

File Copy



GSA Pacific Rim Region

March 12, 2003

Clarence Caesar  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 1442  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Historic Evaluation for a federally owned property located at  
620 Central Avenue, Alameda, CA.

Dear Mr. Caesar:

This letter is to seek your offices' evaluation and determination of a federal property within the purview of the General Services Administration (GSA), a federal agency.

The subject property known as the Alameda Federal Center was constructed as Maritime Officers School during World War II years 1942-43. The original 32-acre site has been reduced to 7.6 acres. Many of the original structures have been demolished. GSA presently owns the property and is considering the possibility of disposal.

Because of its age and the significant activities that transpired on this property during World War II, the possibility exists that this facility could qualify for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Presently, it is GSA's position that the criteria for eligibility do not support a Historic Register listing. In order for you to get a better understanding of the Alameda Federal Center, I am enclosing copies of the following.

1. Historic Building Preservation Plan (HBPP) prepared by Page & Turnbull, Inc. dated February 23, 1996
2. Supporting for Determination of Eligibility for National Register of Historic Places prepared by Page & Turnbull, Inc. Dated February 1996

We are asking that you provide comments regarding the above. A response within 30 days would be very much appreciated. If you have questions or require more information, please contact Mr. Javad Soltani at (415) 522-3493. Again, we appreciate your consideration in this matter.

U.S. General Services Administration  
450 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102-3434  
[www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Arthur Layne". The signature is fluid and extends to the right with a long horizontal stroke.

Arthur Layne  
Regional Historic Preservation Officer (9PCT)  
Public Buildings Service

Enclosures

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942898  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94290-0001  
(916) 653-8624 Fax: (916) 653-9824  
calshpo@mail2.quiknet.com



GSA REGION 3  
03 MAR 27 PM 12:37  
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT DIV  
SPC

March 20, 2003

REPLY TO: GSA030312A

Arthur Layne, Regional Historic Preservation Officer  
U.S. General Services Administration  
450 Golden Gate Avenue  
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94102-3434

Re: Historic Evaluation of a Federally Owned Property at 620 Central Avenue in the  
City of Alameda, Alameda County.

Dear Mr. Layne:

Thank you for submitting to our office your March 12, 2003 letter and supporting documentation regarding the historic evaluation of a federally owned property located at 620 Central Avenue in the City of Alameda in Alameda County. Constructed in 1942-42, the property was known as the Maritime Officers School until 1947 when the mission it served was changed. From 1947 until its deactivation in 1957 the property served as the U.S. Maritime Service Training Station, Alameda. In 1957, the site was declared surplus and was sold in 1961. Many of the original structures were demolished and the federal government retained ownership of the property, eventually utilizing it as the Alameda Federal Center, the function it currently serves. The current facility is managed by the General Services Administration (GSA), providing leased office space to a wide variety of federal agencies.

Of the twenty-five structures that once made up the Maritime Officers School, nine have been removed, and two are now part of the Robert W. Crown State Beach located to the south and east of the Federal Center. The complex today consists of a total of seventeen one and two story buildings, including fourteen that are original to the complex. The original Maritime Officers School could be divided into two groups of buildings: the working buildings and the living buildings. The living buildings included barracks, mess hall, firehouse, infirmary, garage, and store. The working buildings and features included administration, auditorium, indoor swimming pool, parade ground, seamanship building, night-vision classroom, anti-aircraft building, the mast assembly, the pier, the engineering building, and the academic building. In the World War II years most of the working buildings had a more direct relation to the special nature of the school's maritime training mission. Of these structures, only the seamanship building, the engineering building, and the academic building survive.

GSA is seeking my comments on its determination of the eligibility of the Alameda Federal Center for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in accordance with 36 CFR 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A review of the submitted documentation leads me to concur with GSA's determination that the Alameda Federal Center is not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP under any of the criteria established by 36 CFR 60.4. Although the property has associations with World War II-era training of officers associated with the U.S. Maritime Service, it has lost considerable integrity of design, materials, setting,

feeling, and association with its historic period of significance (1942-1957). Those structures that remain do not convey the special nature of the property's historic maritime training mission during and after World War II.

Thank you again for seeking my comments on your project. If you have any questions, please contact staff historian Clarence Caesar by phone at (916) 653-8902, or by e-mail at [ccaes@ohp.parks.ca.gov](mailto:ccaes@ohp.parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Knox Mellon', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Knox Mellon  
State Historic Preservation Officer