

PRESERVATION ARCHITECTURE

May 18, 2015 rev. August 24, 2015

2777 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley
Project Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this documentation is to identify and evaluate proposed exterior work at the subject property with respect to its historic resource status and conditions.

This effort is based on several site visits to record existing structure; on general property research, including the review of the building permit history; and on the review of documents for a proposed project, including a revised design.

SUMMARY PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & HISTORY

The subject property and building are located on and face Shattuck Avenue to the west and with a secondary side facing south to Stuart Street. The building is a 1940 recreational (bowling alley) and commercial structure that has, since 1975, been in retail use (originally grocery market and subsequently sporting goods).

The original building stood amidst the numerous commercial and manufacturing uses that lined Shattuck Avenue in south-central Berkeley, which was then also a rail corridor that served both passenger and freight (fig.1). The original building has been altered in important ways but its original and highly contextual setting and form remain.

From the Shattuck Ave. perspective, the subject building is an upside down T-shaped structure, with the bar of the T facing Shattuck, a central structure extending to the rear, and with open service and parking areas in the open spaces to each side, south and north. At the intersection of the T form is a tower form that has served as the emblem and entry to this structure since its origins. The elongated form along Shattuck consists of two single-story wings that flank the tower and that originally housed individual shops and businesses.

In the early 1990s, the elongated front of the building was expanded towards the street with shallow fronts at the wings and with a forward expansion at the tower entrance, including a semi-circular marquee (figs.2-3). The doors and windows were all replaced, so no original or early front windows or doors remain (figs.4-5). These additions and alterations fundamentally changed the design character of the original building, yet are evidently respectful of the original architectural. The forward entry forms, for example, mimic original elements of the tower, and the banding at the flanking facades also appears to have mimicked bands on the original yet now unexposed exterior walls. No plans for these alterations were located.

At the rear is a structure with a vaulted roof, oriented east-west, that housed the original bowling lanes. Permit records indicate that the interior space was originally opened to the vault, but in 1955 a suspended acoustic ceiling was added and which was subsequently removed at the time of its conversion to a market.

Per the original permit (dated August 1940) and selection of original drawings (on microfiche at City of Berkeley, dated August 1940, reproductions attached), the original building was constructed for The Clyde Co. from the designs of Albert Farr and J. Francis Ward, architects. The original design was a Moderne style, but with limited architectural features, so it was stylistically pared down, as would be expected for a bowling alley structure, which were historically large facilities with limited and focused embellishment at their fronts and entry ways. As noted, the present rounded forms at the façade, including the semi-circular entrance canopy and the horizontally-banded fascia, are not

original. However, the rounded building corner at the end of the south wing is original.

Based on building permit records, from 1940 to 1975, the several shops that lined the front of the building housed many different businesses, including restaurants and cafes, offices and retail, exercise studios – even a small theater. One such individual business, a café, remains in the southernmost space at the street-corner. Otherwise, since 1975, the smaller spaces across the front have been subsumed into the overall retail space.

The building's north side stands internal to the site, behind the rear of an adjoining building and within a small parking lot between the subject and adjoining buildings. Thus, there is no exterior building frontage on that side.

Its south side, facing Stuart St., includes the end of the existing cafe at the south wing, the low façade of which curves around from the front. Behind that and to the south side of the vaulted, central structure is another small parking lot. The walls that face that lot – the rear (east) of the south building wing and the south side of the vaulted central structure – are flat, cement-finished concrete block walls. The south wall also has a series of structural pilasters. Original windows on the east facing wall have been noticeably blocked up, while large original windows at the south wall have been removed and partly replaced with smaller upper units. Those latter window alterations date to 1999 and the former to 1990, when the small entrance way was also added in the crook of the east and south exterior walls (figs.6-7) dated August 1940.

The original and largely existing structure is constructed of concrete block walls, wood and timber frame roofs, and concrete floor slabs (the latter were at least partially reconstructed in the mid-1970s). Windows and doors are metal framed, though no original exterior doors or windows remain at either the front (west) or south side. Given that the front face of the building was added, existing awnings were also added.

PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

A 1977 historic resources inventory documented this structure (see attached). The photo therein shows the building as it was immediately after its conversion to a grocery market and before subsequent additions were made at its facades (fig.3). Also included was a brief statement of historical significance contending that the building is significant as a “reminder” of its recreational past and as a “fine example” of successful adaptive reuse. At that juncture, the building was just 37 years old so no formal identification of significance was made. Consequently and presently, the property is identified under the State Historic Resources Inventory (SHRI) as requiring reevaluation (having been assigned a “status code” of “7N”).

PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed project (based on set of architectural drawings by Trachtenberg Architects, dated 08/31/2015) will reuse the building as an auto showroom, sales and service facility.

As revised, the project proposes an addition to be located at the building's north side, which is internal to the lot, behind the subject and adjoining buildings. The proposed work will minimally alter the front and entry, generally with new paint and signage plus a new metal accent band (to partly replace existing and non-historic window awnings) and, specifically, with the removal of a set of storefront windows, a pair of utility doors, along with the slight expansion of those existing openings in order to add a vehicular opening at the north end of the front facade. This work will alter the building where previously altered, as the openings and wall to be altered are themselves previous and non-historic alterations.

The south side lot will remain and the south side walls will be retained and repainted.

EVALUATION

For project planning purposes, the current effort recommends that the building at 2737-2797 Shattuck Ave., historically named the Berkeley Bowl Building, has potential historical significance as it is:

- A 1940 commercial recreational facility located in south-central Berkeley and representative of that once dense commercial and local manufacturing context (thus generally meeting California Register [CR] criterion 1, as the property is associated with events that have made a contribution to the broad patterns of local history).
- An iconic commercial structure (thus meeting CR criterion 3, as the building embodies distinctive characteristics).

While altered in important ways, the building retains important aspects of its original character, in particular its location and setting and its architectural massing, along with a range of original architectural features at its central tower. Yet, aspects of its original architecture have been lost, specifically the pared down Moderne facades of the front wings. Consequently, the building's integrity is partly intact – its location, setting, feeling and association; and partly lost, including aspects of its design, materials and workmanship (from the “aspects of integrity” under the National Register of Historic Place's evaluation criteria).

Based thereon, its character-defining features include:

- Building exterior form and massing – T-shaped with central tower, low flanking wings (with a rounded southwestern corner), and a vaulted rear structure
- Exposed architectural elements of the original central tower.

Based on these conclusions, the north and south site areas (lots) and building sides have no historical character or character-defining features, the reasons being that the north side is internal to the site and without a public face while the south side, while on and facing Stuart Street, is ultra-utilitarian and has previously been altered in substantive ways.

Though it appears to have such potential, and for the sake of simplicity is herein called “historic,” the subject property and structure are not at this juncture an identified historic resource. Nonetheless, respecting its potential and for planning and design purposes, 2777 Shattuck is presumed to be a historic resource and any proposed project is likewise presumed to be a rehabilitation with guidance and compliance to be measured by application of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*.

This effort proceeds by evaluating the proposed project relative to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards)*. As the project will alter the historic property in order to further its use, the appropriate treatment and evaluation *Standard* is that of *Rehabilitation*, which is defined as follows:

“When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment.”

The following lists the ten *Standards for Rehabilitation* and analyzes the proposed project with respect to each.

1. *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

The subject property was historically a recreational facility (bowling alley) along with commercial and retail uses. Since 1975, following closure of the bowling alley, it has housed commercial and retail uses. As there are no proposed changes to its non-historic commercial use, the proposed work meets Standard 1.

- 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

The proposed project will not alter the identified historic character of the property and does not propose to remove or alter any historic spaces, features, etc. The work will retain the building's essential, character-defining form (T-shaped with low wings and vaulted rear structure) and features (at central tower). Consequently, the proposed project meets Standard 2.

- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

The project proposes minimal alteration of the building front, specifically the addition of a new vehicular opening to replace a set of non-historic windows and a pair of non-historic doors at the north end of the front facade.

The proposed work poses no potential to create a false sense of historical development. And no conjectural or salvaged features are proposed. So the proposed work meets Standard 3.

- 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

The identified character and characteristics of the historic resource consists of original construction, and no subsequent additions or alterations have any identifiable significance in their own right, so the project also meets Standard 4.

- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

All identified character defining forms, features, finishes, examples of construction techniques and craftsmanship embodied in the historic structure are proposed to be retained. The proposed alterations will effect only non-historic materials and elements. As the overall forms and primary characteristics of the resource will be unchanged and thus preserved, the proposed work meets Standard 5.

- 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

The work does not propose repair or replacement of historic features. Thus, the proposed project meets Standard 6.

- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

No specific treatments beyond exterior painting are proposed, so the project complies with Standard 7.

- 8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

Given the proposed additions and alterations, there does not appear to be any potential for disturbance of archeological resources. While archeology is beyond the scope of this historic architectural report, the project appears to meet Standard 8.

- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The proposed building addition is to be located in an interior lot area at the north side of the building, where there are no identified spaces, materials or elements that characterize the property. Likewise, the proposed exterior alteration will locate a new vehicular opening that will replace previous and non-historic alterations.

As proposed exterior alterations and new additions will not destroy or alter identified character defining materials or features of the property and will not alter any spatial relationships, the project as proposed complies with Standard 9.

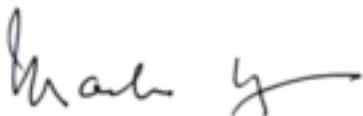
10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

The proposed addition and alterations may be removed without altering the integrity of the identified historic structure or its environs, so the project also meets Standard 10.

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Conclusively, the proposed project at 2777 Shattuck Ave. retains the identified historic building forms and design while appropriately adding to the building in a concealed location and while also altering an exterior area that has been previously altered. Thus, as summarized herein, the proposed project at 2777 Shattuck clearly meets the *Standards for Rehabilitation*.

Signed:



Mark Hulbert
Preservation Architect

attached: figures 1-7 (pp.6-10); HRI; 1940 plans

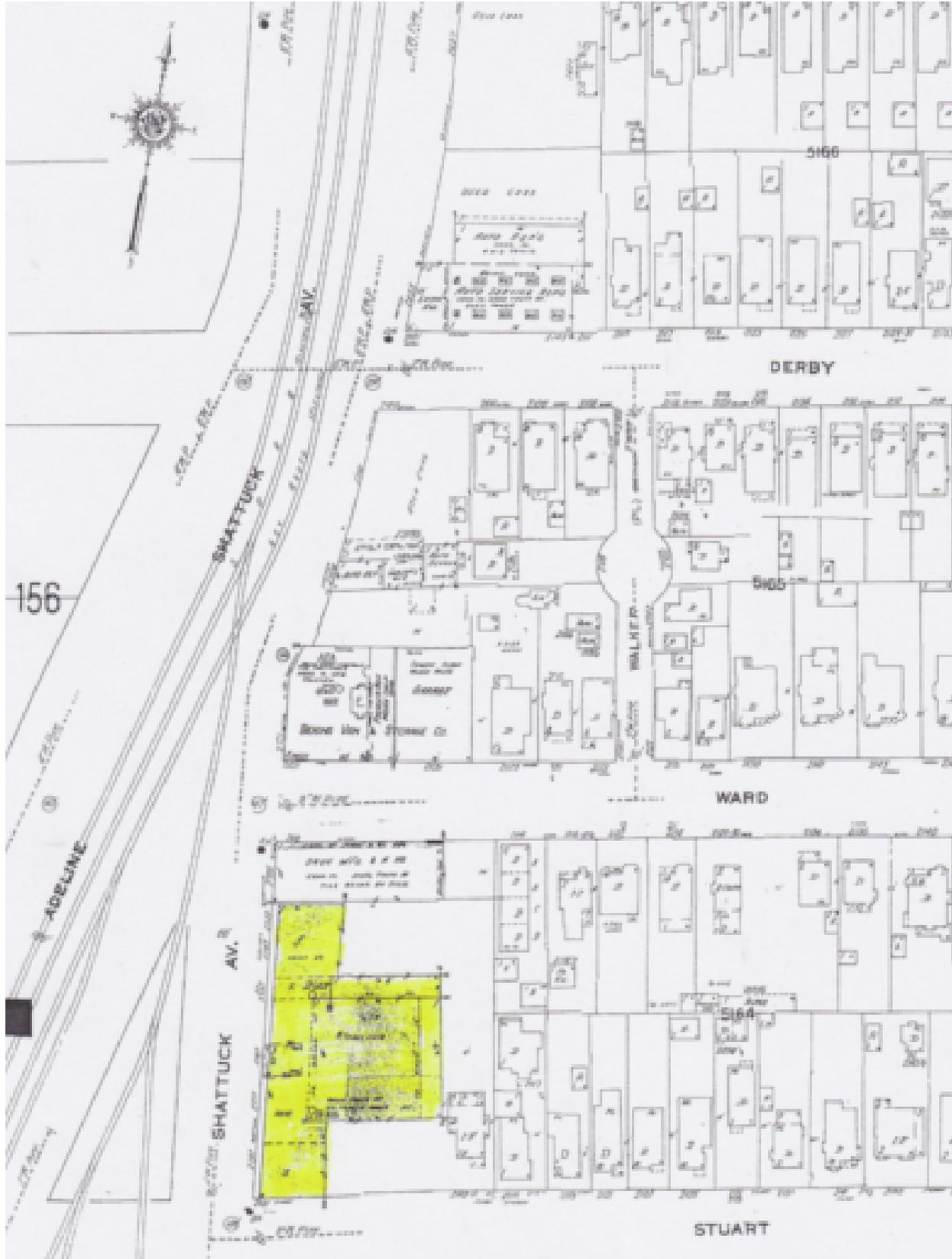


Fig.1 – 2777 Shattuck Ave. (highlighted) - 1950 Sanborn Map

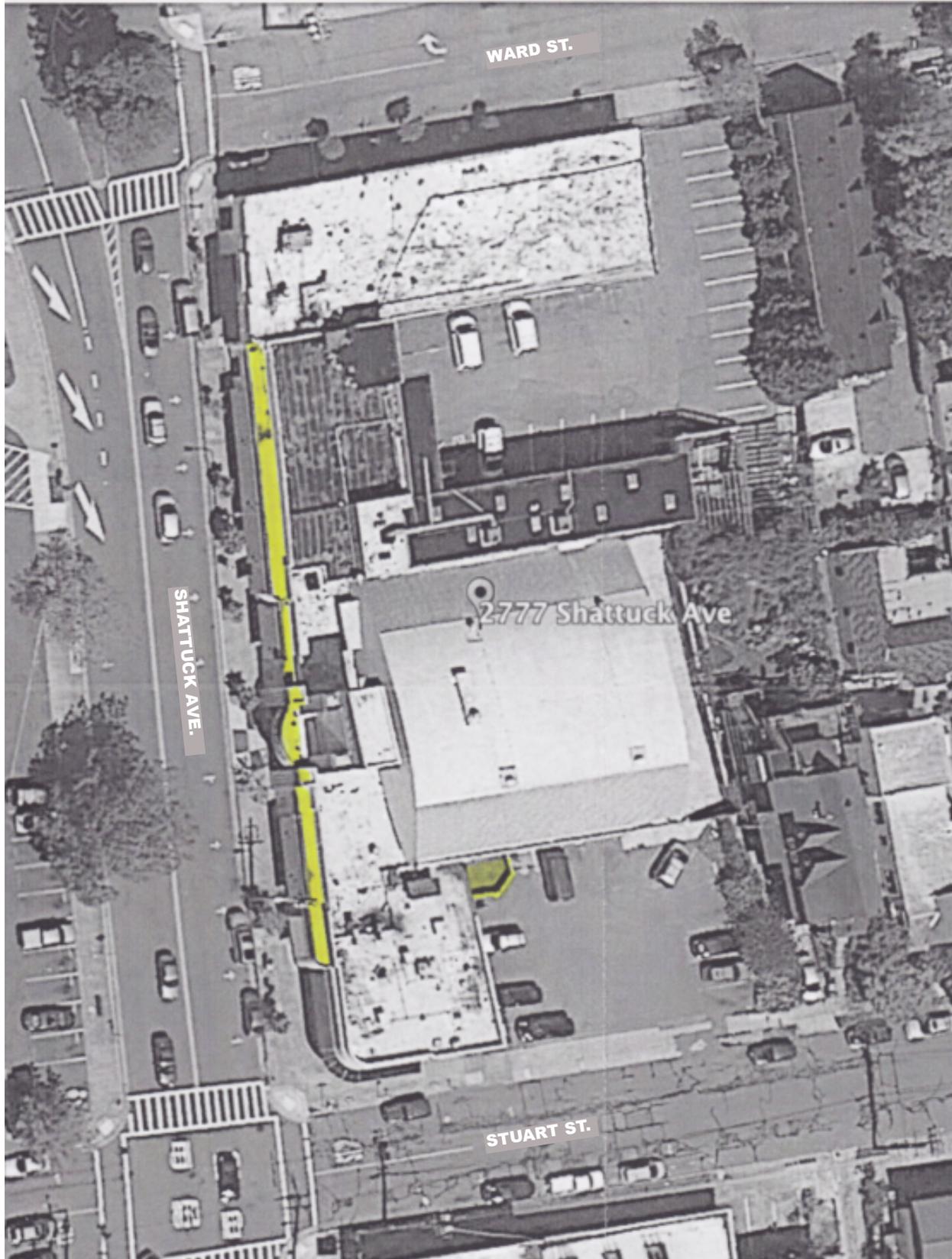
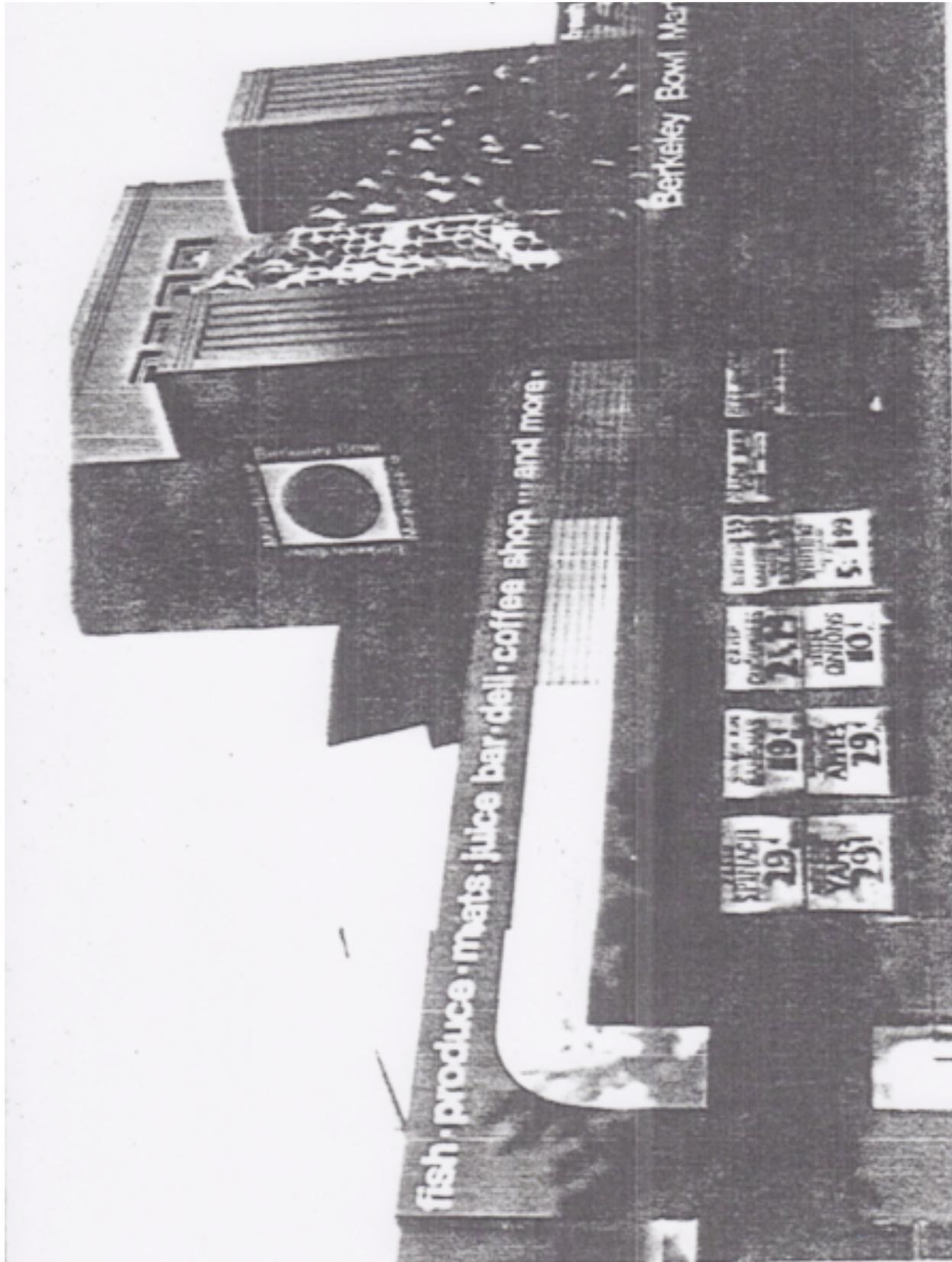


Fig.2 – 2777 Shattuck Ave. - Location Map (2014 - north is up)
Yellow highlighting indicates previous building additions



**Fig.3 – 2777 Shattuck Ave. - 1977 (from HRI)
Image shows building prior to front additions**

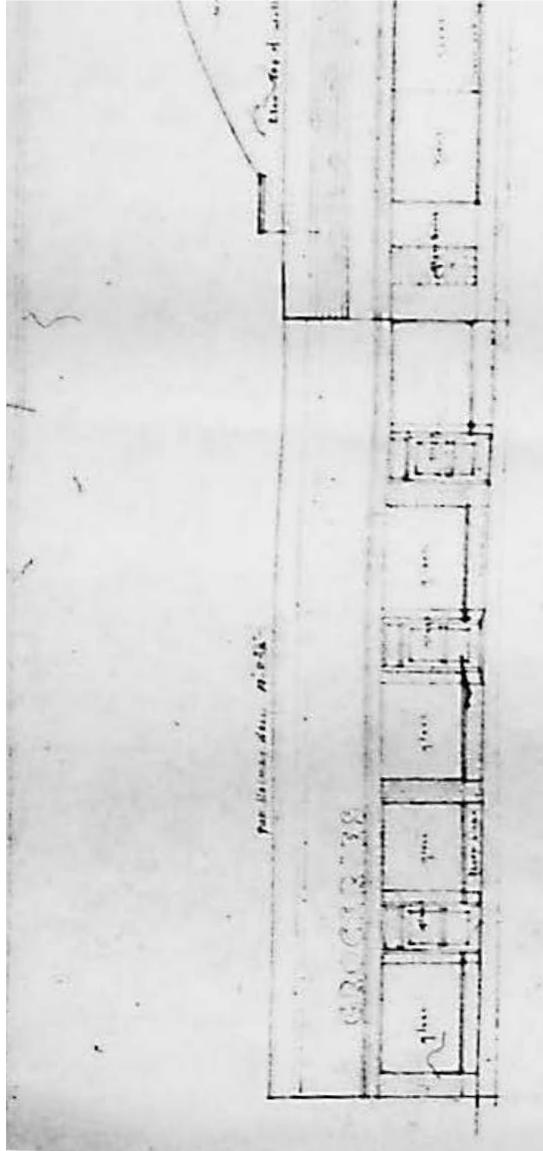


Fig.4-5 – 2777 Shattuck Avenue - Northern end of Front (West) Elevations - 1940 (above, from original plans) and 2015 (below)

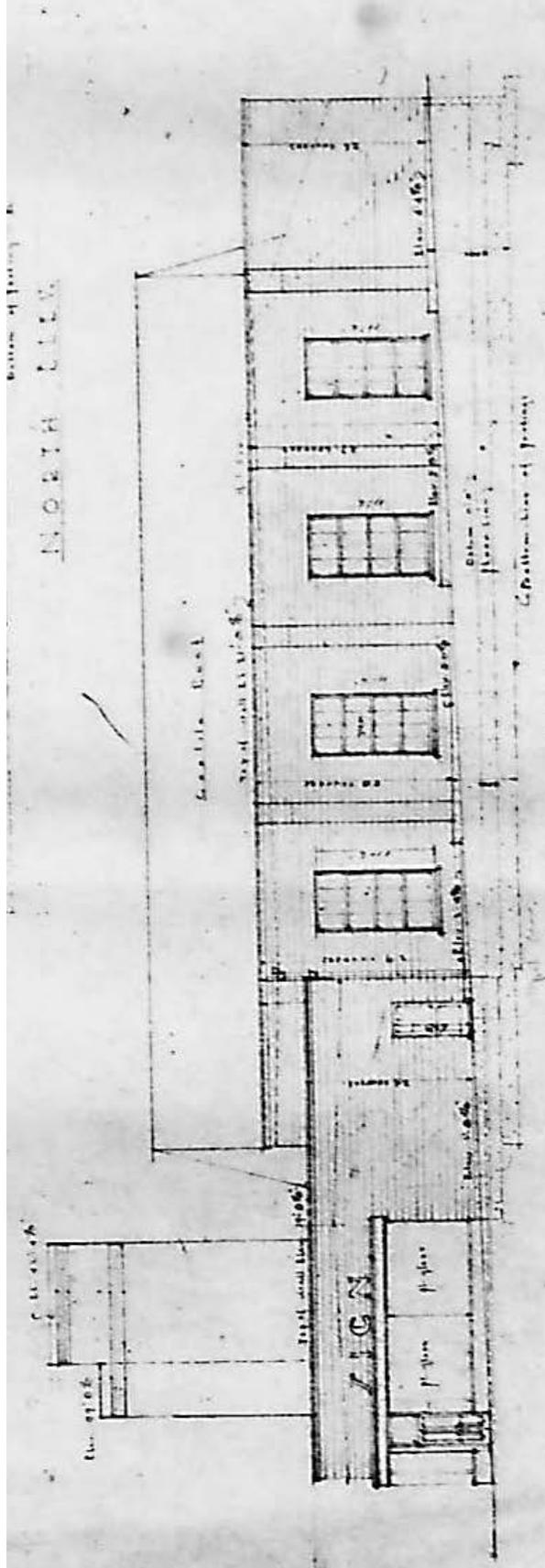


Fig.6-7 – 2777 Shattuck Avenue - South Side Elevations - 1940 (above, from original plans) and 2015 (below)