

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary #  
HRI #  
Trinomial  
NRHP Status Code

Other Listings  
Review Code                      Reviewer                      Date

Page 1 of 4                      \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder): Rancho Bella Vista

P1. Other identifier: HP-88-01

\*P2. Location:     Not for Publication     Unrestricted

\*a. County    Santa Clara County                      and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a location map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad    Cupertino                      Date    1980 Photorevised    T .8 S. ; R .1 W. ; Mount Diablo    B.M.

c. Address:    20021                      Bella Vista Ave.                      City    Saratoga                      Zip    95070  
                    d. UTM:(give more than one for large and/or linear resources)                      Zone    10S ;                      mE/                      mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

terminus of Bella Vista Avenue off Horseshoe Drive.                      APN# 397-20-091

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

This secluded Italian Villa was designed at the beginning of the twentieth century by renowned San Francisco architect Willis Polk. The sprawling, two-story stucco house features a red-tile hipped roof, sun porches, covered walkways and open balconies, a three-story bell tower, and elegant detailing, such as Classical columns, carved exposed rafter tails, and gabled chimney tops. It contains nearly 20 rooms and features many different styles of windows. The residence is in a setting surrounded by numerous California live oaks.

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)    HP2. Single family property

\*P4. Resources Present:     Building     Structure     Object     Site     District     Element of District     Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo:  
(View, date, accession #)  
View facing east, July 2009.

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:

Historic     Prehistoric     Both  
1917, 92 years old.

\*P7. Owner and Address:

John K. & Susan Kraft  
20021 Bella Vista Ave.  
Saratoga CA 95070

\*P8. Recorded By: (Name, affiliation, and address)

F. Maggi, L. Dill, & J. Kusz  
Archives & Architecture, LLC  
PO Box 1332  
San Jose, CA 95109

\*P9. Date Recorded:                      10/26/09

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)

Reconnaissance

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

Archives & Architecture: City of Saratoga Statement of Historic Context, 2009.

\*Attachments:

- None                       Continuation Sheet                       District Record                       Rock Art Record                       Other (List):  
 Location Map                       Building, Structure, and Object Record                       Linear Feature Record                       Artifact Record  
 Sketch Map                       Archaeological Record                       Milling Station Record                       Photograph Record

DPR 523A (1/95)

\* Required Information

State of California - The Resources Agency  
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

Primary #  
 HRI #

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\*NRHP/CRHR Status Code 3CS

Resource Name (Assigned by recorder) Rancho Bella Vista

B1. Historic Name: Charles Blaney House

B2. Common Name: 20021 Bella Vista Ave.

B3. Original Use: Residence

B4. Present Use: Residence

\*B5. Architectural Style: Italian Villa

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)  
 Constructed 1917.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: n/a Original Location: n/a

\*B8. Related Features:  
 Unknown.

B9a. Architect: Willis Polk

b. Builder: Unknown

\*B10. Significance: Theme Architecture Area: Fruitvale West

Period of Significance: 1917 - Property Type: Residential Applicable Criteria: (2), (3)

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

Rancho Bella Vista is listed on the Saratoga Heritage Resources Inventory, included as a part of HP-88-01. It qualified under Criteria a, b, c, and d:

- a) the property exemplifies and reflects special elements of the cultural, social, economic, aesthetic, and architectural history of Saratoga;
- b) the property is identified with persons significant in local history;
- c) the property embodies distinctive characteristics of the Italian Villa style, type and period; and
- d) the property is representative of the notable architect Willis Polk.

Rancho Bella Vista also appears eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion (2) and (3), as the house embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Italian Villa house-type within Saratoga's City of Homes period, and represents the work of master architect Willis Polk.

(Continued on page 4, DPR523L)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) None

\*B12. References:

Saratoga Heritage Preservation Commission, Historic Resources Inventory form, 1988.

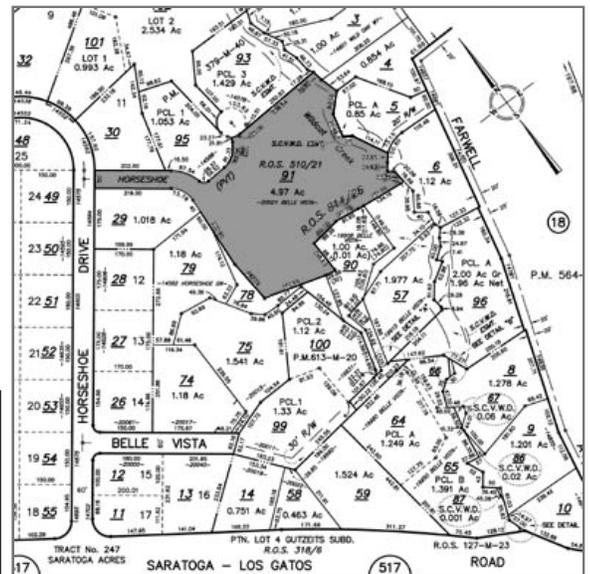
B13. Remarks: Listed Heritage Resource

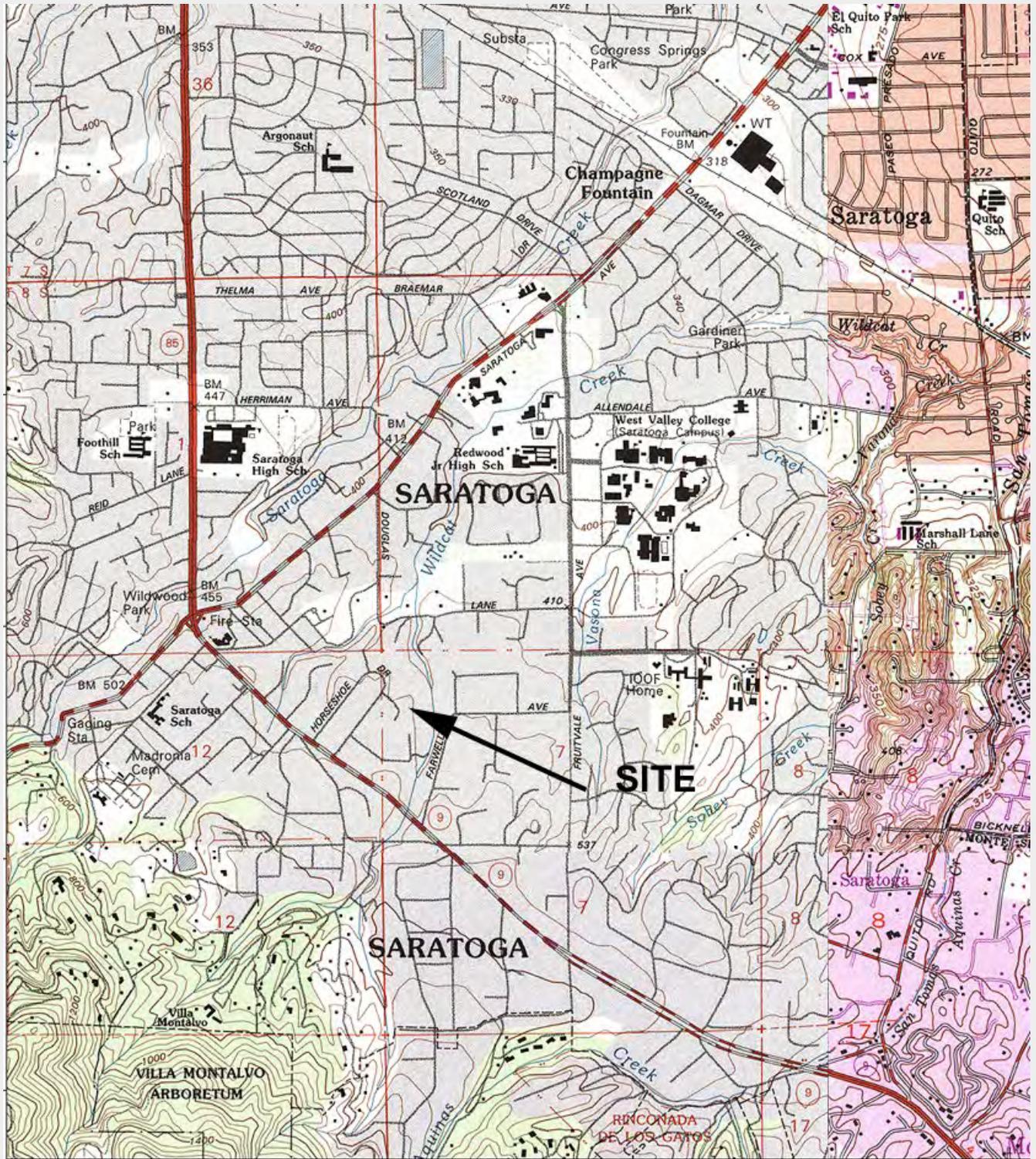
\*B14. Evaluator: Franklin Maggi

\*Date of Evaluation: October 26, 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)





MN  
14°

586000m E. 587000m E. 588000m E. 589000m E. WGS84 Zone 10S  
0 1000 FEET 0 500m 3000m  
Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

Page 4 of 4 \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Rancho Bella Vista

\* Recorded By F. Maggi, L. Dill, & J. Kusz \* Date 10/26/2009  Continuation  Update

*(Continued from page 2, DPR523b, B10)*

**Historical Background**

This house was designed by prominent San Francisco architect Willis Polk and was built on the site of what had previously been the Frank Farwell ranch.

Farwell was an early Saratoga pioneer, who first arrived in the area in 1856. He was a gold in the Sierra Nevada, and also for a while a businessman in San Francisco. In what was then the rural area around McCartysville, he established a ranch, and became a leader in the then small lumbertown. He was involved with the Congregational Church, Improvement Club, Madronia Cemetery, was a school trustee, and later helped start the Blossom Festival and Saratoga Missionary Settlement.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles D. Blaney, cousins of the Farwells, bought a portion of the ranch, and built the house now known as Rancho Bella Vista. Mr. Blaney was chairman of the State's first highway commission. The Blaney's gave generously of their time and money to community programs, and were involved in politics, philanthropy and cultural activities. Mrs. Blaney was her own landscape gardener and her gardens became a Saratoga showplace. She was also one of the first suffragettes. The property was later the home of Mrs. Blaney's sister, Edith Kirkwood and then Mrs. Kirkwood's son, Robert, a California Assemblyman and later the State's Controller.

**Architectural Context**

Willis Polk (1867-1924) was a prolific San Francisco architect who began his career as a draftsman for his father's construction firm in Kansas City. He later worked for the Boston firm Van Brunt and Howe, and then A. Page Brown in New York City. He took a position with Chicago architect Daniel Burnham in 1902, but returned to San Francisco a year later and again partnered with Burnham in 1906 following the earthquake. Polk was a versatile architect, with particular skill in combining classical styles. He was regarded for his elegant residential work, mainly in mansions and estates, in the Georgian Revival style for wealthy and prominent Bay Area residents.

**Integrity**

The house retains adequate architectural design, workmanship and materials, as well as a compatible setting, and the property continues to embody the historical associations and feelings of this villa.