

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Rich Hillis, Director, Planning Department  
Jonas Ionin, Commission Secretary, Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Erica Major, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee

DATE: December 22, 2020

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

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The Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee has received the following proposed legislation, introduced by Supervisor Haney on December 15, 2020:

**File No. 201400**

**Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for the San Francisco Eagle Bar, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3522, Lot No. 014, situated within the Leather and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Cultural District.**

If you have comments or reports to be included with the file, please forward them to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: [erica.major@sfgov.org](mailto:erica.major@sfgov.org).

cc: Corey Teague, Planning Department  
Dan Sider, Planning Department  
Laura Lynch, Planning Department  
Scott Sanchez, Planning Department  
Lisa Gibson, Planning Department  
Devyani Jain, Planning Department  
Adam Varat, Planning Department  
AnMarie Rodgers, Planning Department  
Aaron Starr, Planning Department  
Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, Deputy City Attorney  
Joy Navarrete, Planning Department

1 [Initiating Landmark Designation - San Francisco Eagle Bar]

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3 **Resolution a initiating landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for**  
4 **the San Francisco Eagle Bar, Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 3522, Lot No. 014, situated**  
5 **within the Leather and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Cultural District.**

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7 WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by  
8 resolution initiate landmark designation; and

9 WHEREAS, San Francisco Eagle Bar (SF Eagle), Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 3522,  
10 Lot No. 014, is situated in Supervisorial District 6 within San Francisco’s Leather and Lesbian,  
11 Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Cultural District in the South of Market (SOMA)  
12 neighborhood and is listed as a key asset by the cultural district; and

13 WHEREAS, SF Eagle is a Legacy Business, a designation affirmed by the Historic  
14 Preservation Commission and Small Business Commission, and is considered an iconic San  
15 Francisco establishment that contributes greatly to the culture, character, and lore of San  
16 Francisco; and

17 WHEREAS, SF Eagle has been operating at its current location since opening in  
18 February of 1981 at 396-398 12th Street, the corner of 12th and Harrison, and is the name  
19 sake of Eagle Plaza, a new public plaza that pays homage to SOMA’s historic LGBTQ  
20 community, and is the first plaza of its kind in the world; and

21 WHEREAS, The LGBTQ leather community has played an integral role in SOMA’s  
22 history as a neighborhood, and by the 1960’s SOMA had become the epicenter of the LGBTQ  
23 leather scene; and

24 WHEREAS, In 1964 a Life magazine article titled “Homosexuality in America,”  
25 highlighted San Francisco’s leather community, making San Francisco the unofficial capital of

1 the gay leather scene and drawing even more like-minded individuals to the city and more  
2 specifically the SOMA neighborhood; and

3 WHEREAS, The Folsom and Harrison corridors in SOMA became known as the  
4 'Miracle Mile' and by the 1970's counted nearly 30 different gay businesses including leather  
5 bars, clubs, shops, and bathhouses; and

6 WHEREAS, The late 70's and early 80's saw the gay leather community organize to  
7 protest the redevelopment of SOMA by establishing the Folsom Street Fair in 1981 and later  
8 the Up Your Alley Street Fair, both of which celebrated the existing gay leather residents,  
9 businesses, and culture of SOMA and currently bring in half a million people every year from  
10 all over the world into the neighborhood; and

11 WHEREAS, Less than a dozen leather bars, clubs, shops, and bathhouses are left in  
12 SOMA today, with several having recently closed, announcing their pending closure, or being  
13 threatened with closure; and

14 WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco established the Leather & LGBTQ  
15 Cultural District in order to preserve the unique culture of the Western SOMA neighborhood  
16 and protect the existing businesses and residents who currently call it home from  
17 displacement; and

18 WHEREAS, The SF Eagle has a history as an important fundraising institution for the  
19 LGBTQ community; and

20 WHEREAS, Terry Thompson, who became the bar manager of SF Eagle in 1984 and  
21 managed the bar for 11 years, utilized the Eagle as a vehicle for raising over \$5 million for  
22 AIDS charities and eventually helped to create the AIDS Emergency Fund (AEF); and

23 WHEREAS, Many of Thompson's events became classic fund-raisers in the SOMA bar  
24 scene and several continue on at the SF Eagle today including the world famous Bare Chest  
25

1 Calendar (hosted at the SF Eagle since 1985) and the wildly successful and popular Sunday  
2 fund-raising beer busts; and

3 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Eagle Bar is a large open space format leather-themed  
4 bar, with the second-largest outdoor patio in the City with a structure dating back to the late-  
5 1800s that has been painted to reflect the colors of the leather community which are, black,  
6 blue, white, and red; now, therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby initiates landmark designation of  
8 San Francisco Eagle Bar, Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 3522, Lot No. 014, under Planning  
9 Code, Section 1004.1; and, be it

10 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Planning Department  
11 prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission  
12 for its consideration of the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of  
13 the property; and, be it

14 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation  
15 Commission review the Landmark Designation Report and any other information the Planning  
16 Department may have related to the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and  
17 value of the San Francisco Eagle Bar; and, be it

18 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation  
19 Commission consider whether the San Francisco Eagle Bar warrant landmark designation,  
20 and submit its recommendation to the Board pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.