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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name PALOS VERDES PUBLIC LIBRARY AND ART GALLERY; FARNHAM MARTIN'S PARK

other names/site number MALAGA COVE PLAZA LIBRARY

2. Location

street & number 2400 Via Campesina N/A not for publication

city or town Palos Verdes Estates N/A vicinity

state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90274

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 3/7/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper
Edson A. Beall
Entered in the
National Register

Date of Action
4-16-96

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/Library

Recreation & Culture/Art Gallery

Social/Meeting Hall

Park

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/Library

Recreation & Culture/Art Gallery

Social/Meeting Hall

Park

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:

Mediterranean Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Hollow-cast Concrete,
stucco

roof Red clay tile

other Palos Verdes stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Social History
- Landscape Architecture
- Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1928 - 1945

Significant Dates

1928, 1930

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

~~Hunt, Myron~~
Chambers, Harold C.
Olmsted, F. L. Jr.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Malaga Cove Plaza Library - History Room

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .93 Acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	1
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3	7	1	6	2	0
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3	7	4	0	6	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

4

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. Alice LaMar, Chairman

organization Historical Preservation Committee date August 11, 1995

street & number 832 Via Scomte telephone (310) 378-7776

city or town Palos Verdes Estates state CA zip code 90274

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name (Continuation Sheet)

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham
Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

The Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery were listed in the National Register on April 7, 1995. At that time, the property boundaries were drawn to include the library building and its immediate setting. This nomination amends ~~and replaces~~ the earlier nomination to include Farnham Martin's Park, the adjacent city park which is physically connected with the library grounds and historically associated with the library.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1aPalos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Description:

The Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery and Farnham Martin's Park are located on the Palos Verdes Peninsula in the coastal city of Palos Verdes Estates, twenty-five miles southwest of downtown Los Angeles. Situated on two adjoining narrow but deep, upward sloping lots, the library and park share common landscaping and have been united as a single unit. The contributing resources consist of a building (the library), a site (the garden), and two structures (the fountain and the wall). The library building --which appears from the front street at the base of the hill to have two stories--actually contains five levels totaling 16,550 square feet. Designed in 1929 by the renowned architect, Myron Hunt, this is a Mediterranean Revival style structure, constructed of hollow-cast, double-walled reinforced concrete covered with white stucco and roofed with red tile. A five-foot-wide balcony with corbels across the front of the building and a segmented-capped tower are two of the library's striking features. The main entrance to the library is on the west side of the building facing Farnham Martin's Park, preserving the historic American custom of locating libraries adjacent to parks.¹ The original landscaping for both the library and the adjoining park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. who had been retained by the Palos Verdes Project to develop what was perceived would be a model community, Palos Verdes Estates. The park, which is the only landscaped park in the city, exemplifies major characteristics of typical Olmsted parks and was planted in 1928. It was named in honor of Farnham Martin, an Olmsted employee and park superintendent for the Homes Association who, beloved by the community, died tragically in an auto accident in December, 1928. When the construction of the library was completed in 1930, grading and planting modifications were made to integrate the two properties. The building and grounds remain virtually unchanged in appearance and usage since opening to the public. The only modifications, except for a 2324 square foot addition made in 1962 at the rear (south side) of the library, was the replacement of lighting inside, addition of lighting outside and certain improvements for public safety in 1954. Therefore, the overall integrity of the combined properties remains intact.

The library was originally named the Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery and retained this name until 1966. When the Palos Verdes Library District constructed a larger library at the center of the Peninsula, it was renamed the Malaga Cove Plaza Library. Because the building retained its original designation throughout the period of time addressed by this application, 1930-1945, we refer to it by its original name.

Characteristic of the Mediterranean Revival style so popular in Southern California in the 1920's, the Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery is simple in form and detail and is irregular in plan with a large square tower with open loggia, corbeled balcony with wrought iron railing, 20-inch-thick walls, and "S" clay tiled roof. The construction is hollow cast-in-place reinforced concrete, utilizing a technique popularized throughout Southern

¹ Baxter Art Gallery, California Institute of Technology, Myron Hunt, 1868-1952. *The Search for a Regional Architecture* (Santa Monica: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1984), p.48.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Description (continued):

California by Myron Hunt.² The north facade, (the lowest level facing Via Campesina), is four bays wide, the leftmost bay being the entrance to the art gallery and community room, which is set behind a wrought iron gate in a deep vestibule. Native Palos Verdes stone walls line the front boundary and continue along part of the east boundary. Projecting from the facade above the four bays is a balcony supported by concrete corbels. Wrought iron railings line the edge of the balcony between wooden posts which support the roof as it extends to shelter the balcony. This extension of the second floor space also wraps 30 feet around the east side of the building. The park side (west) elevation is lower in scale, and in viewing the building from this side, it would appear to be one-storied with a tower. A shallow arcade shelters the west facade which is six bays across. The roof line extends downward to shelter the library entrance vestibule, which is also set to the left side as you face the building from the park. The piers of the arcade are repeated in the loggia of the tower but on a reduced scale. Topping the tower is a shallow-peaked cap that rises slightly above the roof line of the loggia. Along the east elevation and on the upper part of the hillside slope is a small courtyard paved in local stone, which was created when the 1962 addition was built, and is enclosed by the library on three sides. Viewed from Via Pinale, the highest elevation and south side, the library is largely obscured by shrubbery; what one sees of the building is the addition which has the same low scale as the park side facade and features similar exterior building materials.

The floor plan was designed to provide Palos Verdes Estates, the first and only established community on the Peninsula in 1930, a social center as well as a serviceable library. On the Via Campesina level is a 110-person capacity meeting room and art gallery with adjoining kitchen. The next level up houses restrooms and a projection room for the meeting room below. The third and largest level is for the library collection and the local history room housed in the rear addition; continuing upward is the mezzanine level which serves as storage and stack space for the library collection. The uppermost level is a tower room surrounded by an open loggia with views overlooking the adjoining park, the Palos Verdes community and the Pacific Ocean. All floors are connected by a broad central staircase.

The interior of the library reinforces the Mediterranean Revival architectural style of the building. Large, deeply recessed windows provide natural light to the gallery and library levels. High, open-beam ceilings define the main reading rooms. There is a fireplace paneled in pine in what is now the childrens' section. Furnishings of hand carved walnut are original to the building and are replicas of antique Italian Renaissance tables, chairs and couches, brought to the Peninsula home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Vanderlip 1910-1920 and copied by local artisan, Meredith Watts.³ It was Mr. Vanderlip, then President of National City Bank in New York, who purchased 16,000 acres

² Ibid 42-44.

³ Delane Morgan, *The Palos Verdes Story* (Palos Verdes Estates: Review Publications, Inc., 1963), 79.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Description (continued):

of land, sight unseen, on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and then called upon the most respected professionals of his day -- city planner Charles Cheney, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, and architect Myron Hunt -- to help him plan and develop an ideal suburban environment in Southern California.

Farnham Martin's Park, completed in 1928, is a pastoral retreat and very appropriate for the steep setting. Approaching from the lower street, Via Campesina, one steps onto a stone plaza laid with native Palos Verdes stone and faces a ten-foot-high stone wall set some twenty five feet back from the street. Three canals of cast concrete jut out from the wall which originally spilled water from the fountain on the terrace on the second level into what was a low basin, filled with aquatic plants, against the wall on the lower street level. Due to a major problem in the waterpipes, this pond has been filled with dirt and planted. Twin stone staircases, on either side of the front wall, lead up to the large fountain terrace above, which provides a sweeping view of the red tile roofs, trees, and roads of Malaga Cove.

The fountain itself, viewed at this second level and facing south, is eight and one-half feet high and appears to the eye to be a semi-circular, four-tiered structure, faced with Palos Verdes stone. There are six spouts at each of the four levels, allowing the cascading water to fall and recirculate. However, after climbing another set of 10 stone steps set on either side of the tiered fountain, one turns around to the north to view the other side of the fountain which stands eight feet high at this higher elevation as well and is dramatically poised against a backdrop of sky, ocean and trees. A twelve-panel pedestal supports a large circular bowl which has ornamental cuts around the rim for water to flow through down to the round pond below, the far edge of which is the highest, fourth tier on the other side. Six playful carved dolphins rest on a scalloped base at the bottom of the fountain, and two equidistant stone rectangular platforms which are at the height of the third tier on the opposite side, rest on a raised semicircular stone curb. This fountain, then, is superbly designed for the steep site, providing a dramatic, unique vista whether looking up or down.

Continuing up the next band of five steps, one enters the upward sloping lawn bounded with asphalt walkways within a graceful ellipse, typical of Olmsted, and sheltered by a huge American Elm (*Ulmus Americana*), one of the original plantings in the park and another basic feature of Olmsted park design. The main entrance to the Palos Verdes Library is to the left of the park. This central lawn area is the site of summer community concerts, informal weddings, child play and a favorite place for study. Here, too, one might find a strolling peacock on the grass or hear a chorus of peacocks roosting in the five magnificent *Pinus Canariensis* on the site's perimeter; the birds are descendants of 6 peacocks given to Frank Vanderlip by Lucky Baldwin in 1924. Another set of Palos Verdes stone steps at the apex of the ellipse brings one to the top terrace, lined with *Pittosporum Tobira* original to the site, which is adjacent to and level with the top road, Via Pinale, some 40 feet above the lower parallel road at the front of the property, Via Campesina.

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Description (continued):

Minor changes have taken place in the park through its sixty-seven year tenure. Indeed, as often happens as plans are translated into action, some of the plants specified on Olmsted's drawing were not even installed or not installed according to plan; however, of the major plantings originally specified for the site, the *Ulmus Americana*, the five *Pinus Canariensis*, and numerous examples of *Abelia*, *Pittosporum Tobira*, *Pittosporum Undulatum*, *Juniperus Torulosa*, *Pyracantha*, and *Lagerstroemia indica* can still be viewed today. Other species with shorter lifespans have disappeared. In 1954, under the direction of Samuel E. Lunden, FAIA, the pathways of decomposed granite were replaced with asphalt and tubular railings added for public safety. Outdoor lighting was added at that time and replaced in 1992. The lower basin, inoperable, was filled and planted. In addition, gardeners throughout the years have changed the annual and some of the perennial plantings; however, now having obtained the Olmsted drawings and plant lists of 1930 from the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, the intent is to use that material as a guide for new planting. There have been no substantive changes to the original park design.

The Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery and Farnham Martin's Park have stood the test of time well. The building and grounds are still beautiful, even though library district budget constraints have necessitated some deferred maintenance. Although there are indications of needed repairs and some minor changes have been made to the interior decor, these do not alter the historic appearance or character of this Myron Hunt building. In addition, great care has been given to protect the ellipse and stone terraces of the Olmsted park from newly designed library access required under federal law.

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance:

The Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery is historically significant to the City of Palos Verdes Estates under National Register Criterion A because this building was the nucleus of social life in a small community during the years 1930-1945 when the area was being developed. In addition, as a prime example of the eclectic⁴ design of a well-known and innovative architect, Myron Hunt, the Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery is architecturally significant to the Palos Verdes community under National Register Criterion C. Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style and built in 1929-30, the building exemplifies the ideals set by the new city's Art Jury, established in 1922 with Myron Hunt as its chair to monitor both quality of construction and exterior architectural design of all commercial and residential building. Farnham Martin's Park adjoining the library is historically significant at the local level under National Register Criterion C in both the areas of landscape architecture and community planning and development. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. utilized the best elements of his style in designing this microcosm of a park, but, in addition, as the only formally landscaped park in the city, it is important as a component of Olmsted's master plan for the city of Palos Verdes Estates developed in the 1920's. It should be noted that 1945 is an arbitrary date, chosen for the purpose of this application; in fact, the Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery, although now a branch of a larger library district serving four cities, and Farnham Martin's Park continue to provide today the same types of services for which they were originally designed.

The library was an important building from its beginning. *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, in an article dated September 19, 1930, commented, "A notable feature is the absence of stereotyped library ideas in the design. This is due in part, perhaps, to the fact that it is something more than a library building, being planned for other community uses."⁵ Indeed the art gallery and meeting room, with its projection facilities and adjoining kitchen, have been utilized continuously through the years for community functions. Examples of use from the period of significance include Art Jury dinners, piano recitals, lectures, and art exhibits. The building was also the regular meeting place for the Palos Verdes Woman's Club and used extensively by the Palos Verdes Community Arts Association, the two primary social, service and cultural organizations of the community. The pragmatic--or practical-- spatial arrangement by Hunt has allowed the library to become an integral part of community life at Malaga Cove, which was the Peninsula's population center in 1930 and remains a small commercial center in one of the most beautiful coastal communities in California.

Although Malaga Cove School and La Venta Inn were available for community

⁴ In the Abstract for her thesis, "The Eclectic Architecture of Myron Hunt", Therese Hanafin describes the eclectic architect's concern for functionalism, materials, and orientation to site and classified Hunt as such because of his flexibility, attention to detail, and concern for his clients' demands.

⁵ "Library Building at Palos Verdes is Distinctive California Type," *Southwest Builder & Contractor*, Sept. 19, 1930, 30-31.

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Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

functions in 1930, the library, because of its accessibility during both days and evenings, diverse rooms available for meetings and classes, and its ambiance, was the most popular. The Woman's Club, founded in 1926, met monthly at the library to plan their civic projects, which included volunteer work at the library, and social events. According to the Palos Verdes Bulletin, the tower room was used for classes in wood carving, conducted by Meredith Watts, the artisan who copied Frank Vanderlip's furniture for the library.⁶ In a 1931 article entitled "The Art Jury Dinner", it is reported that 130 residents and their guests celebrated the eighth annual meeting of the Palos Verdes Art Jury at the library.

Dinner was served in the Art Gallery, where the paintings of Ralph Holmes were on exhibit. Their high quality and interest was complimented by the chairman, Myron Hunt, in introducing Mr. Holmes, who told of his interesting experience in talking to the Palos Verdes school children when they visited the exhibit in a body. . .Mr. Vanderlip, in speaking on "Architecture appropriate to the Community" said that recovery from the present business depression might be expected first in the building industry. He thought that prices would have to come down and new methods of construction be found that would make homes much cheaper.

Other distinguished guests present included Hamlin Garland, American author, Gilbert Chesterton, English author, and Alson Clark, painter.⁷

The Art Gallery was an important cultural resource during this period. Exhibitions changed about every one or two months and ranged from marine paintings and model ships to Etruscan pottery and etchings. Both community and nationally well-known artists were encouraged to participate. Paintings were hung throughout the library as well. In addition, the Art Jury sponsored an annual Purchase Prize Exhibit of paintings by California artists. The winning painting was purchased by the Art Jury for community display.

Myron Hunt's design for the Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery was immediately recognized as an architectural landmark. In the same article quoted earlier, *Southwest Builder and Contractor* went on to say the structure was both "individualistic and harmonizing with the whole city scheme." This should come as no surprise since it was Myron Hunt, former president of the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and recognized as "a pioneer of a style of architecture based on Mediterranean and Spanish influences"⁸ who was chosen as chair for the new Art Jury and established the Mediterranean style as the design idiom for the Palos Verdes Project which, as originally conceived, encompassed 16,000 acres. Hunt's legacy in Palos Verdes Estates lives on in the design ordinances he

⁶ *Palos Verdes Bulletin*, December, 1932, 2.

⁷ *Palos Verdes Bulletin*, March, 1931, 10.

⁸ *Pasadena Star News*, November 13, 1984, 3.

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Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

established for the city.

According to Art Jury records, "Mr. Hunt proposed that as people came from all over the world to Southern California, recognizing its climate, they should expect to find an individual type of architecture here which recognized this climate. He proposed in more definite form than at the previous meeting that there should be one generally dominant type of architecture for the whole (Palos Verdes) Project . . ."⁹ This type of architecture was known as Mediterranean Revival, although Hunt tried to promote the style as "Californian: that distinctive style which for several decades has been successfully growing up in this State, deriving its chief inspiration directly or indirectly from Latin types which developed under similar climatic conditions along the Mediterranean."¹⁰ Characteristics of this style include color in light tones, materials such as plaster, adobe, stucco, or concrete, with roofs which should be low pitched, usually of tile laid randomly.¹¹ When the preliminary plans for the library were approved by his professional colleagues, the minutes state that "Architect Myron Hunt was given felicitations of the Jury on the very lovely tower and simple design."¹²

Although Myron Hunt established the image for Palos Verdes Estates and served as chairman of the Art Jury for its first seventeen years, he designed only one other structure in the city, the cliffside home of esteemed landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., who was another important influence in the development of the city. Unlike the Palos Verdes Public Library, this home has been dramatically altered over the years. Indeed, throughout Southern California, Hunt's designs are increasingly at risk. For example, the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, completed by Hunt in 1913, has been extensively remodeled. The Huntington Hotel was the prototype for the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, built by Hunt in 1919, which is currently facing possible demolition. Hunt also designed the entire campus of Occidental College; however modernist intrusions have disrupted the architectural unity of the c.1912-1940 project. All of these buildings are designed in Hunt's eclectic Mediterranean style, but only the Palos Verdes Public Library is still true to Hunt's original vision. Fortunately, its future is very secure as this library is very dear to the community which is planning to restore the building to its former 1930 splendor.

David Gebhard, author and professor of Architectural History at the University of California at Santa Barbara, in his letter accompanying this application, states that the library "in its sensitive play between the Hispanic image and modern needs, and in its splendid siting, is without question one of Hunt's most successful buildings."¹³ Although the Palos Verdes Project was a

⁹ Palos Verdes Art Jury, *Minutes* (December 4, 1922)

¹⁰ Palos Verdes Art Jury, *Minutes* (September 14, 1928)

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Palos Verdes Art Jury, *Minutes* (April 10, 1929)

¹³ David Gebhard, letter to State Historic Resources Commission, November 10, 1994.

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Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

primary interest through its formative years, Myron Hunt was prolific in designing large architectural projects in other parts of Southern California during the same time period. As magnate Henry Huntington's architect, he designed four family homes, the library, finished a partially constructed hotel, and built Pasadena's major hospital. Three major educational institutions, Pomona College, Occidental College and California Institute of Technology, feature buildings by Hunt. Although he did work in the bungalow style, his most popular was in "Mediterranean"; Myron Hunt's buildings throughout Southern California are the epitome of what was popularly viewed as "California architecture".

During Hunt's professional tenure in California 1904 - 1947, he was associated with two partners. The first, Elmer Grey, who became a partner in 1904, had had draftsman training but no formal education in architecture and was of frail health, all of which suggests that his contributions to the firm were limited; he resigned because of poor health in 1910. Although Hunt worked alone for ten years, large post-war (WWI) commissions forced him to take on another partner, and he chose someone who had worked in his firm since 1906. Harold C. Chambers, who became first a junior partner in 1920, played an increasingly important role in the firm until 1947, when Hunt officially retired but continued to work in the office as a consultant until illness forced him to remain at home. Chambers carried on a commercial and institutional practice for 20 years longer. It should be noted that although "Hunt and Chambers" was the architectural firm for such successful projects as the Henry E. Huntington Library in San Marino, the Ambassador Hotel and Occidental College in Los Angeles, the Public Library (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, as well as the Palos Verdes Public Library, Hunt's creative leadership is well documented, and these structures, indeed virtually all 400 projects of his career, are popularly credited to him alone.

Our research show this to be the case for the Palos Verdes Library. Although the plans are signed "Myron Hunt and Harold C. Chambers", an article of *The Bulletin*, published by the Palos Verdes Homes Association, clearly implies that Myron Hunt was the managing architect from the firm in charge of the project as well as illustrates the multiple purposes intended for the building:

Rapid progress is being made in the carrying through of the new Public Library Building for Palos Verdes Library District following the decision of the California Court of Appeals the last week in March validating the \$90,000 bond issue voted last summer. On March 31 the trustees, with architect Myron Hunt, Frederick Law Olmsted, landscape architect, and Jay Lawyer, general manager of Palos Verdes Project, carefully examined the site . . . Mr. Hunt's plans provide for a commodious reading room flanking the

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

the park . .an outdoor reading room or patio on the
east . .another room of ample size opening onto Via
Campesina for committee meetings, lectures and
temporary exhibits. .space for storage of chairs . .a
vault for pictures. .a mezzanine and tower . .small
kitchen . 14

The Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery is an established architectural feature in Palos Verdes Estates in that the building is located at the head of a primary intersection of streets, adjacent to a community park and its architectural elements encompassing the Mediterranean Revival style -- soaring white walls, wide corbeled balcony, square tower, red-tiled roof -- make it a prominent and identifying feature in a city that treasures its Mediterranean architectural heritage. Equally important to the residents of this picturesque city is their recognition of the role played by this building in the social history of Palos Verdes Estates, 1930-1945.

The son of the man who was the first to sign his name, "Landscape Architect"¹⁵ as the designer of New York City's Central Park, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. carried on the principles his father established for the family firm which had a tenure of almost 125 years¹⁶ and participated in 5500 projects.¹⁷ F. L. Olmsted, Jr. was an innovative leader in the fields of landscape, urban design and conservation. In 1900, at Harvard, he initiated the first landscape architecture course offered at university level. He was honored by four United States Presidents -- Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson and Calvin Coolidge -- for his public service including modernizing and implementing L'Enfant's plans for Washington, D.C., designing monuments, parks, the zoo and the White House grounds in our capitol city, and framing the legislation which established the National Park Service in 1916. In 1953, Olmsted Grove was dedicated in Prairie Creek State Park in Northern California in recognition of his conservation efforts to save the redwoods.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. was chosen at an early age to become the heir apparent of the prestigious, internationally recognized firm. Indeed, his name was changed (from Henry),¹⁸ and he literally grew up in his father's shadow, an extension of him, absorbing his values and style as he trained with him on the Chicago World's Fair, Vanderbilt's estate at Biltmore and other projects developed by the firm. The Olmsted "style" was pastoral; the guiding words in park design, according to Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. as he designed

¹⁴ Author, "Library Building Progressing," *Palos Verdes Bulletin* May, 1929: 1.

¹⁵ Dwight Oliver, *Title* (City: Publisher, Year), 13.

¹⁶ National Park Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, "Frederick Law Olmsted," *Pamphlet*, 1992, Pages.

¹⁷ The Master List of Design Projects, compiled by Charles E. Beveridge and Carolyn F. Hoffman, National Association for Olmsted Parks, 1987.

¹⁸ Melvin Kalfus, *Frederick Law Olmsted, The Passion of a Public Artist* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 81.

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

Central Park in New York City, were not "landscape-gardening" but "scenery-making".¹⁹

There are at least six elements of Olmsted style that are utilized at Farnham Martin's Park. First, the landscape architect adjusted design to topography.²⁰ This difficult setting has been appropriately designed so that, despite the sloping terrain, it is entirely usable. Second, the designer developed natural scenery rather than decorative planting.²¹ The casual planting groupings and use of natural stone suggest a glade rather than a formal garden. Third, the duplicate stone steps are an Olmsted trademark used extensively in both parks and residences. Fourth, in the park's elliptical perimeter, the round fountain and the babble of falling water, the romantic ideology the Olmsteds fostered in park design is evident.²² Fifth, the large fountain provides a formal component. Bruce Kelly, author of *Art of the Olmsted Landscapes*, states "Though Olmsted's landscapes are in the naturalistic style, they all contain or were intended to contain one major formal feature. These areas were designed as a meeting place for crowds, as a stage for musical events, and as a setting for a grand promenade. It was a place of transition, where one left the controlled, organized environment and passed into the naturalistic landscape surrounding it."²³ Sixth, the Olmsteds recognized the sociological value of public parks,²⁴ meaning that public parks should be free, unfenced, and offer diverse venues. This microcosm of an Olmsted park design lends itself to a variety of uses by the community, the space carefully plotted within the limited options available to the architect. In the final analysis, however, Farnham Martin's Park surely represents the man himself and his appreciation of natural beauty. Dwight Oliver, local publisher and author, quotes Mrs. Farnham Martin, relating a conversation between Mr. Olmsted and Mr. and Mrs. Martin as they climbed Palos Verdes hills in those early years (circa 1922):

I recall when we first arrived and only Mr. Vanderlip and the Japanese were here . . . Frederick Olmsted, my husband and I were climbing the hill where La Venta now stands.²⁵ We stopped and looked at the Pacific far below us. . . Olmsted said, and I shall never forget it, "How often are men given such an almost untouched great area . . . the cliffs, the beaches where the ocean once was,

¹⁹ Elizabeth Stevenson, *Park Maker, A Life of Frederick Law Olmsted* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1977) 166.

²⁰ Edward C. Whiting and William L. Phillips, "Frederick Law Olmsted, 1870-1957, An Appreciation of the Man and his Achievements," *Landscape Architecture*, April, 1958, 149.

²¹ Kalfus, 84.

²² Bruce Kelly, *Art of the Olmsted Landscape* (New York: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1981), 145.

²³ *Ibid.*, 50.

²⁴ Whiting, "Frederick Law Olmsted, An Appreciation of the Man and his Achievements", 146.

²⁵ La Venta Inn is located less than one mile from the library and park.

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

the canyons, hills and ocean. May we who are now responsible, place parks, open spaces, roads, not for racing but to look at the beauty, and may the generations who follow keep this in their minds and plans."²⁶

In World War I, during which F. L. Olmsted, Jr. was involved in planning temporary U. S. troop and industrial worker housing, the landscape architect developed concern for the quality of residential living in America. He studied European city planning and zoning which was more structured than in our country. Thus, in 1922, when an imaginative real estate promoter, E. G. Lewis, with reportedly 4000 investors in tow, purchased 3200 acres (from Frank Vanderlip, et. al.) on the coast of Southern California for residential development, Frederick Olmsted was employed as "Director of Design" for the Palos Verdes Project.²⁷

We can best learn of Olmsted's role in the development of this planned community, Palos Verdes Estates, by reading his own words. In an article in *Landscape Architecture*, dated July, 1927, he writes:

The human requirements were simply to provide for the pleasantest possible dwelling places, with all the accessories suitable thereto -- means of access, utilities, stores, churches, clubs, hotels, schools, playgrounds, parks, etc., -- and to avoid everything which would not contribute to the comforts and amenities of life. The houses to be provided for were conceived as ranging from the inexpensive to the palatial . . . The community, or series of communities, was conceived not as self-sufficient and self-supporting like the English Garden Cities, but as in part suburban, for people working in Los Angeles (some 20 miles away).

The first step in making the preliminary general plan was a double one; (A) selecting the areas naturally adapted for certain special types of use, particularly (1) business centers and the more intensive uses associated therewith (2) playground sites, both of which require flattish land (3) golf courses, requiring another distinct type of land and (4) canyons and steep hillsides suitable for park use but intractable for residential development unless as landscape adjuncts of rather large estates; (B) selecting routes for main thoroughfares for access to and between the business centers and other use-areas.

²⁶ Oliver, 7.

²⁷ Whiting, "F.L.O. An Appreciation of the Man and his Achievements", 148.

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Statement of Significance (continued):

These two sets of considerations modified each other intimately; the topographic limitations upon the location of thoroughfares, especially those climbing to the upper levels, having a considerable influence on the location of local community centers.

The plan on page 263, covering about 500 acres at northwest corner . . . shows several features typical of the whole development, such as (1) one of the business centers designed as an arcaded architectural unit around a plaza adjoining a main thoroughfare (lots marked black), (2) one of the tree-screened districts for semi-nuisance services (diagonal black dots), (3) one of the combination units of school, playground, and local park, (4) a piece of valley park and parkway (Park land speckled), (5) a piece of the coastal parkway and of the shore park reservation, (6) a piece of a hillside park, (7) a piece of the protective strip of park planting which encloses the entire development on its landward boundary, and finally (8) lots, variously restricted, representing minimum units for individual development.

The great distinction of Palos Verdes as a residential community is the consistent emphasis on the two-fold principle: first, that the success of a great whole depends on the harmony of all its parts, that there is no class of physical changes which can be made in disregard of the rest without danger of impairing the whole or which can safely be ignored in making other determinations, and second, that the inventiveness and imagination of many individuals must be given as great scope in dealing with parts, both large and small, as is consistent with a reasonable harmonious conception of the larger units which together they will compose, so as to avoid a monotonous and stereotyped quality in the latter. A constant effort is made to apply the principle to all those elements -- streets, parks, utilities and their component details -- in which a greater measure of singleness of control usually makes the application of the principle less difficult.²⁸

The map referred to by Olmsted is of the Malaga Cove Plaza area and shows the lot for the Farnham Martin Park and the adjacent lot upon which the library was built, although the map, dated 1927, designates that lot for a church.

²⁸ Frederick Law Olmsted, "Palos Verdes Estates," *Landscape Architecture*, July, 1927, 256-261. The map to which he refers in the text is included in the exhibits of this application.

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

Statement of Significance (continued):

As we learn from Olmsted's text, Palos Verdes was designed as an Utopian community by a dreamer who was guided by firm principles. Of the 3,038 acres (or 4.75 square miles) Olmsted laid out, 849 acres (28% of the area) was dedicated to parkland. The parkland includes:

Schools and playground sites	113 acres
Golf courses	214 acres
Parks and paths	392 acres
Shoreline preserve	130 acres

Not included are the dedicated Rights-Of-Way which comprise another 760 acres. The parklands, it should be emphasized, are natural, undeveloped areas along ocean cliffs, running up steep hills, as well as paths and trails which cut across hillsides forming fire breaks and property divisions. Also included are small neighborhood pocket parks, usually located at street intersections. There is, however, just one formally landscaped park in the entire city, and that is Farnham Martin's Park.

Because of the foresight of the planners of this residential development in not only establishing restrictive covenants running with the land but giving architectural control to an Art Jury appointed by the elected representatives of the homeowners, the above figures are as true today as they were in 1927.²⁹ The Great Depression in 1929, however, halted new development, and when real estate sales resumed thereafter, it was without the financial backing of a land development firm. Of the five community plazas, for example, in Olmsted's city plan, only one, Malaga Cove, had been completed before the Depression; another, Lunada Bay, was constructed after World War II but not to the elaborate Venetian-style plans of architect Kirtland Cutter drawn in the 1920s. The remaining three plaza sites are just vacant land, part of the "parkland" inventory. Without adequate funding, 849 acres of public land is difficult for a city to maintain, let alone irrigate and plant. Farnham Martin's Park, however, owned by the Palos Verdes Library District, has fared better. It is significant as a component of an Olmsted urban design and an important element of our own city's history, as well as a small, beautifully designed park, a distinctive piece of landscape design in its own right.

Using Myron Hunt as his architect, Olmsted built a home, the first to be constructed on the oceanside cliffs, and lived and worked in Palos Verdes from 1922 to 1931, at which time, the Palos Verdes Project essentially finished, the family moved back to Brookline, Massachusetts. During his tenure with the Palos Verdes Project, Mr. Olmsted served as an associate member of the Palos Verdes Art Jury which reviewed every proposed structure in the project, measuring them against established standards; thus, he was in a position to monitor the implementation of his own city plan. In addition to his leadership in the "model" community of Palos Verdes, while living here Olmsted

²⁹ City of Palos Verdes Estates Statistical Information, Office of the City Clerk, 1994.

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**Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA**

Statement of Significance (continued):

collaborated on street plans for burgeoning Los Angeles³⁰, designed other landscaping projects throughout the state, and conducted a state survey in 1929 that provided the basis for California's entire park system and the plan for the development of its beaches.

Although the intervening years have brought changes to Olmsted's community, the founding principles and his basic plans have remained intact. Farnham Martin's Park, virtually unchanged through the years, is timeless and will remain the oasis he intended for generations to come.

³⁰ Susan L. Klaus, "Efficiency, Economy, Beauty: The City Planning Reports of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., 1905-1915," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Autumn, 1991, 466.

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Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

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Section number 9 Page 16

Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

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Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 23 and Lot S, Block 1621, Tract 6885, as per map recorded in Book 78, pages 49-52 inclusive, of maps, records of said Los Angeles County, State of California.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of Lot 23 include the original library building, trees and shrubs, and a four foot high wall of Palos Verdes stone along the 115 foot front on Via Campesina and continuing another 60 feet of the 239 foot eastern boundary. The boundaries of Lot S, a park adjacent to Lot 23, include patios, walks, walls and planters surrounding a 4-tiered fountain with steps on either side, all made of Palos Verdes stone, along the 85 foot frontage on Via Campesina, as well as trees, shrubs and other Palos Verdes stone steps and planters throughout the park, all having been a part of the Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery and Farnham Martin's Park and contributing to its historical integrity. The boundaries of Lot S & Lot 23 have remained unchanged since the park and library were completed in 1928 and 1930 respectively.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

The appropriate United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey Map, original pictures, exhibits and maps pertaining to the library are on file with the original Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery application at the State of California Office of Historic Preservation.

PROPERTY OWNERS

1. Palos Verdes Library District
Ms. Linda Elliott, Director
650 Deep Valley Drive
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274

310-377-9584
2. The City of Palos Verdes Estates
Mr. James Hendrickson, City Manager
P.O. Box 1086
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-0283

310-378-0383

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Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs #2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10:

Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery
Palos Verdes Estates, Los Angeles County, CA.
Negatives are filed in the History Room of said library.
Photographer, Art Evans, Redondo Beach, CA.
Date of Photographs: December 8, 1994.

1. Looking south: front facade as viewed from Via Campesina.
Photo reproduced from the *Palos Verdes Bulletin*, July, 1931.
2. Looking south: front facade as viewed from Via Campesina.
3. Looking east: main entrance as viewed from park.
4. Looking west: as viewed from parking lot.
5. Looking north: as viewed from Via Pinale (1962 addition visible through shrubs).
6. Balcony with corbels and wrought iron railing: looking southeast.
7. Looking north: main library interior, showing original furniture.
Photographer: Padilla Studios, Los Angeles, 1930.
8. Looking north: main library interior, showing original furniture.
9. Looking south: showing children's reading area.
10. Looking west (towards park): adult reading area.

Photographs #11, 12, 13:

Farnham Martin's Park
Palos Verdes Estates, Los Angeles County, CA.
Negatives are filed in the History Room of the Palos Verdes Public Library.

11. Looking north: aerial view of fountain, terraces and park under construction, 1927.
12. Looking south: fountain, terraces and park with construction completed, 1928.
13. Looking southeast: fountain, terraces, park and library, 1930.

Photographs #14, 15, 16, 17:

Farnham Martin's Park
Photographer: Dowsing Photography, Torrance, CA.
Date of Photographs: July 20 and September 18, 1995.

14. Looking west: park and *Ulmus Americana* 1995.
15. Looking northwest: park and fountain, 1995.
16. Looking north from upper terrace: park and fountain, 1995.
17. Looking southwest: park and upper terrace from library entrance, 1995.
18. Looking southwest: fountain and upper terrace from lower terrace, 1995.
19. Looking east: library, 1995

Photographs #20, 21:

Farnham Martin's Park
Negatives are filed in the History Room of the Palos Verdes Public Library.
Photographer: David Boss

20. Looking north: fountain, 1991
21. Looking northwest: detail of fountain pedestal. 1993

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Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, CA

RESOURCE PERSONS

Plans

Edward Carson Beall & Associates
Edward C. Beall, AIA
Miles Pritzkat, AIA

National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted Historic Site

Landscaping

Jack Bauman
Owner, Palos Verdes Begonia Farm
Dorothy Flood
Landscape Architect

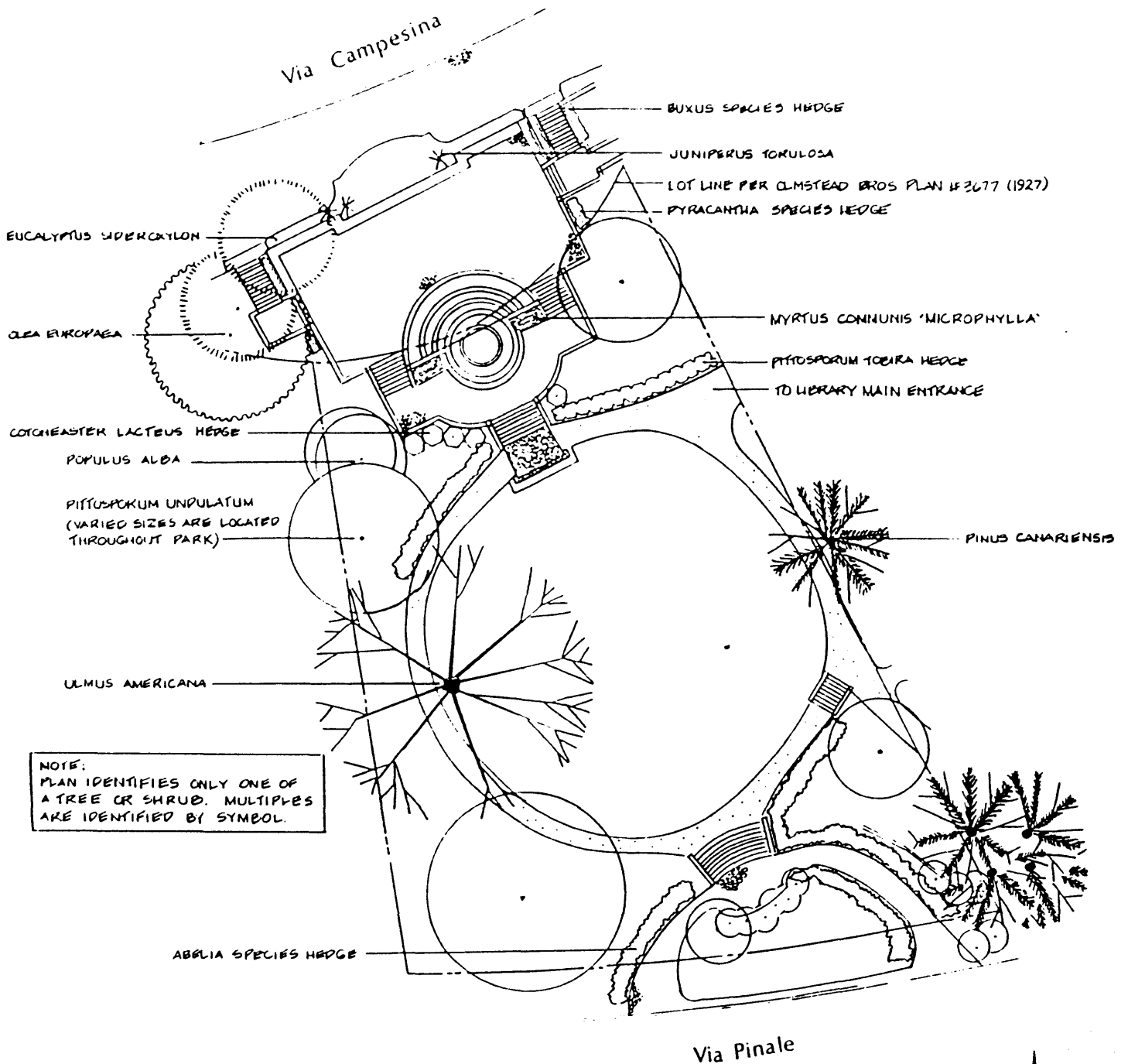
Photography

David Boss
John Dowsing
Arthur Evans, Ph.D.

Residents' Historic Preservation Committee

Alice LaMar, Chair
Pat Ackerman
Nancy Daniels
Ginny Dixon
Janet Fargo
Ann Hinchliffe
Dwyn Robbie
Virginia Twohy
Toodie Walt

Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
 Los Angeles County, California



NOTE:
 PLAN IDENTIFIES ONLY ONE OF
 A TREE OR SHRUB. MULTIPLES
 ARE IDENTIFIED BY SYMBOL.

FARNHAM MARTIN'S PARK
 Major Plantings - August 1995



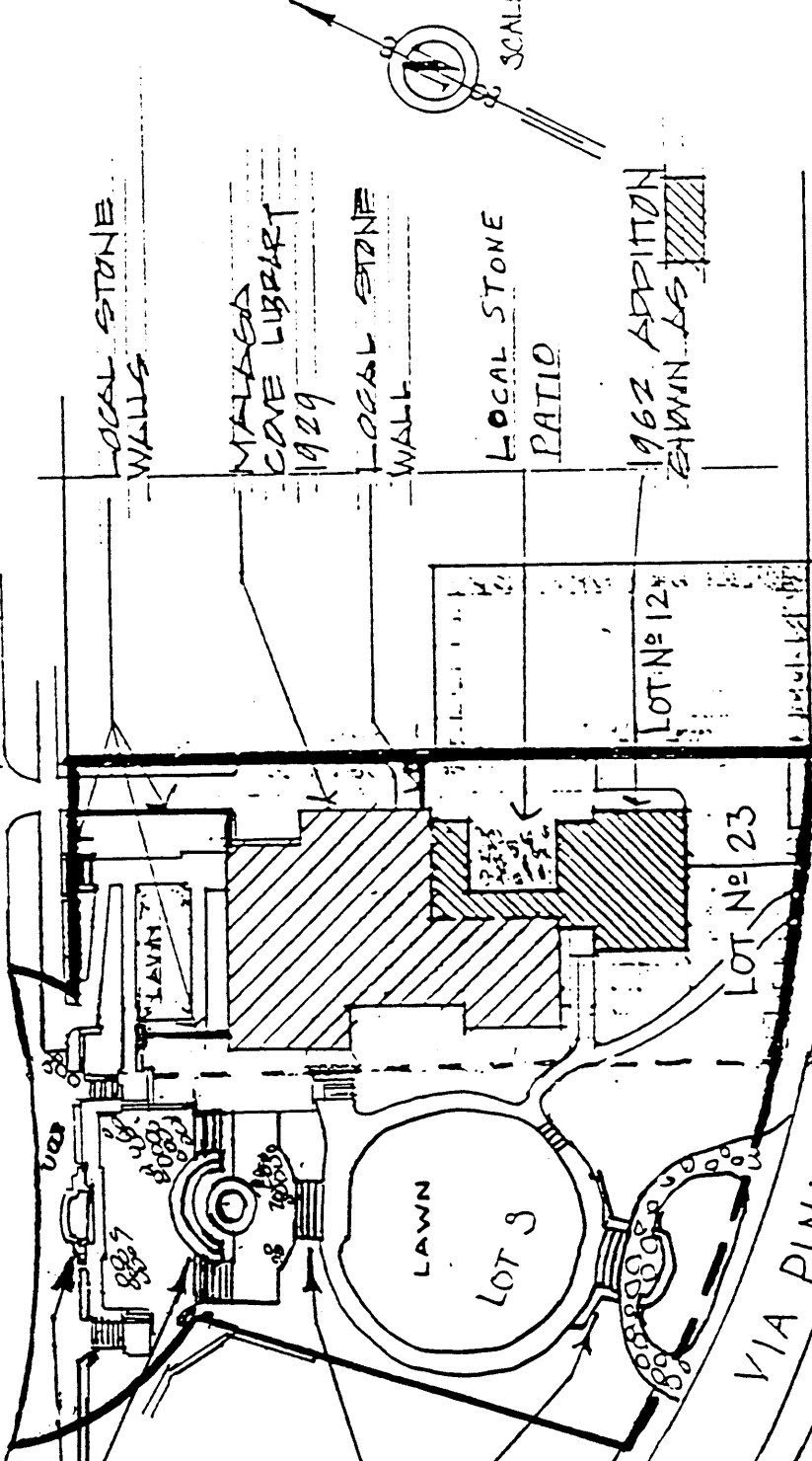
SCALE: 1" = 16'
 (REDUCED 55%)

Palos Verdes Public Library and Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, California

VIA CAMPESINA

LOCAL STONE
FOUNTAIN,
STEPS AND
TERRACES

LOCAL STONE
STEPS AND
TERRACES



SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-

VIA PINALE

LEGAL DESCRIPTION
Lot No. 23 & Lot 9
Block No. 1621
Tract No. 6883

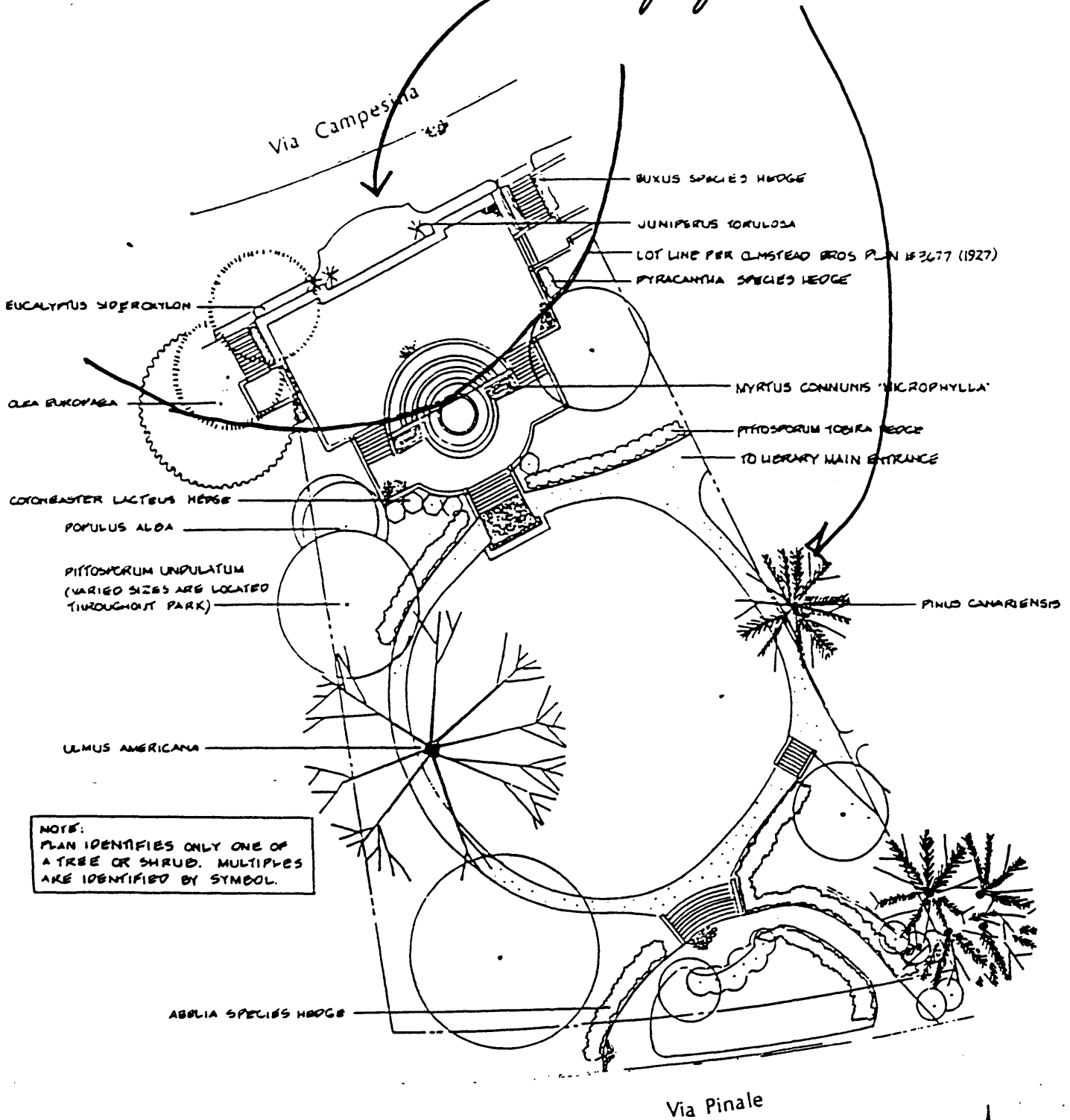
VIA PINALE

MALAGA COVE PLAZA LIBRARY &
FARNHAM MARTIN'S PARK
SKETCH PLAN 1995

VIA RAMON

Ownership

Library District
City of Palos Verdes



NOTE:
PLAN IDENTIFIES ONLY ONE OF
A TREE OR SHRUB. MULTIPLES
ARE IDENTIFIED BY SYMBOL.

FARNHAM MARTIN'S PARK

Major Plantings - August 1995

Palos Verdes Public Library & Art Gallery; Farnham Martin's Park
Los Angeles County, California

SCALE: 1" = 16'
(REDUCED 55%)