

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED **MAY 28 1980**
DATE ENTERED **JUN 25 1980**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC "Fashion Shop" and ~~adjoining home of~~ Stephen Porcella

AND/OR COMMON

Stephen Porcella House and "Fashion Shop"

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

800 Grant Avenue and 1009 Reichert Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Novato

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5

STATE

California

VICINITY OF

CODE
06

COUNTY

Marin

CODE
041

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. William DeMare

STREET & NUMBER

98 San Carlos Way

California

CITY, TOWN

Novato, CA 94947

STATE

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Marin County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

Civic Center

California

CITY, TOWN

San Rafael

STATE

94903

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

portion of "The Old Town Historic District" (map enclosed)

DATE

August 1977 (proposed)

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

City Hall, Delong and Sherman Streets

California

CITY, TOWN

Novato, CA. 94947

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Site includes a vernacular domestic structure with Italianate motifs built in 1900 and an 1½ story board and batten, false fronted blacksmith shop built in about 1894. Adjoining the North and East side of the shop are a poured concrete carriage house or garage covered by a board and batten wall and shingled gabled roof, and a corrugated metal shed. A pump dated 1876 caps a well to the north of the house. Surrounding the east side of the shop are a number of redwood trees which were planted by the original owner.

The home itself has been left almost totally unmodified and still retains an infra- and superstructure as originally constructed. The exterior of the house has an asphalt shingle hip roof with a gabled extension on the southern front. Other features included a lathed balustrade, boxed cornice, a fish-scale shingled pediment with sunburst design. On the interior, wainscoting, doors, windows, and walls have been left intact and have been carefully maintained. A few windows on the south of the house have been converted to aluminum frame, but fenestration is generally of double sash windows which are very elongate.

Of particular interest in the area of the domestic structure are a series of trash dumps which lay below the house. Here the original occupants disposed of their refuse for several decades.

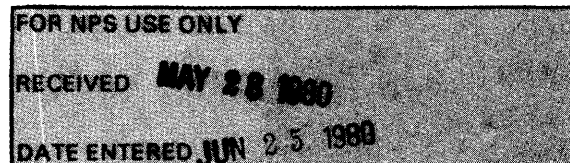
The shop is presently a medium gabled structure with board and batten sides and a false front. In addition to this single story structure is an attached 1½ story section with similar board and batten siding. From analysis of the construction of this structure, it appears as if the northern edge of the building (the board and batten enclosed poured concrete garage) was built as an outbuilding of the domestic structure and at a later date than the original blacksmith shop. The garage alongside this (on the south) of the former) was apparently the last enclosure to be built, and merely roofed in the area between the blacksmith shop and the concrete garage.

The central core of the blacksmith shop was constructed in two periods of time. The initial construction of the shops seems to have occurred in about 1894 (when Stephen Porcella is known to have purchased the lands--Lots 1 & 2 of Block J of a map of the Town of Novato filed in the Marin County Recorder's Office in 1890). It is the single storied southern end of the shop and is composed of board and batten milled lumber surrounding a core of simple balloon construction. Bar cut nails and spikes and handwrought "U" nails delineate this earlier structure. The floor at this time appears to have been of dirt and the edge of the building has a mud sill. Two hung doors on the false front provided access and light. Two six frame double sash windows provided further light and ventilation on the west and east sides.

Within the earlier building are still the brick foundations of the forge and the remains of the 12x 12" block which Porcella used for forging. On the east wall of the structure are the iron rings which horses were tethered to while being shod.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 01 ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE

The second addition to the shop was also constructed by Porcella. It consisted of the flooring of the old shop and the construction of a 1½ story continuation of the shop with a loft above. A second entrance was placed on the east of the shop at this time (a massive single sliding door). The entire exterior of this structure is in line with the earlier shop save the use of wire cut nails.

Presently the shop is abandoned and has not been in use for some time (perhaps the mid 1960's). The original shop area has been relatively undamaged save a few broken windows, some rotted floor planks, exterior weathering, and some leaks in the redwood shingle roof. The later addition has been slightly modified by the addition of vernacular piecemeal wall partitions made of salvaged cabinets, domestic windows and frames, 2x4's and plywood (from when the shop was last used as "The Fixit Shop") (1960's). The upper loft in the shop addition is unmodified and empty, although the loft doors have been sealed.

The concrete garage is undamaged save for a small board and batten addition to the west which was apparently placed there to accomodate larger vehicles in the concrete enclosed space.

The house is presently being leased to others by the landowners. It is in excellent condition save a small amount of dry rot around the front bay windows, the already mentioned renovated windows on the southern exposure, and the reconstruction and ~~the renovation~~ of the central bathroom (although the owners have retained the use of a pull chain toilet and period fixtures as the original toilet contained).

A final note should be made of tools and debris which lie around the property. Many of these items are refuse from Porcella's forging. Other items include hingework and laundry drying equipment which Porcella fashioned personally. The house and the shop are further results of Porcella's hand.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1960	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1894-1960

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Mr. Stephen Porcella

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Novato grew as a town out of the growth of the dairying, ranching and orchard industries. The original community of Novato, and in particular the immediate area called "Old Town", initially arose closer to the shores of San Pablo Bay and the mouth of Novato Creek, until the late 1870's when a railroad established to the area from Petaluma resulted in the shifted focus of commercial life to the area of present downtown Novato. Through the 1880's and 1890's the town began to increase in size.

Stephen Porcella was an integral part of the growth and maintenance of the young town of Novato. Although numerous blacksmiths are known from the historical record in Novato and the immediately adjacent areas, Porcella remained as a permanent resident until his death. Arriving as a naturalized Italian immigrant around the early 1890's, Porcella shortly became one of four or five blacksmiths in the region. By the early years of the twentieth century he had joined in partnership with the only other resident blacksmith, Alexander McIntosh. McIntosh worked for Porcella until he retired around 1939. Porcella continued to operate the "Fashion Shop" as he called it, until about 1950. He died soon after in 1955.

Porcella's house and shop can be considered of great importance to local Novato history. Many people remember Porcella's shop with great respect, and examples of his forging craft probably exist throughout the area. He was the last of the blacksmiths in Novato.

Of more general importance, the Porcella home and the "Fashion Shop" should also be viewed in their representation of a craft and lifestyle almost totally obliterated by late twentieth century urban development and industrialization. In similar manner, the garbage deposits beneath the house should be considered for their archaeological value. No other family lived in the Porcella house during the period of refuse deposition creating a material testimony of the domestic and commercial activities of a single family through nearly one half century. At present this deposit as well as two smaller ones are protected by the house which overlays them, masking their presence. Likewise, the massive flooring which Porcella laid down in the blacksmith shop has created a wooden cap over the original surface and related debris. Examination of small areas through rotted planks and loose boards revealed numerous forms of metallic debris, along with other material indicative of the activities occurring within given loci of the original and later structures.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview with Margaret Coady, City Historian, Novato Historical Museum.

Interview with Enid Porcella Monteiro, daughter of Stephen Porcella.

Interview with Elsie Mazzini, President, Marin County Historical Society.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 75' x 147' (.253 acre)

QUADRANGLE NAME NOVATO

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 10 5318 01810 4218 4110
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

corner lot, Northwest corner of intersection of Reichert Avenue and Grant Avenue
 APN # 153-047-43 (800 Grant Avenue and 1009 Reichert Avenue)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

WILLIAM G. ROOP, Consulting Archaeologist

July 6, 1979
DATE

Archaeological Resource Service
STREET & NUMBER

415-897-4730
TELEPHONE

104 Harbor Drive
CITY OR TOWN

California 94947
STATE

Novato

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Kenn Miller

TITLE

DATE 9/28/79

FDR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William H. Abraham
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 6-25-80

ATTEST: *[Signature]*
FEDERAL REGISTRATION

DATE 6-28-80

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CONTINUATION SHEET

02

ITEM NUMBER 8

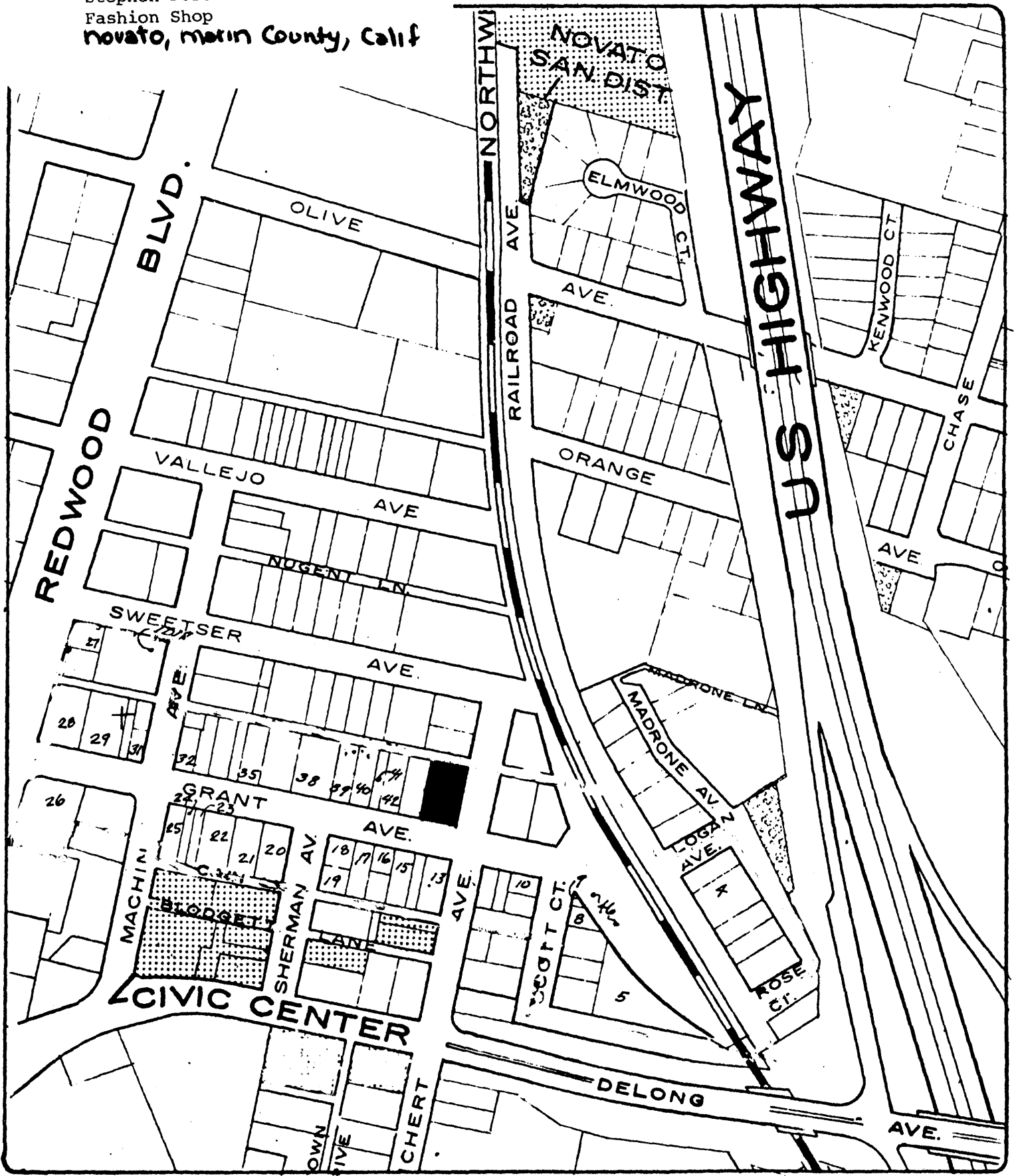
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1

Finally, the City of Novato is very concerned about the rapid removal of many of their historic structures over the past few years. In an effort to divert this tide, a proposed historic district was designed in August 1977. In November of the same year minor guidelines were established for the review of demolition or building permits which might damage structures within this district. It is hoped by some of the City planners that this historic district will be given stronger criterial guidelines for review, as well as the nomination of this district to the National Register for added recognition and support. At present this seems to be economically unfeasible, and a site specific nomination has been chosen both in an effort to promote site specific cultural and historical values within the district as well as attempting to provide an initial model by which other historic structures and areas of Novato might achieve preservation and/or reasonable reconstruction. The Porcella House and "Fashion Shop" are considered a portion of this historic district.

Stephen Porcella House and
 Fashion Shop
 Novato, Marin County, Calif

JUN 25 1980



NOVATO PLANNING DEPARTMENT		 NORTH no.E.1(6)
scale: 1" = 300 FT. date: AUGUST 1977		

STEPHEN PROCELLO HOUSE AND FASHION SHOP
 Novato, Marin Co., California

MAY 28 1980

