



Planning Department  
Community Development Department, Town of Los Gatos  
110 E. Main Street  
Los Gatos, CA 95030

March 12, 2026

**Re: Los Gatos Coffee Roasting, 91 E. Main St, Los Gatos  
Alteration to Storefront Windows**

Dear Mr. Mullin,

As we continue to dive into researching the interesting history of the Farwell Building, we have discovered quite a few revealing photographs, and along with structural clues, we feel we have compelling if not refutable evidence that the current configuration of both the facades and storefronts are not original. We have put together a slide show and storyline that accompanies this letter and fills in the previous unknowns.

**Building History:**

What we know: An original building in this location dates back to 1891. It contains 5 individual suites over a basement. It was destroyed in the “Great Fire” of 1902, and not rebuilt until circa 1915. The Sanborn maps show a correlating gap during this time period. See slide number 1 showing the vacant parcel.

The building that we know, or at least the “bones” of it, was completed around 1915. It has the five suites that step down with the slope of the street. The facade had gable ended parapets on the first, third and fifth sections, with straight top facades on the middle two. Decorative molding adorned the walls above the storefronts. All of the storefronts extended to just before the sidewalk (7” recess) and featured recessed entrances. These entrances we located in the middle of each suite and had diagonal entry walls. The lower walls below the display windows were covered with tile, something very common for the time period. See Slide numbers 2-6.

\*To clarify this statement, it’s important to differentiate between the “storefront” and the “facade”, where the facade is meant to be the “face/structure” and the storefront is the glazing/entry door.

Site visits to the two basements under the coffee shop shows the old, original floor framing for the original center entrances; it was never removed, but framed over. This was very clearly framed for a sloped walkway that most likely was tiled. The joists are lowered in rhythm to match the slope, and the old subfloor is not present. See slide number 8.

In 1950-51, the original facades and storefronts were all intact. Sometime before the winter of 1952, the building underwent a complete facelift. The three gables were removed, along with the decorative moldings. All of the facades were flattened off. This was also when the five storefronts were remodeled into the current configuration of angled displays and doors set back and to the side. The reddish stone veneer (that now only exists on the right side) was very

trendy in the 1950's-60's, first for downtown stores and later for custom residences. The veneer at both Zona Rosa and Nimbus were replaced at one point. See slide number 7

Again, the floor framing tells the story. The accident that destroyed the glass and bench reveal how the angled storefront was indeed a remodel. It was built directly over the old floor layout, which is clearly visible. They didn't even remove the old fir flooring. This flooring is mostly intact save for some dry rot caused by leaky planter boxes. See slide number 9.

In 1980, Terri Hope modified the entry doors to aid in accessibility and at that time covered over the planter boxes to make them benches. The Centonove storefront was remodeled prior to the formation of the HPC.

After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the building underwent significant seismic retrofitting. It was extremely well integrated into the structure that it is hardly noticeable yet effective. These comment frames and footings are visible in the basements.

### **In Summary**

This alteration pays its respect to the historical roots of the building with the same wood windows, bench and stone seat wall. But the subtle difference in the orientation of the wall makes a significant difference to the tenants, customers and ultimately the entire Town of Los Gatos.

Regards,



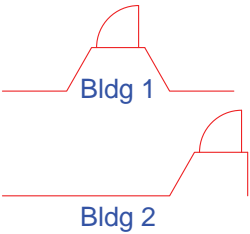
Gary Kohlsaat  
Architect C19245



After 1902 (empty lot next to Rankin building)



Photos of building 1 & building 2 show the original facades/storefronts, the gable-end parapet, decorative trim, and the storefront configuration (with tiled pony walls).



PLAN VIEW OF STOREFRONT CONFIGURATION

1915

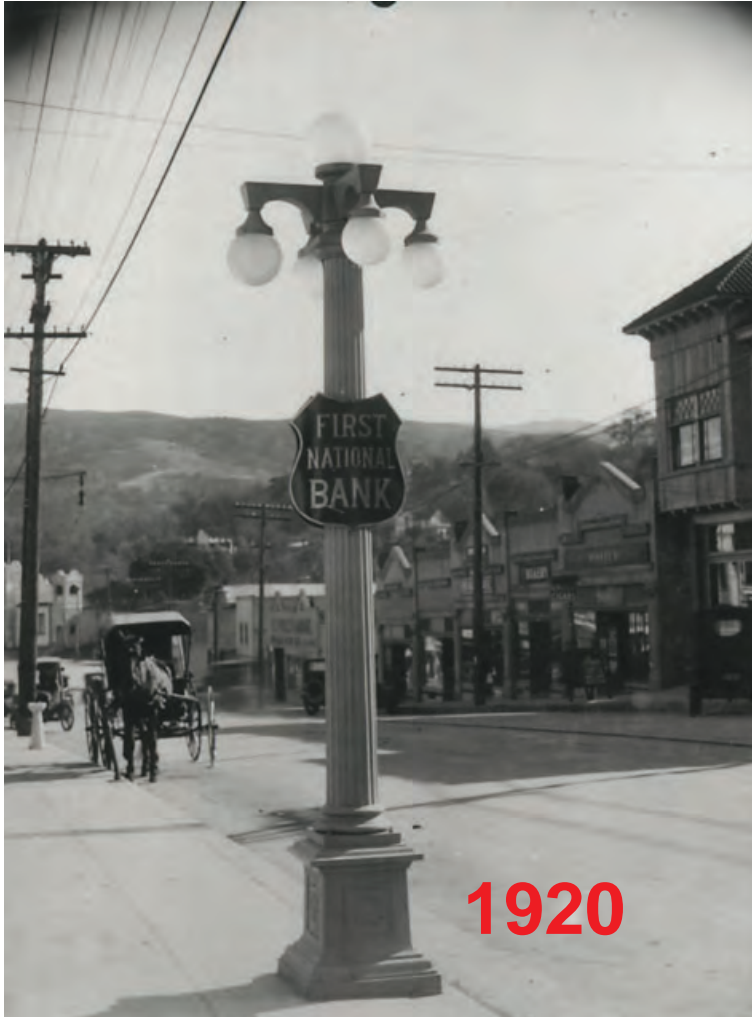
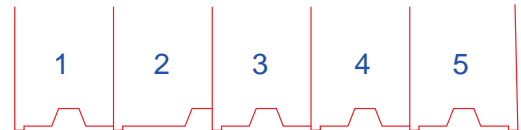
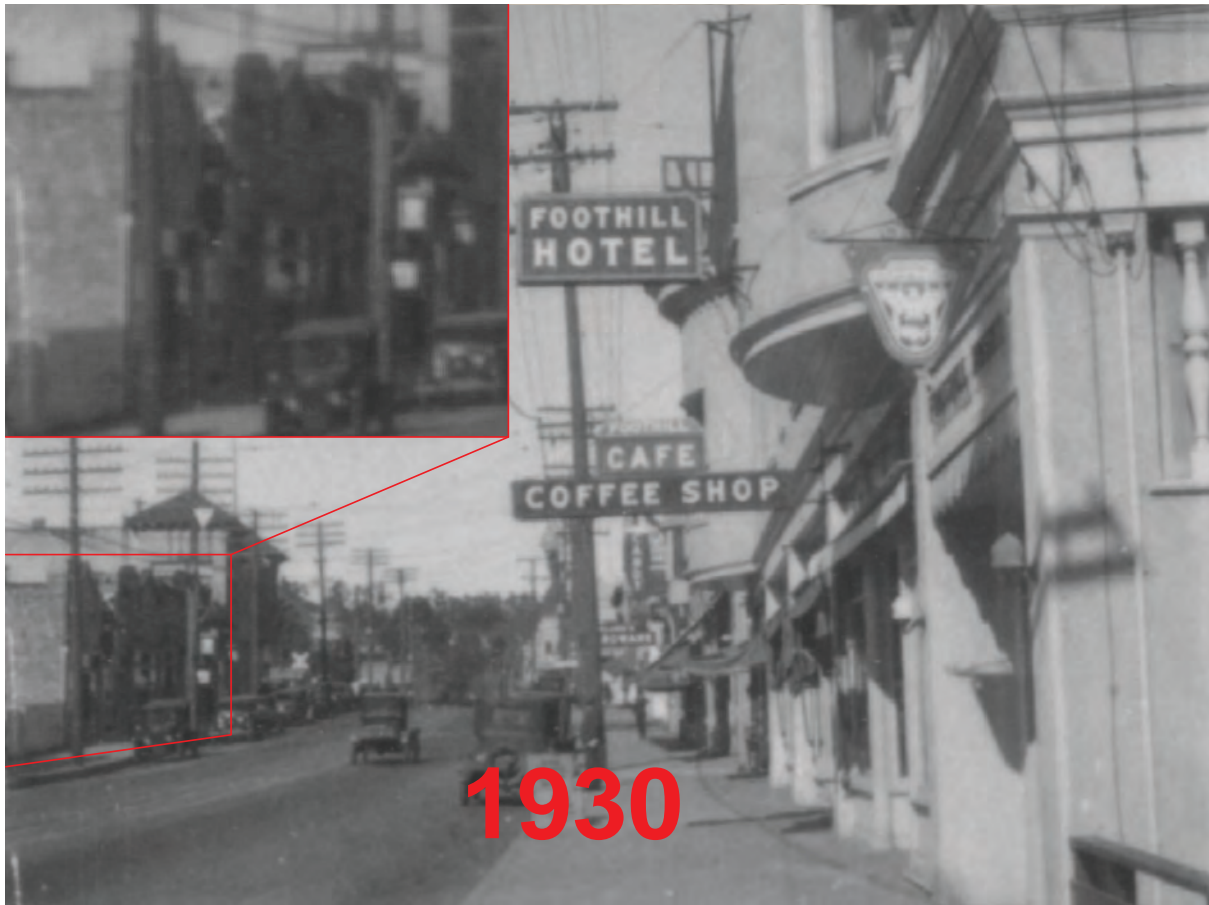


Photo clearly shows building w/5 individual stores. Three of the five have gable end parapets, alternating w/the two flat parapets. 4 of the 5 storefronts have inset entryways in the middle, with glass at the sidewalk. Only one (Zona Rosa) has the entrance on one side. (See diagram) the pony wall under the windows were faced with tile.



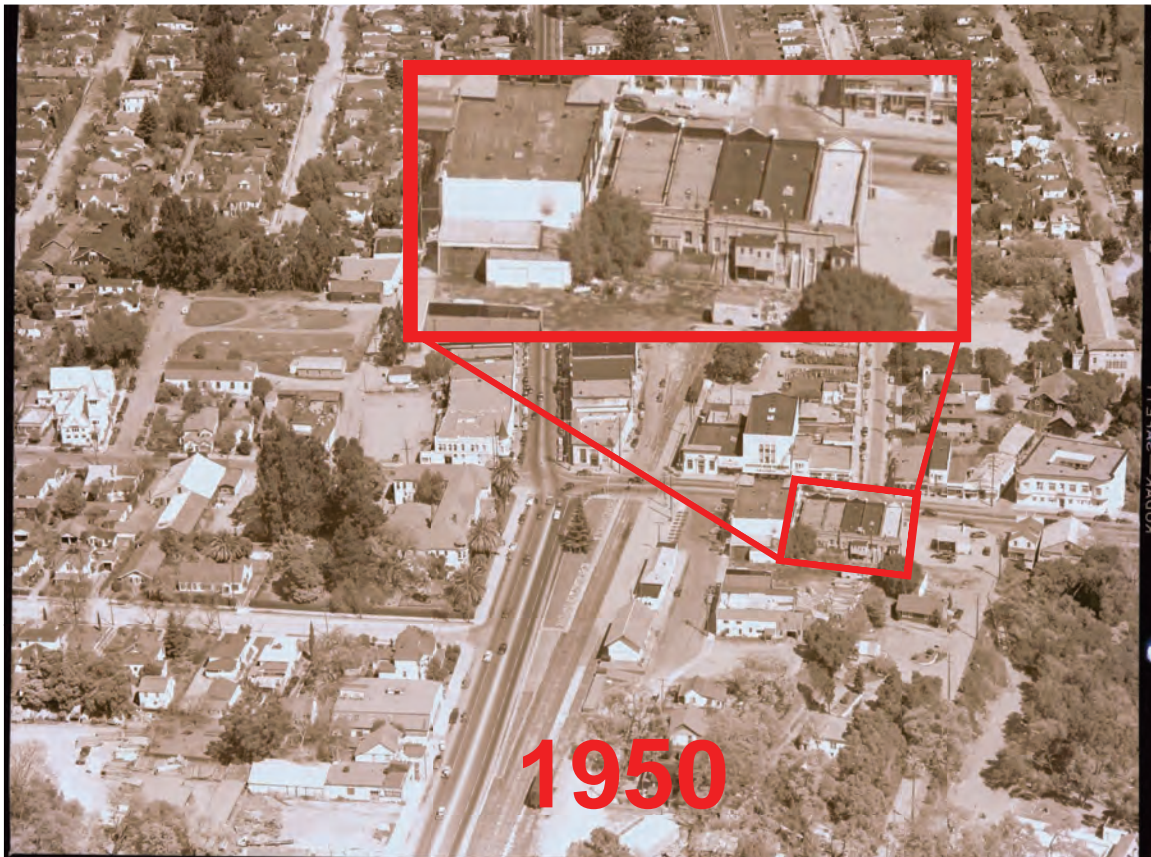
PLAN VIEW OF STOREFRONT CONFIGURATION



Storefronts & facade remain unchanged through 1920's - 1930's.

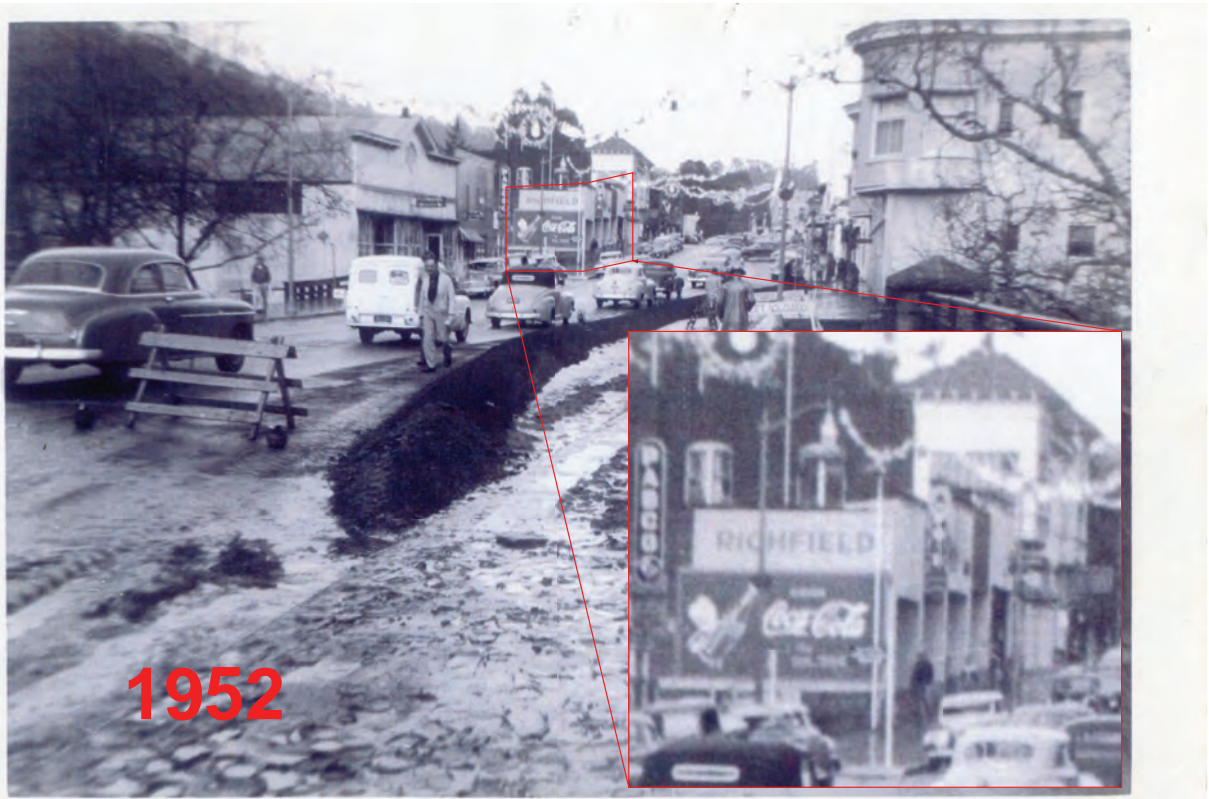


Photo clearly shows the original facades intact, including the configuration of the storefronts. The building was painted white.



Aerial photo from 1950-51 show the 3 gable parapets in tact.





Sometime between 1950 & 1952, the facades (parapets) & storefronts were modified. The gable parapets were removed, along w/decorative trim, resulting in all five units having flat parapets. all of the storefronts were changed to the diagonal configurations that exist today, with the possible exception of Centonove.



Original store front wall with tapered entry from 1915

Bench in front of angled window wall to cover original floor framing

Angled wall from 1952 destroyed by accident.

Additional photos upon request



New floor framing repair  
from recent accident

Original sloped center entry framing  
from basement with angled entry

Girder line is located in the middle of  
the store and the middle of the ramp.

Additional photos upon request

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