Meeting Date: **10/1/2013**

Report Type: Public Hearing

Report ID: 2013-00614

09

City of SACRAMENTO

City Council Report
915 I Street, 1st Floor
www.CityofSacramento.org

Title: Culver House/Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter Landmark Nomination (Passed for Publication 09/17/2013; Published on 09/20/2013 & 09/26/2013)

Location: 3500 2nd Avenue, Sacramento, District 5

Issue: Owner of property at 3500 2nd Avenue requests listing of the property as a Landmark in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources. Listing requires City Council passage of an ordinance identifying the property's significant features and characteristics and directing the Preservation Director to add the property to the Sacramento Register.

Recommendation: Pass an Ordinance adding 3500 2nd Avenue property to the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources as a Landmark.

Contact: Roberta Deering, Preservation Director, (916) 808-8259, Community Development Department

Presenter: Roberta Deering, Preservation Director, (916) 808-8259, Community Development Department

Department: Community Development Dept

Division: Planning Design/Preservation

Dept ID: 21001226

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-Background

3-Ordinance

4-Map

5-Historic Evaluation Forms

6-History of Oak Park Preschool by Donna-Anderson-Johnson

City Attorney Review

Approved as to Form
Michael W. Voss
9/13/2013 2:23:26 PM

City Treasurer Review

Reviewed for Impact on Cash and Debt
Russell Fehr
8/27/2013 6:00:24 PM

Approvals/Acknowledgements

Department Director or Designee: Max Fernandez - 9/10/2013 10:19:41 AM

James Sanchez, City Attorney Shirley Concolino, City Clerk Russell Fehr, City Treasurer
John F. Shirey, City Manager

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Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: Pursuant to City Code, Title 17, Section 17.134.180, listings in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) must be made through an uncodified ordinance adopted by the City Council after holding at least one public hearingThe property owners, the Eta Gamma Omega Sorority, Inc., have requested the nomination of the property at 3500 2nd Avenue for listing in the Sacramento Register as a Landmark. California State Department of Parks and Recreation forms 523A and B (attached) were prepared to document the history, description, and significance of the property.

Policy Considerations: The proposed action is consistent with the City's Historic & Cultural Resources Element of the 2030 General Plan, the City's Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Title 17, Chapter 17.134, to identify and protect historic and cultural resources, including listing of qualified resources in the Sacramento Register.

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations: The Environmental Planning Services Manager has determined that this action is not a Project per Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), because it will not result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Future development proposals affecting the property may require environmental review.

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: At a public hearing held on March 14, 2012, the City of Sacramento's Preservation Director made a preliminary determination that the property is eligible for listing as a Landmark in the Sacramento Register pursuant to the City's eligibility criteria, developed preliminary recommendations on significant features and characteristics of the property, and forwarded the nomination to the Preservation Commission for hearing.

The Preservation Commission then held a public hearing on June 19, 2013, and approved a recommendation to the City Council to adopt an ordinance listing the property at 3500 2nd Avenue, the Culver House/Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter, in the Sacramento Register as a Landmark and specifying the property's significant features and characteristics.

On September 3, 2013, the City Council's Law and Legislation Committee reviewed and recommended the City Council approve the ordinance adding the property at 3500-2nd

Avenue, the Culver House/Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter, to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark.

Rationale for Recommendation: This nomination is consistent with the processes established in the Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Title 17, Chapter 17.134. The property meets the eligibility criteria for listing in the Sacramento Register as a Landmark, as the property retains integrity of location, design, setting, interior and workmanship, and association. It also has significant architectural worth with its distinctive Craftsman design. It also has significant cultural significance as it was the home to Dr. Culver, a vocal member of the committee established to request Oak Park's annexation to the City, as well as being involved with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., which was established by and for African-American college educated women. Its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, protect, and further the goals and purposes of the Historic Preservation chapter of the City Code.

Financial Considerations: None.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not applicable.

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BACKGROUND

Requirements for placement of a property on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Register) either as a Landmark, or as a Contributing Resource within a historic district, are listed in Sacramento City Code section 17.134.170. Generally, nominated resources are noted for one or more of the following characteristics: they are associated with the history of the city and/or the lives of persons significant to its past; they embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, have high artistic value, and/or have significant historic or architectural worth; and concerning historic districts, they have a geographical definable area with a significant concentration or continuity of resources unified by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

The City Council has found that placement of qualifying resources and historic districts in the Register benefits the community and the owner in numerous ways. Protecting and preserving historic resources helps to maintain and revitalize the City and its neighborhoods by stimulating economic activity, encouraging the use and reuse of historic buildings, and protecting buildings and neighborhoods from deterioration and inappropriate alterations, all of which enhance the City′s economic, cultural, and aesthetic standing.

Listing in the Sacramento Register also offers the Building Official the ability to use the California Historical Building Code, which may provide flexibility in means to meet Building Code standards to retain historic fabric, features and characteristics, and preserve historic properties. Sacramento's Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Chapter 17.134, regulates the approval and issuance of permits and entitlements involving resources in the Register, including building permits for new construction; exterior alterations of existing buildings or structures; work affecting significant publicly-accessible interiors, site work; relocation of any structure; demolition or wrecking of any building or structure; sewer connection or disconnection; sign permits; and certificates of use or occupancy.

Resources nominated by the Preservation Commission by adoption of its recommendation to the City Council for listing in the Sacramento Register are regulated under Chapter 17.134 for a period of 180 days in the same manner as if they were listed in the Sacramento Register. After 180 days have elapsed, if the City Council has not adopted an ordinance placing the resource on the Sacramento Register, these restrictions will no longer apply, unless the City Council extends the time period for an additional 180 days.

In addition, Chapter 17.134.490 sets forth minimum maintenance requirements for the purpose of protecting Listed Historic Resources from deliberate or inadvertent neglect. Prompt correction of structural defects is required. The Code Enforcement Manager and Building Official are authorized to enforce the provisions of this Chapter and utilize

provisions of Chapter 1.28 of Title 1 of the Sacramento City Code and the City Attorney is authorized to take such legal actions necessary.

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RECOMMENDED **Ordinance**

ORDINANCE NO. _____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council on _____

ADDING THE CULVER HOUSE / ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY HOUSE, ETA GAMMA OMEGA CHAPTER, LOCATED AT 3500 – 2ND AVENUE TO THE SACRAMENTO REGISTER OF HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES AS A LANDMARK (M13-012)

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1

The Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) is amended by adding the Culver House / Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter**,** as a landmark historic resource (Landmark).

The property, located at 3500 – 2nd Avenue, assessor's parcel number 010-0381-001-0000, is eligible for listing pursuant to City Code section 17.134.170(A)(1)(a) criteria:

i. *"It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation," and*

iii. *"It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction…."*

SECTION 2

Sacramento City Code Section 17.134.180 prescribes that the significant features or characteristics of the resources to be added to the Sacramento Register shall be identified in the designating ordinance.

The significant features and characteristics include the following:

A. The Site and associated Rights-of-Way features:

1. With the structure, primary façade facing 2nd Avenue to north, located squarely on the corner parcel.
2. Planting strips on both 2nd Avenue and 35th Street, evenly planted with date palms.
3. Diamond scoring pattern of concrete front walk from sidewalk to front stairs.

B. The Structure features Craftsman-style exterior elements, including:

1. Large two-story structure, over a partially-below-grade full basement, with a broad side-gabled roof enclosing the prominent secondary facades and extending over the entire width of the house and its full-width front porch.
2. Red, varied rectangular cut rusticated sandstone base, front porch walls, front stair walls, and chimneys, with distinctive similarly-colored grout in a raised bead joint profile, and dressed stone surrounds at openings, including the shallow arched openings under porch with dressed stone trim/keystones. Smooth stone cap at porch wall top, top of porch post bases, on curved/flaring stair walls, and at chimney in-steps and tops. Front stair walls are low, extending from porch deck level. Front stair treads/risers in terrazzo-like concrete finish with slight bullnose tread edges.
3. Side-gabled roof includes slight flare at north and south roof edges. Rafters, with decoratively detailed tails, extend beyond the eaves of the main roof (original rafter tails at the front had been cut at some earlier time for gutter,) and on the shed roofs of the centered dormers and projecting bays. Main and shed roofs have relatively large eave overhangs with outsized brackets. Original roofing would have been wood shingle.
4. East and west elevations include projecting square bays at first and second stories, centered over each other and under the peak of the gable; upper projecting bay is smaller than lower projecting bay.
5. First floor exterior siding above the stone base is painted shingle and second story is painted stucco with painted half-timbering in the gable ends. All trim is a smooth-finish painted wood.
6. Front porch extends across the full north façade supported by wooden battered posts atop the masonry porch walls. Posts have stepped bases and caps with a wider decorative cap at the top. The porch soffit/ceiling is glazed stained wood as is the front door.
7. Windows vary, with some fixed, some double hung, some casement. Upper portions often divided into rectangular patterns of smaller lights. A bank of smaller ganged windows wraps the southwest corner of the first floor, often found in an enclosed porch configuration. All windows original.

SECTION 3

A. Pursuant to Sacramento City Code sections 17.134.170 and 17.134.180 and based on the duly noticed hearings conducted by the Preservation Commission and City Council, the staff report and nomination materials attached thereto, and the testimony presented at the hearing on the designation, the City Council makes the following findings in support of its action to designate the Culver House/Alpha Kappa

Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter, located at 3500 – 2nd Avenue, as a Landmark and to place it in the Sacramento Register:

1. The property meets the criteria for Sacramento Register Landmark eligibility pursuant to Sacramento City Code Title 17, Chapter 17.134, section 17.134.170-C (1-5):

a. The nominated resource located at 3500 – 2nd Avenue, Assessor's Parcel Number 010-0381-001-0000, meets criterion i: *"It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation,"* and criterion iii: *"It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction*."

b. In addition, the nominated resource has: 1) has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association; and, 2) has significant historical and architectural worth; and

c. The designation of the property as a Landmark is reasonable, appropriate, and necessary to protect, promote, and further the goals of this chapter, pursuant to Sacramento City Code Title 17, Chapter 17.134, section 17.134.170(C).

2. Adoption of this ordinance adding the property to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark recognizes the historical and architectural significance of the property to the city.

3. Adoption of this ordinance adding the property to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark promotes the maintenance and enhancement of the significant features and characteristics of the Landmark pursuant to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

4. Adoption of this ordinance adding the property to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark promotes the maintenance and enhancement of the historic materials and fabric, as well as the appearance, of the Landmark.

5. Adoption of this ordinance adding the property to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark is consistent with the City's Historic & Cultural Resources Element of the 2030 General Plan.

6. Adoption of this ordinance adding this property to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark will afford the property the ability to use of the California Historical Building Code and eligibility for any other preservation incentives that may be adopted for listed historic properties.

7. Addition of this property to the Sacramento Register as a Landmark helps to protect historic resources of the City of Sacramento.

SECTION 4

The Preservation Director of the City of Sacramento is hereby directed to add the Culver House/Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter, located at 3500 – 2nd Avenue, assessor's parcel number 010-0381-001-0000, to the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources as a Landmark.

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City of Sacramento, Community Development Department Geographic Information System

Miles
0.010.005 0 0.01

M13-012
Vicinity Map
3500 2nd Avenue
Landmark Nomination

N

S. Cook

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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** 5 **Resource Name or #:** Culver House/Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter

P1. Other Identifier: Oak Park Pre-School

***P2. Location: *a. County:** Sacramento

b. Address: 3500 - 2nd Avenue **City:** Sacramento **Zip:** 95817

***c. USGS 7.5' Quad** Sacramento East **Date:** 1992

***e. Other Locational Data: APN#:** 010-0381-001

***P3a. Description:**

The large Craftsman house is two stories with a broad side-gabled roof. Shed-roofed dormer windows project to the north and south from the roof. The wide front porch extends across the full façade and is supported by battered posts mounted on the rusticated stone porch base. Curved walls flank the entry steps. The building is surfaced with shingles on the first floor and stucco with half timbering on the second floor in the gable ends. Small, square bays project from the first and second stories on the east and west secondary elevations with bracketed shed roofs. Cut beam ends project from beneath the flared roof gable and dormers. Windows are varied; some fixed, some double-hung, some casement. The upper portions are often divided into patterns of smaller lights by muntins. Arched openings faced with smooth stone penetrate the porch base on either side of the front stairs. The basement is partly below grade, with an entry under the porch. A bank of small windows wraps around the southwest corner of the rear of the first floor, to a back door, a small landing and wooden stairway.

Alterations include small gabled ground floor entry on the rear, the installation of a metal balustrade down the middle of the front steps and the basement entry beneath the porch. A sign announcing the Oak Park Pre-School is mounted above the basement entry.

(Please see Continuation Sheet)

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP15 (HP2)

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

P5b. Description of Photo: View to the southeast.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:** ■Historic ☐Prehistoric ☐Both
1901* (Clarence Caesar 1986)

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Eta Gamma Omega Sorority Inc.

Sacramento, CA 95823

***P8. Recorded by:**
Paula Boghosian, Historic Environment Consultants
5420 Home Court
Carmichael, CA 95608

***P9. Date Recorded:**
July 2013

***P10. Survey Type:**
Intensive

P11. Report Citation Oak Park Survey, Historic Environment Consultants, 2004, Sacramento Survey III, 1984-85, Historic Environment Consultants

***Attachments:** ☐NONE ☐Location Map ☐Sketch Map ■Continuation Sheet ■Building, Structure, and Object Record ☐Linear Resource Record ☐Archaeological Record ☐District Record ☐Milling Station Record ☐Rock Art Record ☐Artifact Record ☐Photograph Record ☐ Other (List)

Primary #_____
HRI#_____

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

 ***NRHP Status Code** 5S1

***Resource Address:** 3500 2nd Avenue

B1. Historic Name: Culver House/Oak Park Day Nursery

B2. Common Name: Culver House/Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority House, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter, Oak Park Pre-School

B3. Original Use: Residential **B4. Present Use:** Meeting Hall, Pre-School

***B5. Architectural Style:** Craftsman

***B6. Construction History:**

Alterations include a wood stairway and a small gabled entry at the rear, the installation of a metal balustrade down the middle of the front steps and the basement entry beneath the porch. There is play equipment at the rear. Recently, funds were made available for repair and restoration of the building according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Rehabilitation work included repair or replacement of damaged wood, painting of originally painted stucco or wood, cleaning and restoration of stonework, and restoration of the scored concrete front walk. An open spoke metal fence encloses the house and lawn at the edge of the property.

***B7. Moved?** ■No ☐Yes ☐Unknown **Date: Original Location:**

***B8. Related Features:** Play equipment and shed/garage at the rear.

B9a. Architect: unknown **b. Builder:** unknown

***B10. Significance: Theme:** Community Service /Residential Architecture **Area:** Oak Park

Period of Significance: 1901- present **Property Type:** residential **Applicable Criteria:** A, C

(Please see Continuation Sheet)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: HP2

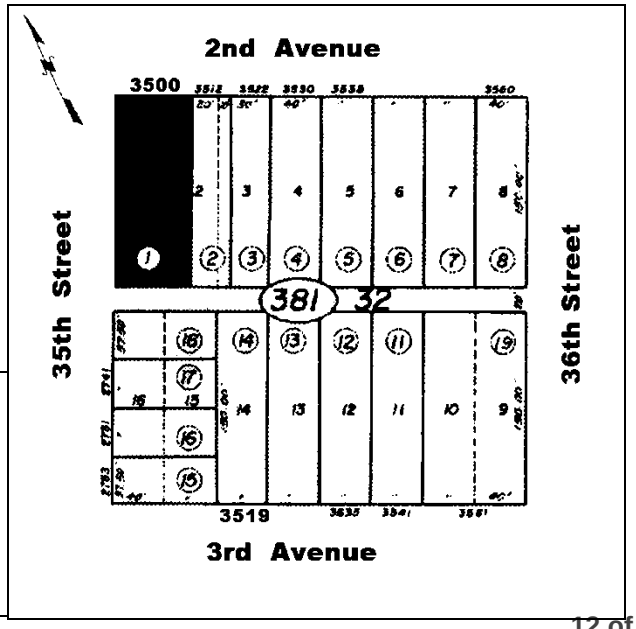
***B12. References:**

Owens, Ken et al, Historic Overview for the Oak Park Redevelopment Area, April 1980.
Sacramento Archive and Museum Collection Center: Photo Archives, Map Books
Sacramento Bee, 1/5/1915, p. 3
Sacramento City Building Permits
Sacramento City Directories
Sacramento Survey III, 1984-85, Historic Environment Cons.
Sacramento Union, 6/8/1910, p. 3; 6/11/1910, p. 1

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** Paula Boghosian, Historic Environment Cons.

***Date of Evaluation:** July 2013



(This space reserved for official comments.)

***P3a. Description:** (continued)

There is a small gabled entrance at ground level at the back of the house, perhaps an entrance to a possible doctor's original basement office since it is noted on the 1915 Sanborn Map. A fence with black metal spokes encloses the house and front yard, with its lawn, trees and shrubs. A playground lies at the rear of the house. A small shed structure also stands at the rear. A tall sign noting the Pre-School stands in one corner of the play yard at the back. Mature date palms surround the property in the planting strips on both 2nd Avenue and 35th Street. (*There is some evidence that further research may yield a later date than 1901.)

***B10. Significance** (continued)

Dr. Culver was one of the early physicians in the Oak Park area. He also became instrumental in the movement to annex Oak Park to the City of Sacramento in 1910-11. A previous annexation election had failed and a committee of 25 was appointed at that time to gather signatures for a petition requesting annexation. Dr. Culver was an important and vocal member of that committee. The resulting election was successful and Oak Park, East Sacramento, a portion of South Sacramento and Elmhurst were added to the city.

The doctor remained in the house until his death in 1953. Not long after his death, George K. Lange occupied the house, obtained a permit in 1953, and opened the Oak Park Day Nursery which became one of the area's oldest child care facilities. He is said to have operated the nursery for 18 years.

The history of the Culver House took another turn with the 1966 involvement of a branch of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. (AKA) sorority in its proposed future. (The AKA is the first Greek-letter organization established by and for African-American college educated women.) The organization of the current Oak Park Nursery housed in the Culver House began in 1966 with the participation of the Eta Gamma Omega Chapter of the AKA in a summer day nursery in the basement of that house. This chapter adopted goals to establish and maintain a well-equipped pre-school in the house geared to assist children from low income families to progress physically, intellectually and socially at their own pace.

The Sorority's proposal to the state in response to state legislation permitting approved groups to open and operate preschools was accepted and they prepared the facility, painting, providing books, tables and chairs, as well as assisting in nutritional needs, the collection of kitchen equipment, appliances, meal planning and purchasing food. A sorority member interviewed and selected staff and worked with them through that summer as the volunteer coordinator/site manager.

From 1973-75, Shule Jumamose, a school emphasizing African-American culture and history, was operated in the house by James and Cheryl Fisher.

In 1974, the Preschool was incorporated under non-profit laws and a Board of Directors was elected. Licensing occurred and the Board designated Shirley Green West as Project Director. In 1975 the Chapter purchased the property for operating the preschool.

In the summer of 2008-2009 the house was restored with grants from the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency and the City's Historic Places Grant Program, in accord with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties.* The house has been utilized for a number of community purposes that carry out the original goal of the Sorority - service to the Oak Park Community. The child care facility is still in operation and the Sorority holds meetings in the house.

The house is significant as an "embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction", criterion *iii* (c) of the Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Chapter 17.134.

The house is a distinctive representative of Craftsman design. Significant character-defining features of the house include the following:

- placement of the house on a prominent corner with lawn and open space;
- planting strips with large mature palm trees in front and along west side of house;
- diamond scored concrete front walk;
- large two story structure over partially below grade basement, broad side-gabled roof;
- full width front porch, north elevation;
- distinctive secondary facades with brackets under eaves and supporting shallow shed-roofed square window bays;
- rusticated red sandstone base with similarly colored raised bead joint profile, dressed stone openings, keystones over arches;
- rusticated red sandstone chimney;
- front stair sides angled at base;
- cut rafter tails;
- shingles and half-timbered exterior surfacing with wood and stucco.

The house possesses a number of Craftsman style features, and has retained integrity of design, location, setting, materials, workmanship and association. It is an impressive building, sited grandly on a corner lot and its stately street palms enhance its early 20th century image.

The house is also significant for its "association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state, or the nation," criterion *i* (a) of the Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Chapter 17.134.

It has served as nursery/preschool facility almost continuously since 1953. The house has been utilized over time for community purposes that carry out the goal of service to the Oak Park Community, provided by the AKA Sorority branch. The Sorority- managed Preschool has influenced and served approximately 2000 students over the past 47 years. The building also has associations with Dr. Culver who was instrumental in achieving the annexation of Oak Park into the city.

In addition, the property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

The house appears to be eligible for listing as a Landmark in the Sacramento Register of Historical and Cultural Resources under Criteria *i* (a) and *iii* (c), pursuant to the Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Chapter 17.134.

3500 2nd Avenue, rear (south) elevation

Setting—3500 2nd Avenue, view to the southeast.

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History of the Oak Park Preschool at 3500 2nd Avenue, Sacramento, CA

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., (AKA) is the first Greek-letter organization established by and for African-American college educated women. It was founded at Howard University in 1908 and incorporated as a perpetual body in 1913, with the mission, "Service to All Mankind." Eta Gamma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., was chartered in 1958 in Sacramento, CA. During its almost 55 years of service to the Sacramento community, they have implemented a number of local projects that support the National Sorority's programs and objectives. Among them is the Oak Park Preschool.

The idea of sponsoring a preschool in Oak Park, as a community service project began with the Eta Gamma Omega Chapter in early 1966 with students in a summer day nursery care. There were 19 members in the chapter. They were as follows;

Agnes Bailey, Alberta Battles, Onida Benton, Rena Buotelle, Vannie Boyd, Anne Braxton, Evelyn Brown, Shirley Green West, Juanita Hyson, Ruth Love Holloway, Mary Mack, Archalene Martin, Addie Molson, Sarah Payton, Pauline Porter, Queen Randall, Mildred Smith, Enolia Thomas and Grace Valentine.

The bare walled basement at 3500 2nd Avenue, Sacramento, CA., had been rented space. The goals of the preschool were to:

1. Increase the public awareness of early childhood experiences in relation to a child's progress in mastering developmental tasks that are conducive to later learning.
2. To establish and maintain a completely equipped preschool with a well trained staff in which children from low income families can progressively develop physically, intellectually, and socially at their own pace in a secure setting.
3. To provide a curriculum that will aid parents in numerous educational activities, will encourage and promote total family education and involvement.

Ruth Love Holloway who was working in the Department of Compensatory Education advised the chapter of new legislation (AB 1331) that would permit groups whose proposals had been approved to open and operate preschools. The chapter took the challenge and wrote a proposal and the state accepted it. They were delighted but knew they had to take action. The greatest assets were the many skilled sorority members and their husbands and families willingly volunteering their time and expertise; painting the interior walls and installing curtains, ordering books, tables, chairs, listening posts, and building blocks. They assisted in the nutritional needs by the procurement of kitchen equipment, appliances, planning meals and menus and purchasing food. The sorority members were responsible for maintaining the books and financial records.

Anne Braxton was the member who interviewed and selected the initial staff and worked with them through the summer as the volunteer coordinator/site manager. The staff was composed of a teacher, three teacher aids, a nurse, a cook, a psychologist and a coordinator. The program proved successful and at the close of the summer in 1966, Anne Braxton and two other staff members returned to their regular employment at the Sacramento City Unified School District.

In 1974, the Preschool was incorporated under the non-profit laws of the State of California and a Board of Directors was elected. The board operates under the guidelines of the Child Development Division of the California State Department of Education with an annually renewed contract. Licensing occurred under the Department of Social Services. The Board officially designated Shirley Green West, a retired Special Education Resource Teacher, as the Project Director. She holds the Director position to date.

In 1975 the Eta Gamma Omega Chapter decided to purchase the property to continue to house the preschool. Although the preschool's major funding comes from the California Department of Education, Eta Gamma Omega reduces their rent when they are affected by State budget cuts, pays some of the major bills, makes contributions to the school for books, donates new coats at Christmas and supports their fundraisers.

In the summer of 2008-2009, with grants from the Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Authority and the City's Historic Places Grant Program, the house was restored, including the Chapter's request to change the exterior of the house from brick red to a craftsman style (AKA) green and white, which fits the historical era. The preschool children watched the progress of the restoration and referred to the building as their "new green school." The second floor of the house has multipurpose uses; preschool board meetings, preschool plays and performances, and many guest speakers from the community. It is the meeting location for the Eta Gamma Omega Chapter members, the NAACP, National Pan-Hellenic Council and other community groups. The house has been used for a summer community lunch program. It was the central point of training for the U. S. Census Bureau and it was also used by the U.S. Census as a Question and Answer Center for the Oak Park Community. In 2012, Eta Gamma Omega Chapter held their first community health faire on the lawn and throughout the house. The preschool children and their parents were invited to attend.

The original idea of being of services to the Oak Park Community flourished. The Preschool has influenced and served approximately 2000 students over the past 47 years.

Submitted by -Donna Anderson-Johnson May 14, 2013