

December 10 2007

**The Booker T. Washington Community Service Center**  
800 Presidio Avenue, San Francisco  
**Historic Resource Evaluation Report**

## Summary

This report addresses a specific institution, the Booker T. Washington Community Service Center (BTW), and its current property and facility, a community center building located at 800 Presidio Avenue.

The purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Develop and analyze the historical record concerning the subject property, and specifically the record of ownership, use, and associations
- Make a determination of its eligibility to the National Register of Historic Place (NR), the California Register of Historical Resources (CR), and/or as a San Francisco Landmark
- Address a proposed project with respect to its effects on the BTW.
- Generally address the question of whether there is a potential historic district in this neighborhood and, if so, what impact a proposed project might have thereon.

Towards these ends, research was undertaken within the BTW archives, at the San Francisco History Center and the Newspaper Center of the San Francisco Main Library, the University of California at Berkeley's Bancroft and Environmental Design Libraries, the San Francisco Assessors-Recorders Office, and on the internet. Detailed research results are listed at the end of this report. Numerous field surveys of the BTW and its neighborhood were also undertaken.

## Introduction

This HRER has been requested by the Planning Department of the City of San Francisco as a result of a project to be sponsored, in part, by the BTW, which proposes to demolish the existing one-and-a-half story community center building and replace it with an updated facility while adding residential units above. The completed project will encompass approximately 80,000 square feet (s.f) on seven levels. The community center component, located on the first floor and on the ground (and partly subterranean) floor provides 8,090 s.f. along with a 7,200 s.f. gymnasium for the BTW. The residential portion will include 72 units of housing, including approximately 12 units of affordable housing, on the 5 levels above the BTW.

This report generally follows the SF Planning Department's Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) format, addressing the following subjects in the order listed:

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### Past Historic Evaluations

In c1979, under the auspices of the “SOHP [State Office of Historic Preservation] Minority Survey,” a two page Historic Resources Inventory (Form DPR523) was prepared for the BTW (attached). This DPR523 record very briefly describes the property and its significance, and identifies an NR Status Code, handwritten as a 6 (with a second letter is not legible), indicating that the resource was determined ineligible for the National and California Registers.

The DPR523 record provided the findings for the inclusion of the BTW in an “on-line book” on the National Park Service website entitled Five Views: An Ethnic Site Survey for California. Under the chapter *Black Americans in California*, by Eleanor M. Ramsey, which provides “an historical overview of the Afro-American experience in California,” the BTW is specifically identified as an “Historic Site.” However, as noted above, the underlying survey did not result in the identification of the BTW as eligible for either the National or California Registers.

Another prior evaluation was made and recorded on June 6, 2003, in the form of a Section 106 Review. Federal and federally-sponsored programs and projects are required to be reviewed pursuant to Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to identify historic properties, and to consider the effects of proposed federal undertakings on historic properties.

The subject Section 106 Review was undertaken per a 1982 Programmatic Agreement between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF). Programmatic Agreements allow categories of undertakings to be completed at the level of the assigned jurisdiction, in this case the City, without requiring direct Federal participation at the case level.

In this instance, the Section 106 record shows that the work was underground sewer replacement. While there is no statement addressing what specifically triggered Section 106, Federal HUD finds were evidently applied to the project, thus requiring a Section 106 Review. The review was also undertaken as the property was by then over 50 years of age.

The Section 106 Review was jointly completed by the CCSF Mayor's Office of Community Development and Planning Department. It consists of two forms, a Section 106 Research Form A, and a Section 106 Review Form B (attached).

Form A recorded baseline information about the resource, including designation findings, which reiterate the NR Status Code 6 from the 1979 DPR523 Form described above.

Form B again identifies the NR status as a "6;" and thereafter records the "Planning Department's Application of NR Criteria for Eligibility" via the checking off of applicable findings and conclusions. This review checked that the property "does not have significance" under any of the four NR Criteria, and "does not possess integrity" under any of the seven NR Aspects of Integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association). As a result, Form B concludes the Section 106 Review with a "finding of no adverse effect."

Thus, prior evaluations all concluded that the BTW is not an historical resource. Moreover, a discrepancy is repeated in each of the prior evaluations, wherein the architect of the BTW is recorded as Henry Gutterson. As recorded herein, the architect of the BTW was Lloyd Gartner.

### **Evaluation Summary**

Nevertheless, per the the evaluation findings detailed in the following evaluation, the opinion of this evaluator is that the subject property and building appear eligible for the CR under Criterion 1, as a resource associated with a pattern of events important to the history of San Francisco; specifically, the founding and development of a social, educational and recreational institution, the BTW. The current BTW property, building and landscape are, literally, links to an historically significant pattern of events. the history of a specific group of people – African Americans – and their efforts to positively progress in the first half of the 20th century via the creation of a progressive institution, the BTW.

However, this evaluation also concludes that the current property, its building and landscape are not individually meritorious. Likewise, the persons associated with important periods in the development of the BTW are not individually significant, but have cumulatively served furtherance of the institution.

This evaluation therefore concludes that the BTW is not eligible for any association with significant persons; or for any distinguishing architectural, landscape, engineering or artistic characteristics; or as a representative work of an important individual.

Finally, the BTW setting, property and building remain much as they were upon their development in 1951, without substantial alteration, so the resource appears to maintain its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

## Property and Building Descriptions

The BTW inhabits a generous, L-shaped site at the southeast corner of Presidio Avenue and Sutter Street, fronting on the former to the west, yet since it is a corner building, a second frontage faces Sutter. The site plan is configured with the long leg of the L to the west along Presidio, and the upper tip of the L on Sutter to the north. The foot of the L juts into the center of the block, and is thus surrounded on its three sides by rear yards of residential lots. The lot's nominal measurements are: 174.5 feet of frontage on Presidio; 84 feet fronting on Sutter; the inboard portion of the lot extends another 96 feet eastward into the block and is about 90 feet in width. San Francisco Planning Department records identify the lot area as 22,363 square feet, or just over 1/2 acre in size.



Fig.1 – Aerial View of BTW Building and Site  
(north is up)

Occupying about 45% of the area of the site, the building of the BTW is a large rectangle – 134 feet by 74 feet in plan – located along the Presidio and Sutter frontages of the site, leaving the inboard portion open, along with a 35 foot wide side yard across the south end of the building.

This south yard is partly at the street level, and is paved for BTW parking and egress directly from the gym via a side door. Beyond approximately 25 feet in depth, the south side yard is a landscaped slope that meets the lower site at the rear of the building. This generous lower site is divided up into three parts: an upper terrace that is concrete paved and which runs the full north-south length of the site across the rear of the building, including direct access on Sutter Street via a set of gates; a broad, middle terrace, some ten steps below via a wide set of stairs and, again, a landscaped slope, that is a concrete paved yard with a gazebo-like structure at its south end; then yet another, albeit narrower, paved yard another ten or so steps below that, with a garden/barbecue structure in its north end and facing west. These interior, rear yards are surrounded by adjacent residential structures. And despite the openness and scale, landscaping is limited to grassy slopes, shrubbery relegated to corners of the site, and several

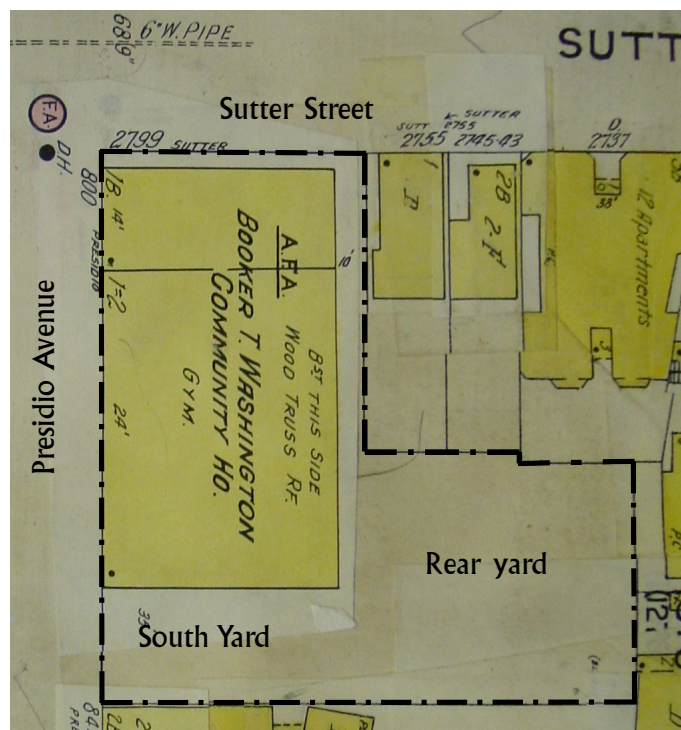


Fig.2 – Plan View of BTW Building and Site  
(from c1970 Sanborn Map)

large Eucalyptus trees roughly in the center of the yards.

At the top of the site, sidewalks line and abut each frontage, and the Presidio Avenue side has a line of stout street trees.

In two parts, the building has a small, low wing at the Sutter (north) end of the property, abutting a larger and taller structure to the south that stands the full depth of the building, and approximately 75% of its overall length. The low wing houses entry, classroom and administration type spaces, and the high wing houses a basketball gymnasium, including a set of bleachers across its entire east side. The massing and proportions of these two parts are such that the building is largely a gymnasium.

While Presidio Ave. is fairly level, Sutter St. descends eastward from the street corner, so the building rises from 1-2 stories at the front (west) to 2-3 stories at the back (east). Given the topography, the main building level, including the floors of the entry and gymnasium, are on Presidio, whereas the lower floor is a full story below, though at grade across the rear of the site. This lower level is an L-shaped plan, occupying the area of the low, north side wing – a portion of which is in the ground, basement-like, although a sunken area



Fig.3 – Rear Yard looking southeast

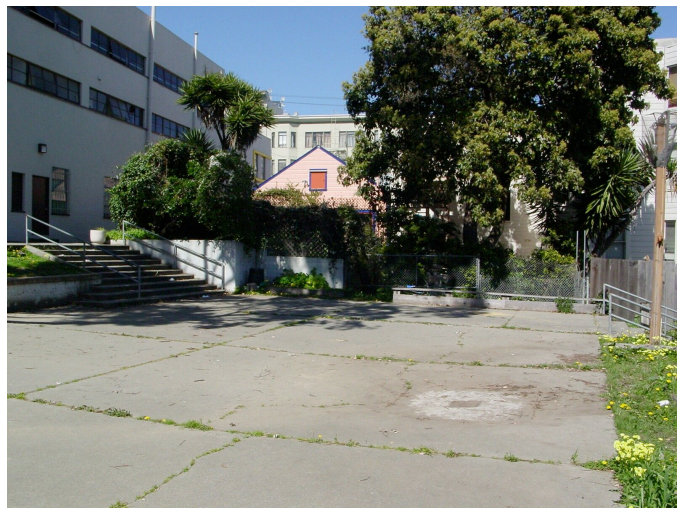


Fig.4 – Rear Yard looking North with BTW building at left



Fig.5 – West Elevation with South Yard at right



Fig.6 – BTW viewed from corner of Presidio (at right) and Sutter (at left)

way across the north provides air and light – with a strip of space across the east that corresponds to the bleacher area above. There is also a crawl space directly below the gym.

Though there are two street facades, the entry way is located within the low, side wing facing Presidio, making the Sutter Street elevation secondary, to the extent that it appears and feels like a side elevation. Thus, the building fronts on Presidio, with sides across the north and south, and the rear to the east.

At present, the building's west (front) elevation is largely obscured by bulky street trees, the only unobscured part of which is the single story volume at the north end. The obscured building wall is two-stories in height. Two vertically stacked rows of elongated window openings, enframed by a projecting band, span the length of this wall. Window units are steel in a 4-over-4 pattern. The exterior wall finish is plain stucco with a plain sheet metal roof edge flashing across the top of wall. Sheet metal scuppers atop the wall spill into downspouts at each end.

The north end of the west elevation is also plain stucco clad, which is continuous with the plane and finish of the two-story portion of this facade. A recessed entry way is inserted directly at the line between the higher and lower walls, filling about one-third of the length of the lower wall and two-thirds of its height. Centered within are two pairs of metal entry doors with narrow lights, surrounded by a pattern of side and top lights. The ceiling of the recessed entry extends beyond the face of wall in the form of a shallow, beveled canopy edge that also returns along the exterior wall at each side of the entry way. A wall mounted sign is centered atop the entry on the face of stucco. At the northern half of



Fig.7 – North end of West (front) Elevation

this one story wall, a horizontal band consisting of two windows separated by fluted panels of equal width, enframed by a projecting course (matching the band surrounding the windows at the two story wall), dovetails into the elevation from the building corner, imposing asymmetry to this elevation while, at the same time, adding both vertical and horizontal proportion.

This assertive, asymmetrical band adds a modern, dynamic aspect to the small entry elevation. Yet it is resolved three dimensionally, as the band wraps the northwestern building corner and extends the full length of the north (Sutter Street) elevation, where it, in turn, wraps the northeast building corner before terminating on the east elevation and at the same depth from the corner as at the west.

Due to the topography of this locale, the north elevation follows Sutter Street in its steep upward slope from east to west. Thus, the north elevation is one story at the northwest end, and two stories at the northeast end, where the insertion of a partial floor level below is expressed by six bays of ground floor windows stacked directly below windows at the first floor, and by a ground floor entry way in the bay at the easternmost building corner.

Windows at the First Floor of the north elevation are paired units of five, stacked steel sashes. Each opening is separated from the next by a narrow stucco pier. The ground floor windows are, again, horizontal openings with paired windows that are but two vertical sashes.

A unique feature of this elevation is a contemporary mural spanning its length, painted within the spandrel between the top of the ground floor windows and the bottom of the raised sill of the First Floor windows. Otherwise, as with all of the BTW's elevations, the north elevation is clad in smooth, painted stucco, with a painted sheet metal edge at the top of wall.

A plain, secondary north elevation rises above the lower portion of the building at the north end of the gymnasium volume.



Fig.8 – North Elevation from Sutter Street



Fig.9 – East (rear) Elevation from Rear Yard

The building's east elevation is a large, long wall, three stories high where it corresponds with the gymnasium, and two stories at the north end, all in a single plane. With the exception of the window band that wraps the northeast corner and terminates within approximately twenty feet thereof, this large exterior wall has no architectural feature. There are several sets of windows at the ground floor, along with a single entry door associated with several smaller windows. Long and relatively shallow window openings span the upper wall, asserting a distinctively horizontal character. Consequently, this north elevation is distinctly modern in character, yet utilitarian in its modernity.

Finally, the upper south elevation is another plain, two-story wall, with a single doorway punched therein.

### Building Interior

The BTW is a two-story structure housing entry, circulation, multi-purpose and administrative uses throughout the low wing of the upper story and the ground floor, and a gymnasium in the high wing of the first floor.

From the Presidio Avenue entry, one enters a



Fig.10 – South Elevation



small lobby, with access to the gymnasium directly to the right, and a reception space and corridor straight ahead. Along the corridor, several office and work spaces are located to left (north), with one small office to the right. Also to the right (south) is a doorway accessing a stair to the lower level.

At the lower level, the stair from above drops into a narrow corridor leading both to the right (south) and left (north). To the left, the corridor feeds a sequence of multi-use spaces that are accessed by passing from one to the next. To the right is a long, double-loaded corridor just inboard of the east exterior wall, along which an exterior door leads to the east side yards, followed by doorways to a set of narrow spaces to the left and right. This southern corridor and its associated spaces lie directly below the bleachers at the gym.

The primary space of this building is the gymnasium, which comprises some 75% of the overall building area, and is the only space of general interest, although without particular architectural interest, and all other interior spaces are plain and utilitarian. One noteworthy interior feature is the painted mural, c1977, on the west wall of the First Floor work room.



Fig.11 – Entry Lobby looking east



Fig.12 – First Floor Work Room (Sutter St. windows at left)

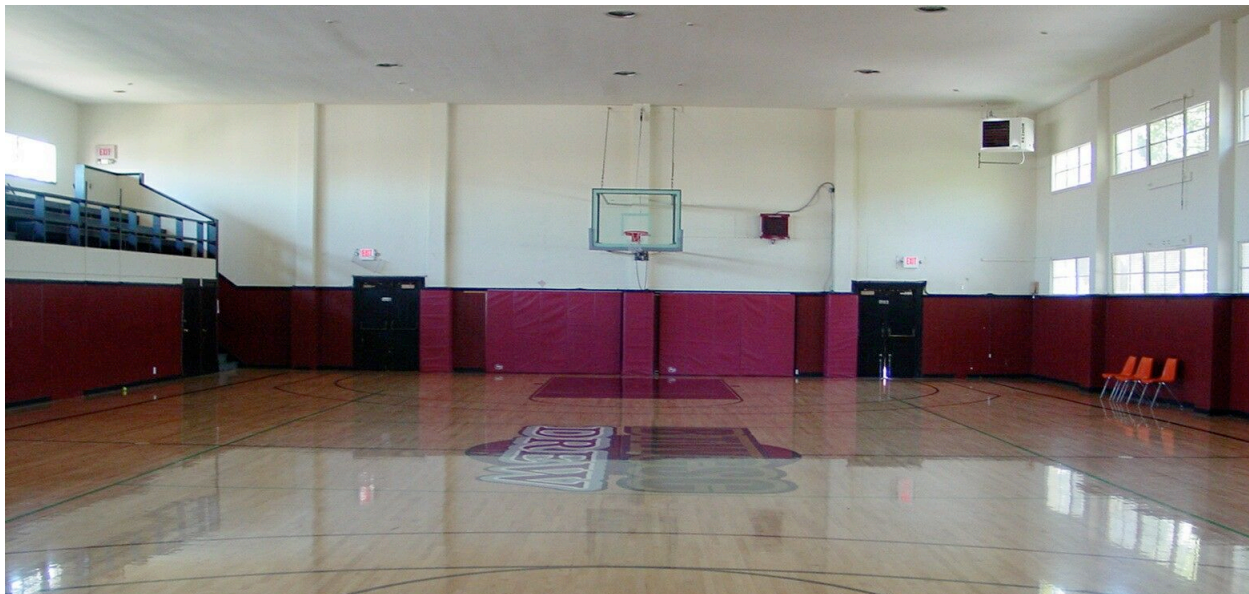


Fig.13 – First Floor Gymnasium (Sutter St. windows at left)

## BTW History

The BTW's story begins at the conclusion of WWI with, thereof, the "Negro" veterans of San Francisco.

The BTW was said to have been established to provide community services to colored people, as there were no such services available in San Francisco. A news article of April 19, 1920 [attached] informs us that the BTW was "named for the widely known negro, Booker T. Washington," that it was to be "the first community center for the colored people of San Francisco," and was to open "yesterday at 45 Farren Ave.." [Farren Avenue was then a north-south street between Scott and Pierce, Ellis and Eddie. It has since been abandoned].

Racial segregation, on the one hand, and advancement, on the other, were the primary motives underlying the creation of such a center. This fact is repeated in various accounts, including in the the on-line book, Five Views, which, in the following passage, includes direct reference to the BTW:

"Black men and women in the military during the First World War could not get assistance in finding housing, employment, or other needed services from general social service agencies like the Red Cross, YMCA, and YWCA. Even the military, then a segregated service, offered little assistance to its Black members and their families. The Booker T. Washington Community Services Center, Inc. was established in 1919 by Black club women in San Francisco who were concerned about the lack of social services made available to Black military personnel and their families. These women raised funds to establish and operate the Booker T. Washington Center."

In his 1990 book about the "cultural history of Black San Francisco," author Douglas Henry Daniels also directly acknowledges the BTW, stating that it was "probably the first Black secular community-wide institution to provide recreation..., in addition to employment and child care services in the Bay Area," while adding that underlying influences included "women's clubs and the settlement house movement," referring to the late-19th century sociological movement pioneered by Chicago's Jane Addams and her Hull House. The BTW staff was "mostly female volunteers" who, in addition to providing supervised recreation, "counseled mothers through the Mothers' Fidelity Club, aided job seekers, and advised youth in juvenile court cases. Social programs at the center... allowed people to gather and to develop their skills within a respectable milieu instead of an underworld environment" (Daniels: pp 157-58)

In the immediate wake of WWI, their first locations were "a small place on Farren



Fig.14 – BTW, 1433 Divisadero St. (undated)

Avenue and later to the basement and first floor flat at 1629 Geary Street” (Jones: pl). Then, in 1923, the BTW relocated to 1433 Divisadero Street, the result of their ability to purchase and renovate a building, and where they remained until 1942.

Thereafter, the BTW moved to leased quarters at 2031 Bush, between Webster and Buchanan, a building then owned by a Japanese America organization, the Golden Gate Institute (and that was presumably available as a consequence of Japanese American resettlement during WWII). Finally, in 1952, the BTW moved into to their brand new facilities at the 800 Presidio Avenue location.



Fig.15 – 2031 Bush St. (2007)

Between its inception and its current location, the BTW moved a handful of times, though – as illustrated below – always proximate to the geographic center of the Western Addition neighborhood, where its African-American constituency were based.



Fig.16 – Aerial view (2007) outlining San Francisco’s Western Addition and highlighting each of the 5 BTW locations

According to a 1988 study of SF's ethnic residents, "after the turn-of-the-century..., Blacks began moving into the Western Addition. By the 1920s, many black families were clustered around Ellis and Scott Streets" (Godfrey: p71). This text then excerpts a 1940 WPA Writer's Program, as follows: "The greater number of San Francisco's 7,000 Negroes live in the neighborhood west of the Fillmore between Geary and Pine Streets," adding that "the colony's social life revolves around its handful of bars and restaurants, its one large and noisy nightclub, its eight churches of caring faiths, and the Booker T. Washington Community Center on Divisadero Street, where trained social workers guide educational and recreational activities for the children and adults" (Godfrey: p72).

Over the course of the years, the Center's purpose merged with the expanding population and resulting ethnicity of its neighborhood. While the kinds of training and recreational activities that the place provides have been somewhat constant, and while it has also remained in one general geographic vicinity, its constituency has integrated, in turn altering its meaning. Whereas it originated specifically as a community center for this Black community – at a time of severe racial segregation and inequality – its current and relatively longstanding situation is that of a neighborhood serving recreational center largely for the use of neighborhood youths.

In this respect, the Center has filled the aspirations of its namesake.

**Booker T. (Taliaferro) Washington** (1856-1915) was, essentially, an educator. His work – a student and graduate of the Hampton Institute in Virginia, thereafter a teacher and leader of Tuskegee Institute – was concurrent with the abolition of slavery and the fledgling emancipation of African-Americans.

Following the Civil War, African-Americans endeavored for educational opportunities, requiring the creation of educational institutions where none yet existed. As documented in the detailed NRHP registration form *Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the U.S.:*

"None would have a greater impact than Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia. Much as the education received there would be the central shaping experience in the lives of Booker T. Washington and numerous other blacks who rose to prominence in the late 19th century, so the values and views of its founder, General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, would be the beacon guiding most black educators for the rest of the century.

Hampton Institute's essence, however, was Armstrong's quasi-religious faith in an industrial education curriculum that he believed would provide the temporal salvation of the freedmen. In essence, it was instruction in subordination, an education in self-discipline that molded blacks into men and women who posed no threat to white control and dominance. Far more than training for a trade, it was inculcation of the Puritan work ethic, which Armstrong believed would transform the black race. His concept of education—teaching frugality, sobriety, self-reliance, honesty, cleanliness, industry, and perseverance—spread until, as Booker T. Washington said, it "permeated the whole race in every section of the country." It would be the hallmark of most of the black colleges founded in the 1870s and 1880s, whether the white missionaries' Allen University and Wiley College, the land-grant Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College and Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial College, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church's Lane College and AME's Allen University and Morris Brown College, and the Tuskegee Institute of Booker T. Washington—Armstrong's foremost protégé" (Ramsey/NPS: pp 13-14).

Washington entered Hampton in 1872, at the age of 16. "After graduation Washington became a teacher

in Tinkersville, West Virginia for three years. In 1878 he left to attend Wayland Seminary in Washington DC, but quit after six months. In 1879 Armstrong asked him to return to Hampton Institute as a teacher. Washington did so, and then in 1881 Armstrong recommended him as the principal of a new school called Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama." (From <http://www.ushistory.net/washington.html>)

Like his mentor, Washington's view was that education and its resulting erudition and skills would necessarily – inevitably – bring fair progress to those who so engaged themselves.

Such an approach is, obviously, not rebellious, but is, instead, mannerist. It is an approach to the relationship between people – to politics – that is polite.

Such was the morality of the BTW's namesake, where the use of Washington's name did more than acknowledge an important American educator – it furthered his theories of usefulness and education as they relate to progress. The BTW is thus called a service center, as it was built upon the vision of making "better" Americans.

### Founding of the BTW

A narrative history of the BTW written in 1945 brings to light its founding:

"Reverend W. J. J. Byers and Mrs Mary D. [McCants] Stewart, along with other interested citizens in San Francisco, recognized a need for providing opportunities for Negro people who were not allowed to participate in the total community life of the city. With the leadership of Reverend Byers and Mrs. Stewart, the Center was founded. This group of people worked under tremendous handicaps and against enormous odds when they attempted to buy a piece of property in a district which felt so strongly against Negroes using and owning property. The group, however, was successful in purchasing the property at 1433 Divisadero Street."

According to another unpublished history by the BTW on the occasion of their 50th anniversary:

"The Booker T. Center at the outset was part of the war-time War Camp Community Services with offices in the Flood Building at Market and Powell Street." (The War Camp Community Services, Inc. was established to provide recreation and other services for the "homefront," see <http://www.nationalrecreationfoundation.org/history.html>].

"Initially, the Center was a place where homecoming World War I African American soldiers could find recreation and entertainment; and young women could be taught sewing, millinery, and they could participate in group singing... until 1920 when the war ended and the program was continued."

"The Booker T. Washington Community Service Center started in May 1920 as a Center for colored people on its own responsibility and prior to the creation of the Community Chest. The Booker T. Washington Club was a member of the Community Service Recreation League as were four other neighborhood centers conducting work of a like kind and character. In 1923 the Community Chest was established and the Booker T. Washington Club became a member of the Chest.

A special study was made to determine a location which would meet the needs of the Center and would be more suitable from a community viewpoint than that which was occupied at the time. This study was instituted through a committee of experts and business men familiar with real estate. Although the Western Addition Improvement and Protection Association was opposed to Negro people using and owning property in this district and requested the Community Chest to force discontinuance of the support being given the Booker T. Washington Club by the San Francisco Community Service Recreation League, the Chest refused to interfere or dictate to any agency with regard to any action taken where race or creed was concerned. This was in 1924."

The 1945 analysis summarizes the purposes of the BTW, which are noted as having been taken from the BTW incorporation papers filed with the County Clerk on April 23, 1923:

"The Purpose:

To promote and encourage...

...social intercourse among the members: games, music, dramatics, recreation and amusement;

...athletics: basketball, boxing wrestling and every sort of gymnastics;

...civic-life lectures and discussion of every phase of civic affairs;

...education classes in language, music and art and all branches of domestic science;

To conduct a free employment bureau and to help strangers coming into the city to get properly locations; and

To purchase and maintain real property to be used and devoted to the carrying out of the purposes of said corporation."

"This Agency," continues the 1945 history, "has served as a go-between for Negro citizens in San Francisco and it has assumed responsibilities over and above the operation of the Center although it is obvious that it is without adequate facilities, equipment and staff for the Center program. When we realize that the increase in population is far beyond the ability of the Center to absorb it, we also realize there there is a need for a change in the purpose of the Agency. It is suggested that the Agency reconsider its statement of purpose in line with the changes within the district pattern."

At that juncture, due to its inadequacies – an SF Chronicle article of October 1941 described the center's building as "woefully small, sadly in need of repair...Paint and plaster fall from the walls...gymnasium has no equipment, no showers" – the BTW was no longer occupying its original building at 1433 Divisadero but, since October 1942, was renting and had moved into 2031 Bush Street, a building then referred to as the Golden Gate Institute's Japanese Language School Building, and which yet remains.

Based on the 1945 analysis, the BTW was obviously directed towards the goal of a new facility, and with the intent of redirecting their primary programs to better suit the time and place. These overriding goals were met over the course of the next seven years, with the acquisition of a then vacant property on Presidio Avenue and Sutter Street in February of 1948, where the groundbreaking for its new building was held in December of 1951, followed by the building dedication in August of 1952.

Another SF Chronicle article about the dedication stressed the BTW's renewed purposes in its title, "Booker T. Washington Center Dedicated...for Use of All Races," as well as in its introductory paragraph:

"What began in 1919 as a center for Negroes was dedicated last week as a community meeting

place for persons of every race. Speaking at the opening Thursday of the new Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, Sutter street at Presidio avenue, Dr. Howard Thurman said: There is not a person here tonight who could hold a straight and honest face if we were dedicating a center – a community center – for one race at the exclusion of another.

Since the first World War the whole idea of people being separate has changed. And so tonight I am able to join with you of many races in opening a center for the whole community.

Dr. Thurman, pastor of the Larkin Street Fellowship of All Peoples, spoke to visitors and many of the center's 300 members who now represent a growing percentage of Orientals and Caucasians, as well as Negroes."

During those years, the Community Chest of San Francisco stood behind the BTW, providing a large proportion of their funding from 1922, when the Community Chest was formed, into the 1950s, and including the funding of the new BTW building on Presidio. The Community Chest was a charitable organization, raising and distributing funds to its member agencies. In 1926, the CC "Speakers' Manual" defined the CC as "an association of approximately 114,000 contributors, and 105 charitable, relief and welfare agencies of San Francisco. Its purpose is to coordinate the work of mercy and welfare of all our citizens...".

A pamphlet about the CC, dated 1933, adds that "since it was organized in 1922, the Community Chest of SF has collected from its donor members \$25,282,400.00. More than 95 per cent of this money has been budgeted to member agencies which care to the sick and needy and which give protection and guidance to children and young people."

In summarizing the Community Chest's efforts, this pamphlet includes a listing for the BTW as a donor member, and adds a succinct summary of the BTW's programs:

"Wholesome recreation for colored people is provided in this community center. Handicrafts and folk dancing for little boys and girls; clubs, theatrical and athletics for older children; sewing classes, cooking classes, a child welfare study group, musical instruction and organized athletics are among the social and educational activities. A community chorus gives concerts featuring negro spiritual and works of contemporary composers. A membership for 585 children and adults brings the average monthly attendance to 2,296."

Of the total BTW budget of \$6,602, the CC provided \$4,607. A 1929 CC pamphlet again lists the BTW, noting that it "Conducts a social, recreational and educational center for colored people." Funding of the year 1928 was \$5,061.15 total, of which the CC contributing \$3,280.20.

## Neighborhood and Property History

A large neighborhood now centrally situated in San Francisco, the Western Addition is generally located between Van Ness Avenue to the east, Presidio and Masonic Avenues to the west, Fell and California streets to the south and north, respectively. The Western Addition was a 19th century addition to the city lying west of Van Ness Avenue. It was first sparsely populated and served by horse car lines, but grew into a central, residential neighborhood alongside the cable cars, the use of which began in 1877, and including 3 separate lines serving the Western Addition – the Sutter, Geary and California Street lines. The subject vicinity was also the location of one of the city's cemeteries, the Laurel Hill Cemetery,

thus the need for and use of transport throughout the latter half of the 19th century.

The subject site lies at the western edge of the Western Addition, where Sutter Street terminates into Central (Presidio) Avenue. As this property was, for a time, the location of the power house for the Sutter Street Railway, and subsequently the location of its cable car house, the Sutter Street cable car line plays a particular role in the early history of the BTW property.

The Sutter Street Railroad was one of the eight original cable car lines of San Francisco. It started up in January 1877, became the Sutter Street Railway in 1887, which operated until 1902, when it merged with United Railways of San Francisco, which in turn operated until 1906, when most of its cars, cables, and powerhouse were destroyed by the earthquake and fire. As the Cable Car Museum of San Francisco informs us:

“The Sutter Street Railroad ran over fairly level ground, and its steepest point had only a 4% grade. Converting the old horsecar line to cable was completed in 1876 and the line officially opened on January 27, 1877. Its cable cars ran on Sutter from Market Street west to Larkin Street. The cable line proved a tremendous success over its previous horsecar system, increasing its ridership by 962,000 in the first year of operation. In late 1878, the company opened a new crosstown line, which ran from the powerhouse, situated at Larkin and Bush Streets, south on Larkin to Hayes Street. The firm also extended the main line on Sutter Street further westward to Central [Presidio] Avenue in the Western Addition, which at that time was sparsely populated. Casebolt sold out his company to a local real estate broker, Robert F. Morrow, in 1883. Morrow promptly began another extension of the line, on Larkin south across Market and down 9th Street to Mission. Morrow also abandoned the 1879 powerhouse at Sutter and Presidio Streets, in favor of consolidating all lines into a single powerhouse at Sutter and Polk” (from <http://www.cablecarmuseum.org>).

Historical Sanborn Maps corroborate this information, as the bulk of the subject site is labeled the "Sutter St. Railway Co's. Car Ho[use]." in the 1886-93 and 1899 maps. By 1905, it had become the "United Railways of SF Presidio Ave. Car Ho[use]." The next Sanborn iteration of 1913-1915 identifies the property as vacant, which was probably so ever since the '06 earthquake. That same map shows what by then had overtaken the cable cars, in the form of the new electric car barn of the San Francisco Municipal Railway, located on the substantial parcel west of Central (Presidio) Ave. and at the corner of Geary, where it stands today.

Given their detail, these historical maps provide excellent information about the immediate vicinity of the future BTW. By 1886, dwellings and residential flats occupy the subject and adjoining blocks, much as today. The presence of cable cars along Sutter allow for stores at the street corners and, in several cases, in mid block. There are several saloons on Central (Presidio) Ave., and a hotel – the Midwinter Fair Hotel – at the corner of Geary and Central (Presidio Ave.). By 1899, this hotel is labeled "The Conservatory," with "boarding and sal[oon]."

Throughout the years from 1886-1915, the blocks across Central (Presidio) Ave. and immediately west of the subject site are occupied by large scale uses, in particular the Laurel Hill Cemetery which, from 1854-1946 – when the cemetery's removal was approved by vote of the people of San Francisco – stood in and beyond what is today the Muni bus barn and yard, The former site of the Laurel Hill Cemetery is a registered California Historical Landmark 760.



Another large scale use, "Florists Nursery & Green Houses," stood on the large parcel at the north-west corner of Central (Presidio) and Geary/Point Lobos, a parcel that corresponds to the Muni bus barn of today. Directly west thereof, and across what was then Josephine and since Masonic, was a large, salt water reservoir of the Olympic Salt Water Co., the structure of which yet remained into the 1950s.

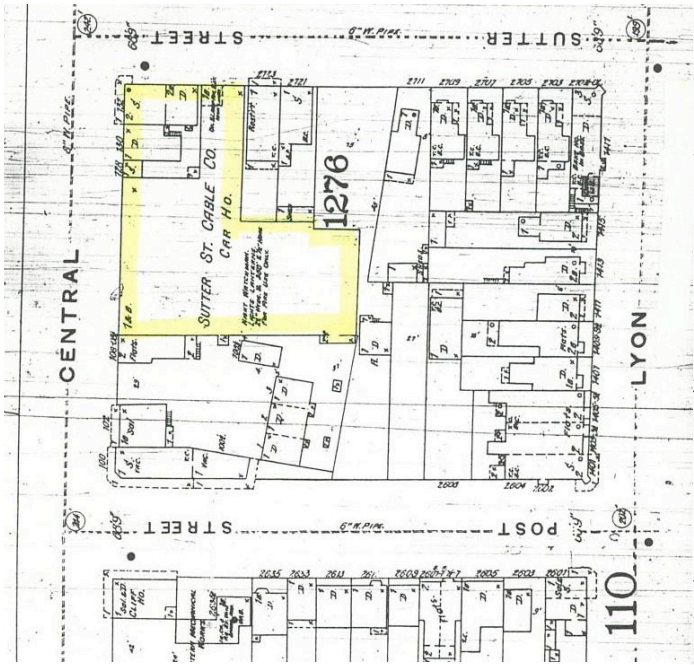


Fig.17 – Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1886-93 (future BTW site highlighted - north is up)

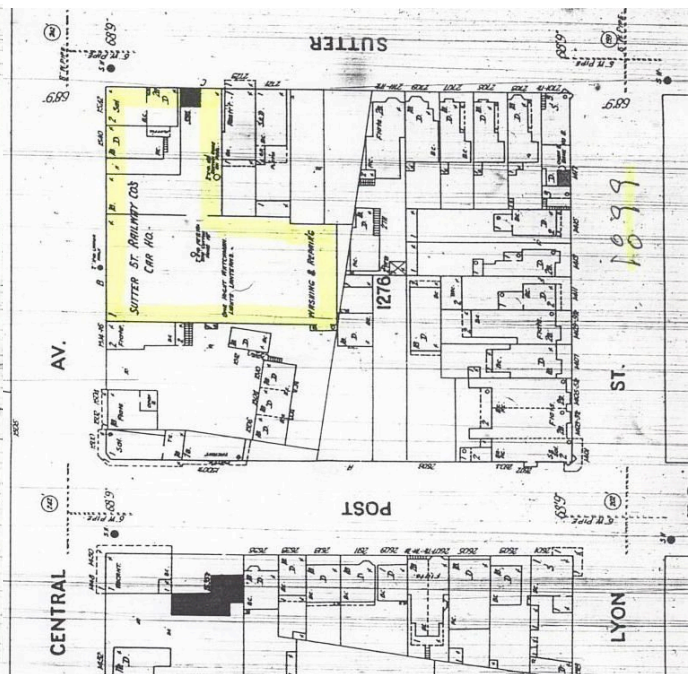


Fig.18 – Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1899 (future BTW site highlighted - north is up)

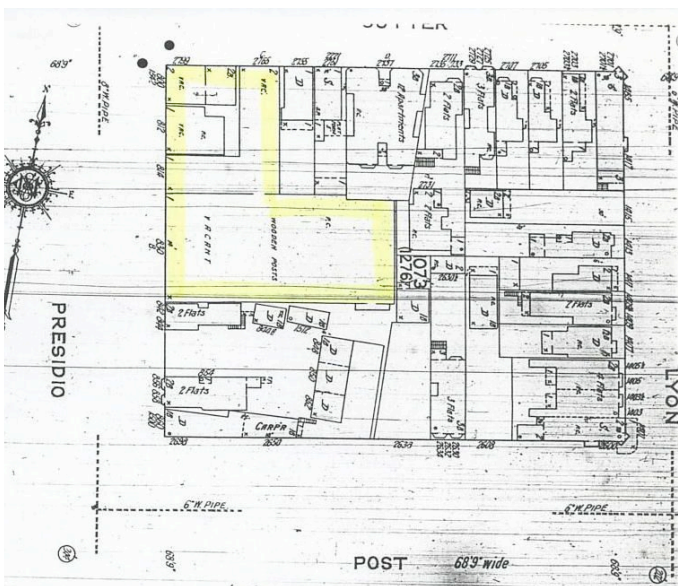


Fig.19 – Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1913-15 (future BTW site highlighted - north is up)

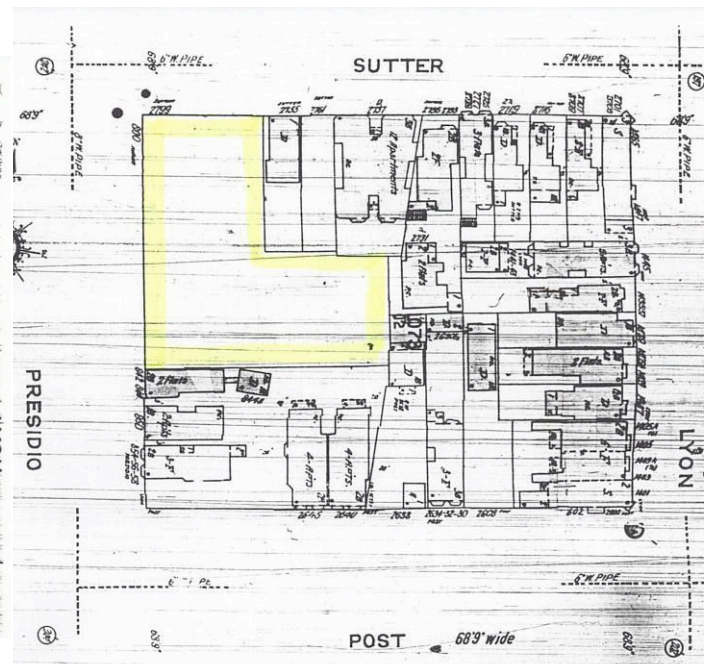


Fig.20 – Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1950 (future BTW site highlighted - north is up)

By 1905, these blocks are largely infilled with residential buildings, and moreso by 1915, at which time the former railroad and residential buildings of the subject block stand vacant, and the large hotel sited at the northeast corner of Geary and, by now, Presidio, stands vacant.

The Sanborn Map of 1950, which is (unfortunately) the next iteration, shows few but some changes in the residential mix of the blocks. Most importantly, it shows the subject site as entirely vacant, at the very point in time when the BTW was preparing for construction of their new building.

### Associated Persons

A wide range of persons are identified as having been associated with the BTW. Rev. W. J. J. Byers, Mrs. Mary D (McCants) Stewart, Mrs. Emma J. Scott and Mr. F. L. Richardson are prominent amongst the names repeatedly associated with the beginnings of the BTW. There are also each of the Directors and Presidents, including Mr. Byers, the first director, and Mr. Joseph Foreman, the first president; Mrs. Ethel Riley Clark, Mrs. Dorothy Spencer, Mr. Robert Flippin, and Mr. James E. Stratten, each of whom served as executive directors for the period under study. At the same time, there were numerous individuals closely associated both in terms of giving and serving, many of which go unnamed in the records, and not the least of which are those that stood behind the main funding organization of its early years, the Community Chest, only one member of whom come to the fore, Dr. Ralph A. Reynolds, the CC's President at the time of the 1952 dedication of the BTW. According to BTW records, alumni of the BTW also include former Justice Alan Bousard, former State Assemblyman and SF Mayor Willie T. Brown, performer Johnny Mathis, basketball star Bill Russell, as well as the now notorious O.J. Simpson (who is depicted in an interior mural dating from c1977).



Fig.21 – SF Mayor Robinson officiating at BTW Groundbreaking, December 1951 (courtesy Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley)



Fig.22 – Mural in First Floor Conference Room

Of these persons, the one individual who stands out, and who is so recognized by inclusion in the biographical index of the San Francisco Library's History Room (one measure of "important persons" in San Francisco) is Mr. James E. Stratten. In addition to his service as Executive Director of the BTW at a pivotal time in its history – when the current property and building were acquired and developed – Mr. Stratten was, according to various news articles as well as his published obituary (attached), the first African-American to be appointed to a grand jury (1947); as well as the first African-American to

be appointed to the San Francisco School Board (1961), and the SF School Board's first African-American president (1964). He served as the BTW Executive Director from 1945-60.

Despite Stratten's identification as an important person in recent history, as well as his direct contribution to the development of the current BTW, the historic context underlying this evaluation is the social, educational and recreational history of this longstanding institution in the context of San Francisco's Western Addition. In this context, each of the various leaders of this institution and its program have contributed while, in the given context, none stand out as uniquely important individuals significant to our past.

### Architect and Architectural Design

Based on original permit records and drawings, as well as a rendering of the proposed BTW, the architect of their building at 800 Presidio Avenue was Lloyd Gartner, AIA, San Francisco, licensed California architect number 642. Queries about Gartner found no other records.

The style of architecture of the BTW is mid-20th century Modernistic, which is characterized by lean building masses, with horizontal bands of windows simply enframed, and accented with prototypically Moderne, fluted cement panels between windows at the front elevation adjacent to the entry. Such ornamentation is limited to the building front, with the rear and interior side elevation without any sort of embellishment. In this modern building, form absolutely follows function, as the building masses express the character of its uses – the low wing housing individual and small scale spaces, and the high wing with its vaulted roof shape monolithically enclosing the large gymnasium space.

Due to the lack of information about Gartner in the academic and architectural records, it is evident that Gartner is not an important architect, therefore the BTW is not the product of a master architect, nor is it representative of an important individual based on association to Gartner.

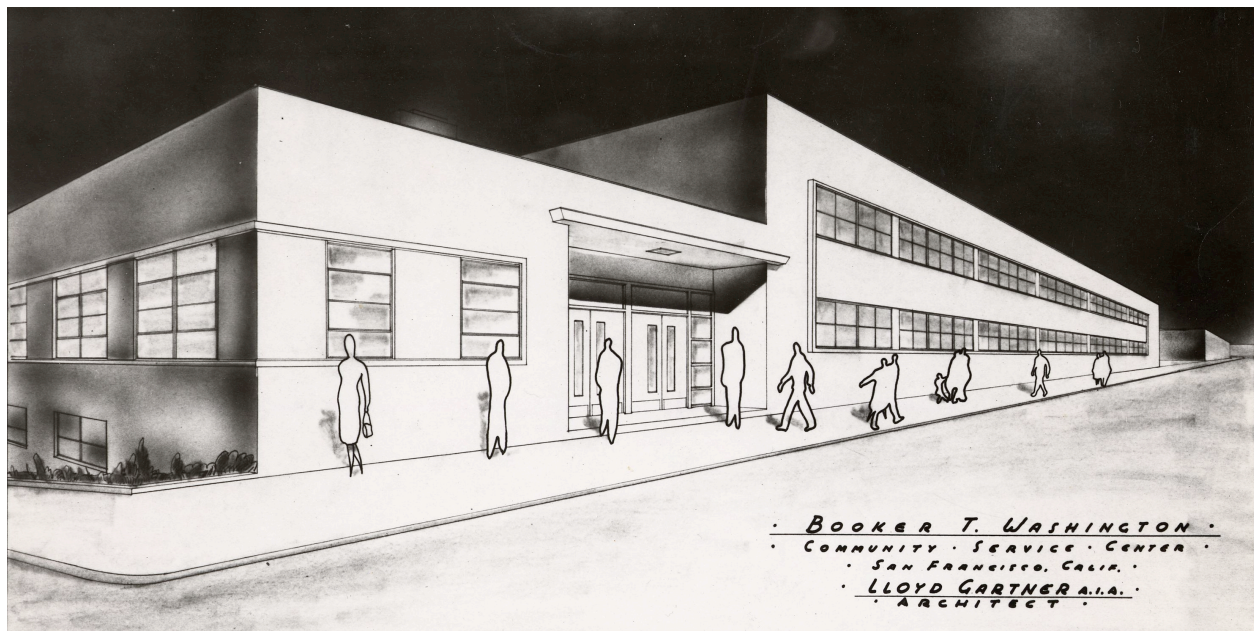


Fig.23 – BTW Rendering, 1951  
(courtesy SF Historical Photo Collection, SF Public Library)

## Historical Context

Legislation creating the National and California Registers requires that potential historic resources be evaluated within an “historic context,” which are defined by the National Register as “those patterns, themes, or trends in history by which a specific occurrence, property, or site is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within....history is made clear.”

While a basic historical context might be assumed to be that of community centers, and in particular those serving San Francisco, the reality is that the BTW was not substantially associated with other community centers. Instead, the founding and development of the BTW represents more substantial historical patterns of social, racial, educational and recreational relations and services specific to San Francisco’s African-American population, yet relative to the entire city, and spanning the period from the close of WWI in 1919 into the 1950s.

Throughout this period, at least until the post World War II years, the African-American population of San Francisco was very small relative to the overall population of SF – less than 1% before 1940 – and the particular segment associated with the community of the Booker T. Washington Community Service Center somewhat smaller still. Nonetheless, by 1940, the Western Addition neighborhood housed nearly two-thirds of San Francisco’s 4,860 African-Americans (Godfrey: p72). By 1950, at which time planning for the current BTW was underway, the population of San Francisco’s African-Americans had jumped to nearly 6%. With the Western Addition absorbing many of those newcomers, the neighborhood was, by then, recognizably African-American serving.

Though both the Emancipation and the conclusion of the Civil War were over 60 years in the past, the BTW was founded in 1920 under conditions of continuing racial segregation. In various references, it is noted as having been not simply a first, but a pioneering African-American institution, offering social, educational and recreational services to people for whom none were previously available. Moreover, the BTW not only succeeded but exceeded its original mission.

The uses and activities of the BTW remained fairly constant throughout its history, even as the institution evolved from providing social, educational and recreational opportunities for a group of people suffering from segregation, to an institution providing the same range of services to the community at large.

Thus, the particular circumstances of the establishment of its current property and building were not governed by the same premises under which the institution was founded. Despite this intentional adjustment, the BTW has a continuous history of serving a particular community and a particular locale.

Often, in cases involving relatively recent and potentially historic resources that are ordinary works of design or engineering, the content of the historical record tends to be minimal. In this case, even though the specific subject is an example of a recent and ordinary resource, the subject of the BTW spans the first half of the 20th century, and is likewise formed around an exceedingly important pattern of American history – African-American ethnicity and culture. Thus, the historical record for and about the BTW is surprisingly voluminous, in and of itself providing a basis for potential historical significance.

## Historic Resource Evaluation

This HRER has been requested by the Planning Department in order to provide a qualified opinion regarding the subject property's potential historic significance based on the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places (NR), the California Register of Historic Resources (CR), and the City of San Francisco.

The criteria used by each of the historic registers to evaluate potential historic resources differ somewhat in their focus, yet their primary evaluation criteria are in common, as summarized below (San Francisco directly employs the NR Criteria)

**NR-SF Criteria A&B/CR Criteria 1&2 – Associated events and/or persons:** Each of the historic registers under consideration include a criteria recognizing properties eligible for their association with events that have significantly contributed to the broad patterns of history, and for their association with the lives of persons significant to the past.

Based on the analysis outlined in the preceding pages, and with the benefit of more than twenty years from the time that the BTW was initially surveyed, it appears that the BTW is eligible for the CR under CR Criteria 1. Within the identified historic context of African Americans in San Francisco and California, the resource, the c1950 BTW building, is associated with events – the founding of an important African American serving institution, the BTW – that made important contributions to the cultural history of the City of San Francisco and the State of California.

As stated within the earliest survey record:

“Black men and women in the military during the First World War could not get assistance in finding housing, employment, or other needed services from general social service agencies like the Red Cross, YMCA, and YWCA. Even the military, then a segregated service, offered little assistance to its Black members and their families. The Booker T. Washington Community Services Center, Inc. was established in 1919 by Black club women in San Francisco who were concerned about the lack of social services made available to Black military personnel and their families. These women raised funds to establish and operate the Booker T. Washington Center. After World War I, when the need that created the center had passed, its board of directors changed the function. Since then, it has offered a broad range of services for both youth and adults in the Western Addition area of San Francisco.” (from Five Views, under A History of Black Americans in CA: Associations)

Specific reasons for limiting eligibility to the CR and to one criteria thereof are:

- That the identified events are local and regional, and do not constitute “significant” contributions to “broad” patterns of history.
- The c1950 BTW building, while bringing to fruition the early endeavors of the BTW organization and its purposes in the form of a new community center, was built under the auspices of expanded community purpose. The architecture of the BTW reflects that changing time and purpose.

**NR-SF Criteria C/CR Criteria 3 – Distinctive architectural and/or engineering characteristics:** Each of the historic registers also include a criteria recognizing resources that reflect or embody “distinguishing characteristics,” which are defined under the National Register's Criterion C as “the physical

features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period or method of construction."

"Type, period, or method of construction refers to the way certain properties are related to one another by cultural tradition or function, by dates of construction or style, or by choice or availability of materials and technology. A structure is eligible as a specimen of its type or period of construction if it is an important example of building practices of a particular time in history."

Previous evaluations identified this resource as ineligible for the NR and CR. However, it is apparent that those evaluations were not detailed research efforts. While the earliest survey in fact identified important historical associations – the history of Black Americans in California – while also identifying this as an historic site within that context, they formally concluded that the resource was ineligible. Yet, at that time, the BTW was no more than 30 years of age. While there are methods for promoting the eligibility of a resource less than 50 years of age, it can safely be presumed that this resource would not have been considered a candidate for special consideration, as the architecture of the BTW is not meritorious.

This same architectural point likely factored into the decision of ineligibility concluded under the 2003 Section 106 Review.

**NR-SF Criteria D/CR Criteria 4 – Prehistoric or historic information potential:** Under each historic register, eligibility may be established on the basis of a given resource having yielded or having the potential to yield prehistorical or historical information.

In this case, the BTW has not yielded any such information, nor is there potential for such historical information.

**Integrity:** In addition to finding significance based on one or more eligibility criteria, a resource must also retain integrity, i.e., the extent to which a resource retains sufficient original, physical form and materials with which its significance is conveyed. In this case, it can be demonstrated that each of the seven aspects of integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association) are in place, since the original resource is largely unchanged. However, the basis for eligibility identified herein is not architectural, but is an association to historical events. Therefore, the architectural aspects of integrity – design, materials and workmanship – are not of primary import.

The BTW building, as it stands today, does not effectively convey the historical events underlying this institution. Rather, what is conveyed by the current building and its programs is a mid-20th century community center serving its urban locale.

Moreover, it is an undistinguished building. And as its associations to events aren't readily conveyed, it does not appear eligible for the NR, or as a City of San Francisco Landmark.

Regardless, the BTW building is descended from the identified historical events. The significance of the resource lies therein, even if its association to those events aren't readily conveyed. Therefore, the conclusion of this author is that the resource is eligible for the CR under CR Criteria 1.

## Potential Historic Districts

No identified historic districts are located in this vicinity of San Francisco. With respect to potential districts, under this evaluation, the Planning Department also requested the preparation of a brief assessment of whether any may be present within the vicinity and, if so, what, if any, potential effects upon any potential district might occur as a result of the proposed project.

To complete a preliminary assessment, this author undertook the following steps:

- An initial reconnaissance of the neighborhood to initially identify unique buildings and concentrations thereof.
- An analysis of the vicinity based on Sanborn Maps, to determine the extent buildings dating from c1890, c1915, and c1950.
- A subsequent reconnaissance of the neighborhood to confirm which of the structures identified via Sanborn Maps yet remained.

For purposes of this effort, the vicinity consists of the 12 blocks bound by Geary Blvd. to the south, Presidio Ave. to the west, Pine St. to the north, and east to Broderick St., plus the irregular blocks to the west of Presidio Ave.

Many conspicuous older residences and rows of residential buildings stand within this vicinity. As with other, inner and, thus, older residential areas of San Francisco, many structures located at street corners are of particular interest, as the late-19th and early-20th century architecture of San Francisco creatively celebrated the street corners. There are also distinctive rows of residential buildings, again as there are in many older SF neighborhoods.

Throughout these blocks, there are many surviving structures from the period of the late-1880s to 1915, and especially so in the northern half of the vicinity, consisting of four blocks in particular: from Sutter to Pine in the north-south direction, and east-west from Lyon to Broderick. The primary concentration of dignified and often unique older residential architecture is centered at Baker and Pine Streets, and radiates out from there in both directions. Closer to the subject site, Lyon St. also has its share of quality older homes - assuming that any district would be one of unique older residences, though it is arguable whether another district of essentially Victorian era residences adds meaning to the City's historical landmarks. Rather, the City might better be served by adding different types of districts. And by adding unique, individual residences to its landmarks, several of which certainly stand in this neighborhood, again especially on Baker at Pine, and yet also surrounding the Lyon and Sutter street corner.

If a large district were desired, one might be carved out of this vicinity, from Broderick and Pine - perhaps extending north to California St. - to Lyon and Sutter, and perhaps, in the most liberal scenario, even west of Lyon to mid-block.

But the dense and mixed character of the blocks adjoining the main thoroughfares, Geary Blvd. and Presidio Ave., limits any potential district from approaching these extents, as the mixed use and density of these primary arteries affect the character of directly adjoining blocks.

There are also several relatively large apartment buildings in this vicinity which date from the early

1900s, several of which stand directly across Sutter St. from the BTW. However, there are no specific concentrations, nor do they appear to contribute to any form of a cluster or district. Upon the subject blocks, there are also a few, older, non-residential buildings - but no concentrations thereof.

### **Project Specific Impacts**

Continuing, directly, with the question of historic districts, there is no potential district that would encompass the site of the BTW. Realistically, any potential district would be centered two blocks east and another two blocks north, thus essentially at the opposite of the vicinity. If such a district were exercised, the proposed project would have no specific impacts.

The largest potential district that might be envisioned for this vicinity could include properties at the east side of the subject block. The proposed project would replace an existing institutional building essentially in its existing footprint, although with a substantially larger mass. Such a project would, like the existing building, continue to distinguish itself from the residential neighborhood to its east, and would not have any, additional, foreseeable effect on that neighborhood.

With respect to the individual resource – the existing BTW building – the proposed project would demolish the existing building and replace it with a new structure housing the BTW in its 2 lower levels, while adding 5 levels of housing above. The effect of the proposed project on the BTW, herein identified as eligible for the CR and, therefore, an historical resource, would necessarily constitute an adverse and significant impact.

### **Architectural Compatibility**

Of this evaluation, another Planning Department request is the need to analyze the proposed project's architectural compatibility with the existing setting.

The project setting is within a neighborhood of mixed density and use. Presidio Avenue and Geary Street are primary thoroughfares with highly mixed types of buildings and uses. The neighborhood due east of Presidio Avenue and the subject site are predominately residential in use and character.

As a result of topography, Presidio Avenue also lies steeply above the residential neighborhood directly to its east, thus creating a physical separation or distinction between the setting on Presidio and the adjacent neighborhood setting. And as each of the perpendicular streets approach Presidio Avenue, their densities and mixed uses increase.

With respect to the proposed project's architectural compatibility to its immediate setting on Presidio Ave. – which is the project's primary setting – the project can be defined as compatible with its neighborhood, given the mixture of building and property types, uses and scales that line and adjoin Presidio.

With respect to the adjoining residential neighborhood directly to the east, the proposed project is situated at the westernmost boundary of that physical neighborhood. Were the proposed building placed within that neighborhood, it would be a large and architecturally incompatible structure to the residential structures that predominate therein. However, the proposed building is situated at the extent of that neighborhood, defining the neighborhoods' boundary much as do other relatively large scale buildings along both Presidio Avenue and Geary Street. As such, the proposed project, while taller than



the existing BTW, would have no significant adverse impact on the existing neighborhood.

The proposed building is also located on a generous parcel, and is placed on Presidio, with room to step down to its adjoining neighbors directly east and south. A large interior yard would also remain open.

Altogether, in the opinion of this evaluator, the proposed project would not be architecturally incompatible with its immediate setting.

## Mitigation

The adverse and significant impact of the proposed project – the demolition of an historic resource – may be mitigated to a less than significant impact by the proposed replacement of the BTW community center uses and programs at the project site.

As discussed above under the topic of Integrity, the existing BTW building does not readily convey the historically significant events surrounding the origins and early development of the BTW institution. Therefore, the continuity of the institution rather than the building is at stake. A new building would house this institution's history and historical associations as effectively as the current building does, as long as the BTW uses and programs are continued.

Finally, in order to maintain a record of the institutional history and accomplishments, the existing BTW building should be recorded via archival photographs to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey prior to its removal. Such archives should be housed by the institution.

## Research Summary

### I. Previous Historical Resource Records

- A. An undated State of California Historic Resources Inventory Form DPR523 for the "Booker T. Washington Community Service Center," 800 Presidio Avenue, San Francisco; by Eleanor Ramsey, for the SOHP Minority Survey, 2pp. (provided by the Northwest Information Center, see attached).
- B. The above listed documentation provided the findings for the inclusion of the BTWCSC and its identification as a "cultural Site" by the National Park Service in an "on-line book" entitled Five Views: An Ethnic Site Survey for California; under the chapter *Black Americans in California*, by Eleanor M. Ramsey, Researcher and Writer, Institute for the Study of Social Change, University of California, Berkeley (@[http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/5views/5views2h17.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/5views/5views2h17.htm)).
- C. Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States Theme Study; by National Historic Landmark Survey, National Register, History and Education Program, National Park Service Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.; August 2000 (this document, located @[http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/nhl/school.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/nhl/school.htm), attaches a detailed NPS Form 10-900).

### II. San Francisco Department of Building Inspection

#### A. Permit Application Records

Date	Subject; Owner; Arch; Contr.
12/24/'51	Excavation and foundation; Community Clubhouse, occupancy Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, owner; Lloyd Gartner, AIA, SF, architect.
12/26/'51	Two-story Type 5 Structure; Community Clubhouse/Public Assembly, occupancy Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, owner; Lloyd Gartner, AIA, SF, architect; Baingo Const. Co., Inc., LA, general contractor.
01/30/'69	Added storage in playground; Booker T. Washington Center, owner (Mr. Ware, supervisor); Laurel Const. Co., general contractor.
01/13/'76	Interior demolition, installing new kitchen...; Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, owner; Gerson & Overstreet, architects; Trans-California Corp., general contractor.
06/22/'78	New concrete steps...wall heater...door...sheetrock on damaged wall; Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, owner; John Decker, general contractor.
10/07/'82	Replace existing wood doors with metal...new cabinets...wood bulkhead on play area...new acoustic tile ceiling...handicap ordinance...; Booker T. Washington Center, owner; Michael Terry/CDC, architect; Joseph F. Mannion Construction, general contractor.
06/21/'85	Refinish gym floor...walls & ceilings..., flooring in bathrooms...hardware...drain tiles on exterior wall south elevation; Booker T. Washington Comm. Ser. Center, owner; Owner, architect or engineer; Mayor's Office of Community Development, lender.
11/18/'86	Sidewalk repair, railing replacement..., painting, lighting...; Booker T. Washington Center, owner; Dennis L. Singer, architect; C.M.A. Const., general contractor.
09/16/'91	New roofing above gym; Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, owner; The Architectural Environment, architects.
12/28/'96	Administration wing roofing..., flashing and parapet cap; Booker T. Washington Center, owner; Sam's Construction, general contractor.

#### B. Permit Drawing Records

Date	Subject Arch
12/12/'51	Booker T. Washington Community Center; Lloyd Gartner, Arch., SF; 14 drawing sheets (corresponding to permit applications dated 12/24 and 12/26/1951).
12/17/'75	Pre-school Kitchen; Gerson/Overstreet Architects; 1 sheet (corresponding to permit application dated 01/13/'76).

11/19/'81 Booker T. Washington Center;  
Community Design Center (CDC), architects; 9 sheets (corresponding to permit applica-  
tion dated 10/07/'82).

08/03/'86 Rehabilitation Project at Booker T. Washington Service Center;  
Dennis L. Singer Architect and Planner; 3 sheets (corresponding to permit application  
dated 11/18/'86).

### III. San Francisco Public Library

#### A. San Francisco History Center

##### 1. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps:

a. 1886-1993 map (on microfiche) identifies the subject site as: a separate store/residential lot structures occupying corner of Central [later, Presidio] Ave. and Sutter St., facing the former; a south adjoining residential lot and structure facing Central [Presidio]; and the remainder, including a portion on Sutter, completely occupied by 1-story + basement structure labeled "Sutter St. Cable Co. Car Ho." (see fig.1).

b. 1899 map (on microfiche) identifies the same configuration as above, with the subject lot divided into 3 lots, except Geary/Sutter corner now a saloon rather than a store, and the larger portion labeled "Sutter St. Railway Co's Car Ho." Directly across Central [Presidio] Ave. is the "Laurel Hill Cemetery," and catercorner across Central are "Florists Nursery's & Green Houses". The extension of Geary St. beyond (west of ) Central (Presidio) Ave. is Point Lobos Ave. (see fig.2).

c. 1905 map (on microfiche) identifies the same, 3 lot configuration as above, yet with the large lot and structures identified as "United Railways of San Francisco Presidio Ave. Car Ho." (with Presidio Avenue now in use) (see fig.3).

d. 1913-1950 map (on microfiche) identifies the same, 3 lot configuration as above, yet all 3 lots and structures are labeled "vacant", with Geary St. continuing west of Presidio. Laurel Hill Cemetery remains across Presidio, and former florists, etc. catercorner across Presidio now several uses and structures, including "Terrazzo Factory" and "Concrete Works" in northern part of site, and Geary Street Car Barn of Municipal Railway" in southern 2/3 (see fig.4).

2. San Francisco Subject Files – Subjects searched included the BTWCSC, community centers, and the community chest. One subject record was found:

a. S.F. Associations, Community Chest of SF, containing a variety of CC related booklets and publications, including:

1) Speakers' Manual 1926 Appeal.

2) "Shall they be Forgotten?," Community Chest, October 23-Nov. 8, 1933.

3. San Francisco Examiner Clipping Files – Subjects searched included included the BTWCSC, community centers, and the community chest. Two folders of clippings were found, including the following pertinent clippings:

a. S.F., Booker T. Washington Community Center

1) "Miss McNair Will Star at Center Fete," 3-26-'66

2) Russ[jan] Center Wanted for Black Center," 6-16-'69.

b. San Francisco Community Centers

- 1) "Get Acquainted Week at Chest Centers," 2-10-'47
  - 2) "Building for Youth Drive Seeks \$3,570,000," 2-13-'48
  - 3) "Head for Drive Selected," 2-19-'48
  - 4) "Youth Appeal Mapped," 2-26-'48
  - 5) "Booker T. Center Ground Broken," 12-29-51 (see attached)
  - 6) "Community Centers Planning Open House," 4-4-'58.
  - 7) "Mortgage Benefit," 3-6-'66.
4. San Francisco Biographical Index: Subjects searched included BTWCSC, James E. Stratten, and Lloyd Garter. Seven index records were found for James E. Stratten:
    - a. "Friends to the Tired..."; SF Chron 10-11-53, pl, c4 [see fig.X].
    - b. "Stratten Taken off School Board"; SF Chron 05-06-'67; pl, cl.
    - c. "Appointed to be the first Negro on the Board of Ed"; SF Chron 03-23-'61, pl, cl.
    - d. "Negroes Split over Appointment"; SF Exam., 03-24-'61, pl.
    - e. "Stratten, the Man, the Job"; SF Exam., 03-24-'61, p9.
    - f. "Why Mayor Selected Stratten"; SF Exam., 03-27-'61, p3.
    - g. "James E. Stratten" [obit.]; SF Chron 04-05-'96, p?.
  5. San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection: Subjects searched included BTWCSC, community chest, 1433 Dividsadero, 2036 Bush, resulting in 2 images:
    - a. Perspective rendering of "Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, Presidio Ave. & Sutter St., San Francisco, Calif."; Clayton Van Wagner, AIA, Architect, Oakland, Cal.; (undated, unrealized project).
    - b. Perspective rendering of "Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, San Francisco, Calif."; Lloyd Gartner, AIA, Architect; (this drawing of the current center was published in the SF Call-Bulletin on Dec. 28, 1951 - see attached).
- B. San Francisco Newspaper Center:
1. "Colored Folks Open Community Center," SF Examiner, April 19, 1920; p11.
  2. "Better Citizens: Negro Center Does its Part," SF Chronicle, Oct. 6, 1941; p11.
  3. "Robinson to Officiate at Ground-Breaking Ceremonies," The Call-Bulletin, Dec. 28, 1951, p11.
  4. "Booker T. Washington Center Dedicated...for Use of All Races," SF Chronicle, Aug. 17, 1952; p10.
- B. San Francisco City Directories – Multiple years from 1920s–1940s were searched, identifying the following:
1. Washington, Booker T. Community Center:
    - a. 1935 - first listing at 1433 Divisadero (no prior listing for BTW).
    - b. 1943 - first listing at 2031 Bush.
    - c. 1945-46 - JE Stratten dir. 2031 Bush.
    - d. 1951 - final listing at 2031 Bush.
- IV. San Francisco Assessor-Recorder
- A. Sales Ledgers (1914-present) recorded the following subject property owners of lot #13, block 1073:

from	to	owner
pre-1914	04/230'21	United Railways of SF
04/23/'21	11/09/'44	Market St. Ry. Co.
11/09/'44	05/10/'46	Bert J. Edelman
05/10/'46	02/24/'48	Louise M. Weinstein
02/24/'48	present	BTWCSC

B. Assessors Records for 800 Presidio Avenue (file folder available over-the-counter via special request and Owner's authorization). One specific assessors records found:

1. Assessors Office Valuation Division Real Property Record, revised 1967, 1969, 1971-71.

V. SF Heritage: Subjects requested were the BTW, 800 Presidio, 1433 Divisadero, 2036 Bush, and architect Lloyd Gartner – no specific records were located.

VI. Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley

A. Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, Annual Reports, 1926-31 (F869 S3.4 B74).

B. San Francisco News-Call Bulletin Newspaper Photograph Archive; "Ground Breaking Ceremonies" connected with story "Booker T. Washington Comm. Ctr", Dec. 28, 1951, 4 negatives.

VII. Books and Publications

A. Daniels, Douglas Henry; Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco; University of California Press, 1990. The founding of the BTW is described on pages 159-60.

B. Godfrey, Brian; Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco's Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities; University of California Press, 1988.

C. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*; National Register of Historic Places, 1990, revised for the internet 2002.

D. San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No.18: Residential and Commercial Architectural Periods and Styles in San Francisco, City of San Francisco Planning Department  
 (@<http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/planning/preservation/PresBulletin18ARCHSTYLES.pdf>)