

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 Peskin on December 15, 2020:

**File No. 201404**

**Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for the architecturally and historically significant building at One Montgomery Street.**

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  
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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 - One Montgomery Street]

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3 **Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for**  
4 **the architecturally and historically significant building at One Montgomery Street.**

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6 WHEREAS, The existing building at One Montgomery Street was constructed in 1908  
7 at its current location in the heart of the Financial District, an area of San Francisco that has  
8 been commercial in character since the earliest development of the City and was effectively  
9 leveled by the earthquake and fires that devastated much of San Francisco in 1906; and

10 WHEREAS, Following the 1906 earthquake disaster, San Francisco's political and  
11 business community sought to quickly reestablish and rebuild the City's economy, foremost  
12 the decimated banking businesses within downtown San Francisco, such as the existing  
13 building at One Montgomery Street; a structure illustrative of post-disaster massive  
14 reconstruction efforts; and

15 WHEREAS, The existing building at One Montgomery, built in 1908 in the Italian  
16 Renaissance Revival style, was designed by Willis Polk, one of the most important, influential,  
17 and prolific master architects ever to practice in San Francisco; and

18 WHEREAS, The existing building at One Montgomery is the former location of Wells  
19 Fargo Bank, prior to that Crocker Bank, and originally, in 1908, First National Bank; and

20 WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery is listed in *Here Today: San Francisco's*  
21 *Architectural Heritage* (1968) and described as having an "outstanding feature... the rotunda  
22 entrance supported by granite pillars"; and

23 WHEREAS, The existing building at One Montgomery is composed of two  
24 interconnected, grand banking halls, the first of which, completed in 1908, was designed by  
25 master architect Willis Polk; the second grand banking hall, completed in 1921, a northward

1 addition and an exact copy of the arcaded base and majestic bank interior constructed in  
2 1908 was designed by renown master architect Charles E. Gottschalk; and

3 WHEREAS, The 1921 addition of the building at One Montgomery is documented in  
4 *Splendid Survivors, San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*, and described as “this  
5 extension made a grand interior even grander with its sumptuous marble furnishings, fluted  
6 columns and coffered ceilings;” and

7 WHEREAS, The existing building at One Montgomery retains its monumental, double-  
8 height, open volume interior, a major character-defining feature, one of downtown San  
9 Francisco's most imposing spaces, a historic interior that has always been publicly accessible;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery is a critical urban element, a vital  
12 pedestrian node, that occupies a key position at one of the important intersections in  
13 downtown San Francisco, where Montgomery, Post and Market Streets meet, site of a  
14 collection of monumental 20th century buildings, including the Hobart Building and Palace  
15 Hotel; and

16 WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery is a significant contributor to San  
17 Francisco's banking history, a major commercial sector in the City during the second half of  
18 the 19th century through the 20th century; and

19 WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery is one of the nationally important banks  
20 that symbolized the wealth of the West; and

21 WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery remains as one in a series of  
22 architecturally imposing, Neo-Classical temple-fronted or historical revival edifices in  
23 downtown San Francisco built of opulent materials, many now demolished or partially  
24 demolished; and

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1           WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery Street is listed in *Here Today: San*  
2 *Francisco's Architectural Heritage* (1968), which was subsequently adopted by the San  
3 Francisco Board of Supervisors through Resolution No. 268-70, and therefore qualifies as an  
4 official local historical register under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

5           WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery received an A-rating in *San Francisco's*  
6 *Architectural Heritage Survey*;

7           WHEREAS, The building at One Montgomery Street is architecturally significant as the  
8 combined work of two master architects and because of its status as an intact remaining  
9 example of an early 20th century bank building with original interior elements in good  
10 condition and; now, therefore be it

11           RESOLVED, That the Board hereby initiates landmark designation of the architecturally  
12 significant and intact One Montgomery Street; and, be it

13           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Planning Department  
14 prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission  
15 for its consideration of the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of  
16 the existing building at One Montgomery Street; and, be it

17           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation  
18 Commission consider whether the existing building at One Montgomery warrants landmark  
19 designation and submit its recommendation to the Board according to Article 10 of the  
20 Planning Code.

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