foyer/entry hall was reconstructed after the building was lifted in 1907 to accommodate the existing storefronts. At that point, the deep 1903-entry recess (which had stairs leading down to the street) was eliminated, and the space in the foyer was squared off so that it is now substantially larger than originally. New flooring was installed, and the place where it joins the original floor is still visible where the 1903 front door used to be. The foyer contains wainscoting with vertical panels up to the chair rail. Some of the original applied graining on the woodwork remains, although it is in deteriorated condition because of the paint stripping that uncovered it. An unpainted wooden staircase leads to a series of private rooms on the dwelling unit's second level of residential occupancy. The balusters are builder's Colonial style. The foyer also contains an unusual art nouveau fixture and a milk glass fixture that lights the stairway hanging from long chains attached to the second floor ceiling. Its milk glass shade may be original to the 1903 residence. However, under the canopy of the fixture is a capped-off gas pipe, which suggests that there might originally have been a gasolier there. The staircase originally contained a gas and electric torchère on the newel post. The interior features of the National Register designation would include the staircase to the landing of the second level of residential occupancy. The ceiling crown molding in the foyer is not original. The bottom of the supporting post at the top of the stairs reveals an outline of a bit of the coffered ceiling that was in the 1903 foyer. A fragment of the oak flooring that was in the 1903 foyer emerges from under the present front door sill to the space.

The formal parlor has an elongated shape, which suggests it is pretending to be a grand hall. This parlor has a coved ceiling. It also has a Palladian window at the end of the room. The center lighting fixture and sconces are not original, but they all have period-

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etched glass lampshades. The mantel is mahogany veneered, with a bombe front, in the neo-Georgian style. It is refinished. It does not have columns or shelves, as a typical Colonial Revival mantel would, but rather a single projection where those elements would occur. It does have a beveled over mantel mirror. The room's fireplace has dark green Minton-style tiles. The gas heater is a Humphrey Radiantfire No. 20.

The family parlor, a square room suggesting a colonial space, also contains a coved ceiling and an asymmetrically placed Palladian window. The mantel of this room has Colonial Revival elements: a lower shelf supported by three brackets and a mirrored over mantel with columns supporting the upper shelf. The beveled over mantel mirror is very horizontal, suggesting the Prairie style. The mantel has been refinished. The mantel's tiles imitate rusticated bricks, giving a Richardsonian touch. The heater is Welsbach, with cabriole legs—also a Neo-Georgian touch. The center lighting fixture is a gasolier in the Colonial Revival style (it has both electric lights and gas jets, as did the original residence, although this fixture is not original to the building). Its main feature is a brass ball, with curved pipes for the gas, suggesting a Colonial oil lamp. There are raised acanthus motifs in both the fixture and the lampshades. A pair of sconces flanks the mantel. On the south wall, west of the Palladian window, there are faint tile-shaped rectangles—vestiges of the time when most rooms in the rooming house at 557 Ashbury Street had washbasins and plaster splashboards incised with a tile design.

The dining room—another square room—has boxed beams, a built-in cupboard with a now-blocked-off pass through to the kitchen, and tongue-and-groove wainscoting. The room contains four milk glass electrical lighting fixtures at the intersection of the boxed beams, which the owner believes are original to the 1903 residence since there are no capped-off gas pipes under the flanges. The center fixture is not original, but has milk glass shades and is sympathetic to the room. The mantel has Colonial Revival elements. Columns support the lower shelf. A second set of columns resting on the lower shelf supports the upper shelf, which has a beveled over mantel mirror. This is the only one of the three mantels on the first floor that has its original very dark finish, although the finish is rather deteriorated. The fireplace tiles are powder blue. The heater is a Humphrey Radiantfire No. 20. Except for one drawer pull in the cupboard, hardware in the room is original.

Most of the partitions that were added to make the rooming house functional have been removed. However, both the first floor bathroom and the second floor kitchen, which were added for the rooming house, have been retained. In 2003, a bookcase occupying the space of the pocket doors between the foyer and the original formal parlor was

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removed and the pocket doors were restored; and the two flats, although having legally comprised only one unit since 1968, were now physically rejoined into a single dwelling, 100 years after having been built as such.

**Integrity**

557 Ashbury Street/1500-1512 Haight Street retains integrity of location, as it has not been moved since it was erected in 1903. It was however, lifted in 1907, to insert a series of commercial storefronts to serve the emerging Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. The storefront rehabilitation, which occurred in 1985, is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Restoration. All of the rehabilitation and restoration work over the course of time both on the interior and the exterior of the building attests to the owner's commitment to the property and the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, the building retains integrity of *location, design, materials, and workmanship*.

The integrity of *setting* is essentially intact, although the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood has undergone periods of decline and revitalization. Today, the Haight-Ashbury remains a lively place that is known throughout the world. The subject property was lifted in 1907 to accommodate a series of storefronts primarily located on the Haight Street elevation of the structure. It continues to serve as a mixed-use building and maintains a high degree of integrity under setting.

Additionally, the features and spaces of the property that remain from the periods of significance identify integrity of both feeling and association. Under *feeling*, this property, because of its rarity as a mixed-use Colonial Revival building, particularly evokes the aesthetic and historic sense of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood commercial district and its surrounding residential area. Under association, the property is linked to persons of historical and artistic significance and to the Haight-Ashbury's role as the epicenter of the counterculture in the late 1960s.

**City of San Francisco Survey Ratings**

The Richard P. Doolan Residence and Storefronts/Norman C. Larson Residence and Storefronts were designated as a City of San Francisco Landmark Number 255 on June 26, 2006.

Other survey ratings include a windshield survey conducted by students of San Francisco State University under the leadership of Judith Waldhorn Lynch. The building

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was first identified as being architecturally significant in a Haight-Ashbury Victorian Survey conducted in 1974.

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**Statement of Significance**

**Summary Paragraph**

The property is nominated under Criterion A: Events for its association with the development of the Haight Ashbury neighborhood in San Francisco in the early twentieth century. The property meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G, being an exceptionally significant property directly associated with the “Hippie Movement” in America. The property is also significant under Criterion C, Design/Construction. The building is a rare surviving Colonial Revival residence over storefronts located in the Haight Street commercial corridor of San Francisco, and contains original building materials and design features found in the Colonial Revival style of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a rare style in San Francisco, found mostly in major residences in the Pacific Heights neighborhood. This building is particularly significant because of its unusual integration of residential and commercial uses on one site. Significant dates are 1903, the year of the building’s original construction, and 1907, the year the building was raised and converted to a mixed-use residential/commercial building. The period of significance is 1903-1969.

**Criteria Consideration G: Exceptional Significance**

557 Ashbury Street located at the northwest corner of Haight and Ashbury Street is directly associated with the “Hippie Movement” in America, from 1965 to 1969, which occurred less than fifty years ago. Political and social changes that occurred during this period in this neighborhood profoundly changed our culture and American society making this site one of exceptional significance.

**Criterion A: Events**

From 1903-1969, the subject property housed a wide variety of shops including services, offices, retail sales, light manufacturing, and a saloon. These shops were entirely typical of the commercial district along Haight Street between Masonic and Stanyan Streets during this period. What makes the property at 1500-1512 Haight Street distinctive among the dozens of buildings along this stretch is that it has more storefronts than does any other property, and these storefronts possess high integrity. Thus, no other property on Haight Street represents the rich commercial history of that street as well as this one does.

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From April 1965 to 1968 the storefront at 1510 Haight Street was the location of Mnasidika, a mod clothing boutique. It was one of the first hippie shops in San Francisco, and was almost certainly the first hippie shop on Haight Street. The building is also associated with Janis Joplin, one of the great rock music performers of the 1960s. The period of significance is 1965-1968, the years this shop was open. Holcombe Jewelers was located in the corner storefront at Haight and Ashbury Street for fifty-one years.

The property historically known as the Richard P. Doolan Residence and currently known, as the Norman Tyler Larson Residence with its associated storefronts is located at 557 Ashbury Street/1500-1512 Haight Street in San Francisco is a significant resource at the local level. The property is associated with a chain of events important to the social, cultural, ethnic, and political history of San Francisco. In addition, the property is a significant example of Colonial Revival architecture. The residence dates from 1903 and the storefronts date from 1907. It is distinguished in its architectural form and style. Significant persons and events are associated with the site. The property is significant under National Register Criteria A and C. The neighborhood takes its name from the intersection of Haight Street and Ashbury Street. Haight Street is the main commercial street of the neighborhood and the top of Ashbury Street contains prestigious housing.

Today, the historic Doolan residence and storefronts property iconographically symbolizes the history of the development of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. In particular, the building represents and embodies the hippie movement of the 1960s. Located on the northwest corner of Haight and Ashbury Streets, the building is essentially the neighborhood's "ground zero", signified by the Haight and Ashbury street names lettered on its façade. The property has served as a backdrop for countless photographs and as a location for many documentaries about this famous San Francisco neighborhood. The hippie movement had its genesis in the Haight-Ashbury district, resulting in a political, social and cultural revolution that significantly impacted youth throughout the nation and the world. (See the photo documentation of the subject property and the Haight-Ashbury, especially the images of the Grateful Dead from 1966 and 1967 and Harry Reasoner reporting from the Haight-Ashbury district in 1978.)

From the 1930s to the 1960s the neighborhood declined somewhat, as other areas of the City located west of the Haight-Ashbury developed. This decline can partially be attributed to the massive demolition of the Western Addition during the 1950s and the 1960s. This area formerly contained block after block of significant 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture. Fortunately, the Haight-Ashbury was spared this wholesale approach to

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redevelopment, in part, due to the fact that the neighborhood organized a citizen revolt, which succeeded in blocking a proposal that would have extended the Central Freeway into the Panhandle and Golden Gate Park. From 1965 through 1968, the neighborhood achieved international significance as the center for the hippie movement. This was followed by some decline from 1969 until the mid-1970s, and again it was followed by the revitalization efforts of new property owners and neighborhood associations. City policies and changes in zoning resulted in the creation of the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD) in the 1980's as one of many significant NCDs in the City.

**Brief Historical Context**

**The Baird Estate**

557 Ashbury Street and the surrounding Haight-Ashbury neighborhood were part of the Baird land holdings, including the land from Masonic to Shrader and from Page to Waller Streets. By 1903, a corner lot of 32.5 feet by 100 feet at Haight and Ashbury Streets was sold to Richard P. Doolan. In the same year he constructed a residence at 557 Ashbury Street. John H. Baird had acquired the land in the early days of San Francisco, and the Baird family was a colorful part of San Francisco history.

The Baird Estate is first described in an 1894 plot book. Land holdings at that time included most of the property from Masonic to Schrader Streets and from Page to Waller Streets. This area began to be developed in the early 1880s as the Haight Street cable car line was introduced and the Panhandle and Golden Gate Park were laid out.

Baird's will established a trust, which held some of John H. Baird's property. Part of the property associated with 557 Ashbury Street was held by the trust and part of it was owned directly by Baird's widow, Veronica Baird. The Baird Trust agreement indicated that the land held in the trust could not be sold until the eldest son, Joseph, turned 21 years of age. The sale of the subject property to Mr. Doolan and of surrounding Haight Street parcels occurred in 1901. Much of Haight-Ashbury was developed in the early years of the twentieth century.

**The First Owner, Richard P. Doolan**

The Colonial Revival residence at 557 Ashbury Street was constructed in 1903 for Richard P. Doolan as his personal residence. When it became clear that Haight Street would become strictly commercial in nature, from Masonic to Stanyan Streets, due to

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the westward expansion of the City caused by the Great Earthquake and Fire, he had the building raised and storefronts built beneath it. The building belonged to Doolan until his death in 1947 and remained in his family until 1973.

Doolan first appears in San Francisco City directories in 1881. For many years he lived at 1424 Mission Street with his family, which included Thomas Doolan (most likely his father), who worked as a brick mason, and Frank T. Doolan (probably his brother), who worked as a draftsman.

Richard Doolan had a variety of clerical and professional jobs over the 25 years he worked in San Francisco. From 1881 through the early 1890s he worked as a clerk and bookkeeper, first for the H. T. Holmes Lime Company, and then for Nolan Brothers, which sold boots and shoes. In the mid-1890s he worked at the U. S. Custom House, first as an assistant cashier and then as an assistant appraiser. For a few years at the turn of the century he was an attorney, and from 1903 to 1905 he was a financial agent, with an office in the Hayward-Kohl Building, at the northeast corner of California and Montgomery Streets. After converting this building to a residence over storefronts in 1907, Doolan and his family departed from San Francisco for parts unknown. In 1911 he, his wife Mary, his father Thomas, and brother Frank returned to the city and lived on Hayes Street. Richard resumed working as an attorney and later listed his occupation in directories as a "capitalist." Mr. Doolan retained ownership of 557 Ashbury Street/1500-1512 Haight Street for the rest of his life. He died in September of 1947 in San Francisco, CA. In 1948, title was transferred to Mary, R. Marion and Jerome K. Doolan, his widow, daughter, and son.

**Frank T. Doolan, the Designer**

The Colonial Revival residence at 557 Ashbury Street was designed in 1903 by Frank T. Doolan, presumably the brother of owner Richard P. Doolan. Frank also designed the storefronts that were added to the property in 1907.

Frank Doolan worked as an architectural draftsman for most of his working life in San Francisco. In the late 1880s he worked for architect William H. Armitage; thereafter his place of employment is unknown. For a brief period during the first half of 1891, he worked as an architect and designed four buildings, two of which were for himself or for his father Thomas. After his return to San Francisco in the 1910s he worked again as a draftsman, and then was unemployed. His career was undistinguished, but the excellence of the design of 557 Ashbury/1500-1512 Haight illustrates the ability that many draftsmen possessed a hundred years ago in San Francisco.



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**Charles Koenig, the Builder of 557 Ashbury Street**

Charles J. U. Koenig was the contractor who built 557 Ashbury Street in 1903. He had a long career as a carpenter, builder, and building contractor in San Francisco. He came to this city in 1890 and initially worked as a carpenter and builder with two relatives, first with Ludwig Koenig, then with brother William. After William left his partnership in 1894 to become an architect, Charles worked alone as a building contractor at least through 1929. In his forty-year career he was prolific, building houses and flats for his clients in many neighborhoods. In 1896 he also built an attractive, wood-framed Gothic Revival church that still stands at 3728 Cesar Chavez Street.

**Subsequent Residents of 557 Ashbury Street**

The building has gone through several changes over the years, from a single-family residence to a living unit over stores, to apartments over stores, and back to a single-family dwelling unit over storefronts. At all times, from 1903 to the present, the entrance to the residence or living units has had the address of 557 Ashbury Street. As first constructed, this building was the two-story single-family residence occupied by its owner, Richard P. Doolan, a financial agent with an office in the Hayward-Kohl Building at California and Montgomery Streets.

In 1907 the house was raised, and three storefronts were built beneath it. The two upper stories continued to be a single-family residence occupied by renters. In 1910 the residents were Simon R. Ames, a former restaurant owner, his wife Amy, and her father, Emil Bettenhausen. Ames was listed in the census as having his "own income." In 1912 the residence became the Lansdorff Apartments, taking its name from Max Lansdorff, who occupied one of the apartments, worked as a salesman, and presumably managed the apartments as well. He remained through 1914. In 1918, the building became the Evelyn Apartments, with three units. The proprietor in 1920 was Evaline Allen, after whom the apartments may have been named. She lived in one of the units with six other family members and a boarder. Another unit was occupied by Julia Barry, for whom no occupation was listed. George Melo, owner of a cigar store, and his wife Annie occupied the third unit.

No further information is available about residents until 1953, when 557 Ashbury Street consisted of eight living units. The increase in units most likely occurred during World War II, when there was a severe housing shortage in San Francisco.

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There were still eight units in 1966 and 1967. In 1966 seven single people and one married couple occupied the units. One resident was a shop owner, one was a student, and the rest had no known occupation. In 1967 most of the residents were the same as in 1966. One was a janitor, and the others had no known occupation.

**Criterion C: Design/Construction**

The property is a rare surviving mixed-use type of the Colonial Revival style in the City. The contractor for the residence was Charles J.U. Koenig, a prolific and well-known contractor who practiced in San Francisco from 1894 to approximately 1930. The Doolan/Larson Residence and Storefronts is also a significant and rare example of the Colonial Revival style in San Francisco. It is associated with two distinct chains of events, both important to the religious, ethnic, social, political, and cultural history of San Francisco. It is also important for its association with significant persons important to San Francisco history.

**American Architectural Context**

“It was not until the centennial of American independence in 1876 that the country began looking back with nostalgia to the era when the Atlantic states were a part of England. Thus was born American Colonial Revival architecture—varying reinterpretations of the building styles exported to the colonies during the century and a half of British rule.”<sup>4</sup> (It should be noted in this context that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, California was a colony of Spain. Thus, the Mission Revival is a more literal colonial Revival style for California). Largely influenced by the published works of Andrea Palladio, adaptations of Italian Renaissance-derived classicism had developed in British architecture since the Baroque period of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By the later 18<sup>th</sup> century, a more refined neoclassical sensibility had emerged, connected with a period of rapid economic development and growing cultural sophistication. American colonial-era buildings mirrored British taste of these same periods, but tended to be simpler in style and more modest in scale.

Characteristics of colonial domestic architecture included symmetrical massing with prominent entry porticoes, use of classical columns, moldings, and detailing, with hipped or side-gabled roofs. Fenestration was most commonly single, double-hung windows used in repetition. Palladian windows were frequently used, as homage to the master architect. Such windows consisted of a single arch-topped central opening,

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flanked by two smaller rectangular openings. "The style often had a rectangular plan, strictly symmetrical facades, hipped roofs with dormer windows, classical ornament, and Palladian windows and [the buildings] were painted in light colors. [The architects] sought a sense of quiet and restraint."<sup>5</sup>

Architectural historian Paul Duchscherer's analysis of the Bay Area Colonial Revival describes 557 Ashbury Street to a striking degree. "While fairly well represented here [in San Francisco], Colonial Revival is not a common Bay Area style; it is far more prevalent in the East and Midwest. Most local examples feature balanced, but asymmetrical compositions, routinely embellished with decorative friezes or other ornaments in Classical forms of delicate cast plaster. A hipped roof with dormers is one of the most usual features of local examples. Colonial Revival interiors generally have details that repeat some of the Classical motifs on the exteriors, such as columns, turned balusters, spindles, and dentil and other moldings. Often used in two tiers, columns were used on fireplace mantels to support the main shelf and an over mantel with a beveled mirror and upper display shelf. Ceilings were frequently coved and box beams were also a common feature."<sup>6</sup>

557 Ashbury Street is an atypical and unique version of the Colonial Revival in San Francisco and the Bay Area, in part because it is a mixed-use property with a single-family residence situated over a series of storefronts. Some of the distinctive features of the building include both the symmetrical and asymmetrical placement of windows on the Haight and Ashbury Street elevations, the centralized dormers with rounded eyebrows projecting from the hipped roof, and the Palladian arched windows with their projecting shelf moldings on the first level of residence on both the Haight and Ashbury Street elevations. Other features include the original saloon windows located in the corner storefront, which served as a jewelry store for over fifty years. Additionally, marble is evident in the corner storefront and in the entryway to the residence. The storefronts contain transom windows and projecting flat signage. A decorative iron gate designed by J. David Modell was installed in 1985. Behind the gate, a wood and glass framed door provides access to the dwelling unit. In 1907, when the building was raised, its recessed west entry was filled in and the large window added, flanked by the oriel windows that originally flanked the entry stair. The three small windows on the south elevation were probably added to light closets when the building was later converted into a rooming house. The cornice line brackets seen in the, circa 1908 photograph of the building no longer exist. Norm Larson, the current owner planted trumpet vines over twenty years ago and they now cover an external staircase on the west side of the building, a north building wall and are evident in the transom areas of the Haight Street storefronts.

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**Typical San Francisco Town House Plans**

Additionally, the residence at 557 Ashbury Street largely conforms to the typical San Francisco town house ground plan and floor plan. As a Colonial Revival variant designed for a corner parcel, the building is representative of the predominant building patterns evident in the City at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century described below:

“San Francisco settled on a general pattern of closely spaced freestanding houses separated from the adjacent structures by a few feet on one side and only a few inches on the other. The side windows in the principal rooms faced the more open side. San Francisco’s cool summers made the one-sided window placement, and resulting lack of cross ventilation in some interior rooms, quite bearable. The common two-story row house plan [in San Francisco] consisted of a long hall with no windows on one side of the house from which branch three interconnected principal rooms; a rarely used formal front parlor, a second, or family parlor, and a dining room with a projecting bay window. Behind the dining room were the kitchen and pantry. Ten-foot high sliding doors connecting the ornamented front rooms rendered the lower floor of such a house admirably suited for receptions. The second, or bedroom floor, repeated the plan of the first floor without the interconnecting sliding doors. The master bedroom was usually in the front and had a bay window. The children’s bedrooms were in the middle, and servants were housed in the rear rooms or in the attic. The bathroom was placed over the kitchen to minimize plumbing.”<sup>7</sup>

**The Haight-Ashbury District**

The Haight-Ashbury district is largely an intact streetcar suburb dating from the 1890s through the 1920s. Much development and increased density occurred after the 1906 earthquake and fire. This is because the neighborhood had developable land, the infrastructure was intact, and there was enormous pressure for development. Many of those post-quake buildings have classical detailing, which they share with 557 Ashbury Street. Various buildings on and near Haight Street show the historic changes in the neighborhood. The four corners of the famous intersection of Haight and Ashbury all have mixed-use buildings with two stories of residence above ground floor retail. All but 557 Ashbury Street were originally designed as mixed-use buildings, and all have classical detailing. 557 Ashbury Street is quite spare by comparison, and the residential part of the building is atypical. However, the building’s memorable eccentricity has undoubtedly contributed to the fame of this historic intersection. All four of the corner buildings do have similar height and use. 557 Ashbury Street is not the only building on

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Haight Street to have undergone adaptive reuse. There are a number of mixed-use buildings on Haight Street where the ground floor commercial space was carved out of a first floor flat in an all-residential building. There are, as well, original mixed-use buildings and all-commercial one-story buildings. The residential part of the neighborhood, off Haight Street, has much architectural harmony.

There are three local Colonial Revival buildings situated on corner lots, also single-family residences, which are relevant when discussing 557 Ashbury Street. Two of them, 701 Scott (located in the Alamo Square Historic District) and 1390 Waller Street (at Ashbury Street), were built in 1902. 701 Scott Street is larger and more symmetrical than 557 Ashbury Street, but bears the stronger resemblance to it. The physical proximity of 1390 Waller Street allows the viewer to imagine 557 Ashbury Street as it was originally built. 1901 Page Street, at Shrader Street, is an elaborate local Colonial Revival with street-side gardens that dates from 1896. There are many three-flat buildings extant from circa 1907 within a block of Haight Street. Their classical detailing connects them with 557 Ashbury Street. There are earlier residential buildings in the Haight-Ashbury district developed between 1880s and 1910 in a variety of architectural styles, including Queen Anne, Stick/Eastlake, Italianate, Shingle Style, and Classical Revival, as well as the Colonial Revival styles. Major development and build-out in this area continued into the 1920s.

Additionally, the fact that the building was raised (lifted) post-1906, also contributes to its significance. The owner realized that Haight Street and the surrounding streets were being build out with new moderate-scaled single family and multi-family residential buildings to accommodate those who were displaced by the Great Earthquake and Fire. Raising this building and inserting six storefronts resulted in a property that provided neighborhood serving retail uses.

There are only a handful of raised, mixed-use buildings extant in the City. "Other known examples include the southwest corner of Fell and Laguna Streets also lifted and moved to the sidewalk/property line post-1906 for neighborhood serving retail with residences above. A formerly two story Italianate structure at the southeast corner of Fillmore and Jackson Streets was also raised to accommodate retail on the ground floor with residences above. Built in 1879, (John Remer, original Architect) the building was moved and raised in 1914 by Charles Fantoni, Architect for Angelo Belli, owner.

The Goodman Building, located at 1111-1121 Geary Street, City Landmark No. 71 designed by Rousseau and Sons, Architects dating from 1869 was raised in 1906 to accommodate ground floor retail. Two other mixed-use buildings located nearby that

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were also raised or altered to accommodate storefronts include 1439-1445 Haight Street which was built as a one-story structure in 1904 by August Nordin, Architect for a Mr. Hancock, owner and was altered into a two-story building in 1909 by the Mc Dougall Brothers, Architects for a Mr. Cody, owner. 1426-1428 Haight Street dating from 1905, was constructed as a one-story building in 1905 by William Koenig, Architect and brother of Charles Koenig, responsible for 557 Ashbury Street. This building was altered in 1922 into a two-story building by C.S. Mc Nally, Architect for a Mr. Meadham, owner. Located at the north side of Haight Street, 100 feet west of Masonic Avenue, the building also contains ground floor retail and residences above".<sup>8</sup>

**Criteria Consideration G: Exceptional Significance in the "Hippie Movement" of the 1960's.**

557 Ashbury Street, located at the northwest corner of Haight and Ashbury Street, has come to symbolize the "Hippie Movement" in America, from 1965 to 1969, which occurred less than fifty years ago. Political and social changes that occurred during this period in this neighborhood profoundly changed our culture and American society. "Whatever one thinks of the sixties, the tumultuous era cracked the cold war culture and the nation experienced a sea change---a significant transformation in politics, society, and foreign policy."<sup>9</sup> The pattern of events and significant persons that are directly and indirectly associated with 557 Ashbury Street and the Haight-Ashbury district make this property exceptionally significant. The extraordinary impact of the political and social events which occurred in this neighborhood and at this location over forty years ago have resulted in the recognition of this property as an exceptionally significant site. The northwest corner of Haight-Ashbury represents an iconic property in the "Hippie Movement" is widely photographed by tourists (world-wide) and by natives alike.

Additionally, during this brief period of time, "America became multicultural---a legacy of the struggle. For minorities, the sixties were a legal and political revolution. In just a few years minorities overturned centuries of legal inferiority and discrimination obtained their rights guaranteed by the Constitution---an astounding achievement for any society."<sup>10</sup>

The Haight-Ashbury is famous because of the 1960s. Famous people from the '60s lived all over the neighborhood, and there were happenings throughout, as well. Still, the intersection of Haight and Ashbury gives the neighborhood its name. It is of great interest for that reason. Haight-Ashbury has been called a state of mind. It is, in fact, a central city neighborhood, one of the older such neighborhoods in San Francisco, CA.

One attraction in photographing a building is that it has south exposure, so it is reflective of light. The northeast and northwest corners of Haight and Ashbury both have this. 557

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Ashbury has been painted a near white (pale gray) since 1983. (That is also the earliest known color of the building (see photo donated by Juanita Benson)). The exposure of 557 Ashbury Street alone makes it highly photogenic.

There is an old tradition of painting street names on corner buildings. Since English language is read left to right, two of the corners of Haight and Ashbury, the southeast and northwest, have the potential for street signage which reads "Haight" "Ashbury", not the reverse. 557 Ashbury (the northwest corner) has had the street names painted on the buildings since 1983, when the building was repainted. The southeast corner of the street doesn't have street names painted on it. This is one reason 557 Ashbury Street is constantly photographed by visitors.

Another reason that makes a building stand out is that it stands alone against the sky. The corner building at 557 Ashbury occupies only half the property. The commercial space at 1508-12 Haight is only one story high. From the vantage point of the southeast corner of Haight and Ashbury, looking diagonally across the intersection, there is a powerful impression of sky. The reflectivity of the white building strongly represents the architecture of the City and its residents.

The extreme flatness of 557 Ashbury Street, with its lack of bay windows, is also photogenic--something like a billboard. The details of 557 Ashbury Street create an air of mystery--another reason it get so much attention. On the residential level, this is created by the Palladian windows, oddly placed oval windows, tiny rectangular windows on the south side. 557 Ashbury Street doesn't look like the apartment building one expects to see above shops on the commercial part of Haight Street. At ground level, each of the three shops below the main building has different facade from the others. This creates a sense that this is a building with a past. Furthermore, the other three corners at Haight and Ashbury contain Victorian mixed-use buildings with multi-family dwelling units above the storefronts. 609 Ashbury Street is a twelve-unit building with Aavark Clothing Store and Club Delux Bar occupying the retail space. 606-612 Ashbury Street is an eight-unit Victorian building from the 1890's with a new retail outlet on the ground floor known as RVCA and represents contemporary clothing created by the Artist Network Project (ANP). On the northeast corner, another Victorian mixed-use building known as 560-562 Ashbury Street contains a Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream shop as well as the Crepe Express Café. It too is a multi-family building over commercial property dating from the 1890's. The subject property, 557 Ashbury Street is an unusual, mixed-use Colonial Revival property with a single-family residence above and is expressed in this distinctly different style.

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Finally, the street signs at the Haight-Ashbury corner are famous and photogenic, namely, 600 Ashbury Street and 500 Haight Street. 1500 Haight is the corner shop of the 557 Ashbury building. At the southwest corner, the address of the corner shop is 1501 Haight, not 600 Ashbury Street.

### **The Bohemian and Gay and Lesbian Movements in the City**

Starting in the mid-1950's, the bohemian literary scene in North Beach began attracting national attention. Many of the central figures of San Francisco's beat subculture were gay men: Robert Duncan, Paul Mariah, James Boughton, and Allen Ginsberg. The hippies flocking to the Haight-Ashbury district in the summer of 1967 also contributed to the development of the San Francisco lesbian and gay subculture."<sup>11</sup>

### **The "Hippie Movement"**

557 Ashbury Street is significant for its association with the "Hippie Movement" in Haight-Ashbury from 1965 until 1969. "Whatever one thinks of the sixties, the tumultuous era cracked the cold war culture and the nation experienced a sea change---a significant transformation in politics, society, and foreign policy."<sup>12</sup>

The northwest corner of Haight-Ashbury represents an iconic property in the "Hippie Movement" is widely photographed by tourists (world-wide) and by natives alike due to the location and setting of the street signs and markers on the building.

As Michael D. Lampen indicated in the San Francisco Almanac, "the hippie movement, the idealistic drug-discovering rock –music voiced child of the beat generation, burst upon the San Francisco scene in 1965 with the visit of the Beatles, the drug advocacy of the novelist of Ken Kesey, and the rise of Jefferson Airplane rock band. Western Haight Street, near Golden Gate Park, became the hippie mecca in 1966, and San Francisco hippiedom climaxed in the 1967 "Summer of Love." Hippie hangouts on Haight included the Drogstore Café, the Psychedelic Shop, and the Pall Mall Lounge, as well as the Panhandle and Hippie Hill in nearby Golden Gate Park. Popular rock auditoria were Fillmore West, the Avalon Ballroom and the People's Ballroom. The word "hippie" derived from "hip" (meaning aware and part of the current scene") was coined by Examiner writer Michael Fallon. Hippie code words included "cool," "acid," "trip," and "bummer."<sup>13</sup> The northwest corner of Haight and Ashbury, (known as 557 Ashbury Street, remains to this day, ground-zero of the Hippie Movement. Tourists and natives flock to this corner for photo opportunities and "reminisce about a time when LSD was legal" and the Grateful Dead were in concert at the Fillmore West.



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“What happened in Haight-Ashbury was an outpouring of the desire of a specific community to order its existence, to take control of its destiny. There is no element of human behavior more traditional or basic than that. That is why the spirit of the Haight-Ashbury lives on, for it was the dream of self, shared by a community, magnified by traditional resources.”<sup>14</sup> Further, 557 Ashbury Street symbolically represents the “hippie movement” due to its association with the events and people of the period.

Harrah-Conforth states further in his Ph.D. thesis about Haight-Ashbury that the “participants in the Haight-Ashbury community were self-styled role players, in keeping with the prevailing oeuvre of people as “life actors.””<sup>15</sup>

Finally, the Colonial Revival “building at 557 Ashbury is at the heart of Haight-Ashbury history. It appears in countless photographs, perhaps most notably the iconic shot of the young Grateful Dead--Jerry Garcia, Phil Lesh, Bobby Weir, Bill Kreutzman, and Ron McKernan--posed at the famous street sign, with the palladium windows of 557 providing a distinctive backdrop. On the morning that Jerry Garcia passed away, the owner of the building, Norman Larson, had the presence of mind and the graciousness to display black bunting from the windows. All day, and into the evening, pilgrims gathered at the familiar building at the northwest corner of Haight and Ashbury, the focal point of the Youth Movement that culminated in the Summer of Love, in 1968. Mr. Larson's building was the site of floral and musical tributes and a candlelight vigil. A rare example of neocolonial architecture in San Francisco, 557 was one of the first buildings on Haight Street and became the “First Building” of the Flower Child Movement”<sup>16</sup>

### **The History of the Shops at the subject property**

The history of the use of 1500-12 Haight Street reveals a treasure trove of neighborhood-serving shops that evoke a bygone era. The list includes: saloon, jewelry store, optometrist, cigar store, shoeshine shop, dry cleaner, plumber, realtor, accountant, barber, women’s clothing store, beauty shop, insurance agent, hatter, and magazine shop. The first establishment at the corner was a saloon—the Gold Bar. It closed when Prohibition went into effect. Occupying the same corner space at a later time was the property’s longest-term commercial user—Holcombe Jewelers. M.D. Holcombe and his son ran it for 51 years. The son, Alex Holcombe, was a crewmember on the flight in World War II that was a decoy of the *Enola Gay*, the plane that carried the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima. Another long-term shopkeeper was James Lombardi. He ran Jimmy Shoe Shine Shop at 1504 Haight St. for 45 years. 1508

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Haight was a barbershop in 1907, and in 2006 it is still a barbershop (although it had other uses from 1967 to 1984). There were other long-term uses and users, as well.

One of the shops at the property does have a 1960s connection. Mnasidika was a mod clothing boutique at 1510 Haight Street. The shop opened in April 1965, and closed just three years later. This clothing store was probably the first hippie shop on Haight Street. The proprietress was Peggy Caserta. The shop name was a covert reference to a lesbian lover in "The Songs of Bilitis," a 19th-century lesbian poem. The shop name is thus a reference to the first lesbian social and political action group in the United States, the Daughters of Bilitis, a group founded in 1955 by homophile activists Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon. In 1973, Peggy Caserta wrote *Going Down with Janis*, which chronicles her affair with Janis Joplin and their mutual drug addiction.

The commercial development of Haight Street involved a major conversion of buildings that were not originally commercial. Several buildings on Haight Street, nearly all with 25 feet of street frontage, started out as three flat buildings, and became mixed-use later. In the conversion, the bottom flat, which stood about 6 feet above ground, was largely gutted, and a floor installed at ground level. Since the flat itself would have had a 9 or 10 foot high ceiling, this means that the converted shop spaces have a rather high ceiling—approximately 16 feet. In a number of examples on Haight Street, however, the ground floor was not completely gutted. The back area of the ground floor flat, which would have had the kitchen and dining room, was retained, with stairs added to make the connection to the street level space. 1630 Haight Street, a shop in a double width (50 feet) building has an elevated space at the rear. The flat's original dining room details remain intact. 1632 and 1654 Haight Street also has some original details and the original rear rooms are evident. The only Art Nouveau style building in the Haight is located at 1677-81 Haight Street. It has a small shop at the front and a first floor apartment at the rear, which was likely part of the original first floor plan for the dwelling unit. At 1458, 1524, 1552, and 1560 Haight Street, the elevated floor at the rear of the shops is the only element remaining from the point of construction circa 1910. All other details have been eliminated.

### Traditional versus Hippie Shops on Haight Street

In the first year of the hippie phenomenon, 1965, traditional shopkeepers on Haight Street were generally tolerant of hippies because they were filling up empty storefronts.

The traditional element thought the hippies would revitalize the commercial strip along Haight Street and then move on when they could no longer afford the rents. For a year

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or so business on Haight Street did indeed increase. In spite of this, the merchants' association would not allow hippie proprietors to join.

Things changed in 1967-1968, when national publicity about hippies brought a tremendous influx of youth to the Haight-Ashbury, followed by dealers in hard drugs. There was then a rapid turnover among both traditional and hippie shops, and many vacant storefronts.

At 1500-1512 Haight Street two traditional shops, Jimmy's Shoe Shine Parlor and Holcombe Jewelers, successfully made it through the hippie and drug-dealing years into the mid-1970s and 1980s, respectively. Two other long-established businesses, the Haight Family Barber Shop and Veta's Gift Shop, each succumbed in 1967. The storefront at 1506 Haight Street went through a rapid succession of realtors and accountants. The one hippie shop, Mnasidika, prospered at first, but then also went out of business in 1968.

***Mnasidika***

Mnasidika, clothing boutique. 1510 Haight Street. Opened April 1965, closed c. 1968. Proprietor: Peggy Caserta. Mentioned in the *S.F. Examiner* in September 1965. "Mnasidika is an obscure literary reference (Mnasidika and her lover, Bilitis, were thought to be the first known lesbians in history) that a friend told [Peggy Caserta] would be immediately recognizable to Bay Area lesbians. About the time Peggy figured out that it wasn't, she realized that the vaguely Eastern, cool-sounding name might appeal to the growing hippie market right under her nose." <sup>20</sup> The literary reference is to *Les Chansons de Bilitis* ("the songs of Bilitis"), an 1894 collection of prose poems by Pierre Louys presented as translations from a recently rediscovered ancient Greek original. "Despite its campy excesses, [this faux-antique] book has always had a powerful cachet in literate lesbian circles: as late as 1955, when the homophile activists Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon founded the first lesbian social and political action group in the United States, they called it (without irony) the Daughters of Bilitis." <sup>21</sup>

**Janis Joplin's direct association with the subject property.**

Janis Joplin began to frequent the store. In 1973, Peggy Caserta wrote *Going Down with Janis*, which chronicled her affair with Janis Joplin and their mutual drug addiction. On October 4, 1970, Janis Joplin died of a heroin overdose at age 27.

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"A woman like no other, Peggy's [Caserta] fast-paced stories burn a hole through the fabric of time, allowing me a quick vision of the whirlwind of changes occurring in San Francisco during the sixties. Her experimental wisdom, developed over the years, came across as vividly honest. Although I was born at least a generation too late, I've always held a certain affinity for the ideals which sprung forth from the transitional period we often associate with typical images like bare feet, hitchhiking, and flowers in the hair, or what is commonly referred to as "hippie-love-sh\*t".<sup>22</sup> She arrived on the scene before the scent of revolution was even in the air. Growing up in New Orleans, she traveled to New York for a time, and collected many sky-miles as a stewardess before settling in the Bay area. Attending college only lasted long enough to launch her into a new state of awareness, where she found an entrepreneurial finesse that paid off well. Her curious, little boutique was located at 1510 Haight Street and was esoterically named Mnasidika.

This treasure trove was a cash cow that will forever mark the map. Historical moments were unfolding as Bill Graham started a musical movement that caught like wildfire. Music was becoming fashionable and rock n roll a part of the mainstream as San Francisco was a prime spot for such performers as Jefferson Airplane, The Grateful Dead, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Santana and many more. Bands on the scene started to create a buzz for themselves and everyone wanted MORE. It was during this stir of America's melting pot, when civil rights and the topic of equality were at the forefront, freedom of expression through speech or whatever means of protest to get the point across. But let's not forget what got the youth started on this trip--they were blowing their minds on LSD, opening doors, dissolving barriers, eating up the world as if it were a giant peach, giving up all sense of reality to understand "All You Need Is Love." Thus dawned on us the Age of Aquarius, and as the flower children flocked to San Francisco, CA. Peggy was sitting pretty with the only hip-store on the block carrying those items that distinguished the psychedelics from the squares. Being off-beat and eccentric was trendy and kids were seeking to stand out from the crowd, taking full advantage of the stylistic choices offered at Mnasidika (aptly named after one of the first lesbians in Greek - mythology).

Jimi Hendrix walked in looking to get a gig and ended up with his infamous image, the vest and afro now accented by bellbottoms, which could only be bought exclusively at the little Haight Street boutique. She even sold Levi-Strauss on the idea of changing their production lines to manufacture the new design, but unfortunately didn't reap any royalties or licensing fees or she'd be a billionaire. Living across the street from Janis Joplin (before she made a name for herself) she would open the window and bellow her famous phrase. "Hi-ya Honey" as seen in commercials of Southern Comfort. Peggy

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recollected not paying her much attention until after she heard the girl's wailing and powerful voice. After complimenting her raw talent, Janis claimed emphatically. "you're my first fan.

They eventually became lovers whose romantic moments were interspersed over the years, but held strong during Woodstock when Peggy was the only non-musician to experience flying into the massive, dirty event on a helicopter, first class. It was the only way she would attend, and Janis just had to have her moral supporter by her side for one of the largest exposures for musical artists in history. Sometime after Joplin left her back-up-band; Big Brother and The Holding Company and urged by her manger Albert Grossman to pursue a solo career, she hooked up with Kris Kristofferson, who wrote one of her most memorable hits, "Me and Bobby McGee," featured on her final album, Pearl. The tragic day, when she was found dead in her cheap hotel room, left a gigantic hole in not only Peggy's heart, but that of the nation. Our first ever, female rock and roll superstar bit the dust, way to young. It took an extended period of time to recover from such a heavy blow, but over the years Peggy has been pursued by many interviewers to be a consultant on the details of Janis Joplin's life. She remains involved in several types of businesses [in Long Beach, CA] and persists, in spite of the wreckage, surviving an era we could all forget, if it weren't for the drastic social changes spurred by people opening their minds." <sup>23</sup>

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### **Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of the westerly line of Ashbury Street with a northerly line of Haight Street; running thence northerly and along said westerly line of Ashbury Street, 32 feet, 6 inches; thence at a right angle westerly 100 feet; thence at a right angle southerly 32 feet, 6 inches of the northerly line of Haight Street 100 feet to the westerly line of Ashbury Street and the point of beginning.

### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the whole city parcel occupied by the residence and the storefronts which are all located on Lot 09 in Assessor's Block 1231, formerly a portion of Western Addition Block No. 674. There are two separate buildings contained on Lot 09. Both buildings, the entirety of the parcel, and interior rooms within the residence are proposed for designation.



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**Boundary Map: Subject Property indicated in hatched area, NW corner of Haight and Ashbury Streets.**

