

EASTER HILL VILLAGE, BUILDING NO. 13
Northwest corner of Hinkley Avenue & South Twenty-Sixth Street
Richmond
Contra Costa
California

HABS CA-2783-F
CA-2783-F

HABS
CA 2783-F

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1111 Jackson Street
Oakland, CA 94607

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Easter Hill Village, Building No. 13
Northwest corner of Hinkley Boulevard & South 26th Street
Richmond
Contra Costa County
California

HABS No. CA-2783-F

HABS
CA-2783-F
(Page 1)

Location: Northwest corner of Hinkley ^{Avenue} Boulevard and South 26th Street

U.S.G.S. Richmond Quadrangle (7.5'), Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: northwest corner 10.4197417.557557; northernmost point 10.4197464.557687; northeast corner 10.4197354.557875; southeast corner 10.4197235.557872; southwest corner 10.4197233.557673.

Present owner: Richmond Housing Authority

Present use: Demolished in 2004

Most recent use: Public housing project (until late 2003)

Significance: Easter Hill Village has been determined eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C. Easter Hill is eligible under Criterion A because of its local significance as part of the effort to address the critical Post-World War II housing shortage in City of Richmond. Easter Hill Village was the most significant public effort to provide affordable permanent housing for many families displaced by the demolition of temporary war housing. Easter Hill Village is eligible under Criterion C because it had significant influence on the design of multi-unit housing. Easter Hill Village was the first multi-unit residential development to combine the twin themes of the planned unit development with the individuation of units. The design was also unique for its time in the care given to integrating a multi-unit residential development to its site. Easter Hill Village also is an important design by master architects Donald Hardison and Vernon DeMars, and landscape architect Laurence Halprin. The design of Easter Hill Village had at least statewide, if not national significance and influence. The period of significance under Criteria A and C is 1953 to 1954. The boundary of the eligible resource is the boundaries of the original Easter Hill Village project except Buildings 2, 3, 4 and 6 that have lost their historic integrity.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.

B. Historical Context

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

Building 13 is one of forty-one surviving buildings in the Easter Hill Village complex. As originally built in 1953-1954, the complex consisted of forty-eight buildings that were similar in construction, finishing materials, and general architectural character. All buildings were one or two stories in height and consisted of one or more modules that were linked end-to-end. The buildings varied principally in the finish of their second stories and in the number of modules that they contained. (The basic modules are identified on original plans with a letter from A to E; variations are indicated by a number suffix, and by the letter "R" for reverse plans.)

Building 13 consists of two mirror-image modules joined at their sides. The more eastern of the two modules is setback relative to the other, creating a staggered or stepped footprint. On the original plans, these modules are labeled as (from east to west) modules E and ER.

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783, for a description of the elevation, plan, and architectural character of these modules, and of the Easter Hill complex as a whole.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions

Building 13 is one story in height and 80'-0" in length, from east to west. The building faces south, toward Hinkley Boulevard.

In its plan, Building 13 is divided into two mirror-image modules: ER to the west, and E to the east. Each of these modules is 40'-0" in length and 29'-0" plus a small ell in depth, and contains one living unit. The modules are staggered relative to each other, with the eastern module set back 10'-0" from the western one.

2. Foundations

Building 13 has a reinforced concrete perimeter foundation.

3. Walls and structural system

Like all buildings in Easter Hill Village, Building 13 is stud-framed in construction. The building is clad in board-and-batten siding on all four sides.

The main façade is along one of the long sides, that facing south. Entrances to each of the two units can be found in this façade. The rear of the building is in the other long façade, that facing north. Each unit has a back door on this side of the building.

4. Porches

Each unit in this building possesses its own entrance porch. Each porch has a concrete deck, wooden railings, and wooden posts that support a shed roof. This shed roof is actually an extension of the main roof; it is not a separate roof structure. A sidewalk leads to the porch in the western module, and a wheelchair ramp leads to the porch in the eastern module. The latter porch is wider than the former.

A rear porch can be found in the north elevation of each unit. These porches fit into the angle of the rear wall and an ell that is formed by the storage room.

5. Openings

Exterior doors are wooden hollow core doors, opening inward. Over each door is a security grille with dense metal screen that opens outward. Both the doors and the security grilles have deadbolt locks. These doors and grilles are non-original. In the main (south) façade, the front doors are adjacent to paired windows, while in the rear façade, the doors are adjacent to single windows.

As is the case elsewhere in Easter Hill Village, all windows in this building are of three types: single windows measuring about three feet in width by four feet in height, paired windows measuring about seven feet in width by four feet in height, and bathroom windows measuring about three and one-half feet in width by two feet in height.

In the main (south) façade, fenestration consists of six paired windows, three per unit. In the rear (north) façade, there are two paired windows, a single window, and a bathroom window in each unit. Each of the two side

facades has two paired windows. These are arranged off center, that is, closer to the front porch than to the rear of the building.

6. Roof

The roof is almost flat, with a very slight gabled pitch. It extends beyond the plane of the wall to cover the porches. The roof beams are exposed, and where they extend to cover the porches they are supported by wooden porch posts. There is a break in the roofline where the E module is set back from the ER module. Two small, rectangular chimneys, one for each module, can be found near the apex of the roof. These chimneys are made of wood, are clad in stucco, and house metal flues that rise up from them.

C. Description of Interiors

1. Floor plans

a. Basement

Building 13 contains no basement.

b. Apartment floor plans

Modules E and ER each contain one townhouse. The front door in each of these townhouses opens directly into the living room. From the living room, one door leads to a kitchen, and another door leads to a hallway. The hallway, in turn, opens into four bedrooms, a bathroom, a coatroom, and a linen closet. From the kitchen, one door leads into a storeroom, while another opens onto the back porch. The storeroom projects beyond the rear wall of the townhouse, forming an ell with that wall.

The living room measures about twelve feet by nineteen feet, and the kitchen is about thirteen feet by sixteen feet, minus a notch formed by the storeroom. The bedrooms vary in size, from about ten feet square to ten feet by thirteen feet, plus small projections containing closets.

2. Flooring

Floors are covered with non-original twelve-inch vinyl tiles.

3. Wall and ceiling finish

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

4. Openings and trim

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

5. Doors to bedroom and linen closets, storage rooms

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

6. Kitchen fixtures

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

7. Bathroom fixtures

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

8. Lighting and heating fixtures

Please refer to the "Outline" report for Building 8, HABS No. CA-2783-A.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation

Building 13 is located at the northwest corner of South 26th Street and Hinkley Boulevard. A parking area is to the north, and Building 12 is to the east. Several boulders can be found at the rear of this building, between it and the parking lot. Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783 for more on the general setting at Easter Hill Village.

2. Historic landscape

See "Narrative" report, CA-2783.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings

The original 1953 Easter Hill Village plans and specifications are on file at the architectural firm of Hardison, Komatsu, Ivelich & Tucker, 538 Ninth Street, Suite 240, Oakland, CA 94607.

B. Interviews

Hardison, Donald. Personal communication with Marjorie Dobkin. January 2003.

_____. Personal communication with Ward Hill and William Kostura.
October 2003.

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783, for more interviews.

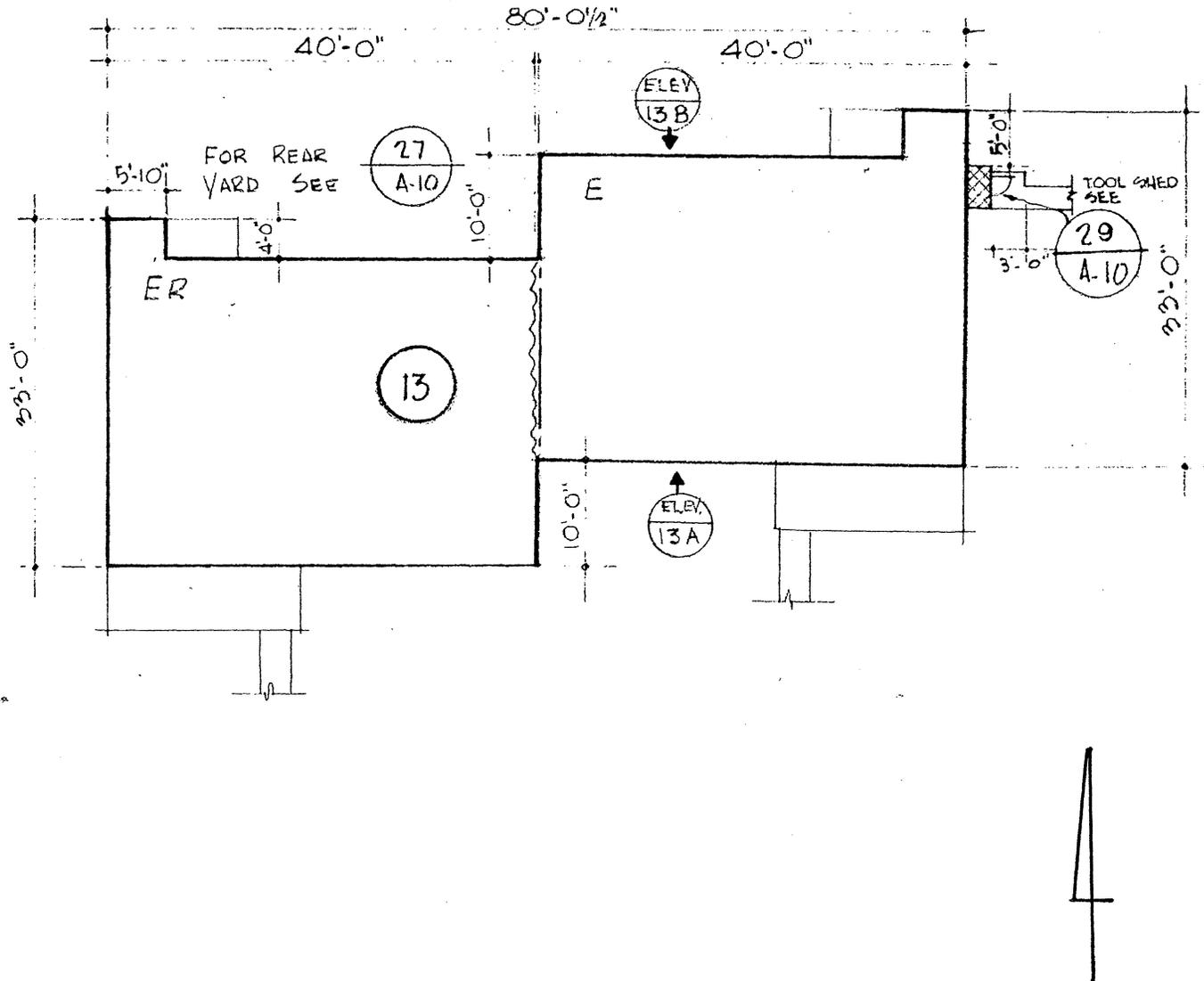
C. Bibliography

Please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Historic American Building Survey documentation was undertaken as a mitigation measure as per the Memorandum of Agreement between the Richmond Housing Authority and the California State Office of Historic Preservation. The City of Richmond Housing Authority as part of the Hope VI Revelopment Project demolished forty-one (237 units) buildings of the existing forty-five buildings in the Easter Hill Village complex (including removing existing landscape features) in May 2004 for the construction of 219 new multi-family rental-housing units, thirty for-sale detached houses, and fourteen for-sale town-homes would be developed. On a vacant site just east of Easter Hill Village, an additional forty for-sale detached houses would be developed. A total of 303 new housing units will be constructed as part of this project.

The documentation was prepared during the period of October 2003 to July 2004. The narrative report is a collaboration of three individuals: Historian Marjorie Dobkin prepared the sections on social history regarding Richmond during and after World War II and on Easter Hill Village and the section on the history of the Easter Hill Village design; Landscape historian Denise Bradley prepared the description and historic background sections on the Easter Hill Village landscape design and the biographical material on landscape architect Lawrence Halprin; Architectural historian Ward Hill prepared the sections on the Modern Movement in architecture, the Bay Region Tradition and the general historical background of the City of Richmond. Architectural historian William Kostura prepared the Outline Format reports on the forty-one individual Easter Hill Village buildings (original building numbers 8 to 48) demolished for the project.



Sketch plan for Building No. 13, showing the arrangement of modules. For module plans, please refer to the "Narrative" report, HABS No. CA-2783.