IDENTIFICATION
1. Common name: Theater Angels Building
2. Historic name: Willey House
3. Street or rural address: 140 Fifth Street
    City: Gilroy Zip: 95020 County: Santa Clara
4. Parcel number: 79900723
5. Present Owner: Theater Angels Art
    Address: P.O. Box 1640
    City: Gilroy Zip: 95020 Ownership is: Public Private X
6. Present Use: Community Center Original use: Residence

DESCRIPTION
7a. Architectural style: Folk Victorian/Classic Revival
7b. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

A simple two-story front gable structure c. 1859 of rectangular shape. 1890's alterations include a large veranda porch and one story additions on the side and back. Windows are two over two double hung with a 10 pane door leading from the second story onto the porch roof. The fenestration including the front door, is symmetrical in three openings on each floor. The structure is sheathed in weatherboard siding with narrow shiplap construction used on the porch balustrade. The style is Pioneer with hints of Greek Revival in the roof shape, flat surface detail, vertical fenestration, and structural massing. The wrap around porch is supported by simple squared pillars of wood. The basic form of the structure is repeated on other sites along 5th Street. The landscaping is exceptional with a wide variety of mature plants, especially the large trees. A more recent addition of a picket fence is keeping in character with the other buildings along 5th Street.

8. Construction date:
    Estimated: 1859 Factual
9. Architect: Unknown
10. Builder: Unknown
11. Approx. property size (in feet):
    Frontage: 75 Depth: 150
    or approx. acreage
12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s):
    Mar. 1986
13. Condition: Excellent __ Good X Fair ___ Deteriorated ___ No longer in existence ___

14. Alterations: __ Addition to rear circa 1895 ___

15. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary) Open land ____ Scattered buildings ____ Densely built-up X ____ Residential ___ Industrial ___ Commercial ___ Other: ___

16. Threats to site: None known X Private development ___ Zoning ___ Vandalism ___ Public Works project ___ Other: ___

17. Is the structure: On its original site? X Moved? ____ Unknown? ___

18. Related features: ___

SIGNIFICANCE

19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)

James K. Rule was the founder of the Gilroy Christian Church. His home at 140 Fifth Street was probably built at the same time as the church itself, in 1857. Rule's daughter, Eliza Rule Wentz, and her husband, Christian Wentz, inherited the house in 1882 on the death of her father. Judge Howard Willey purchased the house in 1893 and made several additions to it. Judge Willey arrived with his family in Gilroy in 1876, when he was 38 years old. On his arrival in Gilroy, Mr. Willey worked for some years in the general merchandise store of his brother-in-law, H.W. Briggs. He was elected Justice of the Peace of the Gilroy Township in 1883. He served as a judge for 36 years, as well as Deputy County Clerk for Santa Clara County and as a special correspondent for the San Jose Mercury. Judge Willey did much to beautify his home town of Gilroy. His love of nature and floriculture led him to support city beautifications. He planted large gardens both at his own home and on plots around the town. He referred to his house as "Floral Home." Judge Willey died at home in April 1919. The house remained in the Willey family until 1973 when it was purchased by the Theatre Angels Art League. It was opened as a cultural center in 1974.

20. Main theme of the historic resource: (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)
   Architecture ___ 1. Art & Leisure ___
   Economic/Industrial ___ Exploration/Settlement ___
   Government ___ 3. Military ___
   Religion ___ 2. Social/Education ___

21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).

   A FIELD GUIDE TO AMERICAN HOUSES, McAlister
   Assessment Rolls
   Gilroy Museum Files- Rule, Willey

22. Date form prepared: April 1986

   By (name) The Firm of
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