

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
CHR Status Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1745 - 1751 SUTTER ST

P1. Other Identifier:

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County: San Francisco

\*b. USGS Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1995

c. Address: 1745 - 1751 SUTTER STREET City: San Francisco ZIP 94115

d. UTM Zone: Easting: Northing:

e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number 0686 060 - 063

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

1745 - 1751 Sutter Street is located on a 40' x 101' lot on the south side of Sutter Street, between Laguna and Buchanan streets. Built circa 1880, 1745 - 1751 Sutter Street is a 2-story, wood frame, double flats building designed in the Italianate style. The rectangular-plan building, clad in wood channel drop siding, is capped by a flat roof. The foundation is not visible. Wood stairs, flanked by turned balustrades, lead up to the primary entrance from the sidewalk. The front of the lot is enclosed by a concrete site wall.

The primary façade faces north. The building includes 4 residential units with 4 entrances on the first story. The entries are located at the center of the primary façade, and feature four partially-glazed, paneled, wood doors with glazed transoms. The recessed, paneled entries have segmental arch openings and are located beneath a portico featuring a dentiled, bracketed entablature surmounted by a turned balustrade and supported by Corinthian columns and pilasters. Two 2-story angled bay windows are located on either side of the primary façade. (continued)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP3. Multiple Family Property

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photo



P5b. Description of Photo:

View of the primary façade, looking south. 11/9/2007

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age:

Historic  Prehistoric  Both

ca. 1880 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

\*P7. Owner and Address  
MESHISHNEK THOMAS J  
1745 SUTTER ST

SAN FRANCISCO CA 94115

\*P8. Recorded By:

Page & Turnbull, Inc., DL  
724 Pine Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108

\*P9. Date Recorded: 11/9/2007

\*P10. Survey Type:

Reconnaissance - Level 1

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

Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan

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

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Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1745 - 1751 SUTTER ST

\*Recorded By: Page & Turnbull, Inc., DL

\*Date Recorded: November 2007  Continuation  Update

\*P3a: Description (continued):

The primary window type is a one-over-one, double-hung, wood sash with molded trim. The first floor windows have round arched openings, and the second story windows have segmental arch openings. The bay windows are decorated with wall panels, colonnettes, spandrel panels, keystones, and intermediate dentiled cornices. The second story windows at the center of the façade over the primary entrance, feature bracketed pediment hoods. The primary façade terminates in a parapet adorned with a bracketed cornice and a paneled frieze.

The building appears to be in good condition.



Detail of the primary façade showing upper story ornamentation and entry portico.  
Source: Page and Turnbull

# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

\*NRHP Status Code 7R

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\*Resource Name or # (assigned by recorder) 1745 -1751 Sutter Street

- \_\_\_ B1. Historic name: Hamumei-kan Boarding House, Nihon Gakuen School, U. Sano Midwifery
- \_\_\_ B2. Common name: 1745 -1751 Sutter Street
- \_\_\_ B3. Original Use: Multiple-family residence
- \_\_\_ B4. Present use: Multiple-family residence
- \_\_\_ \*B5. Architectural Style: Italianate

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

Ca. 1880: Constructed. Ca. 1910: Three-story rear porch added. 1919: Shingle roof repaired. 1968: General rehabilitation of exterior and interior completed. 1988: Back steps repaired and portion of roof over back deck removed.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: None.

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Unknown

\*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural community development Area: Japantown, San Francisco, California

Period of Significance ca. 1910 - 1961 Property Type Residential Applicable Criteria N/A

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

The subject parcel consists of the eastern portion of what was originally a larger lot owned by George E., William H., and John C. Miller as early as 1894. The three Miller brothers were carriage-makers and in 1880 lived with their parents at a nearby address. There is no record of the Millers having lived at the subject address, so it may have been used as a rental property. The building was originally designed as a two-story duplex; however, it appears to have been converted to double-flats by the 1910s. Also by that time, the subject building had become the Hamumei-kan Boarding House, with the Nihon Gakuen School and U. Sano midwifery operating in the western units of the duplex. These business names were not verified by archival research, but the boarding house may have been given a family name or the name of a Japanese hometown, as was common practice. At any rate, the building housed a number of Japanese American families and single lodgers, even if it was not operated as a formal business. By 1930, ten Japanese American people resided in the unit at 1745 Sutter Street, including a family of four, a couple, and four single lodgers. Their occupations included cooks, servants, and porters in private households and a religious worker. Another ten Japanese American people resided in the unit at 1747 Sutter Street, including two families and three individual lodgers. Their occupations included servants, a cook, a butler, and a laundry man, all employed in private households. A family of six lived at 1749 Sutter Street. K. Fujiwara, the head of household for this address, worked as a servant in a private household. Census records do not indicate any residents living at 1751 Sutter Street in 1930. (continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP3. Multiple family property, HP36. Ethnic minority property (JA)

**\*B12. References:**

The Japanese American Directory, San Francisco: The Japanese American News, Inc., 1941.

Japantown Task Force, *Images of America: San Francisco's Japantown*. San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2005. (continued)

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: Caitlin Harvey, Page & Turnbull/  
Matt Weintraub, SF Planning Department

\*Date of Evaluation: May 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



**B10. Significance (continued)**

Sometime before 1932, the property was sold to E. and Zilla D. Nivernals. During the 1930s, the property underwent a number of transactions, eventually being sold to A.J. Juzo and Hisako Kajioaka in 1938. The Kajioakas do not appear to have resided at the property, as Hisako is listed as a housewife living on Geary Street in 1940. The 1941 Japanese American Directory indicates that all of the units in the building were occupied by Japanese Americans. The Kajioakas maintained ownership of the property until 1943, when it was transferred to California Pacific Title Insurance Co. This occurred around the time that Japanese Americans were interned during World War II, and it is likely that the Kajioakas lost ownership of the property due to these events. A nearby property was sold to an "Alien Property Custodian" at this time. In 1943, the property passed to Charles and Etna J. Fowler before it was again purchased by Japanese Americans in 1950. Sisters Satomi and Kuniye Koga were also associated with the property at 2000 - 2016 Fillmore Street around 1950, though they resided at 1795 Sutter Street at this time. This suggests that they dealt in speculative real estate transactions in addition to their jobs as stenographer for the State Department of Employment and Grocer, respectively. In 1953, Jackson Sledge, George Hipona, Wilmer Steele, and Shirley Birdsong resided in the building's four units. Tenancy remained fairly steady through 1980, with only a few changes; however, no Japanese Americans were listed among the residents. By 1961, the Kogas had sold the subject property, which appears to have been owned by non-Japanese American parties up to the present.

The early ownership of 1745-1751 Sutter Street by absentee owners of European American ethnicity and its long-time occupation by Japanese American residents illustrates a trend in property ownership and use that was common throughout the Japantown neighborhood. This had to do with difficulties faced by Japanese citizens who were not able to own property due to laws like the Webb-Heney Alien Land Act, which was in effect from 1913 to 1956 and made it illegal for "aliens ineligible for citizenship" to own property or hold it in trust for eligible children. Nonetheless, the transfer of the subject property to Japanese American ownership in 1938 occurred fairly early in Japantown's history. The property's apparent use as a boarding house with numerous working-class tenants in a multiple-family dwelling also reflects settlement patterns and housing needs within the Japanese American community. Many of the residents of this building worked as laborers, servants, or in blue-collar jobs and accordingly resided in high-density flats, boarding houses, and tenements. The brief pre-war ownership by a Japanese American and the subsequent loss of the property in 1943 is a representative example of many such occurrences during World War II, when the neighborhood's Japanese American population was interned. The fact that the property was then purchased, post-war, by American-born Japanese Americans reflects ownership trends during the post-war period of resettlement, when Japanese Americans sought to reestablish themselves and their community.

The Hamumei-kan Boarding House at 1745-1751 Sutter Street is still used as a multiple-family residence, as it was designed and as it was used throughout the history of Japantown. In particular, it maintains the higher density configuration (four units within an original duplex) that it had achieved by the time of Japanese American use as a boarding house or tenement. The building retains integrity of location and setting, having never been moved from the residential neighborhood in which it is located. The building also retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, since it appears to have undergone relatively few alterations since its early history.

Though it is associated with general historic trends and the development of culture and demographics in Japantown, 1745 -1751 Sutter Street does not appear to be eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or for local listing. It is notable for its use as a residence, apparently a boarding house, for multiple Japanese American working-class families; however, the property does not singularly illustrate significant cultural aspects of the Japanese American community. The property may reflect historic trends as part of a historic district that is based upon the social and cultural history of Japantown; however, documentation of such a potential district has not been completed. The status code of 7R assigned to this property means that it was identified in reconnaissance-level survey but a final evaluation was not determined. Further research into the feasibility of a potential historic district may be required in order to fully evaluate the property. This property was not assessed for its potential to yield information important in prehistory or history, per National Register Criterion D.

**B12. References (continued)**

- Pease, Ben. San Francisco's Japantown and Western Addition maps; 1910, 1920s, 1940, 1948-49, 1956-59, 1972, 2004.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1893, 1899, 1913, 1950.
- San Francisco Assessor's Office, sales ledgers.
- San Francisco Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan Historic Context Statement, 2009.
- San Francisco Block Books: 1894, 1901, 1906, 1909.
- San Francisco City Directories.
- San Francisco Department of Building Inspection, permit records and plans.
- United States Federal Census records.