



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THAT CITY COUNCIL
DESIGNATE AS A CITY LANDMARK
DOLORES/NOTRE DAME SCHOOL
33 EAST MICHELTORENA STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
027-232-014
RESOLUTION 2016-5**

FEBRUARY 24, 2016

WHEREAS, Section 22.22.050 of the Municipal Code of the City of Santa Barbara grants the Historic Landmarks Commission the authority to initiate a designation process to recommend to the City Council the designation as a City Landmark of any structure, natural feature, site or area having historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural or aesthetic significance; and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2016, the Historic Landmarks Commission adopted Resolution of Intention 2016-2 to hold a public hearing to consider a recommendation to City Council for designation of the Dolores/Notre Dame School located at 33 East Micheltorena Street as a City Landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Staff Report concluded that the school at 33 East Micheltorena Street, completed in 1926 in the Spanish Renaissance subset of the Spanish Colonial Revival style with intricate cast stone details surrounding the entrance and windows, is significant for its historical and architectural influence on the heritage of the City; and

WHEREAS, the church has retained a high level of historical integrity as its location, setting, association, footprint, design, materials, and workmanship have not been altered so that it conveys its original 1926 appearance; and

WHEREAS, the proposed boundary of the City Landmark designation be five feet around the 1926 structure and includes the front sandstone wall. The school playground,

fields and the 1965 convent building are excluded from the designation as they do not contribute to the significance of the 1926 building.

WHEREAS, under the provisions of Article 19, Section 15308 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines and the City List of Activities Determined to Qualify for a Categorical Exemption (City Council Resolution Dated November 10, 1998), staff has determined that designation of the Dolores/Notre Dame School as a City Landmark is eligible for a Categorical Exemption; and

WHEREAS, Section 22.22.050 of the Municipal Code of the City of Santa Barbara states that the City Council may designate as a City Landmark any structure, natural feature, site or area having historic, architectural, archeological, cultural, or aesthetic significance by adopting a resolution of designation within 90 days following receipt of a recommendation from the Historic Landmarks Commission; and

WHEREAS, in summary, the Historic Landmarks Commission finds that the Dolores/Notre Dame School at 33 East Micheltorena Street, Assessor's Parcel No. 027-232-014, meets the following City Landmark criteria listed in section 22.22.040 of the Municipal Code:

- A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation;
- D. Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State, or the Nation;
- F. Its identification as the creation, design, or work of a person or persons whose effort significantly influenced the heritage of the City, the State, or the Nation;
- G. Its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship;
- I. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on February 24, 2016, the Historic Landmarks Commission of the City of Santa Barbara hereby recommends to the City Council that it designate the Dolores/Notre Dame School located at 33 East Micheltorena Street, Assessor's Parcel No. 027-232-014, as a City Landmark and makes findings based on the historic and cultural significance of facts presented in the Staff Report.

**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

Adopted: February 24, 2016

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
CITY LANDMARK DESIGNATION
STAFF REPORT**

**DOLORES/ NOTRE DAME SCHOOL
33 MICHELTORENA STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
027-232-014
FEBRUARY 24, 2016**

Background:

The 1926 school, was designed by noted Southern California architect, Ilton E. Loveless, in the Spanish Renaissance subset of the Spanish Colonial Revival style that played a significant part in the heritage of Santa Barbara. The school was commissioned as part of the Our Lady of Sorrows parish to provide Catholic education to the parish children. The school as well as the church were commissioned after the 1925 earthquake. The school, originally called Dolores School, was completed three years prior to the completion of the church.



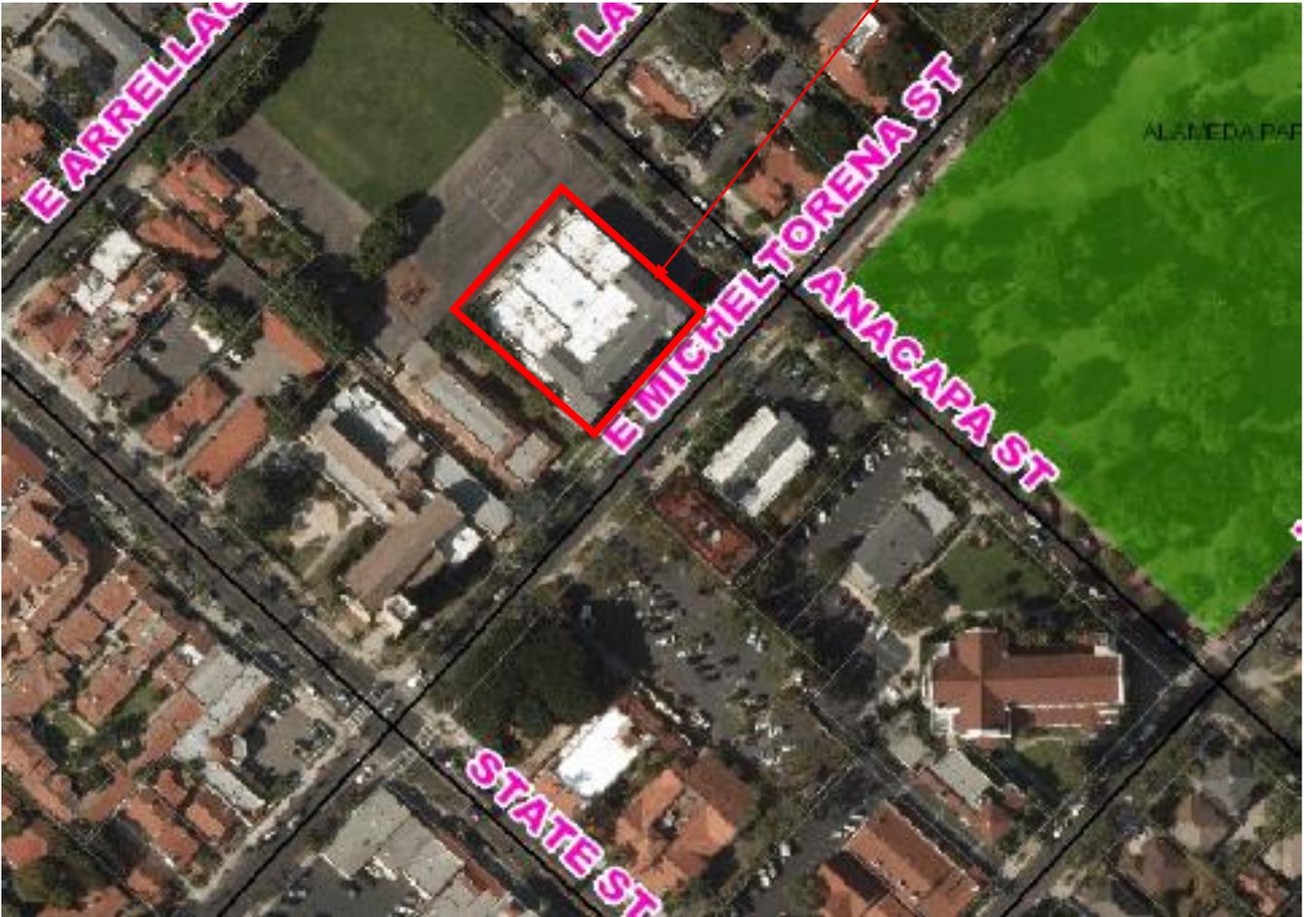
Above: View of the southern elevation of the Dolores/Notre Dame School with its ornate entrance. September 2015.

The school faces Micheltoarena Street, the street behind the location of the Our Lady of Sorrows Church and rectory. The entrance is at the top of a grand concrete staircase behind a low, ashlar cut sandstone wall topped with rosemary bushes and a low iron fence. The school property includes a large playground and playing field that extend to the East Arrellaga Street behind it. The playing side and rear school play grounds and fields are surrounded by a six foot chain link fence covered in hedges. In 1965, a separate convent and chapel building was added to the west side of the school and is on the same parcel as the school. The playfields, and convent building are not included in the proposed designation of the 1926 building.

The school demonstrates the architect's attention to intricate details. The cast concrete ornamental surrounds that adorn the entrance and window surrounds are highlighted against the smooth stucco walls. The structure has been on the City's Potential Historic Resource list since 1991 as a City Landmark for its architectural style and historical significance. It is the opinion of the Historic Landmarks Commission Designation Subcommittee that building is an excellent candidate for City Landmark designation

Vicinity Map

Red line indicates boundary of designation that includes the 1926 school building, and the front sandstone wall.



Historic Context:

The three-story school designed by architect Ilton E. Loveless was built on the corner of Micheltorena Street and Anacapa Street in 1926. The school opened as Dolores School in November 1926 and classes began on January 3, 1927. Dolores School served grammar school students (Kindergarten through Eighth grade). The school became Bishop High school from 1941 until separate building for Bishop High School was established in 1959 and Dolores School moved back to the building. After merging with Guadalupe School in 1974 the school was renamed as The Dolores/Notre Dame School. The philosophy of providing a quality Catholic education for all children lives on in the staff that serves the school today.



Above: The intricate front entrance surround is inspired by Spain's Renaissance/Plateresco style, September, 2015

The choice of the formal Spanish Renaissance subset of the Spanish Colonial Revival style shows that although more formal than some Santa Barbara Spanish Colonial Revival styles the building was sensitive to the fact that Santa Barbara was moving towards a Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean aesthetic.

Spanish Colonial Revival Style; Spain's Renaissance/ Plateresco Style.:

California's 52 year period of Spanish-Franciscan cultural impact and the following brief Mexican period brought in piecemeal elements of the Spanish period styles in the early twentieth century. The formal influence was a combination of high style details with vernacular mission and adobe buildings. Therefore, in the 1920s, in Santa Barbara, the Spanish Colonial Revival style sources were broadly and loosely interpreted. Each architect and educated client developed a favorite formal Spanish repertoire and some were inspired by buildings seen in travels to Spain, Mexico, or Spain's former South American colonies. However, most architects and clients tended to like examples clearly based on Spanish European designs rather than Mexican or South American interpretations of original Spanish structures.

The Dolores/Notre Dame school took inspiration from Spain's Renaissance, *Plateresco* style. The origins for the decorative style were from the sixteenth-century Italian sculptors and artisans who came to Spain to execute commissions for tombs and altars for Spanish nobles and church officials.

This period produced a defined style. In California, the ornamental Spanish Renaissance, *Plateresco* style was intermixed with other Spanish Revival styles as it appears around the ornate entrances with exuberant stucco and stone ornament. This style is seen in many dramatic entrance doors and window treatments of offices and shops in the Los Angeles area. Such formality of style worked well for offices and apartment buildings. The architect of the Dolores/Notre Dame School was practicing primarily in Los Angeles where the style was more popular than the simpler Spanish Colonial Revival styles seen in Santa Barbara. The style is unique and an important addition to architectural repertoire of Santa Barbara.

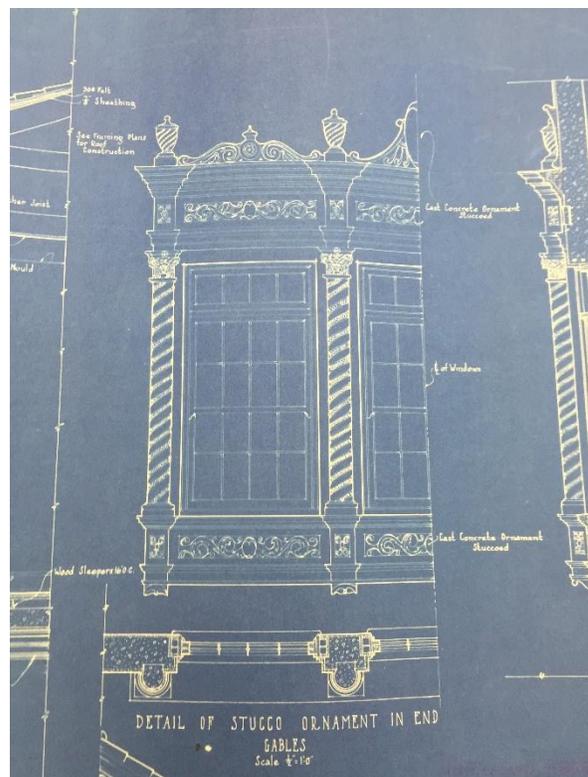
Architect:
Ilton E. Loveless 1892-1973:

Ilton Loveless was born in the District of Columbia on August 10, 1892. He moved with his wife to San Diego in 1919 where he began his career as an inspector with the U.S. Navy Public Works Office in 1920. He remained with the

Navy until 1923 when he opened his own architectural firm. He was listed as an architect in the San Diego City Directory until 1935. Loveless went on to build several buildings for the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Los Angeles. Loveless resided in Los Angeles until his death on March 27, 1973 at the age of 80. Loveless was well known in Southern California for his knowledge of mission architecture and was involved in an evaluation and study of the California missions for the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West. Loveless was contracted to restore the San Diego mission. In Los Angeles, he was contracted in 1929 as the architect for St. Mary's College, a girls' school which was said to be a \$1,000,000 academy built on a thirty-three and a half acre site in the Santa



Above: The third floor triplet windows in the gable have an elaborate window surround (original drawing below). The divided light, wood, double hung windows add an important detailed contrast to the stark stucco walls. September 2015.



Monica Mountains. The buildings included a chapel, dormitories, and classrooms. Other notable works of Ilton Loveless include: Mercy Hospital Historic Complex Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles; Incarnation Roman Catholic Church Project Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles; Saint Elizabeth Parish School; Van Nuys Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles; Saint Michael's Church, Rectory and Convent; San Diego Unified School District, Point Loma Junior-Senior High School; Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Hospital, Long Beach, CA; Restoration of the San Diego de Alcala Mission, 1930; Nazareth House, 1924; St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 1926.

Significance:

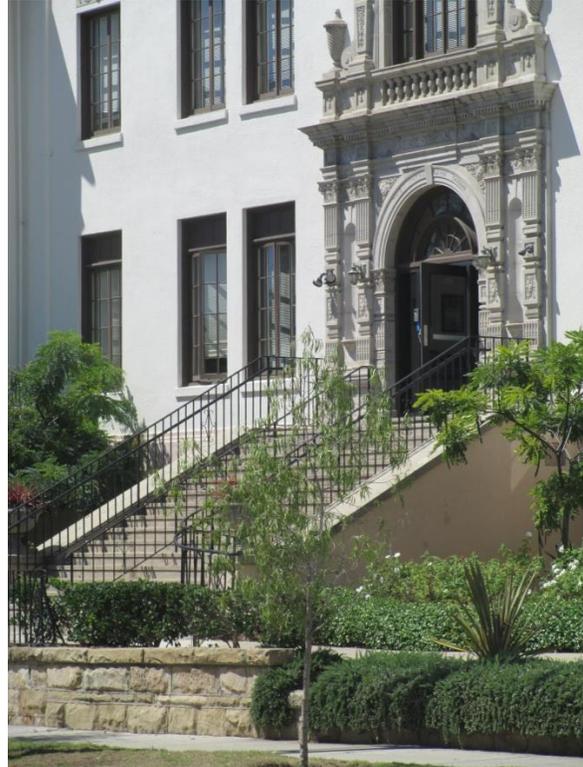
The City of Santa Barbara defines historic significance as outlined by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040. Any historic building that meets one or more of the eleven criteria (Criteria A through K) established for a City Landmark or a City Structure of Merit can be considered significant. Dolores/Notre Dame School meets the following five criteria:

Criterion A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation;

This building is an excellent example of the Spanish Renaissance subtype of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, which became an important part of Santa Barbara's heritage in the early 1920s, when the City deliberately transformed its architecture and look from an ordinary western style town into a romantic Spanish Colonial Revival city. This transformation was the result of the planning vision of a number of Santa Barbara citizens in the early 1920s with the founding of the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association, who urged that the town identify its individual character and then use planning principles to develop it. As an original 1926, Spanish Renaissance subtype of the Spanish Colonial Revival structure, it qualifies as a City Landmark because it is a significant part of the heritage of the City.

Criterion D, its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State, or the Nation;

Dolores/Notre Dame School's ornate front entrance and window surrounds that are highlighted against the simple smooth stucco walls are character defining features of the buildings Spanish Renaissance subtype of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Between 1922 and 1925, several major cultural buildings within the downtown core, were built using the architectural motif of the City's Colonial and Mexican past. As a result, when the earthquake occurred in 1925, the Community Arts Association viewed the disaster as an opportunity to rebuild the downtown in Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean/Mission styles that reflect the heritage of the city. The



Above: The intricate entrance at the top of the dramatic staircase above Micheltorena Street. September 2015.

building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Spanish Renaissance subtype of the Spanish Colonial Revival style that is an important architectural identity of Santa Barbara.

Criterion F, its identification as the creation, design, or work of a person or persons whose effort significantly influenced the heritage of the City, the State, or the Nation;

The building is significant as the work of architect Ilton E. Loveless, who was a major practitioner of the Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival styles in the 1920's in San Diego and Los Angeles. His work is significantly influential to the heritage of the City as he used the Spanish Colonial Revival style to transform the architectural style of the downtown area.

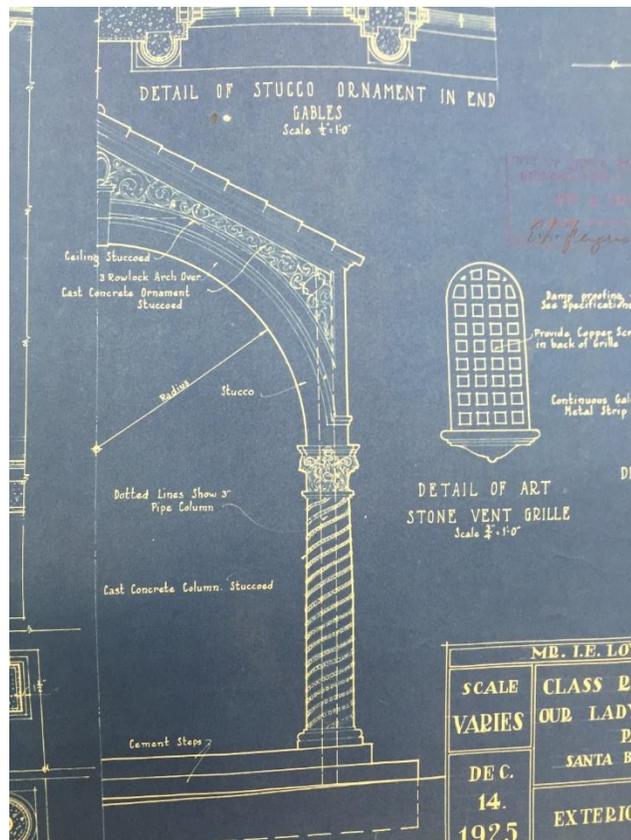
Criterion G, its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship;

The Dolores/Notre Dame School demonstrates outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials, and craftsmanship. The building's composition, massing and simplicity are exemplary of the style. The pre-cast stone entrance surround that is at the top of the steep staircase over Micheltorena



Above: The original drawings by architect Ilton Loveless demonstrate the building retains almost all of its original features so that it has a high historic integrity.

Below: Original drawings detailing the north side door surround.



Street, the window surrounds around the triple set of windows on the third floor and the true-divided light, wood, casement and double hung windows recessed into the stucco walls are a few examples of the outstanding attention to detail, materials, and craftsmanship that the school embodies that qualify it as a City Landmark.

Criterion I, Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an establish and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood;

The school rises over half a block of Micheltorena and Anacapa Streetscapes and has been an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood since 1926.

Historic Integrity:

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its original appearance. There are essential physical features that must be considered to evaluate the integrity of a significant building. Since 1926, its location, setting, association and feeling have not changed. The original design, materials, and workmanship have been retained so that the building conveys its original 1926 appearance. Thus, the building has retained a high level of historical integrity.

Recommendation:

Staff Recommends that the HLC adopt a resolution to recommend to City Council that the Dolores/Notre Dame School be designated as a City Landmark. Staff recommends the proposed boundary of the City Landmark designation be five feet around the 1926 structure and includes the front sandstone wall. The school playground, fields and the 1965 convent building are excluded from the designation as they do not contribute to the significance of the 1926 building.

Works Cited:

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