

April 29, 2026

1872 ALAMEDA DIABLO
Historic Resource Evaluation

The following report summarizes and develops the subject property's historical resource status for the purposes of applying for the Mills Act's historic preservation tax incentive.

1872 Alameda Diablo is a single-family property (assessor's parcel #195-200-003) and residence located within the unincorporated community of Diablo on the western side of Mt. Diablo in western Contra Costa County (figs.1-2). First mapped as lot #143 in the Mt. Diablo Estate tract (fig.3), 1872 Alameda Diablo is an identified contributor to the California Register and Contra Costa County register *Diablo Historic District* (fig.4).

Research efforts underlying this evaluation report have included the collection and review of permit records from Contra Costa County; historic telephone directories (at the Library of Congress, loc.org), newspapers (at the CA Digital Newspaper Collection, CDNC.org and at the San Francisco Library, sfpl.org), along with a site visit to record the property, its context and conditions. The current effort is also based upon previous historical research and documentation, by the present author, of other Diablo properties (1897 Calle Arroyo & 1850 Alameda Diablo), also for the purposes of the Mills Act.

Summary Descriptions

Site and Exteriors (figs.5-16)

The subject lot is a generally rectangular .413 acre parcel, its approximately 100 foot northern frontage on Alameda Diablo, its parallel side lot lines some 200 feet deep, its rear lot line on Diablo Rd. to the south. The property has a generous frontage and large front yard bisected, east-west, by a creek with both vehicular and pedestrian bridges to the house standing in the rear to the property the property.

The 1872 Alameda Diablo residence has been dated to 1926, the original 1-2 story (plus full basement) house a stucco walled and clay tile roofed Spanish Eclectic style design with a T-shaped plan, its front-facing, single-story, side-gabled main wing the stem and the 2-story front gabled westside wing the crossing bar.

To the original house an attached 1-story 2-car garage was added in the 1980s and an attached 2-story rear addition was added in the 2020s, both additions appropriately and compatibly designed to the form of the original house. The latter project, which successfully went through the County's historical review process and met rehabilitation standards and conditions, also added a raised terrace with entry steps and hardscape at the front of the house and a detached pool house in front of the extant pool off the northeast corner of the house. At the rear, that project sculpted the steep embankment and added a tall retaining wall to create usable outdoor space behind the residence.

In addition to the light-colored stucco and reddish clay tiles, existing exterior materials include metal clad (?) windows and doors with patterns of divided lites. Several of the frontward, east and west side openings are low-arched, others rectilinear. A painted, wood framed and detailed balcony over which a sloped roof extends hangs above the front entry in the front crook of the T. The entry way

below has a bracketed projecting roof that engages the underside of the balcony and a Spanish tile clad stoop. Rounded roof gutters and downspouts are copper. There is an ornamental balconette at the front upper story opening of the side wing and another at the rearward upper west side opening. Smaller features include clay tile attic vents embedded in the upper gabled walls and ornamental wall-mounted metal lanterns.

Of the original materials and elements, the bulk have been replaced in-kind. As such, exterior materials at the additions correspond to those at the original residence.

The site is uniquely configured. While creek channels cross numbers of adjoining and nearby properties, here the creek prominently crosses in front of the house, with both concrete vehicular and wooden pedestrian bridges crossing the deep channel, the vehicle bridge with wooden guardrails each side, both with concrete structural abutments. In the channel and frontage are a number of mature trees and there is a low stone wall along the street. Which altogether, from the street, makes for a distinctive landscape in the foreground with the proud residence in the background. Its landscape once included olive trees, thus the Los Olivos nickname, yet they no longer exist and the next generation of its landscape, including creek channel treatments, are pending.

Interiors (figs.17-22 + floor plan figs.23-24)

The house Interiors consist of living spaces – including living, dining, kitchen, family room – at the first floor. From the entry way, a stair ascends to the second floor bedrooms and which an elevator alongside the kitchen also accesses. A second stair below the main stair descends to the basement. The interiors reinforce the architectural quality and character of the house. As this is a private residence, no interior spaces or features are identified herein as having historic importance.

Summary History and Summary of Historic Significance

As noted, 1872 Alameda Diablo is an identified contributor to the California Register and Contra Costa County register listed *Diablo Historic District*. The following are excerpts from the previous historical records for 1872 Alameda Diablo (attached).

From CA Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) from 523 A&B for 1872 Alameda Diablo, dated 2/1/2001:

This white stuccoed Spanish style two-story home has a red tile roof and upper level verandahs and six-foot arched windows. It is set back, across Green Valley Creek, and accessed by both an arched foot bridge and an auto bridge with planter boxes. The property is called Los Olivos for the many olive trees that the original owner, Putnam, planted on the front of the half-acre property. There is a pool and a number of patios present. The house has been added onto and altered in the rear, but retains a great deal of integrity. It is in excellent condition.

The home was built in 1926 by Cecil Putnam who lived there until 1963. He was able to build the house because he won the lot in a golf match from next door neighbor E.G. Macaulay, owner of Macaulay Foundry in Oakland. Putnam worked for Warner Corset Company. The house stood vacant for two years – 1963 to 1965 – and suffered from neglect. Since 1965, it has had four owners, each renovating and restoring part of the home. The current owners, Ann and John Smith, have finished the project, restoring the home to nearly pristine condition while updating where needed. This house is a good example of a Spanish influenced house and is a contributor to the Diablo Historic District.

From *Diablo's Treasures: The Historic Homes & Heritage Oaks of Diablo*, 2021 (p.16):

"Los Olivos"

1872 Alameda Diablo

Original Owner: Cecil and Marilyn Putnam

Architectural Style: Spanish Revival

Built in 1926

Cecil Putnam built "Los Olivos" in 1926. Legend has it that Putnam won the lot at 1872 Alameda Diablo in a golf match with his next-door neighbor H. C. Macaulay who lived at 1884 Alameda Diablo. Putnam was a retired Army Colonel and obviously a very good golfer! He owned the Warner Corset Company in San Francisco. The company was wiped out in the 1906 Earthquake, and he relocated the business to Oakland. His golfing buddy neighbor also owned a business, the Macaulay Foundry, which was also wiped out by the 1906 Earthquake and prompted a move across the bay to Berkeley.

The two-story, white stucco, Spanish-style home with red tile roof and two small balconies is set back among lovely trees along Green Valley Creek and accessed by an inviting footbridge and a wooden auto bridge. Unlike most of the summer cottages at the time, the house was constructed as a year-round residence. It included a basement, which was also quite unusual for Diablo. The fireplace is original to the house, and some of the windows probably are as well. The name "Los Olivos" originated from the many olive trees that Putnam planted on the front of the property (which have since been removed).

In 1963, Bob and Jackie Schab became the second owners after purchasing the home from Cecil Putnam's son. They did extensive renovating during their 15 years of ownership. Yoush Vadia, in the U.S. on a research grant from Arco, bought the home in 1979, retrofitted the basement and renovated the house extensively again in the 1980s. Earl Purcell became the subsequent owner, and then sold the home to current owners John and Anne Smith in 1996.

As were most of the originally developed homes in Diablo, 1872 Alameda Diablo was built as a country home for its city residents, who resided in Oakland in the period of their family's ownership, 1926-1963. In 1963, the Schabs made this their residence and which single-family use has continued under its successive owners.

From the time of its mapping in 1916 until the mid-1960s, the street name was Camino Tassajara, thereafter Alameda Diablo.

The original owners were Cecil M. and Marilyn Putnam, who resided in the nearby city of Piedmont. General research about the Putnams informs that he was an insurance broker and that both of them were good golfers. Per Contra Costa directories, coincident with the period of the Putnam's ownership of their Diablo property, his father, Kingman Putnam, also resided in Diablo, the possibility being that he lived at 1872 Alameda Diablo.

No original or early plans or photos of this residence have been located, no original designer or builder is identifiable and there are no building permit records that predate 2000, at which time it is generally assumed that the property was largely original, though the attached garage was reportedly added in 1984. Since, as recent permit records indicate, there have been alterations and additions have included:

<i>date</i>	<i>work</i>	<i>owner</i>
2010	HVAC replacement	John O. & Angie G. Smith

2013	Foundation underpinning	Smith
2021	Roofing and roof structural alterations, stucco repair	Smith
2022-25	Additions and remodel	Carlos & Lucy Hidalgo

Based on the record and a current site visit and inventory, historic character-defining features of the site and building are:

@ Site

- Generous landscaped frontage with low stone wall at roadside
- Landscaped creek channel bisecting the site, with associated vehicular and pedestrian bridges

@ Original Residence

- 1-2 story, T-plan, front and side gabled building form with full basement
- Stucco wall cladding
- Spanish-style clay tile roofing with copper gutters and downspouts
- Second story wooden balcony above entry
- Overhanging entry roof with ornamental bracket
- Ornamental metal balconettes
- Multi-lite windows and doors, some low-arched
- Clay tile vents in gables
- Ornamental exterior lighting
- Contributing additions:
 - Garage
 - Rear wing

No interior spaces or features of this private residence are character-defining.

10 Year Mills Act Recommendations

The subject residence and property are well cared for and in good condition. Current and near-term rehabilitation of historic features includes:

<u>Proposed scope at original residence</u>	<u>Rehabilitation cost</u>
1. Reroofing and roof maintenance	\$150,800
2. Door and window replacement and maintenance	\$166,500
3. Balcony restoration, replacement and maintenance	\$30,700
4. Structural and waterproofing repairs	\$235,100
5. Repair and maintenance of bridges at creek	\$147,250
6. Landscaping at frontage	\$62,000
7. <u>Tree maintenance</u>	<u>\$15,000</u>
Total est. rehab and maintenance cost: \$807,350	

Rehabilitation work recommendations 1-5 were competed in 2025; recommendations 6-7 are proposed to be completed within 2 years (by 2028); recommendation 6 and all maintenance work will be completed in the 5 to 10 year period (2031-2036).

Rehabilitation Project Evaluation

The following evaluates the proposed rehabilitation work relative to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards)* and, specifically, the *Standards for Rehabilitation*, which is defined as follows:

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

Rehabilitations and additions to 1872 Alameda Diablo were substantially completed in 2025 while the frontward site rehabilitation includes in progress and future work. The overall rehabilitation project was reviewed, updated and subsequently approved by C.C. County's Department of Conservation and Development, in the course of that process found to meet the Standards. Per the above rehabilitation work program, specifically required rehabilitation work under the approved project has been included herein along with pending and future rehabilitation work and maintenance.

The following lists the ten *Standards for Rehabilitation* and analyzes the rehabilitation and maintenance plan with respect to each.

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

The subject property was historically a single-family residence. The indicated work retains and rehabilitates the single-family residential use. As such, *Standard 1* is met.

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

The identified rehabilitation and maintenance work retains or selectively replaces in-kind all identified characteristic forms and features of the house and its property, in so doing *Standard 2* is met.

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

The indicated work fully respects the overall form and individual characteristics of the historic house and its associated site. The work does not add or copy any features or elements from this or other historic properties. Thus, the project meets *Standard 3*.

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

The identified character of the subject house dates to the period of its origins and early history. Its bridges at the creek are either original or early structures that, as they are directly associated with the original and early property, have gained significance in their own right and which, like the house, are indicated to be rehabilitated, so *Standard 4* is met.

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

All identified character defining forms, features, finishes, examples of construction techniques and craftsmanship embodied in the house and its site are to be retained and rehabilitated or carefully replaced in-kind. Consequently, the proposed work meets *Standard 5*.

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

The work program rehabilitates and maintains deteriorated exterior features and materials of the original/early house and site along with selective replacement of irreparable features and materials, as required, to equal the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials, and as no missing features are indicated to be replaced, the rehabilitation work meets Standard 6.

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

All treatments of identified historic materials are to be careful and protective in order to avoid damage. As such, the project also meets with Standard 7.

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

The proposed rehabilitation program has no potential to disturb archeological resources.

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

As summarized, rehabilitation of the existing house and site have been designed to retain and carefully replace historic materials and features, while its new additions have been designed to be appropriately differentiated as well as compatible to the historic house and its setting. As the rehabilitation work protects and sustains the integrity of this historic residential property, the work meets Standard 9.

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

Again, new additions have been deferentially designed as rearward, minimally attached or detached additions, so the rehabilitation work also meets Standard 10.

In conclusion, since the indicated work program meets each applicable Standard, then the work readily meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Signed:



Mark Hulbert Preservation Architect

attached: figs.1-24 (pp.7-17); 1872 Alameda Diablo-DPR forms (2 pp.)



Fig.1 – 1872 Alameda Diablo (highlighted, approx.) – Location aerial (Google Earth 2025, north is up)

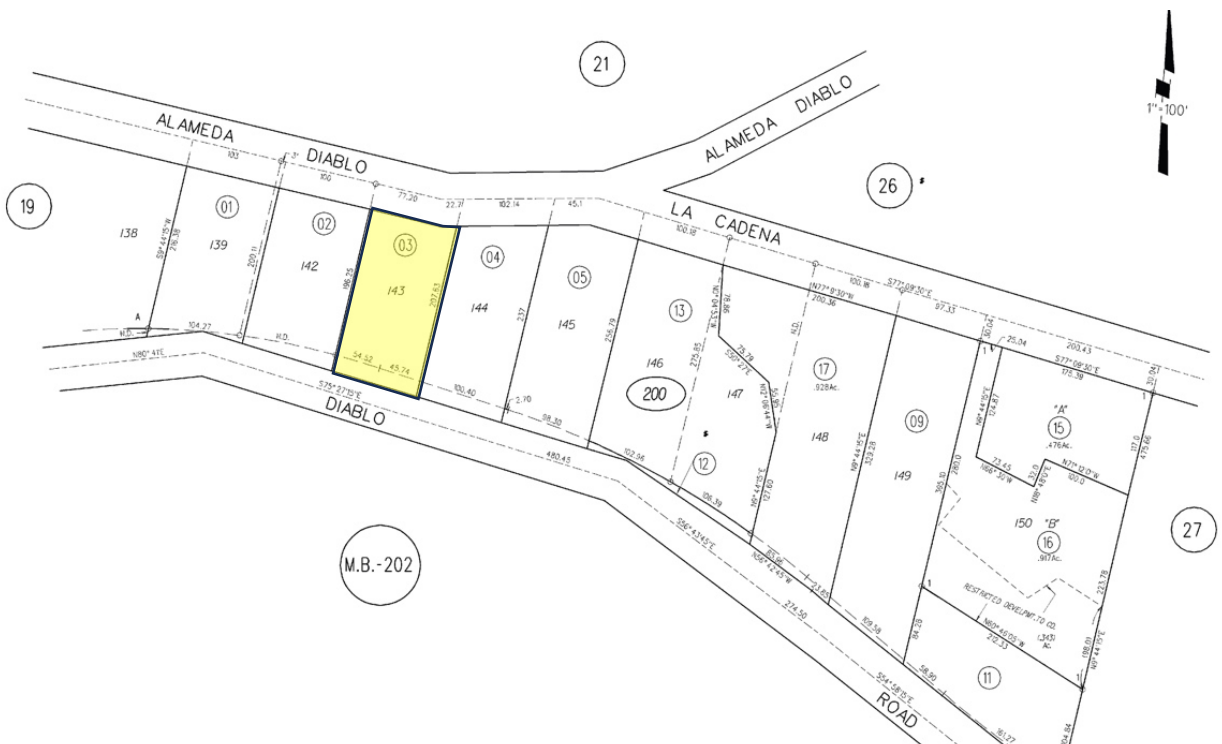


Fig.2 – 1872 Alameda Diablo (highlighted) – from Assessor's parcel map

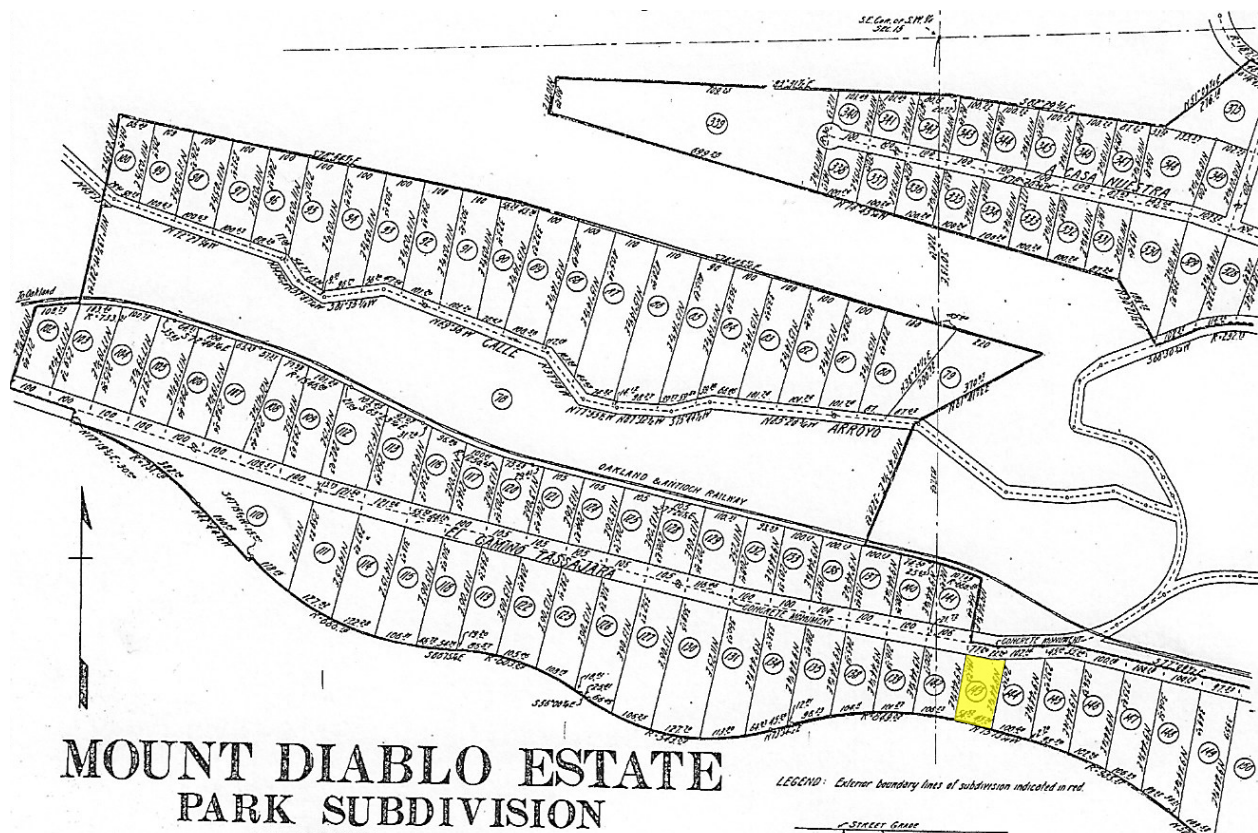


Fig.3 – 1872 Alameda Diablo (highlighted) – 1916 Tract map

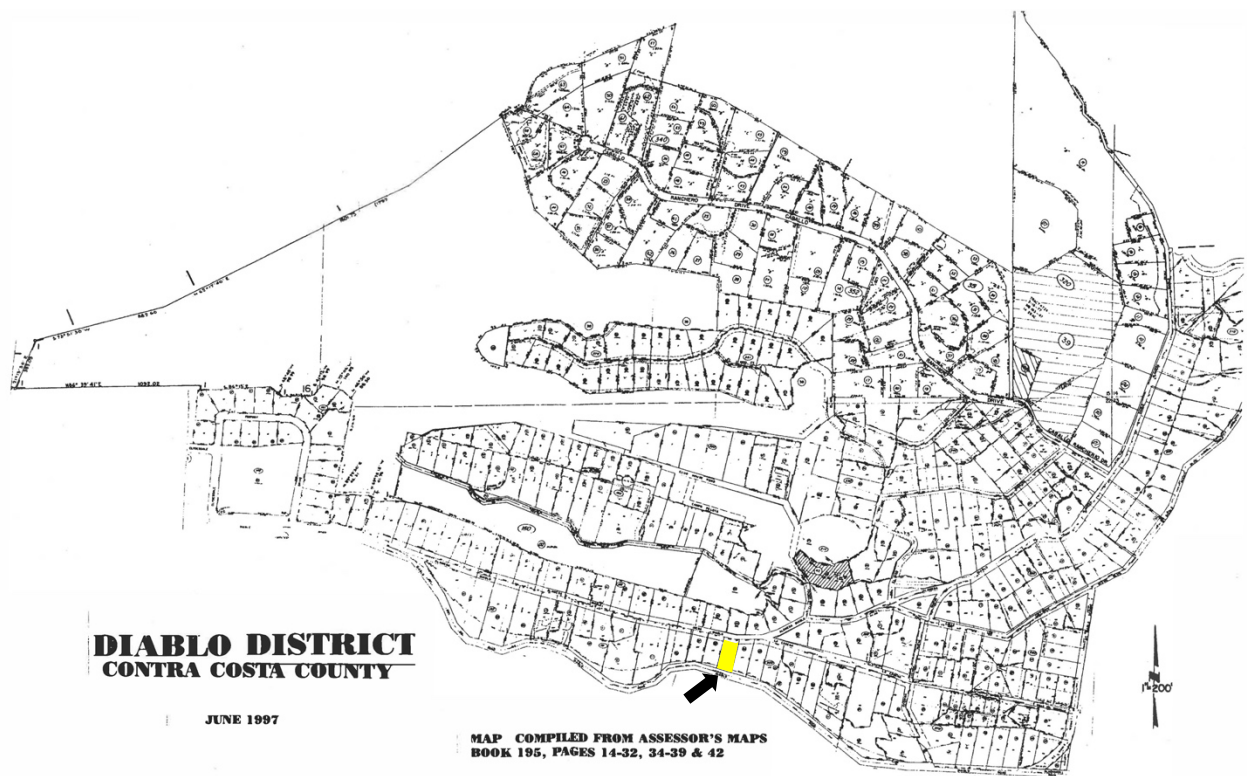


Fig.4 – 1872 Alameda Diablo (arrow+highlighted) – Diablo Historic District map, 2002

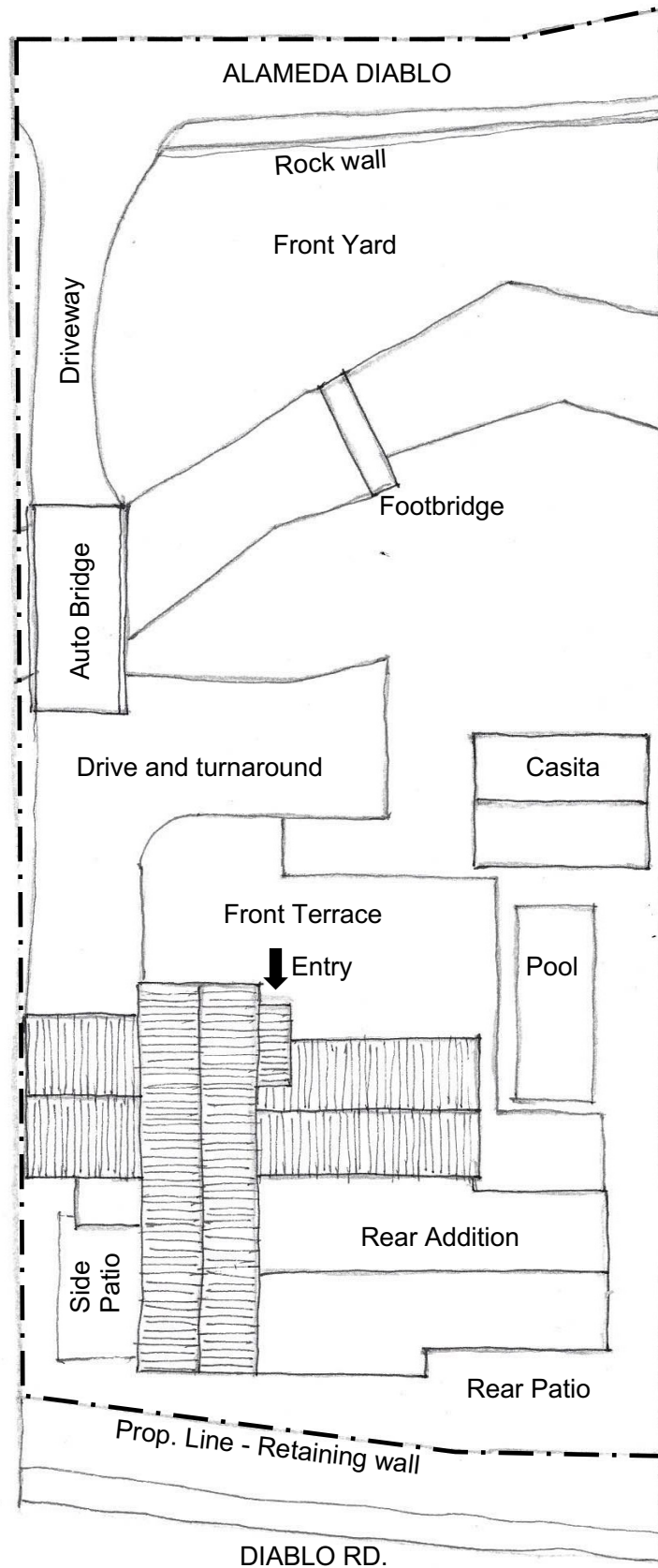


Fig.5 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Site plan depicting original/early house and garage (w/ hatching) with rearward and detached additions (north is up)



Fig.6 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Front (north) of house from street (figs.6-24, MH 2025)



Fig.7 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Front from driveway & bridge



Fig.8 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Front (north) c2002 (from *Diablo Treasures*, p16)



Fig.9-10 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Bridges at creek



Figs.11 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Front entry way



Fig.12 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Front and east side of house with rear addition at left



Figs.13-14 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Rear addition (left) and rear add with pool house beyond (right)



Figs.15-16 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – West side (left) and rear (right)



Fig.17 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Living Room (figs.17-22, Hidalgo 2026)



Fig.18 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Living Room doors and entry/stair hall



Figs.19-20 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Stair landing (left) and second floor doors at front balcony



Fig.21 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Family Room



Fig.22 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Kitchen

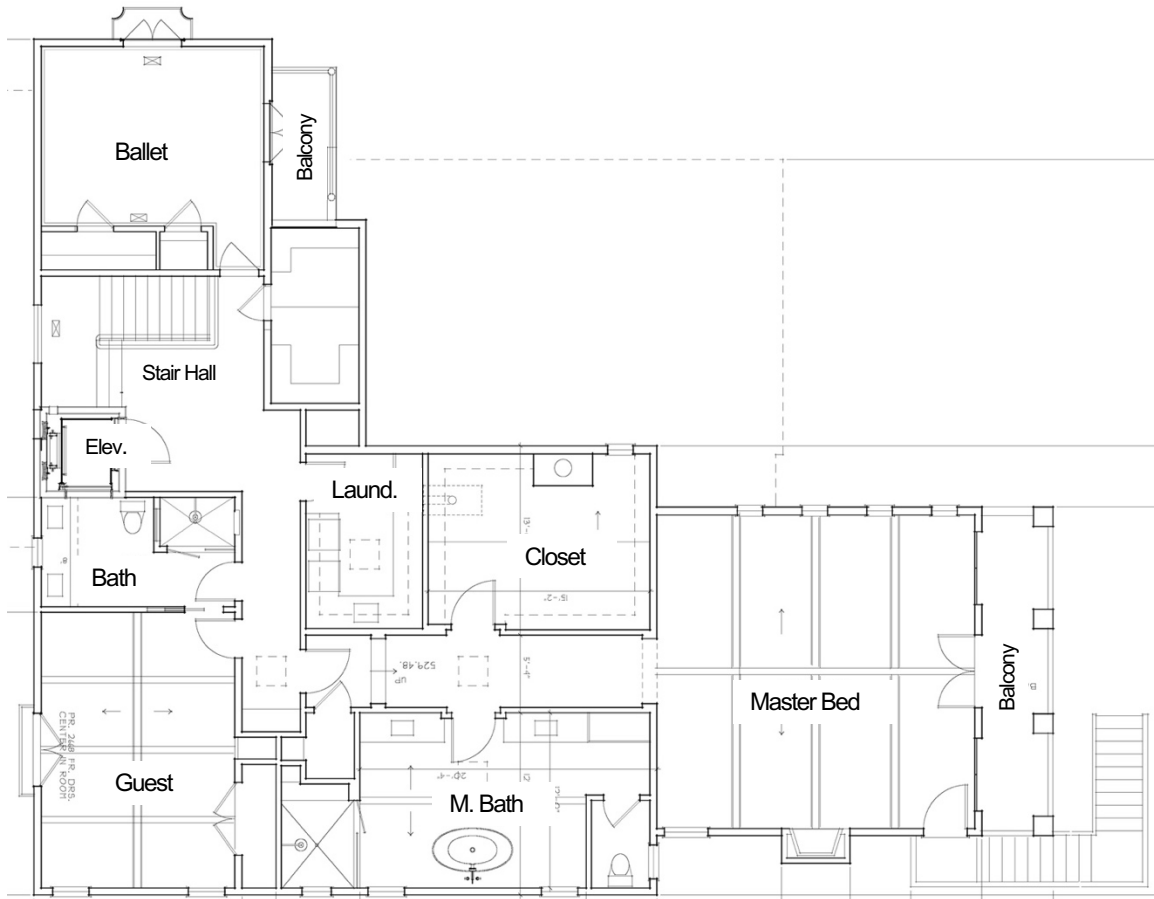


Fig.23 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – Second floor plan (front/north is up)



Fig.24 – 1872 Alameda Diablo – First floor plan (front/north is up)

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____

HRI # _____

Trinomial _____

NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____

Review Code _____ Reviewer _____

Date _____

Page 1 of 2

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1872 Alameda Diablo

P1. Other Identifier: _____

P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted a. County Contra Costa

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date _____ T _____ ; R _____ ; 1/4 of _____ 1/4 of Sec _____ ; B.M. _____

c. Address: 1872 Alameda Diablo City Diablo, California Zip 94528

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/linear resources) _____ ; _____ mE/ _____ mN

e. Other Locational Data (Enter Parcel #, legal description, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Right side of Alameda Diablo from front entrance. Only Spanish style home on that side of the street.

Parcel No. 195-200-0030

P3. Description (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This white stuccoed Spanish style two-story home has a red tile roof and upper level verandahs and six-foot arched windows. It is set back, across Green Valley Creek, and accessed by both an arched foot bridge and an auto bridge with planter boxes. The property is called Los Olivos for the many olive trees that the original owner, Putnam, planted on the front of the half-acre property. There is a pool and a number of patios present. The house has been added onto and altered in the rear, but retains a great deal of integrity. It is in excellent condition.

P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2 - Single Family Property

P4. Resources Present ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)
Photo looking south

P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:

☐ Prehistoric ☒ Historic ☐ Both

built in 1926
Deed, County Records

P7. Owner and Address

John and Ann Smith
1972 Alameda Diablo
Diablo CA 94528

P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)

Roberta Seabury
Diablo Historic Preservation Committee
1904 La Cadena PO Box 535
Diablo CA 94528

P9. Date Recorded: 2/1/2001

P10. Survey Type: (Describe)
Neighborhood Survey

P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none")

Attachments ☐ NONE ☐ Continuation Sheet ☐ District Record ☐ Rock Art Record ☐ Other: (List)
☐ Location Map ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Artifact Record
☐ Sketch Map ☐ Archaeological Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Photograph Record

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary # _____

HRI # _____

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NRHP Status Code

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1872 Alameda Diablo

B1. Historic Name: *Los Olivos*

B2. Common Name: *Smith residence*

B3. Original Use: *Residential*

B4. Present Use: *Residential*

B5. Architectural Style: *Spanish style*

B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built in 1926 as a summer home. 1984, a two car attached garaged added; Bill Mageloff, architect.

B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: _____

Original Location: _____

B8. Related Features: *Footbridge, car bridge, Green Valley Creek runs through front of property, pool, patios*

B9a. Architect: *Unknown*

b. Builder: *Unknown*

B10. Significance: Theme: *Comm Plan Dev, Recreation & Architecture* Area: *Contra Costa County*

Period of Significance: *1912-1929* Property Type: *Residential*

Applicable Criteria: *1 & 3*

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

The home was built in 1926 by Cecil Putnam who lived there until 1963. He was able to build the house because he won the lot in a golf match from next door neighbor E.C. Macaully, owner of Macaully Foundry in Oakland. Putnam worked for Warner Corset Company. The house stood vacant for two years - 1963 to 1965 - and suffered from neglect. Since 1965, it has had four owners, each renovating and restoring part of the home. The current owners, Ann and John Smith, have finished the project, restoring the home to nearly pristine condition while updating where needed. This house is a good example of a Spanish influenced house and is a contributor to the Diablo Historic District.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) *HP2 - Single Family Property*

B12. References:

See continuation sheet of district form for references.

B13. Remarks:

B14. Evaluator: *Diablo Historic Preservation Committee*

Date of Evaluation: *2/1/2001*

(This space reserved for official comments.)

