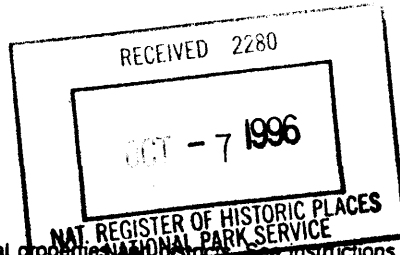


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1077

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Harrison and Fifteenth Streets Historic District

other names/site number Coit Building Group (portion of district)

2. Location

street & number 1401-1501 Harrison St./300-312 14th St./300-349 15th St. not for publication

city or town Oakland vicinity

state California code CA county Alameda code 001 zip code 94612

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 10/3/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

[Signature] 11.7.96
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Entered in the
National Register

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Choose as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Choose only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

- building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: hotel
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling
COMMERCE: specialty store
COMMERCE: restaurant
COMMERCE: professional

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling
COMMERCE: specialty store
COMMERCE: business
COMMERCE: professional
COMMERCE: restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

foundation OTHER: not visible
walls Brick
Terra cotta
roof OTHER: not visible
other Marble
Glass

Narrative Description

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

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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1914-1929

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

See continuation page 5.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey
(in Planning & Building Department)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	10	564580	4184110
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Bloomfield / consultant

organization _____ date 3 May 1996

street & number 2229 Webster Street telephone 415-922-1063

city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94115

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name See continuation page 16.

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

7. DESCRIPTION

The Harrison and Fifteenth Streets Historic District consists of eight fairly small scale buildings in downtown Oakland, Alameda County, California. Seven of them (88%) are contributors: the Hotel Harrison, the Harrison Apartments, the Hotel Coit, the Dille Building, the Coit Commercial Block, the Mrs. A.E. White Building, and the Thompson Building (see Sketch Map and lists of contributing and non-contributing buildings). On level ground, they fill the entire west block front of Harrison Street from 14th Street north to beyond 15th Street, 80 feet of the north side of 14th Street, and both sides of 15th Street west from Harrison Street to Webster Street. All the buildings are flush to the sidewalk and fill their entire lots except for light wells and one parking lot. Uses are retail, offices, and residential hotels or apartments. The buildings are roughly in commercial style with 20th century revival ornamentation. Seven of the buildings have ground floor commercial or lobby uses with front glazing extending into the mezzanines. Compositionally, the three buildings facing Harrison Street are two part commercial blocks with high base and strongly differentiated, three- to five-story "shaft" with bold cornice. The others are two- or three-story horizontal blocks with a high percentage of facade glazing. Heights are two stories to seven (18-86 feet). The buildings have tan pressed or combed brick street elevations laid in American bond with some basketweave trim. Other trim is unobtrusively colored terra cotta, painted cement plaster, marble or glossy tile splash panels, and cast iron colonnettes. Side and rear elevations are common brick or white glazed brick. Major shaft windows are paired, wooden, and punched. Fire escapes are prominent. Some of the buildings badly need maintenance. The blade-and-neon HOTEL sign at the corner of 14th and Harrison dates at least to 1929.

Exterior alterations are limited to other store signage of various dates, about three changes in storefronts, modern awnings, louvered glass in a few mezzanine windows, and the removal of the Hotel Harrison's marquee (since 1984). The noncontributing building was constructed in 1989-1990 on what a 1940s Sanborn map shows as a parking lot. Otherwise the district appears intact as to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

Immediately around the district is a level area of mixed uses from vacant lots (e.g. the northeast corner of 15th and Webster and the southwest corner of 14th and Harrison), to lowrise commercial buildings (on every side), to a few scattered medium-rise and high-medium buildings. Cater-corner from the district are two registered monumental buildings of high artistic merit: the Hotel Oakland at the southeast corner of 14th and Harrison (Bliss & Faville, 1912), and the Oakland YWCA at the northwest corner of 15th and Webster (Julia Morgan, 1915). Compared to these, the district's buildings are rather small and plain. The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey has identified two districts nearby, the Lakeside Apartment District (1907-1928), which begins a

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Section number 7 Page 2

Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

7. DESCRIPTION (cont.)

block east of Harrison Street and carries over virtually to Lake Merritt; and the 17th Street Commercial District (1923-1927) one long block north of the subject district. Historic government buildings in the vicinity are the Oakland (Calvin Simmons) Auditorium at 10th Street (1915), the U.S. Post Office at 201 13th Street (1932), the Alameda County Courthouse at 1225 Fallon (1936), the Oakland Public Library at 125 14th Street (1950), and the Oakland Museum at 12th and Oak (1969). About four blocks to the west is Oakland City Hall (1914). Oakland's Downtown District, identified as Register-worthy by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, lies principally along Broadway but extends one thin arm east to the northwest corner of 14th and Webster. Except for the two Register-listed monuments, the properties adjacent to or across from the district are occupied by buildings less than 50 years old, or heavily remodeled buildings, or parking lots.

Contributing Buildings (Numbers refer to locations on Sketch Map.)

1. Hotel Harrison, 1405-1415 Harrison Street/300-306 14th Street, 1914, architects Olver and Thomas, builder F.A. Muller, original owner Roger Coit. This is a seven-story residential hotel with ground floor stores on a 150x40-foot corner lot. Walls are tan pressed brick with terra cotta trim. There are five bays and a fire escape on the Harrison Street elevation, three bays and a fire escape on 14th. Each bay has paired, punched windows in stories two through seven. The ground floor and mezzanine are all storefronts, outlined with a band of white ornamental terra cotta with a repeating pattern of lines and circles, now partly painted. There are low splash panels of black-green marble, large expanses of glass, and perhaps half the original clerestory prism glass. The corner store's entrance is canted around a corner pier. The Harrison storefronts have been altered by eliminating an entrance in the center bay, covering some piers with glossy black tile, substituting painted plywood faux marble for some presumably damaged splash panels, adding an emergency/service exit, and removing (between 1984 and 1993) the ornamental marquee. The blade-and-neon HOTEL sign jutting diagonally from the corner, dates at least to 1929. The small lobby occupies the two northern bays and has gray marble wainscot, a matching half-flight of stairs, and some ornamental plaster. The front door, hotel desk, rear separation of the lobby, and the elevator door are not historic. The upper floors consist of small SRO rooms off narrow double loaded corridors with next to no ornamentation.
2. Harrison Apartments, 1425 Harrison Street, 1916, architect A.J. Stern, builder F.A. Muller, original owner Roger Coit. This is a four-story and high basement apartment building on a mid-block lot. Walls are tan pressed brick with white marble splash panels and terra cotta trim in

See continuation page

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

7. DESCRIPTION (cont.)

Renaissance Revival style. It has a two-story base and three-story shaft. Of the seven bays, the second, fourth and sixth have paired windows, all with deep reveals. Centered metal balconies double as a fire escape. The entrance is centered, arched, and recessed. The vestibule is gray marble, and the lobby is wainscotted in marble.

3. Hotel Coit, 1435-1445 Harrison Street/301-315 15th Street, 1924, architect Leonard H. Ford, builder and original owner Coit Investment Company. This is a six-story and mezzanine residential hotel, with ground floor stores, on a square corner parcel with parking lot behind the building. Walls are tan pressed brick with terra cotta trim in Renaissance Revival style. It has a ground floor and high mezzanine base, a four-story shaft, and one-story capital. There are six bays and two fire escapes on the Harrison Street elevation, four bays on 15th Street. The corner bays have single windows at each floor, and the other bays each have two windows per floor, all punched. Storefronts and mezzanine are glazed, with black-green marble splash panels. The hotel lobby entrance and its marquee are on Harrison, the third bay south from 15th Street. The large lobby features a U-plan mezzanine, octagonal piers, and decorative plaster.

4. Dille Building, 308-312 14th Street, 1921, architects Reed and Corlett, builder F.A. Muller, original owner Mrs. Helen M. Dille. This is a two-story retail building on a mid-block lot. The facade is orange-tan pressed brick with terra cotta trim in Renaissance Revival style. The three bays are outlined with a continuous band of low-relief terra cotta, and they contain three stores. Storefronts and upper windows are deeply recessed. In the frieze terra cotta plaques are positioned above the piers. There is an elaborate terra cotta cornice. The most conspicuous alteration is modern curved awnings.

5. Coit Commercial Block, 300-318 15th Street/1501 Harrison Street, 1928, architect Leonard H. Ford, builder and original owner Coit Investment Company. This is a two-story retail and offices building on a 24-foot deep corner lot. Walls are light brown combed brick with terra cotta trim in an Art Deco interpretation of Renaissance Revival style. There are nine bays on 15th Street, one on Harrison. The cornice is corbeled soldier courses with a fascia of basketweave and another soldier course below. The eight stores on 15th Street have recessed and paired entries with the original recessed piers. The upper story is all vertical glass panels with terra cotta surrounds and basketweave pier coverings. The corner store and each bay's upstairs center window have been altered.

6. See list of Non-contributing Buildings.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

7. DESCRIPTION (concl.)

7. White Building, 327-349 15th Street/1464-1466 Webster Street, 1924, architect Clay N. Burrell, builder R. W. Littlefield, original owner Mrs. Addie E. White. This is a three-story retail and offices building on a 20-foot deep corner lot. Walls are tan brick and glass, with cement plaster and cast iron trim in Tudor Revival style. There are seven bays on 15th Street and one on Webster. Each bay consists of a ground floor with paired stores and Corinthian colonnettes below a two-story bay window flanked by flat windows. Continuous horizontal bands of glass, with butted joints on the second floor, undulate over the bay-windowed and flat surfaces. A parapet and spandrels of brick and cement plaster combine with the glass bands for a horizontal emphasis. The arched entry to the upper floors is in the center bay on 15th Street. The building is generally unaltered, but it has some modern security fencing.

8. Thompson Building, 330-336 15th Street, 1929, architect Hugh C. White, builder F.A. Muller, original owner Mrs. Helen M. Dille. This is a small two-story retail and offices building on a mid-block lot. Walls are light brown pressed brick with terra cotta trim in Mediterranean Revival style. There are four equal bays on the upper floor; on the ground floor the four unequal bays contain an entry to the upstairs and three stores with recessed entries and polychrome tile splash panels. The design is an enframed window wall with Chicago windows upstairs and a Mediterranean Revival tile roof with side gable over the front portion of the building. There appear to be no alterations.

Non-contributing Building

6. Office building, 320-328 15th Street, 1990, architect and builder unknown. This is a two-story commercial building on a mid-block lot that the 1940s-era Sanborn map shows as a parking lot. It has a stuccoed facade, ground floor show windows, a narrow band of upper floor windows, and a squeezed pediment over the parapet. Although non-contributing because of its age, materials and lack of ornament, the building respects the heights and facade lines of its contributing neighbors.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECTS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sketch Map #</u>	<u>Name of Building</u>
Burrell, Clay N.	7	White Building
Ford, Leonard H.	3 5	Hotel Coit Coit Commercial Block
Olver, John W., and Thomas, Leonard H.	1	Hotel Harrison
Reed, Walter, and Corlett, William H.	4	Dille Building
Stern A.J.	2	Harrison Apartments
White, Hugo C.	8	Thompson Building

BUILDERS

Coit Investment Company	3 5	Hotel Coit Coit Commercial Block
Littlefield, R.W.	7	White Building
Muller, F.A.	1 2 4 8	Hotel Harrison Harrison Apartments Dille Building Thompson Building

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harrison and Fifteenth Streets Historic District appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A, broad patterns of our history, in the context of Oakland's commercial development eastward from the previously established main downtown district, and toward Lake Merritt. This group of commercial/residential buildings represents the secondary commercial infill between the commercial core buildings two to six blocks away around 14th and Broadway, and monuments to the east of the core, such as the Hotel Oakland, the YWCA, the Oakland (Calvin Simmons) Auditorium, and the luxury apartments along Lake Merritt. The period of significance is the construction dates of the various contributing buildings, 1914-1929. Significant dates are 1923 for the creation of 15th Street in this area, and the construction dates of the various buildings: 1914, 1916, 1921, 1924, 1928, and 1929. The buildings have maintained their original uses of ground floor retail and upper story offices and residential hotels or apartments. Alterations include one 1990 infill building, signage, awnings, minor storefront changes, and removal of one ornamental metal marquee. Otherwise the district is intact as to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

CONTEXT

The context of Oakland's commercial development eastward from the established downtown core district and toward Lake Merritt concerns that period of time between Oakland's economic boom after San Francisco's destruction by earthquake and fire in 1906, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. The city had been laid out in the 1850s in a grid pattern with Broadway as the business spine and numbered cross-streets extending northwards from the Oakland Estuary as far as 14th Street. Streets parallel to Broadway were also laid out; in the easterly direction their order is Broadway, Franklin, Webster, Harrison, and four more to Lake Merritt. Commercial development clung near Broadway, and as late as 1901 the Sanborn insurance maps show only residences and churches, on fairly large lots, in the vicinity of 14th and Harrison Streets. This part of 15th Street did not exist then; east of Franklin no cross streets had even been surveyed between 14th and 19th. Lake Merritt had been developed from a noisome arm of the Oakland Estuary into a residential asset, largely by Dr. Samuel Merritt in the 1860s, but its southern end was still marshy in 1901. Local trains to and from the ferries at

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

the Oakland Mole ran south on Franklin Street to their major depot (constructed 1896) at 14th and Franklin, and then they proceeded south along Webster.¹

When the San Francisco earthquake of 18 April 1906 caused a three-day fire that sent refugees scurrying to Oakland, East Bay civic leaders set about to make the gains permanent. The Oakland Clearing House for banks was formed before the month was out. In September businessmen announced plans for a grandiose hotel to rival San Francisco's Palace (the resulting Hotel Oakland actually opened in 1912). Streets damaged by new traffic were repaired before the winter rains. In 1906 the two blocks of 14th Street east of Harrison were paved for the first time. The same year voters at last passed a bond issue for parks; in 1909 they approved bonds for harbor improvements and a new City Hall, and in 1911 for schools and a civic auditorium/convention center. Meanwhile the southern end of Lake Merritt was dredged and its marshlands filled in 1909, the municipality wrested control of its own waterfront from the Southern Pacific Railroad, the rival Western Pacific arrived in 1910, and the Chamber of Commerce engaged in a national publicity campaign. The 1910 census found Oakland's population had grown 120% in the decade and was now 150,000. Its manufacturing had also grown phenomenally, the value of its products rising almost 150%. The city's geographic area doubled.²

The grand civic improvement program of Mayor Frank Mott (1905-1915), which included several parks and the Port of Oakland, proposed an ambitious civic center stretching from the present City Hall (1914) just west of Broadway at 14th Street, to an auditorium/convention center (now the Calvin Simmons Auditorium, 1915) nine blocks to the east at the newly cleaned up southern end of Lake Merritt. Mott also contributed the commissioning of Beaux Arts planner Werner Hegemann's *Report on a City Plan for the Municipalities of Oakland and Berkeley* (1915). Hegemann recommended civic, commercial, and dense residential development in the area between Broadway and Lake Merritt. He suggested cutting 15th and 17th Streets through the

¹ Beth Bagwell, *Oakland, the Story of a City* (Oakland: Oakland Heritage Alliance, 1994 [reprint of 1982]), 28-29, 34-35, 126-127. "\$3,000,000 Building on S.P. Block," *Oakland Tribune*, 11 September 1926, 1, 20.

² Mel Scott, *The San Francisco Bay Area, A Metropolis in Perspective*, second edition (Berkeley etc.: University of California Press, 1985), 123-125, 141, 132, 140, 139, 137, 133. Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey (hereafter OCHS), California Department of Public Resources (hereafter DPR) form for Lakeside Apartment District. Bagwell, 178-193.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

long north-south blocks east of Franklin Street in order to open these blocks to commercial development. In the long run the department stores and other major commercial enterprises ignored Hegemann's recommendations and continued their historic march northward along Broadway, but in the 1910s and early 20s the easterly direction looked like a good investment.³

Another influence on development in the 1910s was the Panama Pacific International Exposition, which took place in San Francisco in 1915. The projected housing needs of its construction workforce and the subsequent visitors caused many hotels to be built throughout the San Francisco Bay area. In Oakland alone 15 or more hotels were erected during this period, and 11 of the survivors are located in a circle with a two to four block radius around the commercial/transportation center of 14th and Broadway. In the same period, the area closer to the lake began to increase in density from single family houses to multiple-unit apartment buildings of two to six stories, notably a few brick ones like the Harrison Apartments.⁴

After the interruption of World War I, development resumed in Oakland during the prosperous 1920s. In 1921-1923 both 15th and 17th Streets were opened in the two blocks from Franklin Street to Harrison. The cuts left many oddly shaped lots alongside the new rights-of-way. Almost immediately these were developed with low rise commercial buildings, and the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey has identified a 17th Street Commercial District in these blocks. On 15th Street, only the block from Webster to Harrison retains its commercial structures of the 1920s. During 1921-1924 six brick apartment buildings were constructed in the Lakeside Apartment District. In 1926-1927 the Southern Pacific streetcar tracks were moved from Franklin to Webster and the depot was demolished. This easterly realignment also promoted commercial development in the area under consideration. Later in the decade luxury highrise apartments were built still closer to Lake Merritt, and this development concluded in 1930 with the highrise Hillcastle Apartments two blocks east of the Harrison and 15th Streets district.⁵

³ OCHS, DPR 523 forms for Downtown District and Oakland Auditorium. Bagwell, 183-186.

⁴ OCHS, DPR 523 forms for Downtown District and Lakeside Apartment District. Betty Marvin, personal communication, April 1994.

⁵ OCHS, DPR 523 forms for Downtown district, Lakeside Apartment District, 17th Street Commercial district, Coit Building Group, White Building, and Franklin Theater Building. *Oakland Tribune*, 11 November 1926 and 1 March 1927.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

Late in the period of significance, Harrison Street itself became the subject of real estate ambitions. A "Harrison Boulevard Association" was formed to encourage and publicize; its known spokesman was dentist William J. McCracken, who served as Mayor 1934-1935. The Association pointed out significant geography, that Harrison connected the upscale Piedmont residential city with the island city of Alameda via the Posey Tube, opened in 1928. The street was ideally suited for automobile traffic, and for several blocks it ran alongside parks and Lake Merritt. It already had several important buildings: the Hotels Oakland, Harrison, and Coit, and Maybeck's Packard Auto Showroom (1928; demolished 1974). In the winter of 1928-1929, Dr. McCracken noted ambitious plans for a new Masonic Temple, a new insurance offices building, and a new California State Building, all along Harrison. These rosy predictions were cut off by the stock market crash in 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression. By the time construction resumed in the late 1940s, Oakland's business climate and demographics had changed so that "Harrison Boulevard" never came into existence.⁶

Institutions also arose in the Broadway-to Lake Merritt area between 1906 and 1930. First came the Madison Street Scottish Rite Temple in 1908. The Hotel Oakland of 1910-1912 had grand spaces for civic and social functions. The Oakland Convention Center (aka Oakland Auditorium, aka Calvin Simmons Auditorium) was built just below the dam for Lake Merritt in 1913-1915. Julia Morgan's elegant YWCA opened at the northwest corner of Webster and 15th in 1915. The National Automobile Club had an office on Harrison opposite the district. A successor Scottish Rite Temple was built facing Lake Merritt in 1926-1927, and the Women's City Club a block east of Harrison in 1927-1928. Government construction continued during the Great Depression with the full block U.S. Post Office at 201 13th Street in 1931-1932, and the Alameda County Courthouse at 1225 Fallon in 1935-1936. After World War II the eastern civic center resumed expansion with the Oakland Public Library of 1949-1950 at 125 14th Street, and the Oakland Museum at 12th and Oak Streets in 1969.⁷

Between and around the major buildings, low rise commercial development filled in the spaces formerly residential. The 1930 *Oakland Directory* classified section noted several auto repair

⁶ Dr. W.J. McCracken, "Great Future is Assured for Harrison Boulevard," *Year Book* (Oakland: Oakland Tribune, 1929), 32.

⁷ OCHS, DPR 523 forms for Lakeside Apartment District, Oakland Auditorium, Oakland YWCA, U.S. Post Office, Alameda County Courthouse. David Gebhard et al., *The Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1985), 293, 298.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

garages in the area, a couple of gas stations, and a number of building contractors and suppliers. Services included restaurants, barber shops and beauty salons, bakeries, a book store, a laundry, cleaners, clothing stores, clubs, advertising agents, realtors, architects, engineers, commercial artists, collection agencies, and developers. Most of the infill buildings these people used have been totally refaced or replaced, sometimes just with parking lots. Some lots appear never to have been built upon in the commercial age at all. Pockets of the historic infill remain, as the Harrison and 15th Streets Historic District, the 17th Street Commercial District, and individual buildings like the Hispanic Revival Franklin Theater Building at 375-387 15th Street, the Art Deco terra cotta of Rosalyn's Dress Shop at 339 14th Street, and the two-story brick commercial building of Holmes Bookstore at 274 14th Street. These remaining buildings demonstrate the eastward extension of Oakland's main commercial district by smaller investors and businesses, and the vigor of Oakland's commercial life.

RELATION OF THE DISTRICT TO THE CONTEXT

The Harrison and 15th Streets District is one of these pockets remaining from the 1906-1930 period's eastward expansion of the commercial district. Its two hotels were probably conceived, in part, to take advantage of the luxury ambience of the Hotel Oakland across the intersection. The apartment building relates to the increased residential density in the area exemplified by the Lakeside Apartment District. In 1930 at the close of the period of significance, the retail stores of the district included a beauty salon, a cleaners, a grocery store, a women's clothing store, a barber, and a general contractor. Professional offices included those of the Hotel Coit's architect and owner-builder, some civil engineers, and commercial artists. A photo of the Hotel Harrison, published in 1929 with the "Harrison Boulevard" article, shows a drugstore in the corner space and a restaurant in the center bay along Harrison Street.

The district's developers and designers were rather minor players in the story of Oakland's overall development. Typically, infill buildings like these are developed by minor investors. Roger Coit (1884-1968) and his Coit Investment Company were responsible for all four of the district buildings along Harrison Street, and for three in the Lakeside Apartment District. His other real estate activities are unknown, but from 1935 to 1955 he was the treasurer of Alameda County. A Mrs. Helen M. Dille is recorded on the building permit applications as owner of two retail buildings (Sketch Map #4 and #8). Another woman, Mrs. Addie E. White, was the original owner of the other contributing building (#7). Coit and Dille each used the same contractor, F.A. Muller, to construct two of their buildings (#1 and 2, #4 and 8). The other

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8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

contractors were Coit's own company (#3 and 5), and R.W. Littlefield, a major Oakland contractor whose office was nearby on the comparable block of 17th Street.⁸

Most of the designers likewise served a secondary market. Olver and Thomas, A.J. Stern, Leonard H. Ford, and Hugh C. White are hardly known even locally. On the other hand, Reed & Corlett (Sketch Map #4) are well known for the Financial Center Building and other works in the Downtown District, but their Dille Building here is a minor example of their work. The White Building (#7) is the exception that proves the rule. A major Oakland architect, Clay N. Burrell, here produced an imaginative and distinctive design. Faced with the problem of a lot only 20 feet deep by 150 feet along 15th Street, he created shallow stores, a minimum of hallway space, and the glass curtainwalled upper floors. The building is distinguished by its "use of materials, textures, and colors; the crispness of detail; the articulation of parts and simultaneous coherence of expression; the effective integration of historicist motifs into an unusually modernist building of its period; [and] the fluidity and lightness of its design."⁹

The other contributing buildings of the district typify infill development in that they employ the early 20th century composition and styles of more important buildings such as the Hotel Oakland and the city's major commercial and financial district. The buildings were constructed in the following order:

⁸ OCHS, DPR 523 forms for Coit Building Group and Lakeside Apartment District. Building Permit Applications. Coit's obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 November 1968, 33/4.

⁹ OCHS, DPR 523 forms for White Building, Coit Building Group, and Downtown District.

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8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (concl.)

<u>Sketch Map #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Building Name</u>	<u>Architect</u>	<u>Developer</u>
1	1914	Hotel Harrison	Olver & Thomas	Roger Coit
2	1916	Harrison Apartments	A.J. Stern	Roger Coit
4	1921	Dille Building	Reed & Corlett	Mrs. Helen M. Dille
7	1924	White Building	Clay N. Burrell	Mrs. Addie E. White
3	1924	Hotel Coit	Leonard H. Ford	Coit Investment Co.
5	1928	Coit Commercial Block	Leonard H. Ford	Coit Investment Co.
8	1929	Thompson Building	Hugh C. White	Mrs. Helen M. Dille
6	1990	Non-contributing building	Unknown	

All of them together convey a sense of historic and architectural cohesiveness through their essentially intact design, materials, workmanship, and uses. They are surrounded, except for the two registered monuments across from the district's opposite corners, by heavily remodeled buildings, new buildings, and parking lots. This one small area does convey the sense of pre-Depression infill commercial development just east of Oakland's main downtown.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

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---. --- for Hotel Menlo Building, 1982.

---. --- for Lakeside apartment District, 1983.

---. --- for Oakland Auditorium, 1983.

---, --- for 17th Street Commercial District, 1982.

---. --- for White Building, 1982.

Polk, R.L. and Company. *Oakland Directory* (Oakland: R.L. Polk & Co., 1930), 1461ff.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated district occupies all of the Alameda County Parcels numbered: 8-625-30, -31, -42 through -46, and -54 through -63.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the entire eight city lots that have historically been associated with the district and retain integrity as secondary commercial structures.

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Harrison & 15th Streets Historic District
Oakland, CA

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION: PHOTOGRAPH LABELS

The following information is common to all the photographs submitted herewith:

1. Harrison and Fifteenth Streets Historic District
2. Oakland, Alameda County, California
3. Photos by Anne Bloomfield
4. 3 and 5 May 1994
5. Negatives with photographer

Photo 1. View of district: West side of Harrison Street, looking south from north of 15th.
From right: Sketch Map #5, 3, 2, 1. (AB262/7)

Photo 2. View of district: West side of Harrison Street, looking north from 14th Street.
From left: Sketch Map #1 (awning now removed), 2, 3, 5. (AB262/1)

Photo 3. View of district: North side of 14th Street, looking east into district.
From left: out-of-district building; Sketch Map #4, 1. (AB263/15)

Photo 4. View of district: North side of 15th Street, looking west from Harrison Street.
From right: Sketch Map #5, 6, 8, out-of-district (parking lot, YWCA) (AB262/5)

Photo 5. View of district: South side of 15th Street, looking east from Webster.
From right: out-of-district, Sketch Map #7, parking lot, Sketch Map #3. (AB263/7)

Photo 6. View of district: 15th Street, looking northeast from Webster just south of 15th.
From left: out-of-district, Sketch Map #8, 6, 5, 7. (AB263/13)

Photo 7. Thompson Building, 15th Street (south) elevation.
Sketch Map #8. (AB263/4)

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PROPERTY OWNERS

8-625-30 (320-28 15th)
Ralph V. & Ruth T. Khoe
328 15th Street
Oakland, CA 94612

8-625-31 (330-36 15th)
Theodore W. & Sandra W. Dang
1305 Franklin Street, Suite 400
Oakland, CA 94612

8-625-31 (330-36 15th)
Lucas W & Genevieve C Dang
1305 Franklin St., Suite 400
Oakland, CA 94612

8-625-42 (1464 Webster/15th)
Webster Harrison Associates
c/o Commonwealth Company
1305 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94612

8-625-043 (1435-45 Harrison)
D & T Investments
1881 Drake Drive
Oakland, CA 94611

8-625-44 (1425 Harrison)
D&T Investm'ts Harrison Apts
c/o Steve Davis
1881 Drake Drive
Oakland, CA 94611

8-625-45 (1405-15 Harrison)
Harrison Hotel Associates
2131 University Ave., #224B
Berkeley, CA 94704

8-625-46 (308-12 14th)
John K. & Arlene K. Chik
1338 Ritle Range Road
El Cerrito, CA 94530

8-625-54 (1501 Harrison)
Judy Chu
2985 California Street
Oakland, CA 94602

8-625-55 (304 15th)
Alex T. & Rita M. Chan
6081 Snake Road
Oakland, CA 94611

8-625-56 and -57 (306-08 15th)
Brand P. Hung
801 Franklin Street
San Francisco, CA 94607

8-625-58 (310 15th)
Frankie S. & Lee Mao Cheung
310 15th Street
Oakland, CA 94612

8-625-59 (312 15th)
Donny K. Chu
315 15th Street
Oakland, CA 94612

8-625-60 (314 15th)
John K. Chu
2985 California Street
Oakland, CA 94602

8-625-61 (316 15th)
Robert C. Woo & Susie Y. Liu
460 Jerome Avenue
Piedmont, CA 94610

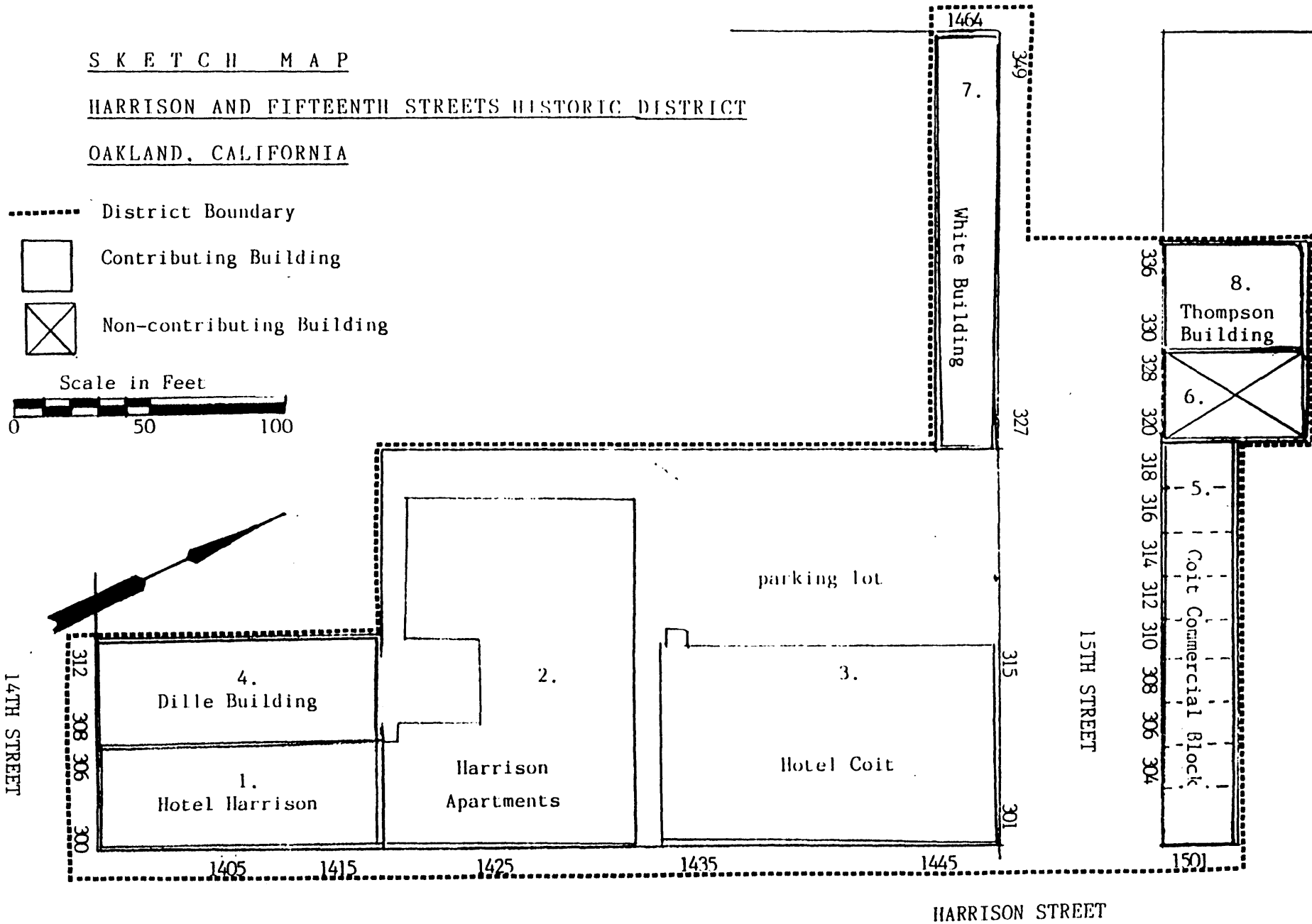
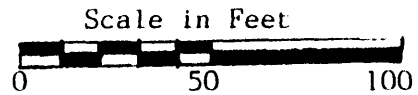
8-625-62 (318 15th)
Judy Chu
318 15th Street
Oakland, CA 94610

S K E T C H M A P

HARRISON AND FIFTEENTH STREETS HISTORIC DISTRICT

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

- District Boundary
- Contributing Building
- ⊗ Non-contributing Building



Alameda Co. CA