



Our Mission: To identify and preserve the sites and structures of architectural and historic significance in the Bayview-Hunters Point District, for the benefit of its residents and for the larger San Francisco community.

founded in 2004 registered and established public benefit organization: May 1, 2005

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27 October 2017

Mr. Michael Li
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103
michael.j.li@sfgov.org

Re: **CASE NO. 2014 002541ENV** INDIA BASIN SHORELINE PARK, 900 INNES AVE., INDIA BASIN OPEN SPACE, AND 700 INNES AVE., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Mr. Li,

After reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed India Basin Mixed-Use Project, with particular attention paid to the Cultural Resources Supporting Information under Appendix C, **The Bayview Historical Society recommends a Full Preservation Alternative** with respect to the Shipwright's Cottage at 900 Innes Avenue; the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard site at 900 Innes Avenue; the Allemand Brothers Boatyard site, and 838-840 Innes Avenue related structures and pathways.

The Bayview Historical Society commissioned the initial India Basin Historic Survey in 2008, and our members have been active in supporting and advocating for the retention and restoration of cultural resources in the community. We worked with the India Basin Neighborhood Association, in 2006, in their tireless efforts to designate the Shipwright's Cottage at 900 Innes Avenue as San Francisco Landmark #250. In 2013, we initiated a process with the San Francisco Planning Department/ Historic Preservation Commission to cite the prior owners of 900 Innes Avenue due to violation of the U.S. Department of the Interior 'Demolition by Neglect' ordinance. We assembled an archival team to document condition of 900 Innes Avenue, and corresponded with the owners, demanding repairs. Our challenge to SFDBI regarding abatement of repairs resulted in a repair of roofing system at 900 Innes, thus saving the building from further deterioration and loss at the time.

We believe that continuing to preserve this landmarked building is only a part of the story, and that additional preservation of adjacent resources is key to retaining the overall historical significance of the area.

As is noted in the descriptor for the **Full Preservation Alternative**, that action would be 'similar to the proposed project and variant, but would include the rehabilitation to Secretary of Interior (SOI) Standards of all three buildings (the Shipwright's Cottage, the Boatyard Office Building, and the Tool Shed and Water Tank building) that are significant features of the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard and contribute to the boatyard's CRHR eligibility. The Full Preservation Alternative would also propose that plantings and new park furniture would be designed to retain the industrial character of the cultural landscape.' We suggest that these comprehensive preservation steps are entirely consistent with the opinions rendered by the senior consultants to the Draft EIR.

For example, the Page and Turnbull Report provides this overview to the Cultural Resources section:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report evaluates five properties, or sub-areas, within the project area determined to be over 50 years in age, therefore considered potentially eligible for listing in the California Register. These sub- areas are: the Shipwright's Cottage at 900 Innes Avenue; the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard site at 900 Innes Avenue; the Allemand Brothers Boatyard site; 838-840 Innes Avenue; and 702 Earl Street. No other properties or features within the project area are of an age to qualify for listing in the California Register. Page & Turnbull's findings indicate that three California Register-eligible properties exist: the Shipwright's Cottage (previously designated as San Francisco Landmark #250 under Article 10 of the Planning Code); the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard site, including three buildings and several objects and landscape features; and the former boatyard building at 702 Earl Street. These properties would therefore be considered historic resources for the purpose of review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Appendix C_Cultural Resources Supporting Information_ Part2:Page and Turnbull Report:
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Further noted in Appendix C. 3.1.1. , under Federal Regulations, “ Historic Sites Act (1935). The Historic Sites Act, Title 16, Section 461 and following of the United States Code (16 USC 461 et seq.), declares a national policy to preserve historic sites, buildings, antiquities, and objects of national significance, including those located on refuges. The Historic Sites Act provides procedures for designation, acquisition, administration, and protection of such sites.” and “ California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 4307. This state preservation law prohibits removal, injury, defacement, or destruction of objects of paleontological, archeological, or historical interest or value.”

We believe that the historical interest in the area is supported by the obvious ‘value’ of the people and activities which are clearly documented and understood. This local, Bayview-based history is largely unknown to many in San Francisco, yet the India Basin activities in the late 19th Century are reflective of the actions and passions of our City’s pioneers.

“Upon relocating to the northern shore of the remote Hunters Point peninsula, the immigrant shipwrights were finally able to begin building scows and other vessels in one location for over half a century without disturbance. Noting the concentration of family-run boatyards in the area, an article in the November 1869 edition of the San Francisco Real Estate Circular stated that “South San Francisco will undoubtedly be one of the most valuable locations for shipbuilding and manufacturing purposes in the county.”⁵² The boatyards that operated at India Basin were small-scale and tended to operate with informal verbal contracts. Their boatyards were frequently home-based industries, with their houses located on or near the boatyard properties. Despite their small scale, the manufacturing and repair of hand-made sailing vessels was vital to San Francisco’s distinctive maritime-based economy. According to the 1880 Census schedules, several of the first settlers in India Basin were English, including Albion Brewery’s John Burnell and Reverend George E. Davis, a pioneer from London who moved to the corner of 8th Avenue South (Hudson) and ‘H’ (Hawes) Street in 1873. Other European immigrants who moved to India Basin in the 1860s and 1870s included Netherlands-born Johnson J. Dircks (1869), William Munder (1869), Hermann Metzendorf (1872), Edmund Manfred (1875), and Fred Siemer (1886), all from Germany. Ireland contributed John McKinnon (1868) and James Pyne. Denmark was a primary source of boat builders, including O.F.L. Farenkamp (1877), Henry Anderson (1893), and Otto Hansen.

The first known shipwright to move to India Basin was Johnson J. Dircks. He established a yard at the corner of 5th Avenue South (Evans) and 'L' (Lane) Street in 1868. Not long after, in 1871, William Stone moved his yard from Potrero Point to 9th Avenue South (Innes), near 'G' (Griffith) Street. In 1876, Dircks moved all of his operations to a site next to Stone's on 9th Avenue South.⁵⁴ By 1880, Dircks' and Stone's sons began to apprentice with their fathers. The passing on of knowledge and craft was a common cultural practice among the boat-building families of India Basin; indeed most of the men who had migrated to the area had learned the craft from their fathers in Europe. The shipwrights in India Basin – Dircks, Stone, Siemer, and Anderson – passed on their craft to their native-born American sons, thereby developing a longstanding tradition of boatbuilding in the neighborhood that would last three generations.⁵⁵ 1883 Coast Survey Map The 1883 U.S. Coast Survey map is the first map to illustrate the extensive changes that had occurred.”

India Basin Historic Survey/KVP pp.27 Bayview Historical Society publication 2008

A letter from Johnson J. Dircks great, great grandson, Brian Dircks, is attached to this correspondence and captures his spirit when celebrating the 900 Innes Avenue Shipwrights's Cottage in 2014. As part of the Cultural Resources appendix in the Draft EIR, the cottage is further linked to the larger historical context which clearly includes the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard and other resources.

5.1.1. Shipwright's Cottage

As indicated in the HRE (Page & Turnbull, 2016:6), the Shipwright's Cottage at 900 Innes Avenue was found individually eligible for listing in the CRHR by KVP under Criteria 1 and 3 “due to its association with resident shipwrights employed in the boat yards of India Basin and as a rare example of a very early Italianate cottage. It is only one of two remaining nineteenth- century dwellings (the other being 911 Innes) in India Basin.” The period of significance for the Shipwright's Cottage was identified as 1870–1938, the fullest possible period considered by the survey.

In 2008, in light of the KVP effort (2008) the Shipwright's Cottage was designated San Francisco Article 10 Landmark #250. The building's designation nomination encompasses only the residence and no surrounding features. The Landmark Designation Report completed for the Shipwright's Cottage found the building to be significant under Criteria A (Events) and C (Architecture), and specified the period of significance as 1870–1930 (which encompasses several years before the building's construction around 1875) (Page & Turnbull, 2016:7).

Appendix C_Cultural Resources Supporting Information_ Part2:Page and Turnbull Report

5.1.3. India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard

The KVP survey (2008) also identified a potential CRHR-eligible historic district, the India Basin Boatyards Historic District, comprising numerous buildings and other landscape features across eight parcels once associated with the Anderson & Cristofani and adjoining Allemand Brothers Boatyards. A DPR 523D (District Record) form was completed for this district, listing the period of significance as 1893 to 1935. According to Page & Turnbull (2016:6), KVP identified numerous resources within the boundaries of the district but did not specify contributors and noncontributors. Page & Turnbull further noted (2016:6) that several of these listed resources were constructed outside of the identified period of significance. Page & Turnbull refined KVP's assessment, determining that the boatyard site is most appropriately defined as a vernacular cultural landscape, a type of property that has "evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape. Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, family, or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of those everyday lives" (Birnbaum, 1994). The India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard, as it was subsequently designated by Page & Turnbull (2016:19), aligns in some respects with the India Basin Boatyards Historic District that KVP previously identified, although Page & Turnbull has determined that the property is more appropriately described as a site than as a historic district given its numerous landscape features (natural and manmade) that convey its significance (2016:99). The beginning of the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard's period of significance is 1875, the year that Johnson Dircks first established a boatyard at the site, which was later acquired by Henry Anderson and expanded as the Anderson & Cristofani Boatyard. Page & Turnbull (2016:99) finds that 1936 is the most appropriate end date of the period of significance as this year marks the opening of the of the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge. From this point forward, the transportation of goods via vehicle (as opposed to vessel) became predominant in the Bay Area and marks the ultimate end of the era in which wood watercraft (the boatyard's specialty) was integral to the Bay Area's transport economy (Page & Turnbull, 2016:99).

The India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard is characterized by a range of built and natural features that date to this decades- long use as a boatbuilding and repair yard—including six buildings, four structures, and several small-

scale features, in addition to topography, views, circulation routes, and bodies of water(Plate 1). These features continue to convey the spatial and functional relationships that defined the operations of the yard and can be internal to or external to the property boundaries.

Page & Turnbull (2016:99) determined that the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard site is: historically significant site under Criterion 1, for its associations with San Francisco's wood scow schooner building and repair industry that was centered at India Basin. Scow schooners were integral to the transportation of goods throughout the San Francisco Bay area during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, prior to the era of widespread automobile use and bridge construction. The remote settlement of immigrant shipwrights at India Basin was responsible for building and repairing such vessels and represented an important working community that, while off the beaten path, supported the region's economy through skilled workmanship. Due to gradual development around India Basin and dramatic infilling of the shoreline, much of the landscape conveying the previous era of shipbuilding no longer exists. As the site of the longest consecutively operating boatyards at India Basin, the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard is the best remaining physical representation of the area's significant working class community.

The India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard as defined by Page & Turnbull is particularly relevant to the current investigation because any historic maritime archeological resources occurring in the APE, specifically those that relate to the local boatbuilding industry during the period of 1875–1936, would potentially be contributing features to this vernacular cultural landscape site. Table 2 lists the elements of the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard and their construction dates, and identifies whether they are considered contributing features.

Appendix C_Cultural Resources Supporting Information_ Part1: Aecom Report: Section 5.1.3. Archeological Survey Report India Basin Mixed-Use Project

The 'contributing' status of various buildings, pathways and other resources as outlined in Table 2, attached to the above Appendix C, Part1, AecomReport Sect. 5.1.3 provides a guideline for designing and implementing the Full Preservation Alternative. The significance of the the area is further articulated in these comments regarding eligibility for inclusion in the California Historic Register.

INDIA BASIN SCOW SCHOONER BOATYARD California Register Eligibility Criterion 1

Page & Turnbull finds that the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard site, a boat building and repair yard in operation beginning in the 1870s, is a historically significant site under Criterion 1, for its associations with San Francisco's wood scow schooner building and repair industry that was centered at India Basin.

Some aspects of the site's integrity, namely materials and workmanship, are somewhat compromised. Most features within the property have been neglected and are in various states of decay and collapse, or are heavily overgrown to the point that original materials, design features, and workmanship cannot be fully conveyed. In spite of these issues, Page & Turnbull considers that enough features remain at the site to convey the significant overall functional relationships that have characterized the boatyard for many decades. The India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard is therefore considered to have adequate overall integrity to convey its historical significance.

**Appendix C_Cultural Resources Supporting Information_ Part2:Page and Turnbull Report
INDIA BASIN PROJECT HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION PARTS 1 AND 2 March, 2017**

Thank you for considering our comments. We respectfully suggest that a Full Preservation Alternative for the Shipwright's Cottage at 900 Innes Avenue; the India Basin Scow Schooner Boatyard site at 900 Innes Avenue; the Allemand Brothers Boatyard site, and 838-840 Innes Avenue related structures and pathways be thoroughly considered during your review of the Draft EIR for the India Basin Mixed Use Project.

Sincerely,

Dan Dodt
President, Bayview Historical Society

cc: BHS Board and membership; IBNA; BayviewCAC