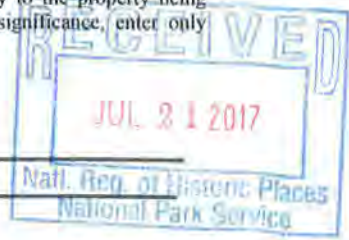


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

MP-1558

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Degnan's Restaurant  
Other names/site number: Degnan's Deli and Loft  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 9015 Village Drive  
City or town: Yosemite National Park State: California County: Mariposa  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
 A  B  C  D

Gary Bulmer 7/14/2017  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date  
NPS FPO  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Jen Saunders 5/31/17  
In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. Date  
Signature of commenting official: Date  
Jen Saunders, Deputy SHPO, California State Office of Historic Preservation  
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government


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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper

9/5/2017  
Date of Action

**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE: restaurant

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE: restaurant

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

OTHER: Mission 66

OTHER: Park Service Modern

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: concrete; Walls: steel frame, wood sheathing, glass; Roof: asphalt; Other: metal/steel/concrete

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Degnan's Restaurant, later known as Degnan's Deli and Loft, is sited in a partially wooded setting within the Yosemite Village area of Yosemite Valley. The site is bounded by Village Drive to the east, an access road to the north, and paved pedestrian and bus routes to the south and west. Designed in the Modern Movement style (sometimes referred to as "Park Service Modern") and constructed in 1958, the two-story building features a prominent A-frame roof with broad eave overhangs, low, horizontal massing, exposed steel framing, board-formed concrete piers, glass window walls, and indoor/outdoor dining areas. The exterior walls are clad in V-groove redwood siding painted a light brown color, and the roof is covered in asphalt shingles. Two iron chimneys project from the gabled roofs of the restaurant, one near the center of the two-story gable, and one at the northwest corner of the one-story gable. The building is in good condition and, despite some alteration over time, maintains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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### Narrative Description

#### Overview

Degnan's Restaurant sits at the east end of the pedestrian plaza in the visitor services area of Yosemite Village, a residential, maintenance, and commercial center near the east end of Yosemite Valley. Mature pine and incense cedar trees screen the building along the east, south,

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and west elevations, and the rocky landscape surrounding the building is dotted with midsized shrubs, small conifers, and scattered patches of grass. Despite the notable A-frame gables at the north and south ends, the building maintains a low, horizontal profile within the landscape.

The original design of Degnan's Restaurant remains intact and exhibits several components of the Modern Movement style employed within national parks during the Mission 66 period. Significant features related to the style include the use of steel in the A-frame, concrete in the exterior piers, interior fireplaces, and floor finishes, and prefabricated elements such as the vertical wall paneling and exterior cladding. The nontraditional fenestration seen in the gable end window walls and along the west elevation are also characteristic of the style; this transparency serves to integrate interior and exterior spaces. Other design features evocative of the style are the low-profile, horizontal massing, and the use of exterior colors and textures that blend the building and environment.<sup>1</sup>

The Modern Movement style, as applied to NPS properties in the Mission 66 period (1956-1966), reinterpreted the design characteristics of the Rustic style (1916-1942)<sup>2</sup>, which was the principal architectural approach applied to new park construction in the decades leading up to World War II. The intent of the Rustic style was to create harmony between the built and natural environments through the use of native materials, traditional craftsmanship, and naturalistic landscape planning. In *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type*, historian Sarah Allaback asserts that the best examples of Modern architecture within parks did harmonize with their setting, "but in a new way." When "stripped of the ornamentation and associations of rustic design, Mission 66 development could be both more understated and more efficient."<sup>3</sup> New structures were designed to reflect the character of the area in which they were constructed, and at the same time employed modern design standards, simplified detailing, and contemporary materials.

Degnan's Restaurant is classified as a noncontributor in both the Yosemite Valley and Yosemite Village National Register Historic Districts because it was built outside of each district's period of significance, 1855-1942 for Yosemite Valley and 1855-1951 for Yosemite Village.

### Exterior

Degnan's Restaurant is a two-story, 25,766 square foot, steel and wood framed building set on a concrete slab foundation. Complex in plan, the western half of the building features two A-framed volumes, which primarily house the interior dining and public food service areas for the restaurant. The two-story A-frame section comprises the front portion of the south elevation, and the one-story A-frame section extends to the north. The eastern half of the building is dominated by a large, one-story, flat roofed kitchen area, with various rectilinear enclosures at the second-

<sup>1</sup> Ethan Carr, et al., National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, "National Park Service Mission 66 Era National Resources" (13 August 2015), Section F, Page 87.

<sup>2</sup> National Park Service, "Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942,"

[https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/rusticarch/introduction.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/rusticarch/introduction.htm) accessed 17 January 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2000) [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/allaback/](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/allaback/) accessed 15 June 2016.

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story level. Food preparation and other service functions are housed in these spaces. The A-frame roofs are oriented roughly north-south. The A-framed roof surfaces are covered in asphalt shingles, whereas rolled roofing is used for the flat-roofed and shed-roofed volumes comprising the eastern half of the building. The broad eave overhang of the A-framed roofs feature lined wood soffits, the pattern of which is created with alternating 2"x4" and 2"x6" boards set side to side. The eaves of the secondary elevations are enclosed with simple plywood boards. Exterior walls are clad in painted, V-groove, vertical redwood siding.

The west elevation runs roughly parallel to the pedestrian mall leading into the Village and serves as the restaurant's primary entry point. The exposed steel frame is a prominent original feature on this side of the building, primarily along the covered passageway that runs the length of the ground level. Above the passageway, ten pairs of horizontal beams extend outward to support a flat roof. Ten diagonal beams of the two-story A-frame roofline intersect with each of these horizontals before terminating in a triangular, board-formed concrete pier. This configuration serves to visually divide the ground floor of this elevation into ten bays. The passageway roof soffits are clad in the same distinctive wood pattern as the eaves of the main roof, and the concrete piers feature a tripartite triangular motif that mimics the shape of the A-frame roof forms.

The original exposed aggregate pavement with redwood dividers remains along the western covered passageway; this original paving treatment is also found at the north exterior dining terrace. An additional dining area, since paved with asphalt, extends out from the covered walkway to connect with the pedestrian mall to the west.

The window wall along the ground floor of the west elevation contains two pairs of glazed entrance doors and one single glazed entry door that together provide access to the delicatessen, fountain, and restroom areas on the interior. This wood framed window wall is composed of fixed plate glass windows and a band of fixed and operable transoms. It extends around the corner of the north elevation, creating transparency at the ground floor and a visual relationship between the interior and exterior.

The second story-dormer on the west elevation features a band of fixed pane windows, arranged in five continuous bays. Each bay has four windows each, with exception of the southernmost bay, which only has two original windows remaining. The other two were removed when the elevator was installed at the building's southwest corner in 2011. The elevator enclosure is clad in vertical wood siding similar to the siding on the original portions of the building, and is topped with a flat roof with a moderate eave overhang and ribbed wood soffit. Also visible along this elevation are the two chimneys, one near the center of the main gable, and the other at the northwest corner. The central chimney extends through a skylight and maintains its original low profile. The northwest corner chimney is pyramid-shaped with a flat top. Both are constructed of iron panels bolted at the seams.

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At the north facade, both the one- and two-story A-frame gable ends are visible at the western half of the elevation, while the more utilitarian service area is set to the east.<sup>4</sup> The one story A-frame gable extends further north than that of the two-story portion, which terminates near the middle of the building. Both gable ends, however, are characterized by a steel framed window wall, continuing the theme of transparency between interior and exterior. An open terrace sheltered by a wood framed shade canopy extends from the north exterior wall of the one-story volume, near the northwest corner of the building. A glazed access door at the north window wall opens onto the terrace, and several picnic tables are available for outdoor dining. A solid wood fence along the east side of the dining area provides visual separation between the patio and the more utilitarian service yard at the east side of the elevation.

At the west side of the north elevation, the paved service lot slopes down from the access road at the north to reach the loading dock and rear entry points. Visually, this portion of the façade is characterized by a low, one-story horizontal volume that houses the kitchen and back of house functions. The flat roof of this section features a moderate eave overhang with enclosed eaves. A collection of boxy, flat-roofed enclosures are set on top of the one-story roof, and house mechanical equipment and other utilities. Some of these enclosures are clad in the original vertical wood siding. Others have been altered and extended, so a patchwork of original material remains in this area.

The east elevation consists of a low, one-story mass, extending the length of the ground floor kitchen area. Mechanical equipment and enclosures, including two small gabled dormers, are visible on the roof of the second story when viewed from the rear parking lot. A solid wood fence connects to the east exterior wall to screen the service yard and associated equipment from view. Mature trees, large rocks and other small plantings also serve to screen this elevation, with the majority of this screening occurring around the southeast corner of the site.

At the south elevation, a full-height, steel-framed window wall fills the prominent A-frame opening, providing a view of the south interior stairway, and serving as a key focal point for the building. The low, one-story section to the east houses the kitchens and other back of house areas. Many of these enclosures have been altered or are later additions. A partial concrete wall with signage for the restaurant attaches to the face of the building and extends perpendicular to the south wall a short distance along the south entry walk. This original feature is clad in the same vertical wood siding as the rest of the building. The actual signage displayed is not original. Mature trees and other plantings screen the more utilitarian one-and two-story volumes at the east side of this elevation.

Though the restaurant has undergone some alteration over time, the building retains its original form and massing, key features of the original design, and many original materials. When initially constructed, the building's A-frame roof surfaces were clad in coursed wood shakes, and a band of open roof framing, uncovered with shingles, lined the edge of each gable end. This latter feature appears in the original drawings and in early photos, but was removed at an

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<sup>4</sup> Note: the original plans show that the north one-story gable was to extend out over the dining patio in this area. This extension was not completed and handmade notations on the original drawings shows extension as built.

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unknown date, likely due to maintenance complications. The shake roof was also removed at an unknown date and has been replaced at least twice with a composition shingle roof, most recently in 2013.<sup>5</sup> In 2011 an elevator was installed in the southwest corner of the building to address accessibility in the building; this required removal of the glazed entryway at the first floor and the two southernmost windows in the second-story shed dormer. The most extensive alterations to the building exterior, however, have occurred at the eastern half of the building, above the kitchen and service areas. Two vented gable dormers were added to the east side of the principal A-frame roof at an unknown date, and the boxy wood-clad enclosures in this location have been extended and altered over time. The most recent known alteration of these enclosures occurred in 2012, when new mechanical equipment was installed.<sup>6</sup>

The available historical record does not include dates for all modifications to the building. A comparison of early photographs and original plan drawings to 2016 photographs reveals some minor alterations over time. Undated modifications to the building exterior include selected infill of glazed openings on the north window wall to accommodate a pass-through service window, the addition of two small storage enclosures at the north exterior kitchen wall, and installation of an arched vent at the central chimney. The transom windows along the ground floor window wall have been painted, and remain in place.

### **Interior**

All of the public dining and food services areas of the interior are housed within the A-frame volumes of the building. Public restrooms and a gift shop space are at the south end of the ground level, with the delicatessen at the center, and the fountain café to the north. The eastern portion of the ground floor contains kitchens and food preparation areas, storage rooms, offices, staff restrooms, cold storage, and utility spaces. Three stairways access the second story from the ground level. Two of the stairways are in the public areas of the building, one at the south end and the other between the deli and café areas. A third stairway provides access between the first and second story kitchens in the eastern half of the building; a dumbwaiter serving both kitchens is adjacent to this stair. A full height central fireplace begins at the ground floor gift shop and extends up through the second story dining room skylight. Open hearths with integrated concrete benches and shelving are located at each level.

The second story dining room is the most visually striking space in the building, with a dramatic cathedral ceiling, full-height window walls at each end, and a massive central fireplace. The ceiling incorporates the same ribbed wood decking that is used on the exterior soffits, and the exposed steel A-frame emphasizes the verticality of the space. The peaked window wall at the north end of the dining room frames a view of Yosemite Falls to the north; the south window wall offers a wooded view of Yosemite Village to the south. The full-height fireplace features a board-formed concrete base and a decorative iron hood that extends through the skylight above. At its base, the fireplace is roughly triangular in plan, and cantilevered concrete ledges wrap around the perimeter at both seat-height and mantle levels. Fireplace openings occur on three sides, each covered with a simple metal grille. The iron hood narrows as it nears the skylight, and

<sup>5</sup> Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



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features bolted standing seams arranged in geometric patterns. The concrete and metal design work in the fireplace features variations on a triangular pattern, a design motif seen also in the triangular forms of the A-frame and exterior concrete piers.

The second floor dining room, and some of the office spaces at this level, retain their original vertical redwood wall cladding, though most of it has been painted white. Original wall cladding is also visible in the café, above the transom windows on the west wall, along the north wall, and in the open areas above. The paneling visible in the areas above the café is the only original wall cladding that remains unpainted. When the building was completed, the fountain (café) and the delicatessen areas of the ground floor featured colored concrete floors with a steel trowel finish. This has since been covered with modern tile cladding. All flooring in the upstairs dining room has been replaced several times, covering the original waxed vinyl asbestos tile floor finish.

Service support spaces to the east of the dining room on the second floor include offices, kitchen, food preparation, and dishwashing areas. The wall and floor claddings in these areas have been altered over time, and remnants of the original vertical redwood siding are present in selected areas. Two additional offices are at the top of the central stair, near the northwest corner of the dining room; the exterior walls and interior portions of these offices retain original wall paneling.

### **Alterations**

The interior spaces, both public and private, have been altered several times since the building was completed in 1958. The building retains the same overall plan and function that existed upon original construction. The earliest documented alteration to the building was in 1961, when the bakery and deli spaces underwent a \$2,500 remodel.<sup>7</sup> A new air conditioning system and fly fan system were also installed at that time. Most of the alterations, however, occurred after the Degnan-Donohoe Inc. contract expired in 1974 and the building came under new ownership. Improvements included creation of the enclosed gift shop space on the first floor and the enclosure of the fireplace in that space, installation of additional refrigeration, and a significant kitchen remodel. Modifications to the kitchen involved elimination of the bakery and expansion of food service functions to include a new grill area at the north end of the kitchen.<sup>8</sup> The drop ceiling at the first floor was added when the building's electrical system was renovated, possibly as part of these alterations.<sup>9</sup>

The public restrooms on the first floor underwent a full modernization in 1988, which included removal of all original ceiling, wall, and floor finishes, reconfiguration of partition walls, and removal of original doors.<sup>10</sup> A pizza kitchen was created in the north end of the building in 1989, when the kitchen spaces adjacent to the café area were reconfigured; this part of the kitchen has

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<sup>7</sup> Francis Donohoe to John C. Preston, Yosemite National Park, 25 January 1961, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California. Note: no details are provided about the work completed.

<sup>8</sup> Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Thompson Architectural Group, Inc., "Degnan's Restroom Remodel," March 1988.

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been altered several times.<sup>11</sup> The back-of-house areas were again altered after the NPS acquired ownership of the building and the Delaware North Company (concessioner) began management of the facility in 1993.<sup>12</sup> The café (originally known as the fountain), was remodeled in 2009 to its configuration as nominated.<sup>13</sup>

The kitchen and service areas on the second floor have also undergone alteration over time as service needs changed, though the floor plan remains generally unchanged. Like the adjacent kitchen, the second floor dining room has been renovated several times and generally retains its original plan. Alterations to the dining room include installation of new flooring and modern light fixtures, installation of half-wall dividers within the space to define dining areas, introduction of the elevator at the southwest corner, and addition of wall-mounted televisions and speakers.

Other alterations within the building include replacement of the original hanging light fixtures over the south stair in the early 1970s, attachment of horizontal metal strips to the balustrade of both primary stairways, and painting of the original wood paneled wall surfaces (originally stained for a more natural finish). The stair rail at the south end of the second story dining room was also replaced with a solid half-wall at an unknown date.

### **Landscape**

The open space to the west of the building is bisected by a paved walkway leading from the pedestrian mall to the restaurant entrance. The southern portion of this open space is enclosed on all sides with a simple wood fence, while the northern portion contains sections of wood fence and intentionally-placed rocks defining preferred paths of travel. At the south end, a paved entry walk leads to the entry doors along the west elevation, and another paved footpath marks the southern boundary of the landscape in this area. Along Village Drive to the east of the building is a paved sidewalk, a wood bus shelter, and a 16-space parking lot. Unpaved footpaths cross through the rocky landscape to the east of the building, some of which are lined with stones and rubble from the site. The bulk of the open area to the north of the building is occupied by the paved service yard, and a paved walkway leads from the rear service road to the exterior dining terrace at the northwest corner of the building.

Research did not identify any original landscape plans for the Degnan's site, but some information exists regarding alteration to the surrounding landscape over time. When the building was originally completed, the area west of the restaurant was occupied by a paved parking plaza that stretched from the Village Store site south of Degnan's to the Administration Building at the west end of the central Village. Photographs of the building taken during and shortly after construction show that the site was largely cleared of vegetation during the construction process. Only two mature deciduous trees along the west side of the building appear to have existed upon completion of the building. Historic photographs do show boulders and

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<sup>11</sup> Thompson Architectural Group, Inc., "Degnan's Pizza Kitchen," January 1989; Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

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smaller rocky deposits scattered through the landscape in the areas immediately adjacent to the building during and after construction. The superintendent's report from June 1958 also notes that park personnel placed large rocks on the grounds in front of the building upon completion.

A postcard view of the building shows that the two deciduous trees along the west side of the restaurant had been removed and replaced with medium to large-sized shrubs around 1970. Aside from these plantings, the surrounding landscape still appeared to be free of trees at that time. As no original landscape plan has been identified, and this later historic view shows a rocky landscape with few plantings, it appears the trees and other vegetation that exist at the time of nomination were added later or allowed to grow in over time.

The 16-car parking lot east of the building, including associated concrete curbing and adjacent sidewalk, was completed in July 1962. A 60-car parking lot was also developed just north of the rear service road later that year, replaced by staff housing in 1999.<sup>14</sup> Frank Donohoe retained Yoneo Ono, a landscape architect from Bakersfield, to prepare an overall landscape plan for the restaurant site in 1963. Mr. Ono prepared a landscape plan, but Superintendent's reports suggest the plans were never approved because the proposed design did not fit with the naturalistic landscape approach mandated by the National Park Service.<sup>15</sup>

The exterior dining areas with exposed aggregate pavement and redwood divider strips were part of the original design and are still intact. The redwood shade canopy over the north exterior dining area was constructed of redwood 4"x12" beams and 2"x3" lathing in March of 1967.<sup>16</sup> The parking plaza that stretched from the Village Store to the Administration Building was eliminated in 1972 and converted to a pedestrian mall to reduce vehicular traffic in the area.<sup>17</sup> The simple wood fencing and other minor alterations to the landscape along the west side of the building may have been completed at this time.<sup>18</sup> The tables and other exterior seating are not original. Various tree stumps have been placed around the exterior dining areas to provide additional seating, but these are not part of a formal or original landscape design.<sup>19</sup>

### Character Defining Features

A character defining feature is an aspect of a building's design, construction, or detail that illustrates the building's significance. Character defining elements include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, interior spaces and features, as well as various aspects of the building's site and environment. The character defining features and spaces of Degnan's Restaurant reflect the design and material characteristics of the Modern

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<sup>14</sup> National Park Service, "Project Completion Report: Parking Areas, Degnan's," June 1962; Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>15</sup> National Park Service, "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, Yosemite National Park, California," July 1963.

<sup>16</sup> "Exterior Patio-Roof Plan-Section & Details for Degnan's, Yosemite Valley, California," one-page plan drawing, 3 March 1967.

<sup>17</sup> Land and Community Associates, *Yosemite Valley Cultural Landscape Report* (Project No. YOSE-504-15), Volume 1 (October 1994), 2-114.

<sup>18</sup> Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

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Movement style, and the building's relationship to the Mission 66 program as a whole. New buildings under the Mission 66 program were designed to reflect the character of the area in which they were constructed, and at the same time employed modern design standards, simplified detailing, and contemporary materials. The features listed reflect this design intent.

#### *Exterior Features and Elements*

- Overall form and massing (low, horizontal emphasis; division into smaller units)
- A-frame and flat roof forms
- Broad eave overhangs (A-frame roofs)
- Decorative wood soffits at eave overhangs (laminated alternating 2x4s and 2x6s)
- Exposed steel frame structure
- Extensive use of glass in exterior walls (bands of fixed windows, windows with transoms, glazed
- entry doors with transoms; wood framing)
- Vertical, V-rustic redwood siding
- Triangular, board-formed concrete piers
- Connection of interior/exterior spaces
- Dormer window along west elevation
- Chimney #1 (north end)
- Chimney #2 and associated skylight (central chimney)
- Outdoor dining areas (covered walkway along west elevation and patio at north end) with exposed aggregate paving and redwood spacers
- Setback from roadways on all sides

#### *Interior Features and Elements*

- Dining Room (2nd Floor)
- Stair #1 (South Stair), Stair #2 (Central Stair) - steel structure, concrete treads, wooden railing (both);
- decorative wood screen at Stair #2
- Central fireplace of board-form concrete and steel, first floor gift shop and second floor restaurant
- Wood-burning metal fireplace with brick lining, first floor cafeteria (northwest corner)
- Decorative wood ceiling (laminated alternating 2x4s and 2x6s)
- Vertical wood wall paneling (primarily extant in second floor dining room and first floor café, sections of original wall paneling also remain in other areas)
- Dumbwaiter
- View of Yosemite Falls from north wall (second floor)
- Original tinted concrete floor at ground level

#### **Integrity**

Degnan's Restaurant retains a high degree of integrity. The building has not been moved and therefore retains integrity of *location*. Although the immediate surroundings have undergone some modifications over time, such as conversion of the Yosemite Village parking lot to a

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pedestrian mall in the early 1970s, the restaurant's setting is generally the same as it was during the Mission 66 period. Trees and smaller plants have been allowed to mature in the rocky landscape surrounding the building, and this has not negatively affected its setting. As such, the building retains integrity of *setting*.

The original design is clearly expressed through exterior features including the A-frame, glazed window walls, board-formed concrete piers, covered walkway, decorative wood soffit, and redwood siding. Key interior design features also remain in place, including the principal stairways, and the dining room at the second level with central fireplace and skylight, decorative wood ceiling, and exposed steel. The overall interior spatial relationships also remain intact, though most of the rear service areas lack integrity because of alterations over time. For these reasons, the building retains integrity of *design*.

Degnan's Restaurant retains integrity of *materials*. Most of the original redwood exterior siding and original glazing materials remain in place, and the steel framing, concrete piers, and decorative wood soffit are intact. The cedar shakes and gable end lattice-work have been removed, and some exterior siding is not original. These material changes do not compromise the ability of the resource to convey its historic character. Similarly, though interior alterations have been made over time to accommodate changes in use, materials including portions of the original redwood wall paneling; the concrete, steel, and wood components of the principal stairways; the board-formed concrete and iron hood of the upstairs fireplace; and the original wood dining room ceiling remain intact to convey the original design.

Conforming to the tenets of modern architecture, the building is composed of relatively inexpensive and mass-produced building materials. However, the integrity of *workmanship* is evident in the treatment of these materials. The concrete piers along the west elevation are textured by the wood used to form them, and a textured eave soffit and ceiling finish was created using simple wood boards. These features show craftsmanship despite the simplicity of materials. This aspect of integrity is also evident in the iron and concrete detailing of the dining room fireplace. For these reasons, the building possesses integrity of workmanship.

Through a combination of original design features and materials, the restaurant continues to express the Modern aesthetic as adapted to a park setting. These features reflect both the "Park Service Modern" style and the Mission 66 period, and as such the property exhibits integrity of *feeling*.

Integrity of *association* involves a direct link between a historic event or person and the subject property. Degnan's Restaurant retains several character defining features that convey the property's association with the Mission 66 period of development within the park, and the property thereby exhibits integrity of *association*.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### 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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1958-1966

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1958

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Wagner, Walter & Partners

Barrett Construction Company

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Degnan's Restaurant is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for association with the significant expansion of visitor services and accommodations completed as part of the Mission 66 program at Yosemite. Degnan's was an essential part of overall Mission 66 development within the Yosemite Valley, specifically in the new Yosemite Village area, which was reconfigured during this era to provide new and expanded amenities for the park visitor. At the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, the building is eligible as a strong representation of the principles of the Modern Movement, or "Park Service Modern" style that was central to the Mission 66 program. The period of significance is 1958 to 1966 under Criterion A, reflecting the date of construction through the end of the Mission 66 period, and 1958 under Criterion C, the date of construction. In addition, the property meets the registration requirements of the *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF)* as an essential part of an overall Mission 66 park development plan that had extraordinary importance in the history and development of an individual park. The building also displays significance as an outstanding example of the Modern Movement style within the park.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Mission 66 program was initiated by the National Park Service (NPS) in 1956, in response to a significant increase in park visitation following World War II. Very little construction had occurred in the national parks during the war when both visitation and funding were low. The Mission 66 program was the most expansive construction effort conducted within the park system since the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, and involved a comprehensive, nationwide park improvement agenda that was to be completed by the fiftieth anniversary of the agency in 1966. About \$1 billion was spent on new employees and staff training, land acquisition, construction activities including campground expansion, new visitor service facilities, circulation improvements, infrastructure, and other enhancements by 1966.<sup>20</sup> Concessioner-funded projects were a key component of the Mission 66 program, and included construction of new lodging facilities, stores, restaurants, and other visitor services within Yosemite and the Park Service as a whole.

### **Mission 66 in Yosemite**

During the post-World War II economic boom, many Americans experienced a significant increase in leisure time, prosperity, and mobility. For national parks across the country, this meant an unprecedented surge in visitation and a consequent strain on park facilities, which were inadequate to serve the rising demand of the postwar era.

<sup>20</sup> Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 10.



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The number of visitors to Yosemite rose to record levels in the early 1950s. As visitation surged, it became increasingly evident that the existing infrastructure, concession facilities, and other services were in immediate need of extensive improvements to both protect the park's precious resources and provide an enjoyable visitor experience. To address the widespread need for essential facilities—at Yosemite, and in parks across the country—NPS Director Conrad Wirth organized an ambitious new construction campaign known as Mission 66. Initiated in 1956, the 10-year program would infuse the National Park System with the capital necessary to repair and build new infrastructure, hire additional employees, construct new visitor service facilities, improve employee housing, and acquire land for new parks. As initially planned, the program of improvements was to be completed by 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service.<sup>21</sup>

The Mission 66 Prospectus for Yosemite, outlining the program of improvements to be completed over the next decade, was issued in July 1956. The prospectus emphasized the protection of Yosemite Valley against over development, and the limitation of park facilities within the Valley to only those that directly supported the visitor. Other key features of the program included an expanded road and trail system within the park, enhanced interpretation services, improved campgrounds and overnight accommodations, increased concessioner services, and a reorganization of facilities needed for park administration, maintenance staff, and other personnel.<sup>22</sup>

One of the most substantial changes to the Valley floor during the Mission 66 period involved the removal of obsolete concessioner facilities from the Old Village on the south side of the Merced River and construction of enhanced facilities in the New Village, which was situated on the north side of the river. The New Village, later Yosemite Village, was originally established in the 1920s and designed in the Rustic style by architect Myron Hunt, and landscape architects Daniel Hull and Thomas Vint. A central part of the original plan for the New Village was the placement of new administration and concessioner buildings around a central plaza that provided visitor parking. Residential, maintenance, and other support buildings were also constructed in the New Village at this time. Each separate zone was physically and visually separated from the others using vegetation, topography, and design. The New Village continued to grow and expand over the next few decades, most notably in the Mission 66 period when a new restaurant, store, visitor center, and other facilities were constructed.<sup>23</sup>

### **Modern Movement Style**

In keeping with the era in which the program originated, the National Park Service employed the Modern Movement style as the basis for design for all new construction that took place during the Mission 66 period. The style combined the use of cost-efficient materials and systems with modernist design concepts to create a distinctive new style of park building representative of the

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<sup>21</sup> Linda Wedel Greene, *Yosemite: The Park and its Resources: a History of the Discovery, Management, and Physical Development of Yosemite National Park, California*, vol. 2 (Denver: National Park Service, 1987), 752; Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers*.

<sup>22</sup> Greene, *Yosemite: The Park and its Resources*, vol. 2, 753.

<sup>23</sup> National Park Service, *A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite National Park* (2011), 95-96.

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modern era. Prominent components of the Modern Movement style, as it was used in parks, included the use of steel, concrete, and prefabricated elements; incorporation of nontraditional fenestration; integration of interior and exterior spaces; low-profile, horizontal massing; use of exterior colors and textures to blend building and environment; and naturalistic site plantings to screen associated parking lots, sidewalks, and utility areas.<sup>24</sup>

The Modern style, as applied to NPS properties during the Mission 66 era, reinterpreted the design characteristics of the Rustic style, which was the principal architectural approach applied to new park construction in the decades leading up to World War II. The intent of the Rustic style was to create harmony between the built and natural environments through the use of native materials, traditional craftsmanship, and naturalistic landscape planning. In *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type*, historian Sarah Allaback asserts that the best examples of Modern architecture within parks did harmonize with their setting, “but in a new way.” When “stripped of the ornamentation and associations of rustic design, Mission 66 development could be both more understated and more efficient.”<sup>25</sup>

While the NPS embraced Modernism during the Mission 66 era, its use was never formally mandated. According to the *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources* MPDF:

No official policy statement regarding the adoption of the Modern Movement style at the National Park Service was ever made. Following the Great Smoky Mountains Superintendents' Conference, where he was asked to issue an official policy on architectural design, [National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth] responded with a brief statement: “Structures should be designed to reflect the character of the area while at the same time following up-to-date design standards. Park structures are to conform, to some extent, with the trend toward contemporary design and the use of materials and equipment accepted as standard by the building industry. However, restraint must be exercised in the design so that the structures will not be out of character with the area and so that the structures will be subordinated to their surroundings.”<sup>26</sup>

Use of the Modern style within parks met with both criticism and praise throughout the Mission 66 period and beyond. However, Allaback states, the style, “as developed by Park Service designers during the Mission 66 era, became as influential in the history of American national and state park management as the Park Service Rustic style had been.”<sup>27</sup>

### **Mission 66 Concession Buildings**

The importance of concessionaire development in the overall Mission 66 program is illustrated in the following passage from the MPDF:

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<sup>24</sup> Ethan Carr, et al., National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources* (13 August 2015), Section F, Page 87.

<sup>25</sup> Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers*.

<sup>26</sup> Carr, *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources*, Section E, Page 10 to Section E, Page 11.

<sup>27</sup> Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers*.

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Mission 66 construction was funded mainly, but not exclusively, by appropriations. Many national park concession contracts, which were renegotiated under Mission 66, required concessioners to make large capital investments. Between 1956 and 1966, park concessioners invested \$33 million in new overnight accommodations, restaurants, gas stations, and park stores. Concessioner investments had great impacts on public perceptions of Mission 66 because they resulted in some of the highest profile, earliest Mission 66 construction projects. Concessioners hired their own architects and could initiate work quickly once they secured financing. The National Park Service usually provided the infrastructure. Concession facilities were used heavily by the public and strongly affected early perceptions of Mission 66.<sup>28</sup>

At Yosemite, concessioner-funded development during the Mission 66 period was focused in the most heavily visited part of the park, the Valley. As outlined in a planning document entitled “Mission 66 for Yosemite National Park”:

The need...is urgent to replace certain obsolete concessioner facilities in Yosemite Valley; modernize and improve others throughout the park; and, provide additional visitor accommodations at various locations. To this end, the Service has required as a condition for renewing concession contracts that additional investments be made to provide needed visitor accommodations.<sup>29</sup>

The first concessioner-funded development in the Valley was the Yosemite Lodge, the core complex of which was completed in 1956. The Lodge provided expanded overnight accommodations, visitor services, dining facilities, a swimming pool, and other amenities for the park visitor.

New concessioner developments, replacing those in the Old Village, were also planned for the New Village area. The first was Degnan's Restaurant, which was completed in 1958 and funded by Degnan-Donohue, Inc., an extension of the original Degnan family concessions business in the park. Upon completion, the building contained a soda fountain, bakery, delicatessen, and entrance foyer on the first level, and restaurant on the second level.

Another major addition to the New Village by a concessioner was the “Merchandising Center,” or Village Store, which was funded by the Yosemite Park & Curry Company (YP&CC) and completed in 1959. The Village Store housed a new restaurant, a fountain to replace the Old Village Grill, a full-service grocery store, a barber shop, a beauty parlor, restroom facilities, and a shoe repair shop.

Other concessioner-funded improvements in the Valley completed as part of the Mission 66 program included safety and sanitation upgrades at Housekeeping Camp. Outside the Valley,

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<sup>28</sup> Carr, *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources*, Section F, Page 85.

<sup>29</sup> National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, “Mission 66 for Yosemite National Park,” (no date), 5.

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concessioners funded new improvements at Wawona, Tuolumne Meadows, White Wolf, Glacier Point, and at the High Sierra Camps.

### The Degnan Family

After immigrating to the United States from Ireland in 1884, John and Bridget Degnan settled in the Yosemite Valley in approximately 1886. They initially lived in a barn near the location of the future Yosemite Valley Lodge.<sup>30</sup> While a handful of hotels in or near Yosemite Valley at this time offered lodging to visitors during the summer months, the Degnans and their eight children were among a small group of people who lived in the area year-round. The Degnan children were frequently the only children in the Yosemite Valley.<sup>31</sup> That changed by the end of the century, as the number of visitors to Yosemite increased significantly in the early 1900s, following the establishment of Camp Curry in 1899.<sup>32</sup>

Soon after the family's arrival in Yosemite, Bridget Degnan began baking bread, which she sold to Yosemite visitors and residents. In 1898, John Degnan built a four-bedroom house in Old Yosemite Village near the present chapel. The house included a bakery, which by 1900 featured a large Dutch oven that could bake more than 100 loaves at a time. In the early 1900s, the Degnans supplemented the bakery operation with a small café and grocery store.<sup>33</sup> Over the ensuing decades, the Degnans were permitted to continue to operate their family-run business despite changes in the management of the larger park facilities.<sup>34</sup> Following their parents' deaths in the 1940s, the Degnan children continued to operate the family business.<sup>35</sup>

Despite the length of the family's tenure at Yosemite, park correspondence from the 1920s and 1930s indicated an intent to terminate the family's concession contract upon the death of Bridget Degnan. When Ms. Degnan passed away in 1941, however, park officials recommended a 10-year contract extension for the family business. This contract extension began on January 1, 1942. Mary Ellen Degnan, Bridget's daughter, led management of the family business until 1947, when she entered into a partnership agreement with her nephew, Francis I. ("Frank") Donohoe. Shortly thereafter, Frank Donohoe assumed leadership of the family's business efforts, which subsequently operated under the business name Degnan-Donohoe, Inc.<sup>36</sup>

Francis Donohoe was born in San Francisco in 1922. In 1939, Donohoe came to Yosemite and worked for the Degnan family. Donohoe returned to San Francisco in 1940 to attend the University of San Francisco.

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<sup>30</sup> National Park Service, "John and Bridget Degnan," Yosemite National Park Website, <https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/historyculture/degnans.htm> accessed May 27, 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Shirley Sargent, *Yosemite & Its Innkeepers: The Story of a Great Park and its Chief Concessionaires*, Yosemite, CA: Flying Spur Press, 1975, 25.

<sup>32</sup> Sargent, 27.

<sup>33</sup> "John and Bridget Degnan."

<sup>34</sup> Sargent, 58.

<sup>35</sup> "John and Bridget Degnan."

<sup>36</sup> William A. O'Brien (Mills Tower, SF) to Mr. A.E. Demaray (Chevy Chase, MD), 17 March 1950; Asst. Superintendent to Yosemite Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, 23 November 1951. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

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In 1945, Donohoe married John and Bridget Degnan's granddaughter, Helene Angela "Nell" Degnan. Following school, Donohoe pursued a military career and went on to serve in the Marines during the Korean War.<sup>37</sup>

Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. continued to operate food service facilities in the Old Village through the late 1950s. In 1958, a new restaurant (Degnan's) was completed in the New Village and most Old Village facilities were demolished or moved from the site in the following months. The Degnan's residence remained in the Old Village area and was used as housing for concessioner employees until 1981, when the bakery portion of the house was moved to the Pioneer Yosemite History Center at Wawona and the remaining residence was demolished.<sup>38</sup>

### Degnan's Restaurant

Discussions regarding construction of a Degnan's facility in the New Village began in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Though the Mission 66 plan had yet to be fully developed, there was already a desire among park officials to move or demolish the aging buildings in the Old Village and return that area to a natural state. Part of this effort meant moving visitor services and expanded concessioner services to the New Village and renegotiating contracts with existing providers.

As expiration of the 1942 contract extension approached, the park drafted a new 10-year contract extension for Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. with a provision for an automatic upgrade to a 20-year extension upon transfer of the company's operations to the New Village facility. As part of these contract negotiations, Frank Donohoe advocated for the permission to expand the company's services at the New Village location in order to better compete with their main rival, the Yosemite Park and Curry Company (YP&CC). However, due to a preferential rights provision in the park's contract with the YP&CC, the type and extent of Degnan-Donohoe operations within the park was limited primarily to the bakery, delicatessen, and fountain business they had traditionally managed.

In 1952, the National Park Service Region IV office in San Francisco released proposed plans for redevelopment of the New Village and \$80,000 was allotted for the construction of new roads and parking lots in the area.<sup>39</sup> The park commenced work the following year, announcing that the area would be ready for construction of new concession facilities in the spring of 1954. Citing financial uncertainties, Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. was slow to commit to a program of improvements in the New Village. A February 1954 letter from Yosemite Superintendent John C. Preston notified Mr. Donohoe that a draft 20-year contract had been prepared authorizing his

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<sup>37</sup> "New Construction Started at Yosemite Park Village," *Merced Sun-Star*, 28 February 1958, 16; "Francis Ignatius Donohoe," *Mariposa Weekly Gazette*, 19 September 2013; "Helene Angela Degnan "Nell" Donohoe," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 August 2008.

<sup>38</sup> Information provided by Lindsay Kozub/NPS to author, 14 September 2016. Degnan's bakery was listed on the National Register in 1975, and removed after 1981 when the house was demolished and the bakery was moved to Wawona. See: National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Pioneer Yosemite History Center," Yosemite National Park (2011), 48.

<sup>39</sup> Superintendent Carl Russell to Francis Donohoe, Yosemite National Park, 8 August 1952. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

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company to operate a restaurant, bakery, fountain, and delicatessen business in the park. Preston emphasized that the contract required Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. to make a new building available for public use by 1955, and suggested that they engage a capable architect soon in order to meet that condition.<sup>40</sup>

By April 1954, Frank Donohoe notified park officials that the company had chosen Frank Lloyd Wright as the architect for the new Degnan's building and that preliminary plans would be made available soon. Donohoe, along with architect Aaron Green, Wright's San Francisco representative, met with park officials in April and presented sketches of Wright's preliminary design, which proposed a collection of circular structures topped by domed roofs. In a memo describing the proceedings and initial drawing review, Lawrence C. Merriam, director of NPS Region IV in San Francisco, commented that the office "[hesitated] to attempt to describe the plans, except to say that the design is a definite contrast to the existing facilities."<sup>41</sup> Plan development continued over the next few months, and the architecture team submitted a third set of plans to Superintendent Preston by June 1954.

A September 1954 memo issued from the NPS Western Office of the Division of Design and Construction<sup>42</sup> indicated that the concessioner's contract had not been fully approved, and no further plan preparation should proceed until that had been completed. By that time, the NPS had also met with Aaron Green to communicate their dissatisfaction with the proposed design, the dome roofs in particular. Mr. Green felt "that this would mean a completely new start as far as building design was concerned and indicated it might also require selection of a new architect by the concessioner."<sup>43</sup> The NPS explained that the "Service desired a style of building that would conform with the general character of the architectural styles already established in the Valley." It was then concluded that no further plan preparation would be undertaken until contract details had been finalized.<sup>44</sup>

In early December 1954, the *Oakland Tribune* ran an article entitled, "Park Service Rejects Wright's Restaurant Plan," which made public the Park's ruling on the proposed project. The author writes:

National Park Service officials, cast unwillingly as architectural critics, disclosed today they have rejected a design by noted architect Frank Lloyd Wright for a restaurant

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<sup>40</sup> Superintendent John C. Preston to Frank Donohoe, Yosemite National Park, 10 February 1954. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

<sup>41</sup> Lawrence C. Merriam to NPS Director, Yosemite National Park, 10 May 1954. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

<sup>42</sup> On June 1, 1954, NPS director Conrad Wirth consolidated the staff from the previously established regional offices of design and construction into two centralized offices in San Francisco and Philadelphia. The Eastern and Western Offices of Design and Construction centralized oversight of Mission 66 projects, and reported directly to professional division offices in Washington, D.C. (Carr, *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources*, Section E, Page 3.

<sup>43</sup> Chief, Western Office, Division of Design and Construction to Chief of Design and Construction, 1 September 1954. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

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building in Yosemite National Park... "It was a mushroom dome type of thing," Conrad L. Wirth, Park Service director said. "A thing to see, instead of being for service rendered." The plan was returned to Degnan, Donohoe, Inc. [*sic*] concessioner who operate a bakery within the California park with instructions that the external design would have to be changed before it could be accepted. "The Park Service in rejecting the design did not mean to challenge Mr. Wright's international reputation as an architect," Wirth said. It has rejected numerous plans for buildings in national parks because they failed to fit into park scenery, he said.<sup>45</sup>

Following announcement of the rejection, Wright publically denounced the NPS, citing politics at the Washington level as the reason his design was not approved. An article in *The Fresno Bee* indicated that Wright thought everyone liked the proposed building, and that he saw the design as something that "might regenerate the whole park architecture and do great things for the park system."<sup>46</sup> National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth received a range of reactions to the decision, from individuals defending the architect's work and asking that the Service reconsider their decision, to letters congratulating the NPS for their efforts to protect the park from "flashy [and] weird attention getting designs."<sup>47</sup> One letter proclaimed:

Heartiest congratulations on Yosemite rejecting Frank Lloyd Wright. To state it briefly, Yosemite is about as real a matter as can be found in the U.S.A. Mr. Wright is about as artificial and unreal as anything that can be found in the United States. The two could hardly coexist!<sup>48</sup>

By 1955, Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. was still operating their deli and bakery out of the Old Village location. The Mission 66 prospectus for Yosemite was completed in July 1956, yet an approved plan for the new Degnan's Restaurant was not in place. In January 1957, however, Frank Donohoe notified the park that he had chosen Walter Wagner and Partners of Fresno to design their new building. His letter indicated that they had realized that "it would be very difficult, if not altogether impossible to have Mr. Wright design a building that is acceptable to the National Park Service." Therefore, they selected Mr. Wagner because prior experience with his work had indicated to them that he was "a capable man, qualified to design within the requirements prescribed by the Service."<sup>49</sup> The project team met at the building site the following month to begin the planning process.

Walter Wagner's office submitted preliminary plans for the new restaurant in March of 1957 and the NPS issued final approval in May, with recommendations for addressing minor outstanding design issues. Park personnel would complete the rough site grading, drainage work, and

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<sup>45</sup> "Park Service Rejects Wright's Restaurant Plan," *Oakland Tribune*, 1 December 1954.

<sup>46</sup> "Architect Calls Ban on Yosemite Building Politics," *The Fresno Bee*, 1 December 1954.

<sup>47</sup> "No Place to Mar Scenery," *The Fresno Bee*, 6 February 1955.

<sup>48</sup> William Loeb, Union Leader Corporation to Conrad Wirth Park Service Director, Washington D.C., 10 December 1954. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

<sup>49</sup> Francis I. Donohoe to John C. Preston, Yosemite National Park, 25 January 1957. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

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provision of utilities to the site, and all finish grading, construction, landscaping, sidewalks, and other improvements within the lease line were the responsibility of the Degnan-Donohoe design team.<sup>50</sup>

Preparation for rough site grading began in late October 1957, and the work was nearly complete by the end of November.<sup>51</sup> Drainage activities began in November, as did rough grading for the new access road behind the restaurant; this work concluded in December. Park personnel also finished placement of concrete curbing along the edge of the front parking area before the end of the year. Final site preparation work and design approval activities continued through January 1958, and construction of the restaurant commenced in February.<sup>52</sup> An article in the *Merced Sun-Star* announced the construction:

Supt. John C. Preston of Yosemite National Park announced today that construction work has been started on the Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. building in Yosemite Village. The building will contain a restaurant, fountain, bakery, and delicatessen to serve park visitors on a year-round basis.

The new structure, located to take advantage of the magnificent scenery offered by Glacier Point, Sentinel Rock, Half Dome, and Yosemite Falls, will be a simple two-story, A-frame building planned to fit into the landscape without detracting from the natural scene.<sup>53</sup>

Construction continued over the next four months, and was completed by the Barrett Construction Company of San Francisco. Footing and excavation work was underway by the end of February, and by the end of March three of the steel frames for the restaurant had been erected, as had most of the kitchen framing. Installation of the shake roof was initiated in April, and the concrete floors set in place. Construction of the restaurant's ground floor was nearly completed by May 1958, and "finishing touches" were in progress for the upper story.<sup>54</sup> Construction work on the building concluded in June 1958.<sup>55</sup> Food services commenced shortly after completion, though an exact date of initial operation is unknown.

As the new restaurant entered its first year of operation, Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. experienced a decline in revenue from that achieved in the old location. The April 1959 Superintendent's Report described the company's financial difficulties and noted that several meetings had been held between park officials, creditors, and debtors to address the situation. The financial strains of constructing the new restaurant ultimately forced Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. to file for

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<sup>50</sup> John C. Preston to Francis I. Donohoe, Yosemite National Park, 29 July 1957. Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, California.

<sup>51</sup> National Park Service, "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, Yosemite National Park, California," October 1957.

<sup>52</sup> National Park Service, "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, Yosemite National Park, California," November and December 1957.

<sup>53</sup> "New Construction Started at Yosemite Park Village," *Merced Sun-Star*, 18 February 1958.

<sup>54</sup> "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, Yosemite National Park, California," February-May 1958.

<sup>55</sup> "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, Yosemite National Park, California," June 1958.



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bankruptcy;<sup>56</sup> however, one of the creditors, Barrett Construction Company, agreed to supply a working fund of \$32,000 to keep the business in operation shortly after construction. The creditors selected a manager for the restaurant and made plans to open for the season on May 19, 1959. Frank Donohoe was to have no voice in management affairs as part of these arrangements.<sup>57</sup>

The Degnan-Donohoe company served out the remainder of their 20-year contract with the park, which ended in 1974. Don Evans, Yosemite Hospitality Director of Facilities, indicates that the Yosemite Park & Curry Company operated the restaurant following Degnan-Donohoe, Inc.'s departure.<sup>58</sup> In 1973, the Music Corporation of America (MCA) purchased the YP&CC, though the YP&CC remained a stand-alone entity.<sup>59</sup> The YP&CC then purchased Degnan's Restaurant in March of 1974.<sup>60</sup> In 1993, MCA sold the YP&CC to the National Park Foundation, who in turn donated all of the buildings previously owned by YP&CC to the National Park Service. The NPS maintains ownership of the building. Also in 1993, a concessions management contract was awarded to the Delaware North Company (DNC) to manage the hospitality facilities within the park, including Degnan's Restaurant. The DNC contract expired in 2015, and Degnan's has since been operated by Yosemite Hospitality, LLC, a subsidiary of Aramark.<sup>61</sup>

### **Walter Wagner & Partners**

Degnan's Restaurant was designed by Walter Wagner & Partners, an architecture and engineering firm with offices in Fresno and Merced, California. The architectural drawings were signed by Henry DuPertuis, one of the firm's partners and the manager of the Merced office.

Walter Wagner (1911-1982) was born in Berkeley, California. He earned his architecture degree from the University of California, Berkeley in 1934, and also completed one year of graduate studies in engineering at Harvard. After finishing his studies, Wagner worked in Arizona as a landscape architect for the NPS. According to his future partner Martin Temple, Wagner did this because there was little architectural work available at the height of the Depression. Wagner next joined the Capital Company, the real estate rental arm of Bank of America. During World War II, he worked as an engineer for Kaiser Engineers.

Wagner established the Walter Wagner architecture and engineering firm in 1945 in Fresno. The firm grew quickly in response to the post-WWII demand for new public and commercial buildings throughout the San Joaquin Valley. In 1956, the firm was reorganized as Walter Wagner & Partners when Wagner went into partnership with six employees, including five

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<sup>56</sup> National Park Service, "John and Bridget Degnan."

<sup>57</sup> "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, Yosemite National Park, California," April 1959.

<sup>58</sup> Don Evans, interview by author, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

<sup>59</sup> Carl P. Russell, *One Hundred Years in Yosemite: The Story of a Great Park and Its Friends* (Yosemite National Park: Yosemite Association: 1992 Omnibus Edition), 234. Also see: Shirley Sargent, *Yosemite & Its Innkeepers: The Story of a Great Park and its Chief Concessionaires* (Yosemite, CA: Flying Spur Press, 1975; 2000 Reprint), 155-156.

<sup>60</sup> Russell, 235, and Sargent, 155-156.

<sup>61</sup> Kozub, Lindsay. "Ahwahnee Hotel and Cottages." Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS No. CA-2830). National Park Service, U.S. Library of Congress, 2015.

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architects (Harry Bode, Henry DuPertuis, Paul Harris, Paul Schoenwald, and Will Thomas) and one mechanical and electrical engineer (James A. Blayney). At the time the partnership formed, the firm had a staff of 34, including six in its Merced office, making it one of the largest architectural and engineering firms in the San Joaquin Valley. In 1966, Walter Wagner & Partners was disbanded when Walter Wagner formed Walter Wagner-Martin Temple with architect and Wagner employee Martin Temple. Walter Wagner retired in 1978.<sup>62</sup>

Walter Wagner & Partners specialized in institutional buildings, including schools, churches, medical buildings and public buildings. Principal works completed by the firm, located in Fresno unless otherwise noted, include:

- Merced County Courts Building, Merced (1950)
- Trinity Lutheran Church (c. 1955)
- Rhodes Department store (1958)
- Fresno City College (1960)
- Fresno Police Headquarters (1960)
- Manchester Shopping Center (1955, with addition of Sears 1956)
- Coalinga Junior College, Coalinga (1961)
- Sun Maid Raisin Plant, Kingsburg (1964)
- Ash Mountain Administration Building, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (1964)
- Fresno County Courthouse (1966)
- King & Rowell Schools (1969)
- Fred Harvey Hotel (1969)
- Fred Harvey Airport Hotel (1970)
- Convention Center, Visalia (1970)
- Internal Revenue Center (1970)

Wagner's most prominent commission was likely the Fresno County Courthouse, an eight-story, New Formalist building that was constructed in 1966 in Fresno's Courthouse Square. The building, which "towered above the Mariposa Mall on its raised pilotes (piers) and the ornamental grillwork represented a new modern image for Fresno charged with hopes for progress and change in the future."<sup>63</sup>

Apart from Degnan's Restaurant, the firm's National Park Service-related work appears to be limited to the Ash Mountain Administration Building (later known as the Foothills Visitor Center), which has served as the park headquarters for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks since its construction in 1964. Historical drawings identify the project architect as Wagner

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<sup>62</sup> Planning Resource Associates, "City of Fresno mid-century [sic] Modernism Historic Context," Submitted to City of Fresno Planning and Development Department, September 2008, Appendix A., n.pag.; Appendix E, 3-4. "Architectural Partnership Formed in Fresno," *Architect and Engineer*, May 1956 (Vol. 205, No. 2), 30.

<sup>63</sup> Planning Resource Associates, "City of Fresno mid-century [sic] Modernism Historic Context," Submitted to City of Fresno Planning and Development Department, September 2008, 52.

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partner Paul Schoenwald.<sup>64</sup> The Ash Mountain Administration Building has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the Mission 66 program.<sup>65</sup> The building embodies many Midcentury Modern design characteristics that are typical of the Mission 66 program, including

- use of large curtain walls
- lack of applied ornamentation
- careful placement of building on site
- concrete walls and pathways
- low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eaves
- large windows with partial aluminum sunscreen
- use of common prefabricated materials
- flexible floor plans (due to minimal interior load-bearing walls)<sup>66</sup>

### Henry DuPertuis

After growing up in Fort Collins, Colorado and serving as a paratrooper during World War II, Henry DuPertuis (1921- ) graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a bachelor's degree in architecture in 1948. DuPertuis then went to work for the architectural firm of Walter Wagner in Fresno. He established a Merced office for Wagner in 1949 and became a partner in William Wagner & Partners in 1956. DuPertuis left the Wagner firm circa 1964, forming a partnership with architect Robert Hesse. In 1965, the Degnan-Donohoe, Inc. engaged Dupertuis and Hesse to design an addition to house a bakery sales area; this addition was not constructed. Hesse and DuPertuis remained partners until DuPertuis' retirement circa 1997. DuPertuis' active participation in architecture is complete, and sufficient time has elapsed to assess his contribution to the field. Dupertuis resides in Merced, where he works as a visual artist in a variety of media, including watercolors, pastels, pen-and-ink, and oil and acrylic paints.<sup>67</sup>

### **Barrett Construction Company**

John Francis (Frank) Barrett, the son of an early San Francisco building contractor, formed the Barrett Construction Company in 1953, after a long partnership with Harry H. Hilp. Barrett & Hilp established a contracting firm of the same name in 1913, and became well known in the Bay Area. The firm's projects over time included Saint Mary's Hospital in San Francisco, the Machine Shop at Mare Island Navy Yard, Holly Park and Sunnysdale housing projects in San Francisco, and work on both the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges. Frank Barrett partnered with his two sons, John F. Jr. and Richard H., to form the family construction company after parting ways

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<sup>64</sup> National Park Service, "Ash Mountain Administration Building," Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS No. CA-2896). NPS Pacific West Regional Office: Seattle, WA, July 2013, 12.

<sup>65</sup> National Park Service, List of Classified Structures, "Ash Mountain Administration Building," <http://hscl.cr.nps.gov/insidenps/report.asp?STATE=CA&PARK=SEKI&STRUCTURE=&SORT=3&RECORDNO=4> updated 31 May 2017.

<sup>66</sup> National Park Service, "Ash Mountain Administration Building," Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS No. CA-2896). NPS Pacific West Regional Office: Seattle, WA, July 2013, 6-7.

<sup>67</sup> Doane Yawger, "Retired architect has turned his love of art into a profitable passion," *Merced Sun-Star*, 21 January 2008.

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with Hilp. The Barrett Construction Company was selected as the contractor for the new Degnan's Restaurant building in 1957; little else is known of the firm's work. Frank Barrett passed away in 1959, and his sons continued run the family business.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Lewis Francis Byington, "History of San Francisco, 3 Volumes," (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.), Vol. 3, 109-111. See also: "The Builders," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 April 1942; "J. Frank Barrett Dies at 70," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 January 1959; "Mass for Katherine Barrett," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 May 1970; "Civic Leader Harry H. Hilp Dies at 88," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 October 1976; "Barrett & Hilp," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 January 1940.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Doane Yawger, "Retired architect has turned his love of art into a profitable passion," *Merced Sun-Star*, 21 January 2008.

"Francis Ignatius Donohoe," *Mariposa Weekly Gazette*, 19 September 2013.

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“Helene Angela Degnan “Nell” Donohoe,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 August 2008.

“New Construction Started at Yosemite Park Village,” *Merced Sun-Star*, 28 February 1958.

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### **Archives**

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Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company Collection, Yosemite Lodge.

Manuscripts, documents

Drawings

Photographs

Yosemite National Park Research Library

Manuscripts, documents

Drawings

Photographs

### **Interviews**

Don Evans, Yosemite National Park, 2 May 2016.

Degnan's Restaurant  
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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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** one acre

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.747978 Longitude: -119.585478

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property encompasses the building footprint and associated exterior features, including dining terraces at the north end of the building and along the west elevation, entrance walk, and signage.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the nominated property includes all portions of the property that relate to its historical significance. Though some of the trees and rocks placed in the areas around the building may have been installed around the time of building completion, the surrounding landscape does not appear to have been developed according to a formal landscape plan. Further, though screening buildings with trees and other vegetation may have been a



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common practice, these elements do not appear to convey significant association with the Mission 66 era development at the site.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Sarah Hahn/Architectural Historian  
organization: Architectural Resources Group  
street & number: Pier 9, The Embarcadero, Suite 107  
city or town: San Francisco state: CA zip code: 94111  
e-mail: [s.hahn@argsf.com](mailto:s.hahn@argsf.com)  
telephone: (415) 421-1680  
date: January 2017; Revised May 2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Degnan's Restaurant  
City or Vicinity: Yosemite National Park  
County: Mariposa County  
State: California  
Photographer: Sarah Hahn/Mayank Patel (ARG)  
Date Photographed: March/May/August 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 35 View of south-west corner

2 of 35 South elevation, looking north

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- 3 of 35 East side of south elevation, looking roughly east
- 4 of 35 Elevator enclosure, southwest corner
- 5 of 35 West elevation overview
- 6 of 35 West elevation, glass window wall and second story dormer window
- 7 of 35 Covered walkway and outdoor dining area along west elevation, looking south, board-formed concrete piers, steel structural beams, and decorative soffit
- 8 of 35 Outdoor dining area along west elevation
- 9 of 35 Board-formed concrete piers, steel structural beams, and decorative soffit along west elevation
- 10 of 35 North elevation and dining patio
- 11 of 35 North-west corner showing the iron chimney in the first floor café
- 12 of 35 North elevation service yard, looking south
- 13 of 35 North elevation, looking roughly south-west from service road
- 14 of 35 Looking south along east elevation
- 15 of 35 East elevation and roof enclosures
- 16 of 35 East elevation, looking generally south
- 17 of 35 South interior stair
- 18 of 35 South interior stair, looking up
- 19 of 35 Looking north along west wall toward first floor delicatessen and café
- 20 of 35 View toward north wall of delicatessen
- 21 of 35 Café interior, looking south from north window wall
- 22 of 35 Café ceiling
- 23 of 35 Café fireplace

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- 24 of 35 Central stair in café with decorative wood screen at left
- 25 of 35 Kitchen view, looking north
- 26 of 35 Overview of second floor dining room, looking north-west
- 27 of 35 South window wall, second floor dining room
- 28 of 35 North window wall, second floor dining room
- 29 of 35 Fireplace overview, looking north
- 30 of 35 Fireplace overview, looking south
- 31 of 35 West wall, looking north
- 32 of 35 Offices at top of central stair
- 33 of 35 South access road
- 34 of 35 Overview of west elevation, looking roughly northeast
- 35 of 35 View of Yosemite falls, Degnan's at right side of frame

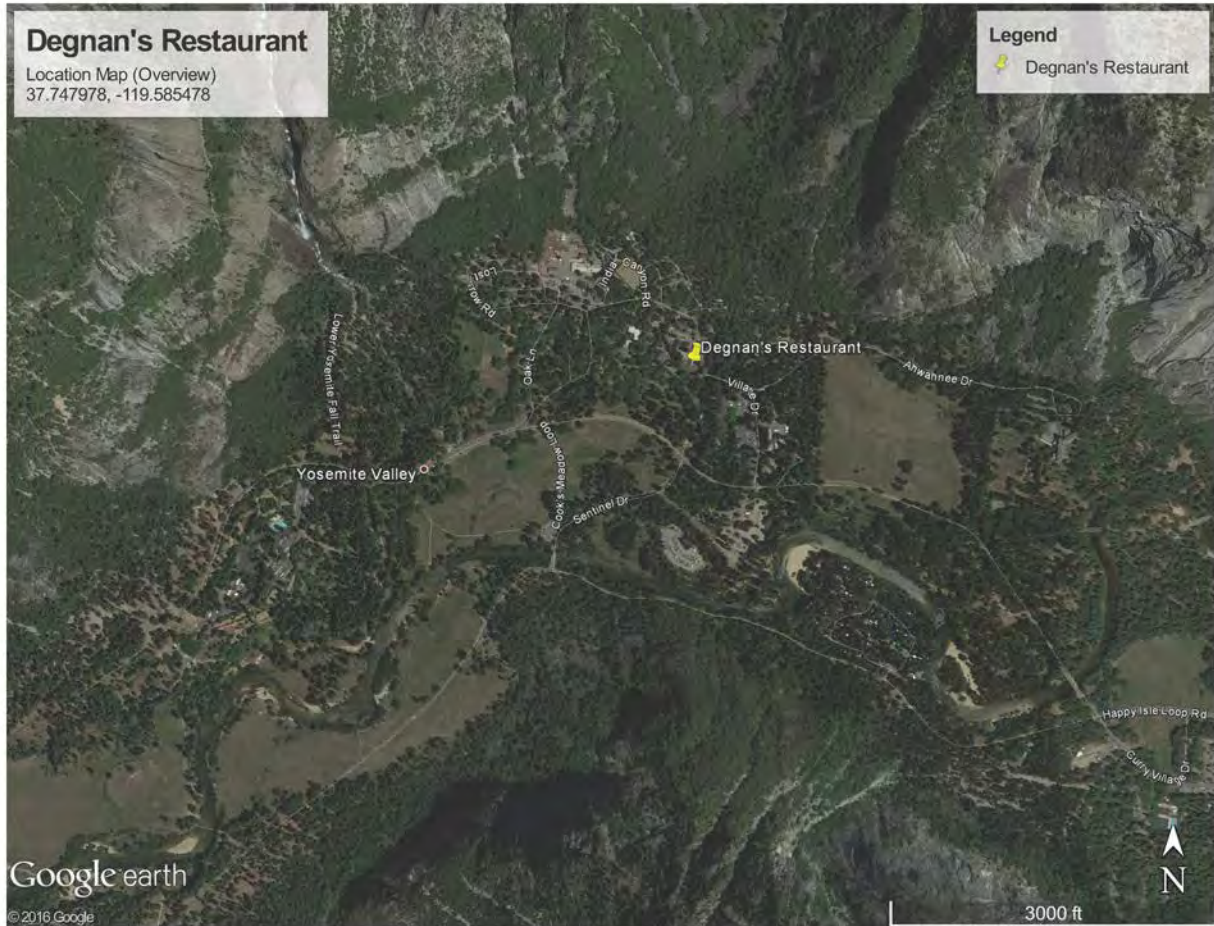
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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County and State

### Location Map (Overview)



Degnan's Restaurant  
Name of Property

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County and State

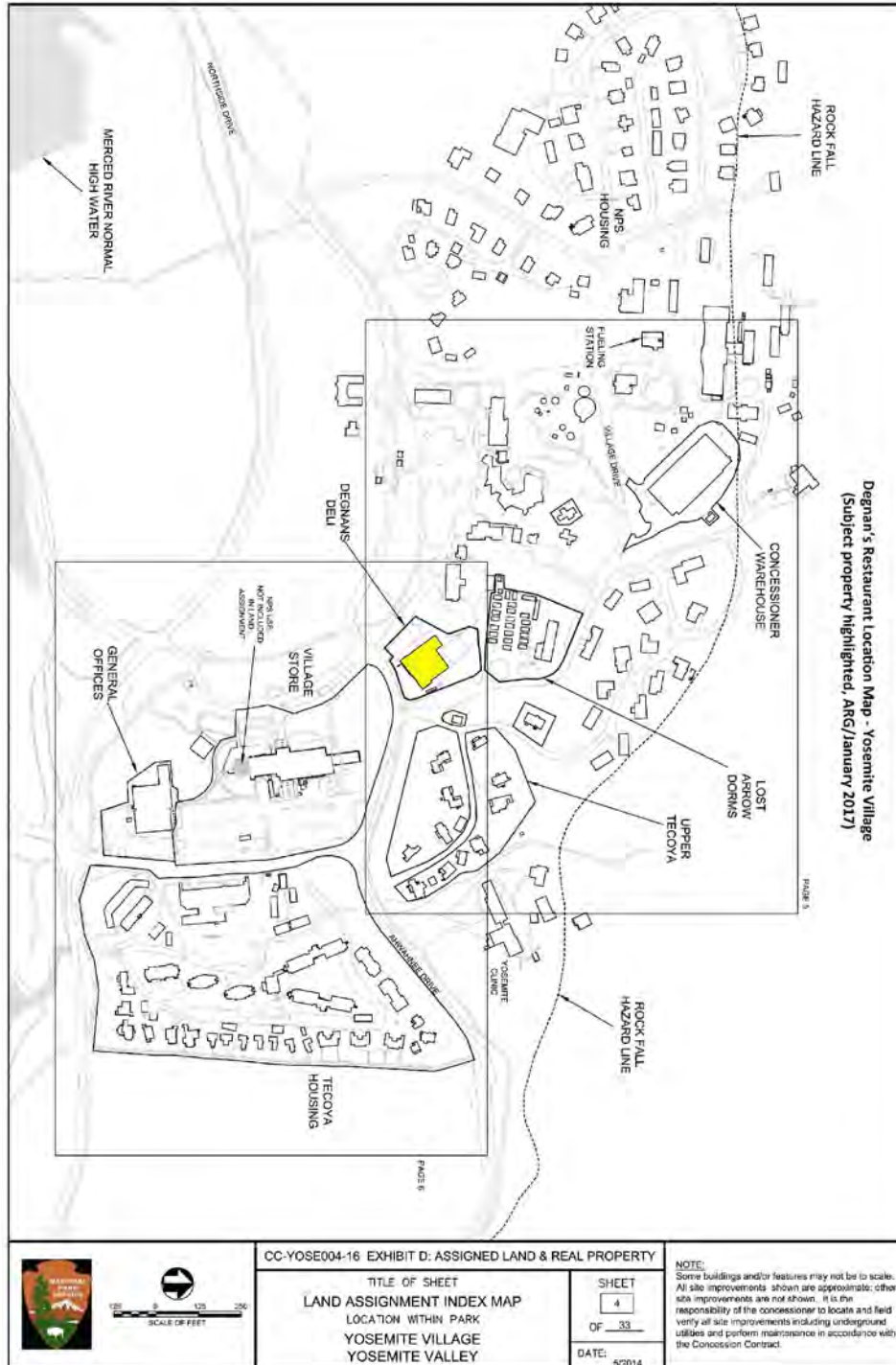
**Location Map (Close-up View)**



Degnan's Restaurant  
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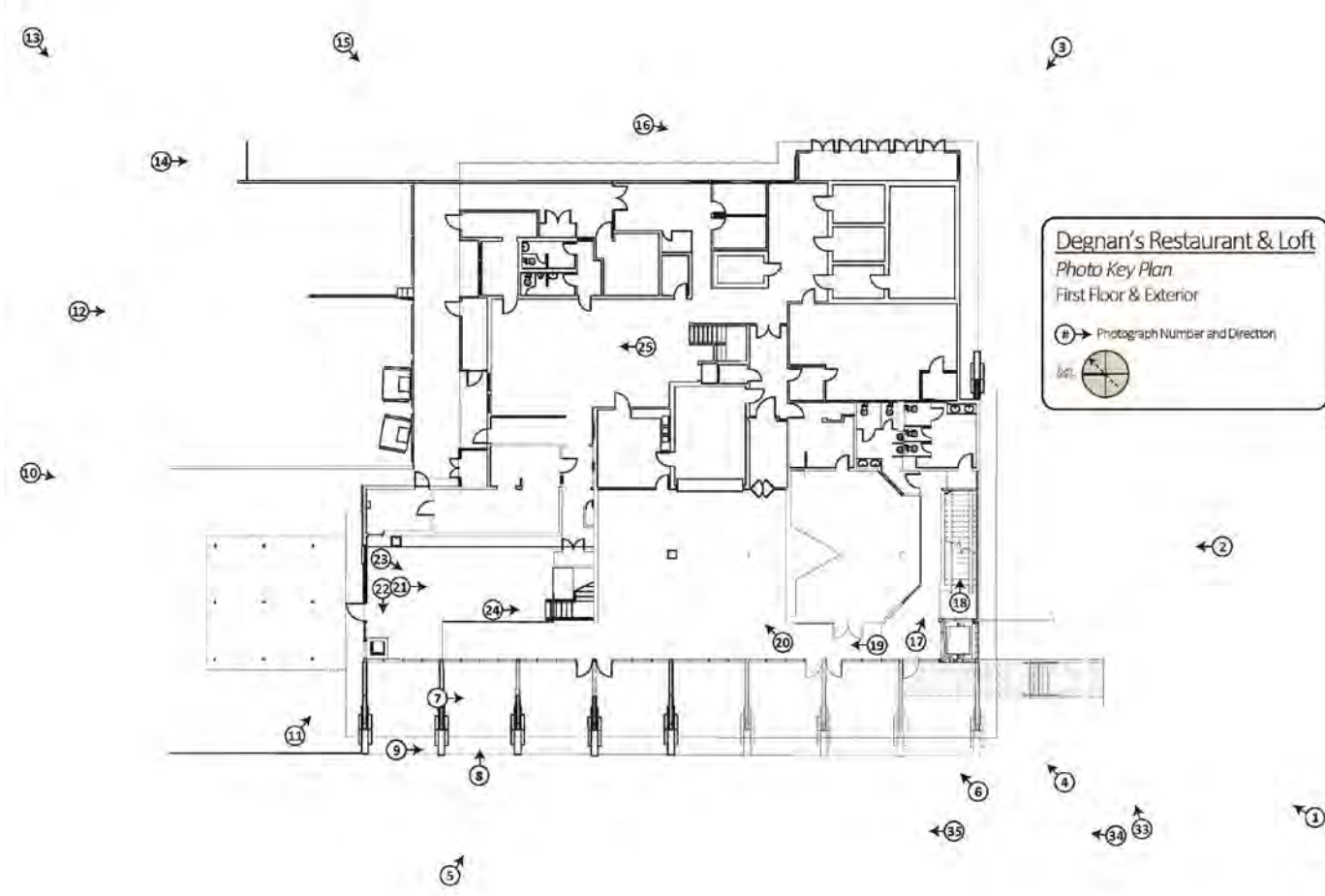
Site Map



Degnan's Restaurant  
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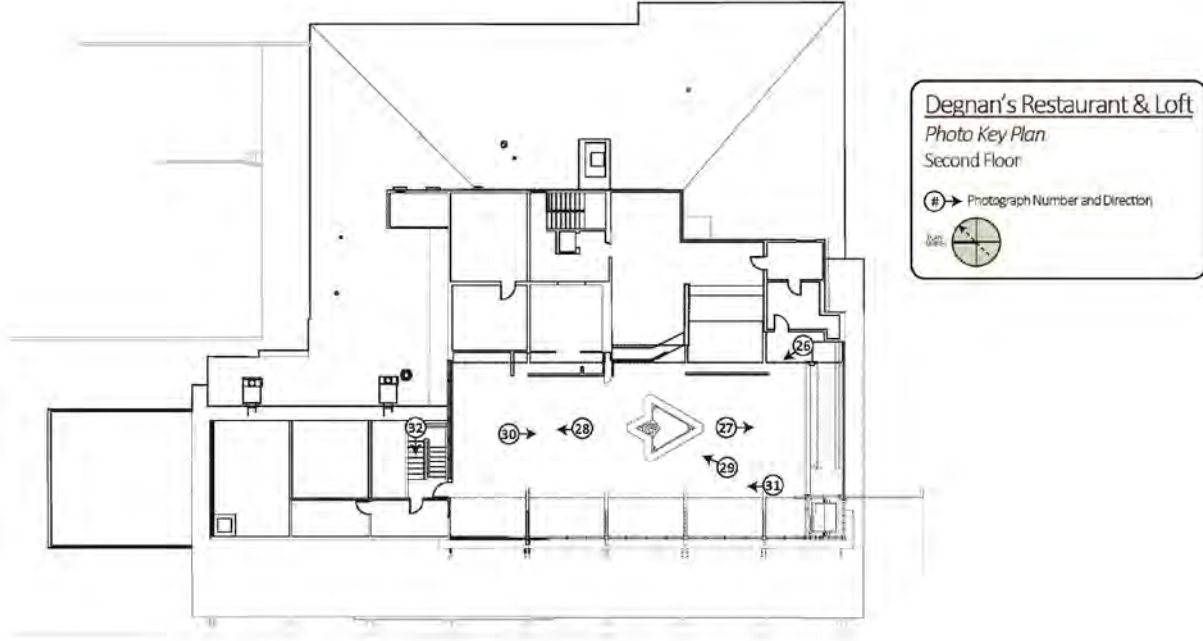
**Photo Key: First Floor & Exterior**



Degnan's Restaurant  
Name of Property

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County and State

**Photo Key: Second Floor**







DEGNAN'S  
LOFT DELI  
CAFE GIFTS







DE  
LO  
CA

one

















KEEP WILDLIFE WILD  
Our Food is  
not Healthy  
for Wildlife  
Never Feed  
or Approach  
Them

No Smoking  
In Rooms



NO ENGINE RUNNING

FLAT TOP

FLAT TOP



NO  
PARKING  
ANY  
TIME

NO EXCESSIVE  
NOISE ALLOWED  
ANY TIME





NO ENGINE  
IDLING  
MAY 2007

FLAMMABLE GAS









THE  
LOFT

WELCOME TO  
CARARINA

MAXIMUM  
CAPACITY  
157

Carabiner  
Café

**NO**  
Outside Alcohol  
Permitted in  
The Loft



JOY PEET'S  
are our passion  
ceptional coffees.



Item	Price
OLD FASHIONED	\$2.50
CRISPER SANDWICH	\$4.50
MEAT & SAUSAGE GRUY	\$5.50





**BREAKFAST**

Whisked Omelet from Farm 2 Table

**DEG MUFFIN**  
Tape and Cheese  
Choice of Bacon, Sausage, Storage, Turkey or Egg \$4.99

**CROISSANT SANDWICH**  
Egg and Cheese  
Choice of Bacon, Sausage, Storage, Turkey or Egg \$5.99

**BISCUIT & SAUSAGE GRAVY**  
1 Biscuit \$2.99  
2 Biscuits \$4.99

**FARM FRESH & CAME TREE**

**DEG'S SIGNATURES**

**DEG'S BREAKFAST** \$11.99  
Whisked Omelet from Farm 2 Table  
Choice of Bacon, Sausage, Storage, Turkey or Egg  
Cinnamon Raisin Bread  
Caramelized Onions

**THE WINDFALL** \$12.99  
Whisked Omelet from Farm 2 Table  
Choice of Bacon, Sausage, Storage, Turkey or Egg  
Cinnamon Raisin Bread  
Caramelized Onions  
Maple Syrup

**SANDWICHES**

1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99
1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99
1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99
1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99
1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99
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1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99
1/2 PANI	\$7.99	1/2 PANI	\$7.99

ORDER HERE  
↓

COOKIE CHIPS

YOSEMITE



STOP





This is a fire escape  
exit ONLY.  
To access The Loft,  
please walk to the  
other side of  
Campus Hall, and  
use the staircase next  
to the restrooms.  
Thank you!











MAXIMUM  
CAPACITY  
157

EXIT

Menu  
Cafe



MAXIMUM  
CAPACITY  
157









EMERGENCY EXIT ONLY

WARNING  
ALARM  
Emergency Exit Only

CAUTION





DEGNAN'S  
DELI  
& GIFTS

Valley Shuttle  
Degnan's Deli  
4





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Degnan's Restaurant

Multiple Name: National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources MPS

State & County: CALIFORNIA, Mariposa

Date Received:  
7/21/2017

Date of Pending List:  
8/16/2017

Date of 16th Day:  
8/31/2017

Date of 45th Day:  
9/5/2017

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100001558

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Accept     Return     Reject    9/5/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Degnan's Restaurant is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A and C in the areas of Community Planning & Development and Architecture. Completed in 1958, the steel and wood-framed, modified A-frame building was associated with the significant expansion of visitor services and accommodations completed as part of the Mission 66 program at Yosemite NP. Degnan's was an essential component of the overall Mission 66 development undertaken within the Yosemite Village area at mid-century, which reconfigured the area to provide new and expanded amenities for the park visitor. The building is a strong representation of the principles of the Modern Movement, or "Park Service Modern" style design that were central to the Mission 66 program. Clearly modern in form, the Walter Wagner & Partners designed building nevertheless blended into its setting and the overall rustic character of Yosemite Village. The property meets the registration requirements of the *NPS Mission 66 Era Resources MPS*.

Recommendation/  
Criteria    Accept National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer    Paul Lusignan

Discipline    Historian

Telephone    (202)354-2229

Date    09/05/2017

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR (No)

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-7100  
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053  
calshpo@parks.ca.gov  
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



May 31, 2017

Joy Beasley  
Deputy Associate Director, Park Programs and National Heritage Areas  
Federal Preservation Officer  
National Park Service - Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science  
1849 C Street NW  
Mail Stop 7508  
Washington, DC 20240

Subject: **Degnan's Restaurant**  
**National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources MPS**  
**Mariposa County, California**  
**National Register of Historic Places Nomination**

Dear FPO Beasley:

Enclosed please find the **Degnan's Restaurant** nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Yosemite National Park Acting Superintendent Palmer L. Jenkins requested we forward the nomination to you with our recommendation for approval.

I concur that the resource is eligible for listing at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, with a period of significance of 1958-1966. The property meets the registration requirements of the *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources Multiple Property Documentation Form*. I have signed the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form signature page as commenting official.

We will retain a copy of the nomination and set of photographs for our records.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact Amy Crain of my staff at (916) 445-7009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jenan Saunders", written over a horizontal line.

Jenan Saunders  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240



H32(2280)

## Memorandum

To: Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Acting Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science *Joe Bailey*

Subject: Degnan's Restaurant, Yosemite National Park, Mariposa County, California

I am forwarding the National Register nomination form for Degnan's Restaurant in Yosemite National Park. It is being submitted as part of the National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources multiple property submission. The Park History program has reviewed the nomination and found the building eligible under criteria A and C at the local level of significance, with the areas of significance of Community Planning and Development, and Architecture.

If you have any questions, please contact Kelly Spradley-Kurowski at 202-354-2266 or [kelly\\_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov](mailto:kelly_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov).