

HALS Threatened Landscape Application for BAREC

September 1, 2006

Statement of Significance

BAREC is the only and last public agriculturally zoned land along California's Central Coast located on the world's best soil. Its history tells a unique story of California's agricultural history. Nowhere is there a place and history like it. It has uniquely contributed to California and the West Coast since the 1880s in four ways: Home for the Care and Training of the Feeble Minded, Osborne Hall and Hospital for children and elderly; home for Civil War Veteran families, University of CA agriculture/horticulture research center.

Physical Description and History

BAREC is 17 acres of agricultural land in the heart of Silicon Valley in the small town of Santa Clara bordering San Jose, the 10th largest U.S. city. Houses, shopping malls and two nearby freeways surround it. The City of Santa Clara has no agriculturally zoned land and the Valley's agricultural land is private and not savable. In the 18th and 19th centuries before the Valley was a computer technology center, it was California's orchard center and called the "The Valley of Hearts Delight". In the 1900s the Valley produced 95 percent of the world's prunes. From 1920 BAREC was the agricultural research center for Santa Clara Valley and California's Central Coast with internationally and nationally important research. This history is considered so important that the California History Center plans to write a book on BAREC's history. BAREC is centered between the National Historical Registered Winchester House and the State Historical Registered Santa Clara Mission. BAREC represents the farmland that surrounded both of these properties. Today these two historical properties have no remnants of agricultural land. BAREC represents the farmland that surrounded both of these properties. As the Valley grew in population BAREC became "a very unique property for studying ag-urban interface issues for the State." An application for State/National Historical Registry has been filed. If BAREC disappears there is nothing that will replace it. The State and City want housing on BAREC. They want to remove BAREC's history so it looks like "anywhere USA". A Draft EIR and Recirculated EIR have been published with comments due in a week. The process has been pro developer and against the community and history. It is expected that lawyers (including an historical one) and community EIR comments will not be acknowledged. A CEQA lawsuit and Referendum may be necessary. The next two months will determine BAREC's fate.

Bibliographical and Other Sources on the Site

1. The Californian BAREC cover story, California History Center/Foundation's Magazine
2. Website has much information and BAREC articles: <http://www.savebarec.org/>

3. San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle (June 26, 1983) article on BAREC's contribution to the California Strawberry industry and bringing back the Japanese after WWII to this industry. Following are some of the many BAREC strawberry researchers: Davis: Dr. Harold E. Thomas, Earl V. Goldsmith, Dr. Richard Baker, Victor Voth, Dr. Royce Bringhurst, Victor Voth. BAREC was the State's center for Strawberry Breeding and Cultural project.
4. Draft EIR with State's historical comments: http://www.ci.santa-clara.ca.us/city_gov/city_gov_90nwinchester_barec_draft_eir.html (Appendices L for Cultural Report)
5. Recirculated DEIR: http://www.ci.santa-clara.ca.us/city_gov/city_gov_90nwinchester_barec_update.html
6. California Agriculture (Nov. 1965) list of "Current Major Projects at the Deciduous Fruit Field Station".
 7. Following are some of more important and well known researchers with research papers filed at UC Davis: Dr. Ali Harwandi did the only drought sod research in the world on BAREC; Dr. Robert Raabe, Plant Pathologist at UC Berkeley, studied Oak Root Fungus (pamphlet on this research most demanded in CA Agriculture Extension); the City of San Jose paid the Center to do research to create its green waste program; the Santa Clara Valley Water District used BAREC's historical weather station and updated it to a satellite system to study historical weather changes as well as using BAREC's wells, which were the only in the central part of the valley, to study the Valley's ground water; alternatives to methyl bromide; biointensive pest management; compost; landscaping plants; cut flowers (the largest agricultural product in the County); Larry Costello did Urban Root Zone studies; Dr. Bert A. Rudolph, Plant Pathologist worked on Walnut and Nut Blight controls and Tomato Verticillium Wilt new varieties which were not susceptible; Dr. Veron Givens, Director of Irrigation, did studies on irrigation pump testing and water tables in Santa Clara County; Butterfield studied Eucalyptus; Dr. Robert Norris (rdnorris@ucdavis.edu, 916-752-0619) did vegetable crop studies; Dr. Michael Freeling, Professor at Berkeley did corn breeding genetic biotechnology research. Following are names of additional researchers who have worked at the Center during the earliest years: W. L. Howard, Pomologist; A.H. Hendrickson, Pomologist; A.H. Hendrickson, Pomologist; Dr. Leslie Smith, Entomologist; F.J. Veihmeyer, Irrigation Engineer; B.A. Rudolph, Plant Pathologist and E.O. Essig, Entomologist. After World War II: Professor W.T. Horne, Plant Pathology; L.M. Smith, Entomology; Dr. Homer Lowe, Entomology; Mr. O.H. Lovell, Entomology; Dr. Stanley Flanders, Biological Control; Irrigation; Michael Shapovalov, U.S.D.A. The November 1965 issue of California Agriculture lists the following researchers: Royce S. Bringhurst and Victor Voth, Pomology; Dillon S. Brown, Pomology; E.F. Serr, Pomology; Paul E. Hansche, Pomology; William H. Griggs, Pomology; Stephen Wilhelm, Plant Pathology; George Nyland, Plant Pathology; John L. Nichel, Entomology and Parasitology; William W. Allen, Entomology and Parasitology; A.H. Lange, Botany. When the property was closed Dr. Maria de la Fuente, Director Santa Clara County Agricultural Extension, was doing research on garlic and chili peppers and Nancy Garrison, Director of the County's Master

Gardener's, was studying various vegetable crops; home for 500 plus County Master Gardeners.

Image Description

1. Winter 2003 aerial just after the University of CA. closed the research facility. The picture looks east towards the largest shopping mall in the region, Valley Fair/Westfield Mall. In the upper left corner are the historical buildings (a 1900 working barn/machine building, a 1928 research and office facility, three 1968 greenhouses donated by the California State Florists Ass., a water tower, wells, and a historical weather station for more than two counties with records going back to the 1930s. On the upper right is a half-acre of the original site with a 1958 office building for the Dept. of Veterans Affairs that includes the original entrance to the 1880s Feeble-minded Children's' home later to become the Civil War Veterans' home. These 1880s buildings were located near the left building. Note the location of the test plots of apples, grapes, drought sod, corn, vegetables, and oaks. Forest Ave. and Winchester Blvd. are in San Jose and Dorcich St. and Henry Ave. are in the City of Santa Clara but all have San Jose addresses with single story homes.

2. View toward the west of BAREC from the Shopping Mall parking garage across the street taken by Kathryn Mathewson in the winter of 2004. Easily seen are the three greenhouses, the native oak test plot, the drought sod test plot in front of it, the water storage tank, the apple orchard in the back left, and the Santa Cruz Mountains in the background.