BOTANIC GARDEN MISSION DAM (& AQUEDUCT); SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN

LANDMARK NUMBER: #24

KNOWN AS: Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (originally the Blaksley Botanic Garden 1926-38)

PHYSICAL ADDRESS: 1212 Mission Canyon Road, Santa Barbara

LOCATION: Upper Mission Canyon (78 acres)

TYPE OF SITE: Botanic Garden and structures

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 83-96 (Mission Dam); 2003-059 (Other Garden attributes)

LANDMARK DATE: February 28, 1983; February 25, 2003

DESIGNATION OBTAINED BY: The Mission Dam and Aqueduct were nominated by The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (October 1, 1982); Other garden attributes were nominated by Paulina M. Conn (April 30, 2002)

PAST OWNERS: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

CURRENT OWNER: Santa Barbara Botanic Garden Inc.
1212 Mission Canyon Road, Santa Barbara, California
CHANGES/ ALTERATIONS: A new wooden bridge and steel railing have been installed across the dam; the Campbell Bridge burned in the 2009 Jesusita Fire

CONDITION: Very Good

DESCRIPTION: In 1983, the Mission Dam located in the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden was designated County Historic Landmark #24. It was built by Indian labor in 1806 under the direction of the Franciscan Fathers to furnish water for the Mission, the adjacent Indian village, and the fields and orchards. The dam was used to store water and to divert it into the aqueduct which delivered this water by gravity flow to the Mission two miles below, a most remarkable engineering feat.¹

In 2003, the Board of Supervisors broadened the landmark to include not only the dam and aqueduct but also the “Indian Steps,” the Entry Steps (1948), the Information kiosk (1937), the original library (1941), Campbell Bridge, and the Caretaker’s Cottage (1927) which could be moved to another location in the garden with the approval of the Board of Supervisors. It also restricted the use of the property to be used as a botanic garden with its historic landscape design and stated that “no changes to the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Mission Dam and Aqueduct shall be made which substantially deviate from the foregoing historic landscape design concept or history use of the landmark property unless express consent in writing is first had and obtained from the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, with reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary.”²

The Garden is also significant because it is closely identified with persons of note including Anna Dorinda Blaksley Bliss, Elmer Bissell, and Frederick Clements, and the architects and landscape architects Ervanna Bowen Bissell, Beatrix Farrand, Lockwood de Forest Jr., and Lutah Maria Riggs.³

Land for the Garden was first acquired in 1926 and the Blaksley Botanic Garden was begun that year. By 1938, the Garden was devoted exclusively to native California plants. The following year, the Garden changed its name to the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, severed its ties with the Museum of Natural History, and incorporated as a benefit to the general public. The final landscape design was adopted in 1943; the final land acquisition occurred in 1970.⁴

¹ Nomination application (October 1982)
² Supervisors’ resolution No. 2003-059
³ Ibid
⁴ Nomination application (April 2002)
RESOURCES:
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden Application for Designation as a Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Under the Authority and Protection of County Ordinance No. 1716 (October 1, 1982)
Resolution of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors No. 2003-059 (February 25, 2003)
Paulina Conn: Nomination of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden for Historical Landmark Status (April 30, 2002)
RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THAT THE MISSION DAM IN THE SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN IS AN HISTORICAL LANDMARK DESIGNATED AS SANTA BARBARA COUNTY HISTORICAL LANDMARK NO. 24, WORTHY OF PROTECTION UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 1716, AND PRESCRIBING CONDITIONS TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE LANDMARK.

WHEREAS, the Mission Dam located in the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, 1212 Mission Canyon Road, in the County of Santa Barbara, has great historical significance and interest to the general public as a landmark and a reminder of pioneer days in Santa Barbara County; and

WHEREAS, on February 2, 1983 the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Advisory Committee declared the Mission Dam to be an historical landmark pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance No. 1716 of the County of Santa Barbara; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara deems the Mission Dam to be worthy of protection and preservation as such historical landmark;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED, as follows:

1. The Board of Supervisors, having duly set a public hearing for February 28, 1983, has heard all interested parties and has closed said public hearing, adopting the conditions set out in Paragraph 2 of this Resolution.

2. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares the Mission Dam to be an historical landmark pursuant to Ordinance No. 1716.
and hereby imposes the following conditions on the Mission Dam pursuant to said ordinance.

a. Demolition, removal or destruction, partially or entirely, is prohibited unless express consent in writing is first had and obtained from the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Advisory Committee. Such consent may impose all reasonable conditions deemed appropriate by the Committee to accomplish the purposes of Ordinance No. 1716.

b. No alterations, repairs, additions or changes (other than normal maintenance and repair work) shall be made unless and until all plans therefor have first been reviewed by the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Advisory Committee and approved, or modified and reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary, and that all such work shall be done under the direction and control of the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Advisory Committee or other qualified persons designated by it.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, this 28th day of February, 1983, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Wallace, Holmdahl, Miyoshi

NOES: None

ABSENT: Supervisors Yager, Kallman

ATTEST:
HOWARD C. MENZEL
COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER

By
Deputy Clerk

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
KENNETH L. NELSON,
COUNTY COUNSEL

By

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RESOLUTION OF THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THAT THOSE
PORTIONS OF THE SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC
GARDEN, 1212 MISSION CANYON ROAD, SANTA
BARBARA, CALIFORNIA, LOCATED ON
ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NOS. 23-340-13,
23-340-14 AND 23-340-15 ARE WORTHY OF
PROTECTION UNDER CHAPTER 18A OF THE
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY CODE, AND
PRESCRIBING CONDITIONS TO PROTECT AND
PREVERSE THEM AS ADDITIONS TO COUNTY
LANDMARK #24.

RESOLUTION No. 2003-059

WHEREAS, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors has considered the historical
significance of those portions of the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, 1212 Mission Canyon
Road/ Santa Barbara, California, located on Assessor's Parcel Nos. 23-340-13, 23-340-14 and 23-340-
15, in accordance with the requirements, standards and criteria contained in County Code, Chapter
18A, and finds that they are worthy of protection as a County Historic Landmark.

WHEREAS, the existing County Landmark #24 known as "MISSION DAM", located on
Assessor's Parcel No. 23-340-14, should be expanded to include (a) the entirety of Assessor's Parcel
No. 23-340-14 and the aqueduct located thereon, (b) Assessor's Parcel No. 23-340-13, and (c)
Assessor's Parcel No. 23-340-15, said County Landmark to be known hereafter as the SANTA
BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT;

WHEREAS, the Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors finds that the SANTA BARBARA
BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT meet the following criteria provided in
County Code, Chapter 18A-3:

1. They exemplify or reflect special elements of the County's cultural, social, economic,
political, archaeological, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history;

2. They are identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history,
including Anna Dorinda Blaksley Bliss, Elmer Bissell and Frederick Clements;

3. They embody distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction
or are valuable examples of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;
4. They are representative of the work of notable builders, designers, landscape architects or architects, including Ervanna Bowen Bissell, Beatrix Farrand, Lockwood de Forest Jr. and Lutah Maria Riggs;

5. They contribute to the significance of a historic area, being a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic, prehistoric, archaeological, or scenic properties, or thematically related grouping of properties, which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development;

6. They have a location with unique physical characteristics or a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the County of Santa Barbara;

7. They embody elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;

8. They are one of the few remaining examples in the County, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen;

WHEREAS, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors finds that the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT meet the following standards provided in County Code, Chapter 18A-4:

1. They have historic, aesthetic or special character or interest for the general public and are not limited in interest to a special group of persons;

2. Their designation as a County Historic Landmark does not require the expenditure of an unreasonable amount of money to carry out the purposes of County Code, Chapter 18A; and

3. Their designation as a County Historic Landmark does not infringe upon the right of a private owner thereof to make any and all reasonable uses of such Landmark which are not in conflict with the purposes of County Code, Chapter 18A.

WHEREAS, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors deems that the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT is worthy of protection and preservation as an historical landmark;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED as follows:

1. The premises defined herein as the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT, 1212 Mission Canyon Road, Santa Barbara, California, located on Assessor's Parcel Nos. 23-340-13, 23-340-14 and 23-340-15, meet the eligibility criteria
and selection standards for a County Historic Landmark as described in County Code, Chapter 18A, as established by evidence presented to the Board;

2. The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors hereby designates the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT, Assessor's Parcel Nos. 23-340-13, 23-340-14 and 23-340-15, as a Historic Landmark, subject to the following conditions:

A. Historic Structures and Features

i. Demolition, removal or destruction, partially or entirely, of the following structures or features, as depicted on the attached map, shall be prohibited unless express consent in writing is first had and obtained from the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, with reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary;

a) Mission Dam and Aqueduct
b) "Indian Steps"
c) Entry Steps (1948)
d) Information Kiosk (1937)
e) Original Library (1941)
f) Campbell Bridge
g) Caretaker's Cottage (1927); provided however, that the Board of Supervisors hereby expressly consents to the relocation of the Caretaker's Cottage to another site in the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden.

ii. No exterior alterations, additions or changes (other than normal maintenance and repair) to the structures or features identified in subparagraph 2-A.i. above shall be made unless and until all plans therefor have first been reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission and approved or modified, and reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary.

B. Continued Use as Botanic Garden

i. The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden has historically functioned as a traditional botanical garden holding documented collections of living plants for purposes of conservation, scientific research, display and education. The historic landscape design concept of the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT is characterized by a system of trails through and around plant communities, displays, exhibits and structures. Such plant communities, displays, and exhibits have, with only limited exceptions, historically been dedicated to plants native to California and the California Floristic Province. No changes to the SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN, MISSION DAM AND AQUEDUCT shall be made which substantially deviate from the foregoing historic landscape design concept or historic use of the landmark property unless express consent in writing is first had and obtained from the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, with reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary.
ii. Nothing in this subparagraph 2.B. shall be construed so as to control or restrict the change, maintenance, repair, relocation, replacement, or updating of plant communities, temporary or permanent displays, exhibits, trails, public areas, interpretive materials or existing structures, and such changes, maintenance, repairs, relocation, replacement and updating shall not require review and approval by the Commission. Any construction or installation of new structures, features or facilities on the landmark property shall not substantially deviate from, or substantially conflict with, the historic landscape design concept or historic use as set forth above, and shall not cause the landmark property to substantially deviate from, or substantially conflict with, the eight (8) criteria from County Code Chapter 18A-3 listed above.

1. The Board of Supervisors expressly finds that all other existing buildings located on Assessor’s Parcel Nos. 23-340-13, 23-340-14 and 23-340-15, other than those listed in subparagraph 2.A.i. above, do not meet the eligibility criteria for historic landmark status under County Code Chapter 18A and shall not be subject to the conditions and restrictions contained herein.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, Santa Barbara, this 25th day of February ____, 2003, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Schwartz, Rose, Marshall, Gray, Centeno
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

ATTEST:
MICHAEL F. BROWN
CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY: Bolet Cohen
Deputy

NAOMI SCHWARTZ
CHAIRWOMAN
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Approved as to form:

Deputy County Counsel

ATTACHMENT: 2 LOCATION MAPS