

# FULLERTON HERITAGE

Fall ❁ Volume 18 ❁ Number 1 ❁ November 2011

*The mission of Fullerton Heritage is to foster an appreciation of our city's cultural history and to ensure the preservation of our historic architectural resources and environments.*

## Amerige Brothers' Real Estate Office Set for Restoration

*by Ann Gread*

The real estate office of Fullerton Founders George and Edward Amerige is to be repositioned and restored. The City of Fullerton and Fullerton Heritage are executing the project. Built in 1887, this small frame building was originally located at the northeast corner of Spadra Road (now Harbor Blvd.) and Commonwealth Avenue. After being sold by the Amerige brothers, the building served as a law office, a barbershop, and a tool shed. The small (16- by 20-foot) structure has been located at Amerige Park since 1920 and is commonly referred to as the "oldest commercial building" in Fullerton.

In 1939, the Realty Office was renovated by members of the Ebell Club of Fullerton and moved to a more promi-

*George and Annette Amerige stand next to downtown Fullerton's first building, the Amerige Brothers Real Estate Office, located at 109 South Spadra Road.*

nent location in the park. It was at this time that the park was renamed for the Amerige Brothers. After the building's restoration, it continued to house a variety of activities, including a museum for the 20/30 Club, a ham radio shack, and a senior center, but received little attention or care. In 1983,



after suffering years of disrepair and neglect, the building was again restored with \$10,000 in labor, materials, and funds raised

*2011: The Amerige Brother's Real Estate Office is temporarily positioned awaiting being placed on its new foundation.*

by individuals, groups, and businesses, to commemorate the 96th Founding Anniversary of Fullerton.

Now, almost 30 years later, this petite, historically important structure is set to be restored again. As part of the Fullerton Community Center Building project, the Realty Office will be relocated within the park. Both the exterior and interior will be restored. The City is responsible for relocating and running utilities to the building, and restoring the exterior. Fullerton Heritage has committed to restoring the interior of the building. When completed, the former Realty Office will be used as a small meeting room.

Fullerton Heritage is honored to be the stewards of this long-awaited proj-

(continued on page 3)



# Advocacy Issues

by Kate Dalton

## Redevelopment Design Review Committee (RDRC)

In the past few months the RDRC reviewed and approved several projects within the College Park Preservation Zone:

On July 14 the Committee reviewed a proposed second dwelling unit on the property at 143 North Cornell Ave. The proposal included demolition of a dilapidated garage and the building of a new two bedroom home over three garage spaces. The design of the new building was found to be compatible with the existing historic home and with the context of the neighborhood and was approved by the Committee with appropriate conditions. One issue addressed by the Committee was the uncharacteristic expanse of concrete that exists at the front of this property and that immediately adjacent to the south. Since this negatively impacts the historic character of the neighborhood, the Committee required that the driveway for this new project be of ribbon style and that landscape treatment be added between the two properties to further break up the concrete massing.

On September 8 and 22 the RDRC reviewed a proposal to demolish an existing home and construct two new homes on the property at 116 North Lincoln Ave. The project initially submitted called for preserving the small existing home at the rear of the lot in order to be allowed a larger Floor Area Ratio (FAR). (The Preservation Zoning Ordinance provides for a FAR of 40% if the historic home is preserved, but only 35% if the historic home is demolished.) The historic structure was in disrepair from years of neglect and its location on the lot hampered the development of a good site plan for the property. Fullerton Heritage strongly objected to the original proposal which included an excessively massive two story home on the front of the lot, with garages and driveways uncharacteristic of historic neighborhoods of the 1920s. At the first RDRC meeting, the Committee agreed with us and requested that the developer completely revise the project to build a single story home on the front of the lot and move the two-story home and all of the garages to the rear of the lot in order to meet the requirements of the Preservation Zone Design Guidelines. The developer resubmitted a much better project that included far superior design and architectural features. The new site plan necessitated the demolition of the

original small house at the rear of the lot, as well as a request for a zoning adjustment to allow for the increased FAR of 40%, instead of the allowed 35%. Fullerton Heritage does not typically support a request for an increased FAR for projects in the preservation zones, but in this case we felt it was justified because of the condition and difficult location of the original house and the quality design of the new project. The goal is to preserve the historic character and streetscapes of the preservation zones and provide for the addition of high quality new dwelling units that will become the historic homes of the future. The Landmarks Commission, with support from Fullerton Heritage, approved the demolition and requested zoning adjustment for this project on October 12. We will watch the actual development of this important project in hopes that it truly will be an example of new development that contributes to the integrity of the preservation zone.

Most recently, on October 13, the RDRC approved a proposed addition to the original historic home and a second dwelling unit over garages at the rear of the property at 143 North Lincoln Ave. This project was generally well designed from the beginning, with the property owner stating his appreciation of historic architecture and neighborhoods in Fullerton and wanting to build a second home on his recently purchased lot that would look like it was built in the 1920s. Fullerton Heritage requested denying the proposed elimination of a couple of original windows in the historic home, since doing so would violate provisions of the Design Guidelines. The Committee agreed, adding preservation of the original windows to the conditions of approval. The Committee approved the proposed project with conditions that included minor revisions to the front elevation of the rear unit to break up the massing and the addition of a ribbon driveway leading to the original garage facing Lincoln Ave.

## Miscellaneous Issues

The **General Plan** update is progressing, with the public comment period about to close and the draft document going before the Planning Commission in November and then before City Council probably in December or January. Fullerton Heritage has thoroughly reviewed and provided extensive input to City Staff and is pleased with the Historic Element of the Plan, and will continue to advocate for its adoption by City Council.

(continued on page 3)

## President's Corner

by Tom Dalton

As we celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Fullerton's preservation organization, I would like to take a moment to thank all of our officers, directors, members, donors and supporters, past and present, who have worked so hard over the years to help improve our city. So much has happened in Fullerton since 1991 that it's hard to remember what it was like before we had a group of people dedicated to "fostering an appreciation of our city's cultural history and ensuring the preservation of our historic architectural resources and environments".

Our organization has enjoyed many successes over the years and has accomplishments that should make us very proud, including but not limited to:

1. Increased membership to over 150 and growing.
2. Worked with the City to designate seven Residential Preservation Zones.
3. Presented 44 awards for preservation related activities.
4. Conducted over 50 walking and trolley tours of Historic Downtown.
5. Made application resulting in our designation as a Preserve America Community.
6. Worked with the City staff to create Preservation Zone Guidelines.
7. Submitted seven successful National Register applications.
8. Placed 54 historic recognition plaques.
9. Worked with the City to designate eleven additional Local Landmark properties.
10. Created a resource guide for vintage home owners.
11. Published over 40 Fullerton Heritage Newsletters.
12. Through Project: Fox, started the campaign to save the Fox Fullerton Theatre complex.
13. Assisted the City with the Hillcrest Park Master Plan.
14. Established annual scholarships for Fullerton College history students.
15. Conducted over 30 history and preservation-related programs and presentations.
16. Chaired the Fullerton Centennial Committee.
17. Worked with the City to revise the Historic Building Survey.
18. Worked with the City on the Historic Element of the current General Plan update.

### Welcome New Members!

Fullerton Heritage extends a warm welcome to our newest members: Bob Jensen (Fullerton College), Bridget O'Brien, Lois & Tony Rossi, and Zoot Velasco (Muckenthaler Cultural Center). Welcome aboard!

Thanks again to the many volunteers who have made our organization such an important part of our city's fabric.

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## Advocacy

(continued from page 2)

The long vacant **Local Landmark**, the **Pacific Electric Depot** (formally occupied by Spadra Restaurant), is in plan check with the Community Development Department for a

proposed restaurant. The only exterior modifications to the building will be the addition of awnings and an expansion to the rear deck. Reportedly the interior will continue to celebrate historic Fullerton with the addition of pictures, as well as a history of the old Red Car line.

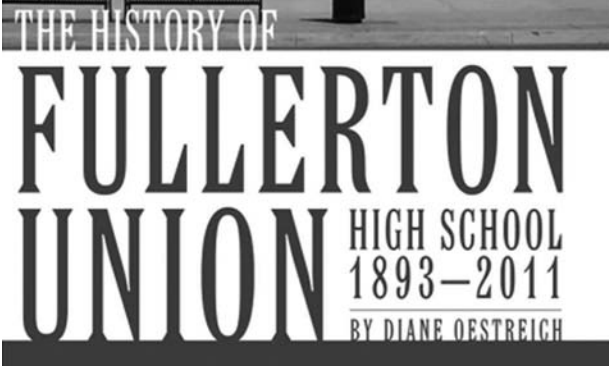
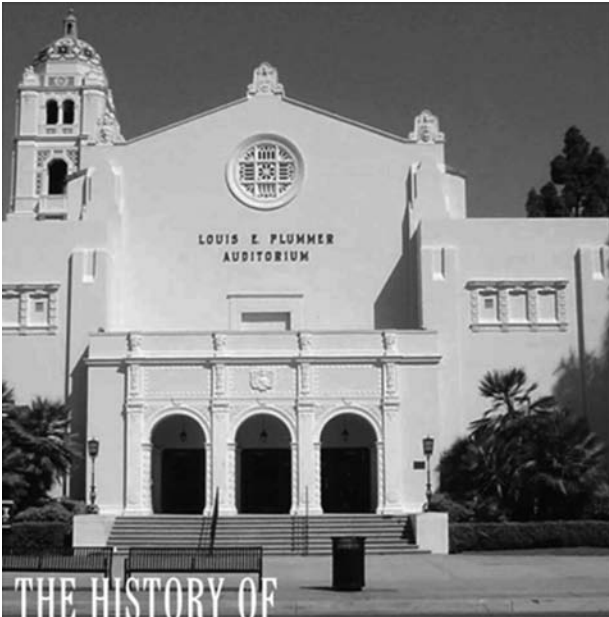
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## Amerige

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ect. Planning is underway to create a "living museum" environment that will provide a glimpse of life in the late 1880's. This project will provide opportunities for our members and the community at large to take an active role in the interior

restoration through donations of labor and historic elements, as well as fundraising. If you're interested in being part of the team, please e-mail us or leave a message on the Fullerton Heritage hotline (714) 740-3051.



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## We Need Your Help!

We are updating our Resource Guide found on the Fullerton Heritage website ([fullertonheritage.org](http://fullertonheritage.org)). If you have hired a company to do any maintenance or improvements around your home and you've been happy with their performance and quality of work, we'd love to add them to our Guide. Please e-mail their specialty and contact information to us at "[webmaster@fullertonheritage.org](mailto:webmaster@fullertonheritage.org)". For those without e-mail access, you can mail us the referral to Fullerton Heritage, P.O. Box 3356, Fullerton, CA 92834.

We thank you in advance for sharing your recommendations for the benefit of other Members.



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Newsletter: Joel Gread, editor; Jim Powell, layout & design