

Preservation & Prosperity in Downtown Environments

Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Vision Plan

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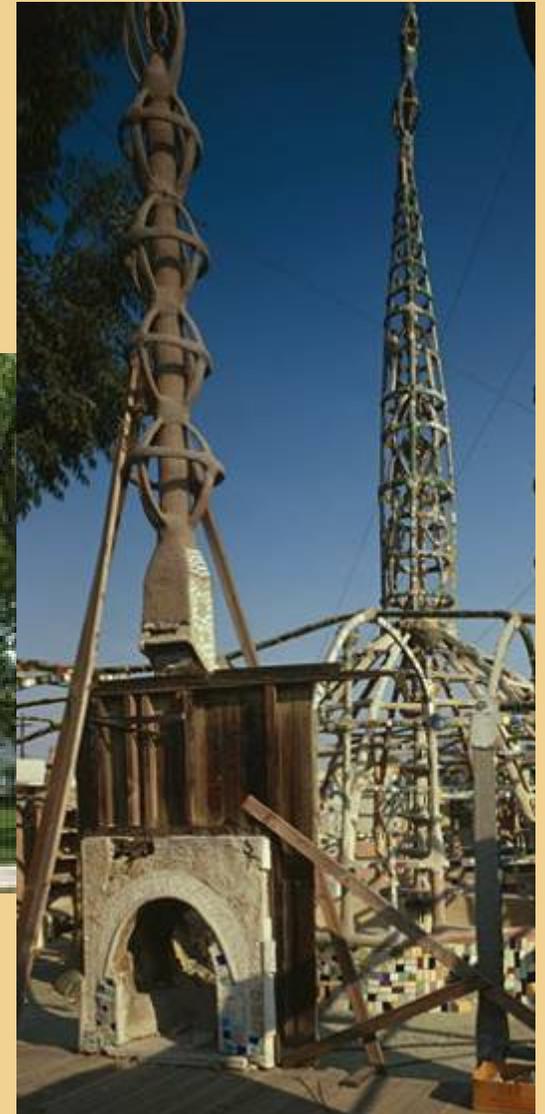
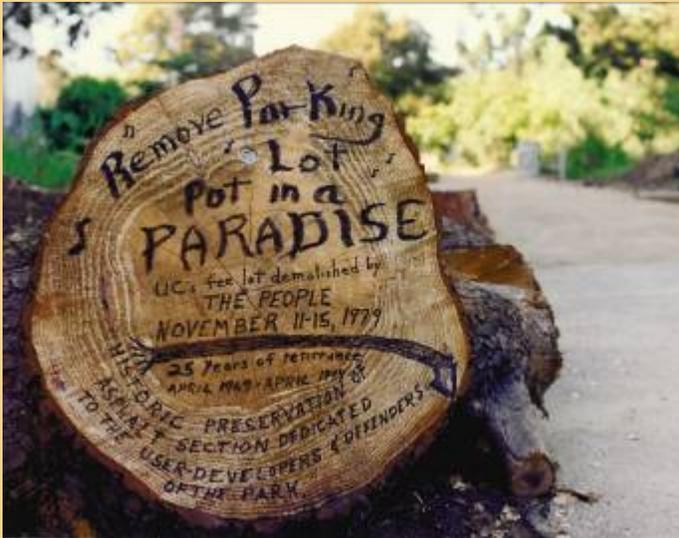
What is historic? What is history?



- Place with a physical tie to significant element from the past
- Record of the *human* past as we understand and interpret it today

Significance: Historic Properties

- Types of properties: buildings, sites, structures, objects



- Categories of significance: events, people, design

Special cases: districts

- Whole is greater than the sum of the parts; boundaries, cohesive theme important



Special cases: recent past

- National & state criteria normally exclude properties less than 50 years old
- Things really changed 50 years ago – now preservation is changing



Special cases: recent past



- Case Study House, left; Eichler, right

Special cases: recent past



- Is 1956 *really* the new 1906?

What makes a city historic?



- Buildings, urban patterns, landscapes, objects

What makes a city *feel* historic?



- Critical mass, context, compatibility

Downtown USA



Can a city make history? Instantly?



Downtowns: old and old-at-heart



Carmel

Pleasanton

Livermore

Mill Valley

Pleasant Hill

Redwood City

Case study: Dublin Historic Park



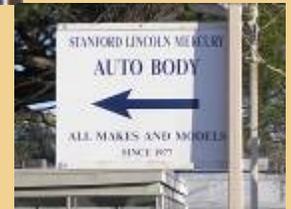
Case Study: Danville – patina without age?



Case Study: Danville – patina without age



Menlo Park: Accretion & Variety



- Santa Cruz Avenue: new and not-so-old

Menlo Park: Accretion & Variety



- El Camino: varying urban patterns

Menlo Park: Accretion & Variety



- El Camino: varying property types

Opportunities & strategies



- Retain & leverage what exists

Opportunities & strategies



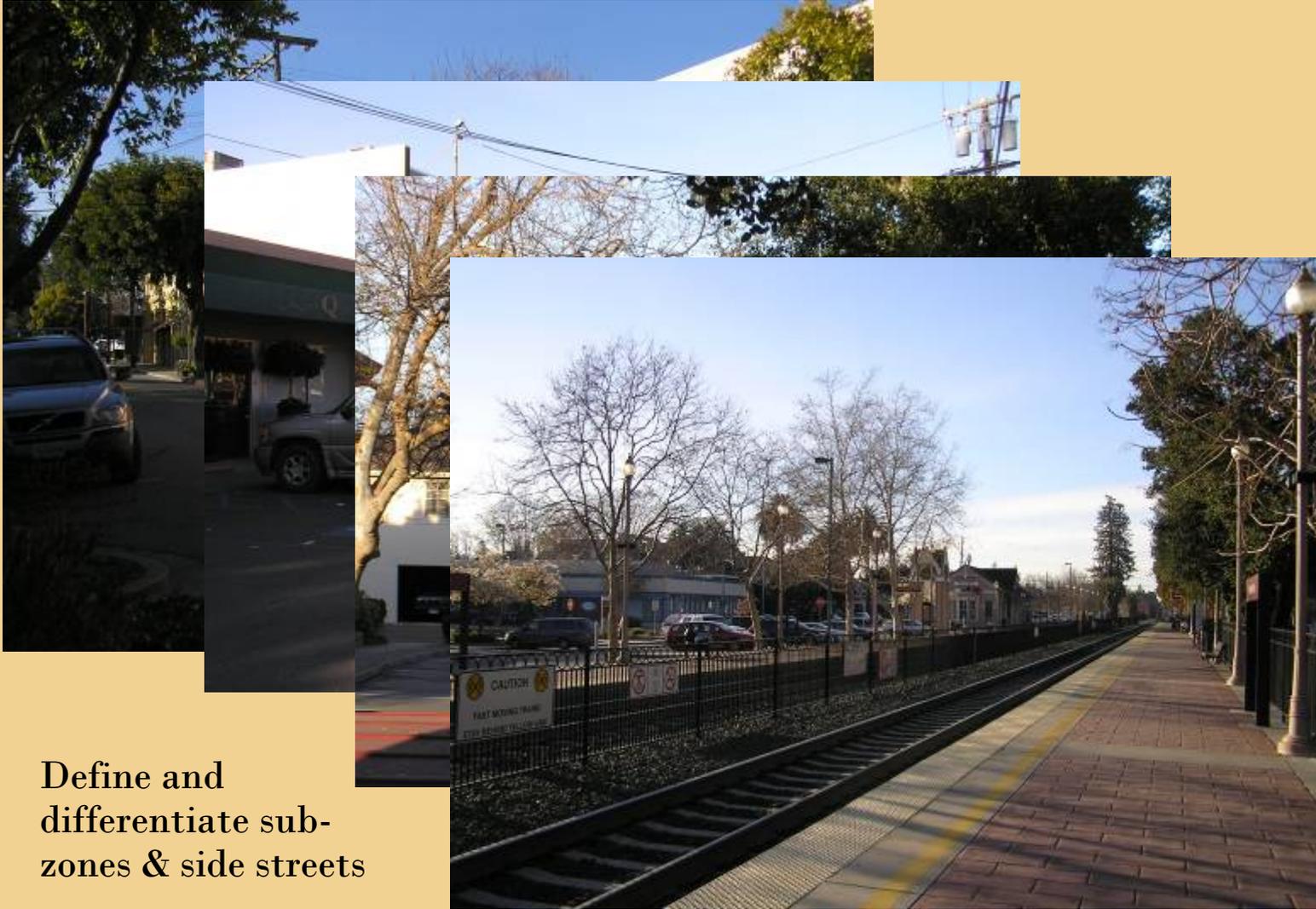
- Reinforce edge conditions – many are historic

Opportunities & strategies



- Extend historical conditions like urban patterns, building types, materials, designs

Opportunities & strategies



- Define and differentiate sub-zones & side streets

Opportunities & strategies



- Study recent eras, styles, phases, and programs – then decide

In the end, *you* make history – two ways

"Any city gets what it admires, will pay for, and, ultimately, deserves. Even when we had Penn Station, we couldn't afford to keep it clean. We want and deserve tin-can architecture in a tinhorn culture. And we will probably be judged not by the monuments we build but by those we have destroyed."

- "Farewell to Penn Station," New York Times editorial, October 30, 1963



- You decide what the past means
- You decide what to build and what to keep