



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

Transmittal

Planning Department Response to the Appeal of the Categorical Exemption for 26 Hodges Alley

DATE: May 11, 2015
TO: Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
FROM: Sarah Jones, Environmental Review Officer – (415) 575-9034
Christopher Espiritu, Environmental Planner – (415) 575-9022
RE: BOS File No. 150395 [Planning Case No. 2013.0783E]
Appeal of Categorical Exemption for 26 Hodges Alley
HEARING DATE: May 19, 2015

Pursuant to the San Francisco Administrative Code Chapter 31, the Planning Department has prepared a response to the Appeal of the Categorical Exemption for 26 Hodges Alley. The Planning Department is transmitting one (1) hard copy of the appeal response. In compliance with San Francisco's Administrative Code Section 8.12.5 "Electronic Distribution of Multi-Page Documents," the Planning Department has submitted a multi-page response to the Appeal of Categorical Exemption for 26 Hodges Alley [BF 150395] in digital format.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, or require additional hard copies, please contact Christopher Espiritu of the Planning Department at (415) 575-9022 or Christopher.Espiritu@sfgov.org.



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

Categorical Exemption Appeal

26 Hodges Alley

DATE: May 11, 2015
TO: Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
FROM: Sarah B. Jones, Environmental Review Officer – (415) 558-9048
Christopher Espiritu – (415) 575-9022
RE: Planning Case No. 2013.07683E
Appeal of Categorical Exemption for 26 Hodges Alley
HEARING DATE: May 19, 2015
ATTACHMENT: Attachment A – Categorical Exemption Determination with Historic Resource
Evaluation Response
Attachment B – April 10, 2015 Appeal Letter from Melody Mar

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

PROJECT SPONSOR: Heidi Liebes, Liebes Architects, (415) 812-5142
APPELLANT: Melody Mar, 358 Vallejo Street, San Francisco melomm@aol.com

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum and the attached documents are a response to the letter of appeal to the Board of Supervisors (the "Board") regarding the Planning Department's (the "Department") issuance of a Categorical Exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA Determination") for the proposed 26 Hodges Alley project (the "Project").

The Department, pursuant to Title 14 of the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15300–15387), issued a Categorical Exemption for the Project on September 19, 2014, finding that the proposed Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a Class 1 categorical exemption. The Class 1 exemption applies to minor alterations of existing private structures, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of determination.

The decision before the Board is whether to uphold the Department's decision to issue a categorical exemption and deny the appeal, or to overturn the Department's decision to issue a categorical exemption and return the project to the Department staff for additional environmental review.

SITE DESCRIPTION & EXISTING USE

The project site contains an existing two-story, 2,263-square-foot single-family residence. The project lot measures 17 feet wide by 62 feet-11 inches deep with an area of 1,067 square feet, and is zoned RH-3

(Residential House, Three Family). Along Hodges Alley and adjacent streets (Vallejo Street) is a mix of housing types, from single-family to apartment buildings, ranging from two to five stories, consistent with the RH-3 and RM-1 (Residential House, Three Family and Residential-Mixed, Low Density) zoning of the project vicinity. Generally, more recently constructed buildings are larger and contain more residential units than the older housing stock in the project vicinity.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project would involve a third floor vertical addition to an existing two-story single family residence. In addition there is a side addition to the northern property line at the first and second floors which encroaches into the rear yard setback. The rear yard requirement is 28'-4" and the existing building is non-conforming as it maintains a 1'-0" rear yard. The proposed third floor addition complies with the rear yard requirement. The proposed 3'-0" deep side addition encloses an existing stairway and extends approximately 5'-6" beyond the adjacent neighbor to the north and spans approximately 16'-0" but does not increase the overall building depth. The project would involve 940 cubic yards of excavation to a depth of 14 feet.

BACKGROUND

On July 24, 2013, Heidi Liebes Architects (hereinafter "Project Sponsor") filed an application with the Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") for CEQA determination for the project described above.

On September 18, 2014, the Department determined that the project was categorically exempt under CEQA Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(e)(1)), and that no further environmental review was required. The Project was approved on February 12, 2015 at a Discretionary Review Hearing before the Planning Commission.

On April 10, 2015, Melody Mar filed an appeal of the Categorical Exemption Determination. The appeal letter was dated and filed with the Clerk of the Board on April 10, 2015.

On April 15, 2015, the Department determined that the appeal of the CEQA determination was timely filed and advised the Clerk of the Board to schedule the CEQA appeal hearing in compliance with Section 31.16(b)(4) of the San Francisco Administrative Code

CEQA GUIDELINES

Categorical Exemptions

Section 21084 of the California Public Resources Code requires that the CEQA Guidelines identify a list of classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and are exempt from further environmental review.

In response to that mandate, the State Secretary of Resources found that certain classes of projects, which are listed in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 through 15333, do not have a significant impact on the environment, and therefore are categorically exempt from the requirement for the preparation of further environmental review.

CEQA State Guidelines Section 15301(e), or Class 1(e), allows for additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than 50 percent of the floor area of the structures before the addition, or 2,500 square feet, whichever is less.

In determining the significance of environmental effects caused by a project, CEQA State Guidelines Section 15064(f) states that the decision as to whether a project may have one or more significant effects shall be based on substantial evidence in the record of the lead agency. CEQA State Guidelines 15604(f)(5) offers the following guidance: "Argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion or narrative, or evidence that is clearly inaccurate or erroneous, or evidence that is not credible, shall not constitute substantial evidence. Substantial evidence shall include facts, reasonable assumption predicated upon facts, and expert opinion supported by facts."

APPELLANT ISSUES AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT RESPONSES

The concerns raised in the April 10, 2015 Appeal Letter are cited below and are followed by the Department's responses.

Issue 1: There are unusual circumstances surrounding the current proposal that would suggest a reasonable possibility of a significant effect. The proposed project will have significant environmental effects, and therefore would not be exempt from environmental review.

Response 1: CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(c) states that a categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The Appellant has not submitted any evidence that the Project would result in individual or cumulative impacts under CEQA due to usual circumstances, let alone unusual circumstances as required by CEQA.

Further, the determination of whether a project is eligible for a categorical exemption is based on a two-step analysis: (1) determining whether the project meets the requirements of the categorical exemption, and (2) determining whether there are unusual circumstances at the site or with the proposal that would result in a reasonable possibility of a significant effect. The Appellant does not claim that the proposed project does not meet the requirements of the Class 1 categorical exemption. Moreover, the Appellant has not established what the unusual circumstances are at the site or with the proposed project. Finally, the Appellant also has not specified that the project would affect a particular resource topic.

CONCLUSION

No substantial evidence demonstrating that any unusual circumstances exist that could result in significant impacts to the environment has been presented that would warrant preparation of further environmental review. The Department has found that the proposed project is consistent with the cited

exemption. The Appellant has not provided any substantial evidence or expert opinion to refute the conclusions of the Department.

For the reasons stated above and in the September 18, 2014 CEQA Categorical Exemption Determination, the CEQA Determination complies with the requirements of CEQA and the Project is appropriately exempt from environmental review pursuant to the cited exemption. The Department therefore recommends that the Board uphold the CEQA Categorical Exemption Determination and deny the appeal of the CEQA Determination.



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Certificate of Determination Exemption from Environmental Review

Case No.: 2013.0783E
Project Title: 26 Hodges Alley
Zoning: RH-3 (Residential – House, Three Family) Zoning District
 40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0134/012
Lot Size: 1,067 square feet
Project Sponsor: Heidi Liebes – Liebes Architects
 (415) 812-5124
Staff Contact: Christopher Espiritu – (415) 575-9022
 Christopher.Espiritu@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
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Information:
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed project would include the interior remodel of an existing two-story residence and the vertical addition for a new third floor to add an approximately 460-square-foot (sq ft) bedroom suite. The proposed project would also include the expansion of an existing roof deck by adding approximately 131 square feet of new roof deck space, accessed from the new third floor bedroom. The proposed third-floor addition would add approximately 11'-1" to the existing 19'-10" structure, for a total building height of 30'-11". Other project details include the installation of new interior stairs, enlarging the existing kitchen, and enclosing an existing exterior staircase for access to the expanded roof deck. The project site is located on the block bounded by Green Street to the north, Vallejo Street to the south, Sansome Street to the east, and Hodges Alley to the west, within the North Beach neighborhood.

EXEMPT STATUS:

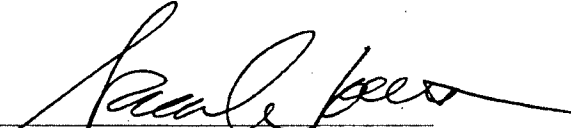
Categorical Exemption, Class 1 [California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15301].

REMARKS:

See next page.

DETERMINATION:

I do hereby certify that the above determination has been made pursuant to State and local requirements.


 Sarah B. Jones
 Environmental Review Officer

September 18, 2014
 Date

cc: Heidi Liebes, Project Sponsor
Kate Conner, Current Planner

Jonathan Lammers, Preservation Planner
Historic Preservation Distribution List

Supervisor Chiu, District 3 (via Clerk of the Board)
Virna Byrd, M.D.F.

Historic Districts. Therefore, the property was evaluated for individual eligibility for inclusion, as well as inclusion as contributor to a historic district, to the California Register.

The California Register criteria for eligible individual resources and historic districts provide specific measures on evaluating individual properties for inclusion into the California Register. Criterion 1 (Events) determines whether a property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States. Criterion 2 (Persons) examines whether a property is associated with the lives of persons important to the local, regional or national past. Criterion 3 (Architecture) analyzes whether a property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values. Criterion 4 (Information Potential) determines whether a property yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The property at 26 Hodges Alley was evaluated for inclusion into the California Register and is further discussed below.

Criterion 1 (Events). According to the HRER, the building stock along the southeastern slopes of Telegraph Hill represents a cohesive development pattern associated with rebuilding efforts following the 1906 Earthquake. The reconstruction of San Francisco was unprecedented in its scope and pace, and remains one of the most significant events in the city's history. Nearly all buildings in the immediate vicinity were residential or mixed-use properties constructed during a punctuated burst of activity between 1906 and 1913, and they convey clear and significant association with the reconstruction effort. While the property at 26 Hodges Alley does not appear to be an individually eligible for historic listing under this Criterion, it is part of a larger grouping of properties which collectively constitute a potential historic district. Therefore, Preservation Staff determined that 26 Hodges Alley Street is significant under California Register Criterion 1 (Events) for its association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction.

Criterion 2 (Persons). According to the HRER, Preservation Staff determined that as a group, the owners and residents of 26 Hodges Alley illustrate the strong working-class Italian demographics that were representative of the North Beach and Telegraph Hill area during the early 20th century. However, none of the persons appear to be important to local, state or national history such that the subject property would be eligible for historic listing under this Criterion. Therefore, Preservation Staff concluded that 26 Hodges Alley is not eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2 (Persons).

Criterion 3 (Architecture). The HRER found that the building was designed by local architect, Fedele Costa, per the original 1907 building permit record. Fedele Costa was born in 1863 in Bioglio, Italy and immigrated to the United States in 1906. The son of a successful builder, he arrived in San Francisco in 1906 and was known to have served as the architect for St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Auburn, California (1911) and the Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church in Woodland, California (1912). The existing building at 26 Hodges Alley does not appear to be a distinctive example of a type, period, region or method of construction such that it would be individually eligible for the California Register under this Criterion. Also, the property also does not appear to be a prominent work of architect, Fedele Costa.

However, the building does appear to be part of a concentration of residential buildings significant for their association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction and eligible for the California Register as a historic district. Nearly all of the buildings in the immediate vicinity were constructed between 1906 and 1913, and most evidence a shared design vocabulary based on Classical Revival influences. Character-defining architectural features of this district include wood frame construction and wood cladding, and the use of design elements such as pilasters, entablatures, dentil moldings and prominent cornices.

Therefore, Preservation Staff determined that 26 Hodges Alley, while not individually significant under this Criterion, could be significant as part of a concentration of properties that convey clear association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction and appear to constitute a potential historic district eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture).

Criterion 4 (Information Potential). Finally, based upon a review of information in the Departments records, the subject property is not significant under Criterion 4 (Information Potential), which is typically associated with archaeological resources. Furthermore, the subject property is not likely significant under Criterion 4, since this significance criteria typically applies to rare construction types when involving the built environment. The subject property is not an example of a rare construction type and would therefore not be eligible for listing in the California Register under Criteria 4.

In order to be considered a resource for the purposes of CEQA, a property must not only be shown to have significance under the California Register of Historical Resources criteria (Criterion 1-4), but also must have historic integrity.² Historic integrity enables a property to illustrate significant aspects of its past. According to the HREER, 26 Hodges Alley retains integrity of location, setting and association as it remains a residential property, has never been moved, and is largely surrounded by the same properties as it was historically. However, the building does not appear to retain integrity of design, workmanship, or materials. The property has experienced several alterations between 1934 and 1969, which included raising the building to insert a garage, window replacement, and the installation of a roof deck. Other alterations which are undocumented or poorly documented include the large rear addition constructed between 1913 and 1938 and the construction of the second-story overhang at the primary façade. The primary entry, garage and fenestration pattern and materials are all contemporary in nature, while the articulation of the primary façade has been altered. Collectively, these changes have significantly changed the character of the building such that it is no longer able to effectively convey its 1907 construction. Therefore, Preservation Staff determined that the property at 26 Hodges Alley does not retain historic integrity.

² Integrity is defined as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's period of significance."

As discussed, the property was shown to have significance under Criterion 1 (Events) and Criterion 3 (Architecture) for inclusion to the California Register as part of a historic district. However, the property did not retain its historic integrity and lacks integrity from its period of significance (1906-1915). Preservation Staff concluded that the property at 26 Hodges Alley is a non-contributor to an eligible Historic District. For the above reasons, the proposed project would not materially impair the characteristics of the existing historic resource, thus the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to historic resources.

Geotechnical. According to Planning Department records, the project site is not located within a Landslide Hazard Zone or Liquefaction Hazard Zone; however, the property is located on a site with a slope of 20 percent. A Geotechnical Investigation was conducted for the property and is summarized below.³

The Geotechnical Investigation notes that the site slopes downward toward the rear of the property to the east and the rear of the property sits at the top of a near vertical 15- to 20-foot-tall slope that was excavated into the hillside for the development of a downslope residence located at 358 Vallejo Street. The project site is documented to be located in an area that is underlain by Franciscan Complex comprised of sedimentary rocks composed of sandstone, shale, and greywacke sandstone. Also, the site lies immediately southwest of former rock quarry operations that were present on the eastern slopes of Telegraph Hill until the turn of the 20th Century.

The Geotechnical Investigation provides specific recommendations and requirements concerning site preparation and foundations, retaining walls, and rock-slope support. These are further discussed below.

Foundations. The Geotechnical Investigation noted that the proposed improvements including the addition of a new third floor bedroom would be adequately supported by drilled pier foundations. Drilled piers should be at least 18-inches in diameter and drilled at least five feet into the underlying bedrock beneath the existing building.

Rock-Slope Stabilization. The Geotechnical Investigation noted that due to former quarry operations, which included blasting has resulted in over-steepened and shattered slopes. Aggressive quarrying that was common in the Telegraph Hill area left exposed bedrock in the eastern slope, and the Geotechnical Investigation found evidence of recent rockfalls, with debris and rock fragments, that have fallen from the eastern slope at the rear of the property and have accumulated in the rear yard of the adjacent property at 358 Vallejo Street.

A Supplemental Geotechnical Analysis was performed and revised recommendations for rock-slope stabilization were recommended. Due to the unique features of the eastern slope at the rear of the site, the previous recommendation to construct a concrete wall to stabilize the slope was deemed infeasible. The Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation therefore recommended that the best solution for reducing

³ Gilpin Geosciences, Inc. – Earthquake & Engineering Geology, *Engineering Geologic and Geotechnical Investigation, Residential Improvements, 26 Hodges Alley, San Francisco, California, May 28, 2013*. This report is available for review as part of Case No. 2013.0783E.

rockfall hazards at the project site would be to include the installation of a steel wire mesh net that would contain loose rock from impacting the residence at 358 Vallejo Street, and the installation of concrete encased steel rock bolts that would reinforce the rock slope. The netting would be supported by vertical rock bolts drilled into the slope at the top and bottom.

The Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation⁴ identified this strategy as the most feasible since the process will essentially stitch the rock together to prevent pieces of rock from becoming dislodged. Finally, a closely spaced steel mesh net will be attached to the slope to contain pieces of rock that may become dislodged in the future. The selected approach stabilizes loose rock by scaling the rock face and applying mesh. Stability of the existing rock slope is increased by pinning potential wedge-type rock failures with the vertical rock bolts.

The Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation ultimately concluded that the project site is suitable to support the proposed project, provided that its recommendations are incorporated into the design and construction of the proposed project. The project sponsor has agreed to implement these recommendations, subject to Building Code requirements and implementation would not result in foreseeable significant impacts.

The San Francisco Building Code ensures the safety of all new construction in the City. Decisions about appropriate foundation and structural design are considered as part of the DBI permit review process. Prior to issuing a building permit for the proposed project, the DBI would review the geotechnical report to ensure that the security and stability of adjoining properties and the subject property is maintained during and following project construction. Therefore, potential damage to structures from geologic hazards on the project site would be addressed through compliance with the San Francisco Building Code.

EXEMPT STATUS:

CEQA State Guidelines Section 15301(e)(1), or Class 1, provides an exemption for minor alteration of existing private structures, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of determination. Additionally, Class 1 exempts additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than 50 percent of the floor area of the structures before the addition, or 2,500 square feet, whichever is less. The proposed project would include the addition of approximately 460 square feet for a new third-floor bedroom suite and the interior remodel of the existing two-story residence. Therefore, the proposed demolition meets the criteria for exemption from environmental review under Class 1.

⁴ Gilpin Geosciences, Inc. – Earthquake & Engineering Geology, *Supplemental Engineering Geologic and Geotechnical Investigation, Residential Improvements, 26 Hodges Alley, San Francisco, California, August 14, 2014*. This report is available for review as part of Case No. 2013.0783E.

CONCLUSION:

CEQA State Guidelines Section 15300.2 states that a categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. There are no unusual circumstances surrounding the current proposal that would suggest a reasonable possibility of a significant effect. The proposed project would have no significant environmental effects. The project would be exempt under the above-cited classification. For the above reasons, the proposed project is appropriately exempt from environmental review.



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Resource Evaluation Response

Date November 4, 2013
Case No.: 2013.0783E
Project Address: 26 Hodges Alley
Zoning: RH-3 (Residential House, Three Family)
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0134/012
Date of Review: November 4, 2013 (Part I)
Staff Contact: Jonathan Lammers (Preservation Planner)
(415) 575-9093
jonathan.lammers@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

PART I: HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION

Buildings and Property Description

The subject property, 26 Hodges Alley, is located on a rectangular-shaped lot measuring 17 feet by 62.917 feet on the east side of Hodges Alley north of Vallejo Street in the North Beach neighborhood. The property is located within an RH-3 (Residential-House, Three Family) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.

The subject property is occupied by a two-story, wood frame, single-family residence constructed in 1907 per the original building permit—although the San Francisco Assessor lists the date of construction as 1924. Originally addressed as 6 Hodges Alley, the residence is vernacular in style, clad with unpainted horizontal rustic wood channel siding, and capped by a flat roof. The primary façade faces west onto Hodges Alley and features a metal-frame, multi-light and panel garage door to the south and a multi-light and metal panel pedestrian entry to the north. Both the garage and pedestrian entries are located beneath a shallow overhang of the second story. The pedestrian entry is accessed via a raised concrete step with a metal pipe handrail. Typical fenestration includes metal-sash multi-light windows inset with operable casement windows. The primary façade terminates in a simple modillion cornice. The second story at the rear of the property overhangs an open area on the first story, creating a porch. Fenestration on the rear and south facades includes multi-light metal windows.

Known alterations to the property include raising the building to insert a garage (1934); repairing the stairs, garage door and replacing back windows (1969); repairing a roof sun deck (1969); addition of a basement bathroom and laundry area (1976); replacement of windows (1984); repairing dry-rot on siding and trim at side and back, as well as the roof deck (2011). Sanborn map and historic aerial photos also indicate that a large rear addition was constructed between 1913 and 1938.

Pre-Existing Historic Rating / Survey

The subject property has not been addressed by any adopted historic resource surveys and is not listed on any local, state or national registries. The subject property is considered a "Category B" property

(Properties Requiring Further Consultation and Review) for the purposes of the Planning Department's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review procedures due to its age.

Neighborhood Context and Description

26 Hodges Alley is located on the southeastern slopes of Telegraph Hill in the North Beach neighborhood, an area roughly bounded by Broadway Street to the south, Columbus Avenue to the west, and the waterfront to the north and east. The area northeast and east of the subject property is marked by steep slopes that remain undeveloped. The developed area immediately surrounding the subject property is exclusively residential in character and primarily composed of single-family dwellings or flats ranging from one- to three-stories in height. Construction dates for buildings located on the subject block range from 1906 to 1998, with the vast majority of buildings constructed between 1906 and 1913. This is reflected in the architecture of the building stock, which ranges from small post-1906 vernacular dwellings along Hodges Alley, to Classical Revival "Edwardian era" flats along Vallejo and Montgomery streets. The overall level of historic integrity is good, although some buildings have been altered to varying degrees, most frequently through the replacement of windows and/or replacement of the original wood cladding with stucco.

A short distance to the east, the residential development abuts the boundaries of the Northeast Waterfront Historic District, a significant concentration of commercial warehouses and industrial facilities dating from the 1850s through the 1930s. Similarly, the Telegraph Hill Historic District is located a short distance to the north in an area roughly bounded by Greenwich, Sansome, Montgomery and Green streets. The district is considered a unique expression of the pattern of development which took place on the east slope of Telegraph Hill from 1850 to 1939.

CEQA Historical Resource(s) Evaluation

Step A: Significance

Under CEQA section 21084.1, a property qualifies as a historic resource if it is "listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources." The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources or not included in a local register of historical resources, shall not preclude a lead agency from determining whether the resource may qualify as a historical resource under CEQA.

Individual	Historic District/Context
<p>Property is individually eligible for inclusion in a California Register under one or more of the following Criteria:</p> <p>Criterion 1 - Event: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Criterion 2 - Persons: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Criterion 3 - Architecture: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Criterion 4 - Info. Potential: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Period of Significance: N/A</p>	<p>Property is eligible for inclusion in a California Register Historic District/Context under one or more of the following Criteria:</p> <p>Criterion 1 - Event: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Criterion 2 - Persons: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Criterion 3 - Architecture: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Criterion 4 - Info. Potential: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Period of Significance: 1906 – circa 1915</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contributor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Contributor</p>

Based on the information provided in the Supplemental Information Form for Historical Resource Determination prepared by Heidi Liebes (dated 16 July 2013), information found in the Planning Department files, and research conducted on Telegraph Hill and the North Beach neighborhood, Preservation staff finds that the subject building is not eligible for listing on the California Register, although it is located within a potential California Register eligible historic district.

Criterion 1: It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

Telegraph Hill was first developed during the Gold Rush, when residential and commercial facilities were erected along the lower slopes of the hill in proximity to waterfront traffic areas such as Clark's Point, the Broadway Wharf and Cunningham's Wharf. A semaphore, or marine telegraph, was also constructed near the crest of the hill to signal the arrival of ships through the Golden Gate—a feature which in time earned the hill its name. Among the oldest surviving buildings from this period are 1301 Montgomery Street, constructed circa 1850, and the Cooney House at 291 Union Street, constructed in 1853.

During the 1850s and 1860s the eastern base of the hill, as well as adjacent filled ground, was further developed as a waterfront industrial district, with numerous wharves, warehouses and manufacturing facilities. By 1869, maps show the southern slopes of Telegraph Hill were thickly built up, despite the fact that some streets were so steep as to be declared impassible. As a consequence, several streets existed only as public footpaths or stairs—a convention that still persists today, such as the stairs located along Vallejo Street west of Montgomery Street.

During this period, a good deal of development consisted of working class dwellings, flats, and rooming houses for residents engaged in maritime industries. These included longshoremen and stevedores who unloaded the ships, as well as the drayman and teamsters who delivered the goods to nearby warehouses. Initially, the hill was home to Irish immigrants, although the west slopes of Telegraph Hill—which encompassed much of the developing North Beach neighborhood—attracted large numbers of Italian immigrants during the 1870s. By the turn of the century, Italians comprised the largest ethnic enclave in both North Beach and on Telegraph Hill.

Approximately three blocks north of the subject property was Pioneer Park, established in 1876 at the peak of the hill by a group of businessmen who donated several lots to the city in honor of San Francisco's pioneers. The expansive views from the hill also attracted real estate speculators such as Frederick Layman, who developed the Telegraph Hill Railroad—a funicular railway that operated along Greenwich Street during the mid-1880s. At the top, visitors could visit Layman's Telegraph Hill Observatory, which featured a restaurant and beer garden known as the "German Castle."

The eastern side of the hill, however, was dominated by rock quarry companies which blasted rock to secure ballast for empty ships, as well as obtain fill and construction materials. Most notorious of the quarry operators were W. D. English & Company and the Gray Brothers, whose blasting sometimes resulted in landslides or actually demolished nearby houses. While citizens tried to shut down the quarries, the companies were politically well connected and blasting continued through the turn of the century.

The 1906 Earthquake touched off numerous fires that consumed vast areas of the city, including nearly all of the buildings on Telegraph Hill and in the North Beach neighborhood. Only a few enclaves were spared destruction, including Jackson Square and the crest of Telegraph Hill. In spite of the devastation, reconstruction began almost at once. The North Beach/Telegraph Hill area was one of the earliest areas of the city to be rebuilt, due in large part to loans that were offered by local Italian banks. The rapid pace of construction meant that the area was rebuilt largely along the same property lines that existed prior to the disaster, and by 1915 most area streets were lined with rows of new two- and three-story flats and dwellings. At this time, the area remained a predominately Italian enclave, with most residents engaged in working class occupations.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Telegraph Hill's scenic location and relatively affordable rents attracted artists and writers to the area. The crest of the hill was also enhanced by a number of civic improvements. In 1923, Telegraph Hill Boulevard was graded and paved to Pioneer Park, followed in 1925 by the construction of an observation area designed by architect G. Albert Lansburgh. Most notable of all was the construction of Coit Tower in 1933, which was designed by prominent local architect Arthur Brown, Jr.

Following World War II, rising rents and real estate prices led many longtime Italian and Irish residents to move elsewhere. The hill then began to take on a more affluent character, although many new residents proved to be staunch advocates of Telegraph Hill's unique qualities. This is best evidenced by the formation of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers organization in 1954, which over the years succeeded in establishing a 40-foot height limit in much of the area, stopping the Embarcadero Freeway at Broadway Street, and establishing the Northeast Waterfront and Telegraph Hill historic districts.

Historic maps indicate that Hodges Alley was created during the 1850s, and was one of several small alleys that still exist in the vicinity, including Bartol Street, Prescott Court, Kohler Place and Castle Street. Several small buildings were erected in the general vicinity no later than 1853, and by 1869 most streets in the vicinity were almost entirely built out. However, development along Vallejo Street and Green Streets east of Hodges Alley ended abruptly about mid-block owing to the steep topography and quarrying activities.

On the 1887 Sanborn map Hodges Alley is shown as being lined primarily with two-story frame dwellings, and connected at the north end to another alley known as Jackson Place. Nearby, the north side of Vallejo Street included a few stores with dwelling units above. These conditions were largely the same in 1905, although Jackson Place was no longer shown on Sanborn maps by that time. The 1905 Sanborn map also gives some indication of the industrial development at the base of Telegraph Hill. The California Fruit Cannery Association operated a large brick masonry canning facility at the corner of Vallejo and Sansome streets, while the block to the east included the Western Sugar Refining Company Refinery.

The fires that spread following the 1906 Earthquake consumed all of the buildings on the subject block. San Francisco Assessor's data shows that most buildings located along either side of Hodges Place were constructed in the first three years following the disaster, while Sanborn maps show complete reconstruction of the area by 1913. Since that time there has been no additional infill construction along

Hodges Alley, and only minor infill construction in the adjacent block faces along Vallejo and Montgomery streets.

Considered as a whole, the building stock along the southeastern slopes of Telegraph Hill represents a cohesive development pattern associated with rebuilding efforts following the 1906 Earthquake. The reconstruction of San Francisco was unprecedented in its scope and pace, and remains one of the most significant events in the city's history. Nearly all buildings in the immediate vicinity were residential or mixed-use properties constructed during a punctuated burst of activity between 1906 and 1913, and they convey clear and significant association with the reconstruction effort. While 26 Hodges Alley does not appear to be an individually eligible for historic listing under this Criterion, it is part of a larger grouping of properties which collectively constitute a potential historic district.

It is therefore determined that 26 Hodges Alley Street is significant under California Register Criterion 1 for its association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction.

Criterion 2: It is associated with the lives of persons important in our local, regional or national past.

26 Hodges Alley was constructed in 1907. Both the 1906 and 1909 San Francisco Block Books show W. H. Hamilton as owner of the subject property. However, the original building permit names the owner of the property as Mary Figari. City directory and U.S. Census research indicate that William & Mary Figari were natives of Italy. William worked as an engineer and captain for the Crowley Launch & Tugboat Company. At the time of the building's construction, the Figaris lived nearby at 330 Vallejo Street. The 1912 city directory shows William Figari living at the property along with Joseph and John Figari, both laborers. By 1917 the Figaris had moved to 2528 Polk Street, and Andreo Bertolini (no occupation given) is shown living at the subject property.

According to the Supplemental Information Form for Historic Resource Determination, the property was sold in April 1930 by James and Annie Nicora to Giuseppe and Marie Figari, who immediately sold the property to Egidio Luchessi. The dates of ownership by the Nicora family are not specified. City directories indicate that Joseph and Antoinette Lucchesi—presumably relatives of Egidio—lived at the property as early as 1920, and continued to reside there until at least 1933. Joseph worked as a laborer and winery foreman. Records show the Egidio Lucchesi worked in the livery trade and lived at 7 Hodges Alley, across the street from the subject property.

In 1933 the property was sold to Gardino and Josephine Granzella, who lived nearby at 1140 Montgomery Street. Gardino was employed in the liquor and restaurant industry, and the Granzellas lived at the property through at least 1947. The property remained in the Granzella family through 1967, although it was rented by Ruth Prager, a social worker, from at least 1953 to 1966.

Between 1967 and 1970 the property was owned by Agnes F. Gump, although city directories do not show anyone living at the property. In 1970, the property was sold to Roger and Ann Skjei, who lived at the property from 1974 through at least 1993. In 2012 the property was sold by the Ann W. Skjei Trust to the present owners.

As a group, the owners and residents of 26 Hodges Alley illustrate the strong working-class Italian demographics of the North Beach and Telegraph Hill area during the early 20th century. However, none of the persons named above appear to be important to local, state or national history such that the subject

property is eligible for historic listing under this Criterion. It is therefore determined that 26 Hodges Alley is not eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.

According to the original 1907 building permit, 26 Hodges Alley was designed by the architect, Fedele Costa. According to a history of Yolo County, California published in 1913, Fedele Costa was born in 1863 in Bioglio, Italy as the son of a successful builder. He immigrated to the United States in 1906 and arrived in San Francisco that year, presumably in search of work during the rebuilding effort following the 1906 Earthquake. In addition to the construction of 26 Hodges Alley, the January 16, 1907 edition of the *San Francisco Call* shows that he contracted for the brick work during construction of the Societa Garibaldina building at 447-461 Broadway Street. Within a few years Costa moved to Livermore, where he is identified in the 1910 U.S. Census as a contractor. He is known to have served as the architect for St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Auburn, California (1911) and the Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church in Woodland, California (1912). Research did not reveal additional information about his subsequent career.

Although no historic photos of the property are available, the 1913 Sanborn map shows the building as a one-story-over-basement structure. The original design was likely vernacular in nature and similar to the simple, utilitarian designs used for the other single-family dwellings along Hodges Alley. The building appears to retain portions of its original wood channel rustic siding, but the primary entry and fenestration are alterations, and it is unlikely that the building was originally designed with a second-story overhang. It is also unclear how much of the cornice is original.

Considered as a whole, 26 Hodges Alley does not appear to be a distinctive example of a type, period, region or method of construction such that it would be individually eligible for the California Register under this Criterion. The property also does not appear to be a prominent work of architect, Fedele Costa. As discussed previously, however, the building does appear to be part of a concentration of residential buildings significant for their association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction and eligible for the California Register as a historic district. Nearly all of the buildings in the immediate vicinity were constructed between 1906 and 1913, and most evidence a shared design vocabulary based on Classical Revival influences. Character-defining architectural features of this district include wood frame construction and wood cladding, and the use of design elements such as pilasters, entablatures, dentil moldings and prominent cornices. Most buildings also feature bay windows on the upper floors. Building height and massing is likewise consistent, with most buildings ranging from two to three stories in height. Buildings along Hodges Alley and Prescott Court are typically smaller and more utilitarian—a pattern that strongly conveys association with the historic working class character of the area.

While buildings with similar ages and stylistic influences are common in the Telegraph Hill area, the adjacent blocks show heavier concentrations of altered buildings, as well as more numerous examples of later infill. Thus, this small potential district remains one of the best preserved areas on the southern and eastern slopes of Telegraph Hill. The preliminary boundaries of this district begin with the residential development along Vallejo Street west of Sansome Street (parcels 0134/003 and 0143/034). The boundaries continue west along Vallejo Street to Montgomery Street, including the properties located along Hodges Alley and Prescott Court, but excluding the building on the southeast corner of Montgomery and Vallejo streets. The district then runs north along both side of Montgomery Street to its intersection with Green Street, where it runs briefly west along the south side of Green Street to parcel 0133/040A.

It is therefore determined that 26 Hodges Alley, while not individually significant under this Criterion, is part of a concentration of properties that convey clear association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction and appear to constitute a potential historic district eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4: It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Based upon a review of information in the Departments records, the subject property is not significant under Criterion 4, which is typically associated with archaeological resources. The building is also unlikely to yield information important to history, such as evidence of unique building materials or methods.

It is therefore determined that 26 Hodges Alley is not eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 4.

Step B: Integrity

To be a resource for the purposes of CEQA, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the California Register of Historical Resources criteria, but it also must have integrity. Integrity is defined as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's period of significance." Historic integrity enables a property to illustrate significant aspects of its past. All seven qualities do not need to be present as long the overall sense of past time and place is evident.

The subject property has retained or lacks integrity from the period of significance noted in Step A:

Location:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks	Setting:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks
Association:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks	Feeling:	<input type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lacks
Design:	<input type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lacks	Materials:	<input type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lacks
Workmanship:	<input type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lacks			

26 Hodges Alley retains integrity of location, setting and association as it remains a residential property, has never been moved, and is largely surrounded by the same properties as it was historically. However, the building does not appear to retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials and feeling. The property has experienced several alterations which included raising the building to insert a garage (1934); window replacement (1969; 1984); and the installation of a roof deck (pre-1969). Other alterations which are undocumented or poorly documented include the large rear addition constructed between 1913 and 1938 and the construction of the second-story overhang at the primary façade. The primary entry, garage and fenestration pattern and materials are all contemporary in nature, while the articulation of the primary façade has been altered. Collectively, these changes have significantly changed the character of the building such that it is no longer able to effectively convey its 1907 construction. Thus, 26 Hodges does not retain historic integrity.

Step C: Character Defining Features

If the subject property has been determined to have significance and retains integrity, please list the character-defining features of the building(s) and/or property. A property must retain the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity in order to avoid significant adverse impacts to the resource. These essential features are those that define both why a property is significant and when it was significant, and without which a property can no longer be identified as being associated with its significance.

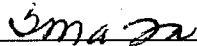
26 Hodges Alley does not retain integrity. Therefore, a discussion of character defining features is not warranted.

CEQA Historic Resource Determination

- Historical Resource Present
 - Individually-eligible Resource
 - Contributor to an eligible Historic District
 - Non-contributor to an eligible Historic District

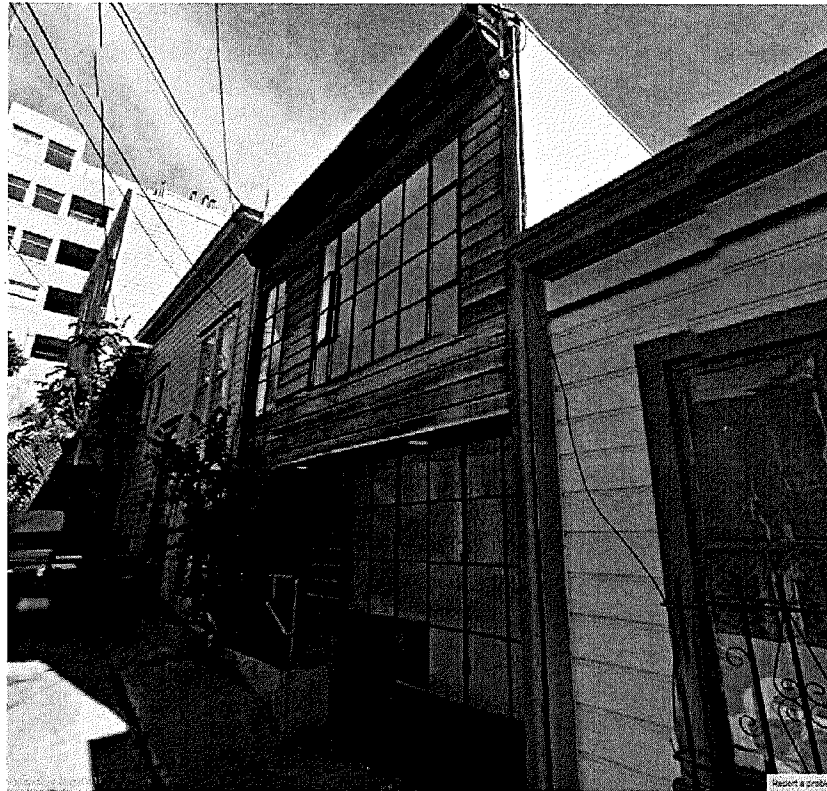
- No Historical Resource Present

PART I: SENIOR PRESERVATION PLANNER REVIEW

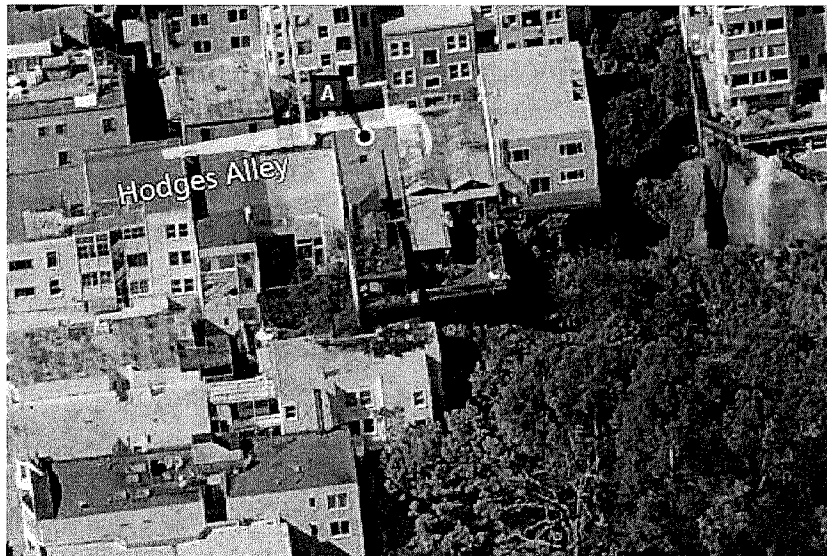
Signature: 
Tina Tam, Senior Preservation Planner

Date: 11-15-2013

cc: Virnaliza Byrd, Environmental Division/ Historic Resource Impact Review File



26 Hodges Alley primary façade (Google Maps)



Satellite view west showing the rear of 26 Hodges Alley (Bing Maps)

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco 94102-4689
Tel. No. 554-5184
Fax No. 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. 544-5227

April 10, 2015

To: John Rahaim
Planning Director

From: *pc* Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Subject: Appeal of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Determination of Exemption from Environmental Review - 26 Hodges Alley

An appeal of the CEQA Exemption Determination for 26 Hodges Alley was filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Board on April 10, 2015, by Melody Mar.

Pursuant to Administrative Code, Chapter 31.16, I am forwarding this appeal, with attached documents, to the Planning Department to determine if the appeal has been filed in a timely manner. The Planning Department's determination should be made within three (3) working days of receipt of this request.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Legislative Clerks, Joy Lamug at (415) 554-7712, or John Carroll at (415) 554-4445.

c: Jon Givner, Deputy City Attorney
Kate Stacy, Deputy City Attorney
Marlena Byrne, Deputy City Attorney
Scott Sanchez, Zoning Administrator, Planning Department
Sarah Jones, Environmental Review Officer, Planning Department
AnMarie Rodgers, Planning Department
Aaron Starr, Planning Department
Tina Tam, Planning Department
Kate Conner, Planning Department
Jonas Ionin, Planning Department

April 10, 2015

RECEIVED
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2015 APR 10 PM 3:40

PC

To: Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Ms. Angela Calvillo
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

From: Melody Mar
358 Vallejo Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Re: Appeal of Exemption from Environmental Review
26 Hodges Alley

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am appealing the San Francisco Planning Department's determination that the project at 26 Hodges Alley is exempt from CEQA review. Under CEQA State Guidelines Section 15300.2, a categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. There are unusual circumstances surrounding the current proposal that would suggest a reasonable possibility of a significant effect. The proposed project will have significant environmental effects, and therefore would not be exempt from environmental review. This will be explained further at the appeal hearing and in further materials.

I respectfully request that the San Francisco Board of Supervisors require that this project undergo environmental review as required by CEQA.

Sincerely yours,

Melody Mar

Melomm@aol.com

Melody Mar

Date:

April 10, 2015



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Discretionary Review Action DRA-0410

HEARING DATE: MARCH 12, 2015

Date: March 20, 2015
Case No.: 2014-001042DRP
Project Address: 26 HODGES ALLEY
Permit Application: 2013.03.21.2735
Zoning: RH-3 (Residential House, Three-Family) District
Telegraph Hill North Beach Residential Special Use District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0134/012
Project Sponsor: Heidi Liebes
Liebes Architects
450 Sansome Street, Suite 1200
San Francisco, CA 94111
Staff Contact: Kate Conner – (415) 575-6914
kate.conner@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO TAKING DISCRETIONARY REVIEW OF CASE NO. 2013.1652DV AND THE APPROVAL OF BUILDING PERMIT 2013.03.21.2735 PROPOSING CONSTRUCTION OF A SIDE ADDITION TO THE NORTHERN PROPERTY LINE AT THE FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS WHICH ENCROACHES INTO THE REAR YARD SETBACK AND A THIRD FLOOR ADDITION WHICH COMPLIES WITH THE REAR YARD REQUIREMENT. THE PROJECT IS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF A REAR YARD VARIANCE. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS LOCATED WITHIN THE RH-3 (RESIDENTIAL HOUSE, THREE-FAMILY) DISTRICT, THE TELEGRAPH HILL NORTH BEACH RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL USE DISTRICT, AND THE 40-X HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICT.

PREAMBLE

On March 21, 2013, Heidi Liebes filed for Building Permit Application No. 2013.03.21.2735 proposing construction of a third floor addition to a two-story single-family residence and a horizontal addition on the first and second floors. The subject property is located within the RH-3 (Residential House, Three-Family) District, the Telegraph Hill North Beach Residential Special Use District, and the 40-X Height and Bulk District.

On June 12, 2013, Heidi Liebes filed Variance Application 2013.0783V for the first and second floor horizontal addition. The rear yard requirement is 28'-4" and the existing building is non-conforming as it maintains a 9" rear yard. The proposed third floor addition complies with the rear yard requirement. The proposed 3'-0" deep side addition encloses an existing stairway and extends approximately 5'-6" beyond the adjacent neighbor to the north and spans approximately 16'-0" but does not increase the overall building depth.

Memo

On December 4, 2014, the Zoning Administrator granted Variance (2013.0783V) after a public hearing held on September 24, 2014. The Variance was appealed and will be heard at the Board of Appeals on March 18, 2015.

On October 27, 2014, Melody Mar (hereinafter "Discretionary Review (DR) Requestor") filed an application with the Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") for Discretionary Review (2014-001042DRP) of Building Permit Application No. 2013.03.21.2735.

The Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") as a Class 1 categorical exemption.

On March 12, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting on Discretionary Review Application 2014-001042DRP.

The Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of the applicant, Department staff, and other interested parties.

ACTION

The Commission hereby takes Discretionary Review requested in Application No. 2014-001042DRP and approves the Building Permit Application 2013.03.21.2735 subject to the following modifications:

1. Increasing the front setback at the third level equal to the width of the closet space (approximately four feet);
2. Increasing the depth of the third level addition to the required rear yard line (approximately three feet); and
3. Reducing the third level roof deck at the northeast corner to align with the adjacent building depth.

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The reasons that the Commission took the action described above include:

1. There are extraordinary and exceptional circumstances in the case.
2. Reducing the roof deck at the third level along the northern property line will improve the northern neighbor's privacy at the rear deck and open space.
3. The width of Hodges Alley is an extraordinary circumstance and the additional setback at the proposed third floor will increase the amount of light cast on Hodges Alley.

APPEAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF ACTION: Any aggrieved person may appeal this Building Permit Application to the Board of Appeals within fifteen (15) days after the date the permit is issued. For further information, please contact the Board of Appeals at (415) 575-6881, 1650 Mission Street # 304, San Francisco, CA, 94103-2481.

Protest of Fee or Exaction: You may protest any fee or exaction subject to Government Code Section 66000 that is imposed as a condition of approval by following the procedures set forth in Government Code Section 66020. The protest must satisfy the requirements of Government Code Section 66020(a) and must be filed within 90 days of the date of the first approval or conditional approval of the development referencing the challenged fee or exaction. For purposes of Government Code Section 66020, the date of imposition of the fee shall be the date of the earliest discretionary approval by the City of the subject development.

If the City has not previously given Notice of an earlier discretionary approval of the project, the Planning Commission's adoption of this Motion, Resolution, Discretionary Review Action or the Zoning Administrator's Variance Decision Letter constitutes the approval or conditional approval of the development and the City hereby gives NOTICE that the 90-day protest period under Government Code Section 66020 has begun. If the City has already given Notice that the 90-day approval period has begun for the subject development, then this document does not re-commence the 90-day approval period.

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission took Discretionary Review and approved the building permit as referenced in this action memo on March 12, 2015.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Fong, Antonini, Hillis, Johnson, Moore, Richards, Wu,

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: March 12, 2015



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Certificate of Determination Exemption from Environmental Review

Case No.: 2013.0783E
 Project Title: 26 Hodges Alley
 Zoning: RH-3 (Residential – House, Three Family) Zoning District
 40-X Height and Bulk District
 Block/Lot: 0134/012
 Lot Size: 1,067 square feet
 Project Sponsor: Heidi Liebes – Liebes Architects
 (415) 812-5124
 Staff Contact: Christopher Espiritu – (415) 575-9022
 Christopher.Espiritu@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.
 Suite 400
 San Francisco,
 CA 94103-2479

Reception:
 415.558.6378

Fax:
 415.558.6409

Planning
 Information:
 415.558.6377

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed project would include the interior remodel of an existing two-story residence and the vertical addition for a new third floor to add an approximately 460-square-foot (sq ft) bedroom suite. The proposed project would also include the expansion of an existing roof deck by adding approximately 131 square feet of new roof deck space, accessed from the new third floor bedroom. The proposed third-floor addition would add approximately 11'-1" to the existing 19'-10" structure, for a total building height of 30'-11". Other project details include the installation of new interior stairs, enlarging the existing kitchen, and enclosing an existing exterior staircase for access to the expanded roof deck. The project site is located on the block bounded by Green Street to the north, Vallejo Street to the south, Sansome Street to the east, and Hodges Alley to the west, within the North Beach neighborhood.

EXEMPT STATUS:

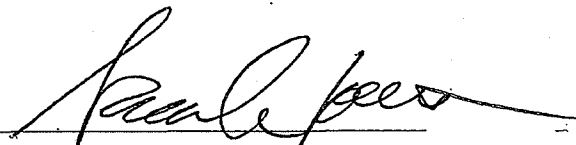
Categorical Exemption, Class 1 [California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15301].

REMARKS:

See next page.

DETERMINATION:

I do hereby certify that the above determination has been made pursuant to State and local requirements.


 Sarah B. Jones
 Environmental Review Officer

September 18, 2014
 Date

cc: Heidi Liebes, Project Sponsor
 Kate Conner, Current Planner

Jonathan Lammers, Preservation Planner
 Historic Preservation Distribution List

Supervisor Chiu, District 3 (via Clerk of the Board)
 Virna Byrd, M.D.F.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (continued):

The proposed project is located on a site that has a slope of approximately 20 percent sloping downward (to the east) towards the rear of project site. The proposed project would involve excavation associated with foundation-strengthening related to the proposed additions and provide slope-stabilization support to adjacent buildings. The existing one-vehicle garage at-grade would remain and the existing 10-foot-wide curb cut, located on the Hodges Alley frontage, would also remain.

Project Approvals

The proposed project would require the following approvals:

- Variance (Zoning Administrator) – The proposed project would require a Variance from the Planning Code for a rear yard modification pursuant to Planning Code Section 134. This variance would be granted by the Planning Department's Zoning Administrator.
- Site Permit (Department of Building Inspection [DBI]) – The proposed project would require the approval of a Site Permit by DBI.

Approval Action: While the proposed project would require the approval of a Variance by the Zoning Administrator, the Approval Action for the project would be through the issuance of a Site Permit by DBI. If discretionary review before the Planning Commission is requested, the discretionary review hearing is the Approval Action for the project. If no discretionary review is requested, the issuance of a Site Permit by DBI is the Approval Action. The Approval Action date establishes the start of the 30-day appeal period for this CEQA exemption determination pursuant to Section 31.04(h) of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

REMARKS:

Historic Architectural Resources. The Planning Department's Historic Preservation staff evaluated the property to determine whether the existing structure on the project site is a historical resource as defined by CEQA. According to the Historic Resource Evaluation Response (HRER)¹ prepared for the project, and information found in the Planning Department archives, the property at 26 Hodges Alley contains a two-story, wood-frame, single-family residence constructed in 1907. Originally addressed as 6 Hodges Alley, the residence is vernacular in style, clad with unpainted horizontal rustic wood channel siding, and capped by a flat roof. The primary façade faces west onto Hodges Alley and features a metal-frame panel garage door to the south and a metal panel pedestrian entry to the north.

The property is not located within the boundaries of any listed historic districts. However, the property is located within proximity (¼-mile) of the Telegraph Hill, Northeast Waterfront, and Jackson Square

¹ Jonathan Lammer – Preservation Planner, *Historic Resource Evaluation Response (HRER), 26 Hodges Alley*, November 15, 2013. This report is available for review as part of Case No. 2013.0783E.

Historic Districts. Therefore, the property was evaluated for individual eligibility for inclusion, as well as inclusion as contributor to a historic district, to the California Register.

The California Register criteria for eligible individual resources and historic districts provide specific measures on evaluating individual properties for inclusion into the California Register. Criterion 1 (Events) determines whether a property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States. Criterion 2 (Persons) examines whether a property is associated with the lives of persons important to the local, regional or national past. Criterion 3 (Architecture) analyzes whether a property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values. Criterion 4 (Information Potential) determines whether a property yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The property at 26 Hodges Alley was evaluated for inclusion into the California Register and is further discussed below.

Criterion 1 (Events). According to the HRER, the building stock along the southeastern slopes of Telegraph Hill represents a cohesive development pattern associated with rebuilding efforts following the 1906 Earthquake. The reconstruction of San Francisco was unprecedented in its scope and pace, and remains one of the most significant events in the city's history. Nearly all buildings in the immediate vicinity were residential or mixed-use properties constructed during a punctuated burst of activity between 1906 and 1913, and they convey clear and significant association with the reconstruction effort. While the property at 26 Hodges Alley does not appear to be an individually eligible for historic listing under this Criterion, it is part of a larger grouping of properties which collectively constitute a potential historic district. Therefore, Preservation Staff determined that 26 Hodges Alley Street is significant under California Register Criterion 1 (Events) for its association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction.

Criterion 2 (Persons). According to the HRER, Preservation Staff determined that as a group, the owners and residents of 26 Hodges Alley illustrate the strong working-class Italian demographics that were representative of the North Beach and Telegraph Hill area during the early 20th century. However, none of the persons appear to be important to local, state or national history such that the subject property would be eligible for historic listing under this Criterion. Therefore, Preservation Staff concluded that 26 Hodges Alley is not eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2 (Persons).

Criterion 3 (Architecture). The HRER found that the building was designed by local architect, Fedele Costa, per the original 1907 building permit record. Fedele Costa was born in 1863 in Bioglio, Italy and immigrated to the United States in 1906. The son of a successful builder, he arrived in San Francisco in 1906 and was known to have served as the architect for St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Auburn, California (1911) and the Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church in Woodland, California (1912). The existing building at 26 Hodges Alley does not appear to be a distinctive example of a type, period, region or method of construction such that it would be individually eligible for the California Register under this Criterion. Also, the property also does not appear to be a prominent work of architect, Fedele Costa.

However, the building does appear to be part of a concentration of residential buildings significant for their association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction and eligible for the California Register as a historic district. Nearly all of the buildings in the immediate vicinity were constructed between 1906 and 1913, and most evidence a shared design vocabulary based on Classical Revival influences. Character-defining architectural features of this district include wood frame construction and wood cladding, and the use of design elements such as pilasters, entablatures, dentil moldings and prominent cornices.

Therefore, Preservation Staff determined that 26 Hodges Alley, while not individually significant under this Criterion, could be significant as part of a concentration of properties that convey clear association with post-1906 Earthquake reconstruction and appear to constitute a potential historic district eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture).

Criterion 4 (Information Potential). Finally, based upon a review of information in the Departments records, the subject property is not significant under Criterion 4 (Information Potential), which is typically associated with archaeological resources. Furthermore, the subject property is not likely significant under Criterion 4, since this significance criteria typically applies to rare construction types when involving the built environment. The subject property is not an example of a rare construction type and would therefore not be eligible for listing in the California Register under Criteria 4.

In order to be considered a resource for the purposes of CEQA, a property must not only be shown to have significance under the California Register of Historical Resources criteria (Criterion 1-4), but also must have historic integrity.² Historic integrity enables a property to illustrate significant aspects of its past. According to the HRER, 26 Hodges Alley retains integrity of location, setting and association as it remains a residential property, has never been moved, and is largely surrounded by the same properties as it was historically. However, the building does not appear to retain integrity of design, workmanship, or materials. The property has experienced several alterations between 1934 and 1969, which included raising the building to insert a garage, window replacement, and the installation of a roof deck. Other alterations which are undocumented or poorly documented include the large rear addition constructed between 1913 and 1938 and the construction of the second-story overhang at the primary façade. The primary entry, garage and fenestration pattern and materials are all contemporary in nature, while the articulation of the primary façade has been altered. Collectively, these changes have significantly changed the character of the building such that it is no longer able to effectively convey its 1907 construction. Therefore, Preservation Staff determined that the property at 26 Hodges Alley does not retain historic integrity.

² Integrity is defined as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's period of significance."

As discussed, the property was shown to have significance under Criterion 1 (Events) and Criterion 3 (Architecture) for inclusion to the California Register as part of a historic district. However, the property did not retain its historic integrity and lacks integrity from its period of significance (1906-1915). Preservation Staff concluded that the property at 26 Hodges Alley is a non-contributor to an eligible Historic District. For the above reasons, the proposed project would not materially impair the characteristics of the existing historic resource, thus the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to historic resources.

Geotechnical. According to Planning Department records, the project site is not located within a Landslide Hazard Zone or Liquefaction Hazard Zone; however, the property is located on a site with a slope of 20 percent. A Geotechnical Investigation was conducted for the property and is summarized below.³

The Geotechnical Investigation notes that the site slopes downward toward the rear of the property to the east and the rear of the property sits at the top of a near vertical 15- to 20-foot-tall slope that was excavated into the hillside for the development of a downslope residence located at 358 Vallejo Street. The project site is documented to be located in an area that is underlain by Franciscan Complex comprised of sedimentary rocks composed of sandstone, shale, and greywacke sandstone. Also, the site lies immediately southwest of former rock quarry operations that were present on the eastern slopes of Telegraph Hill until the turn of the 20th Century.

The Geotechnical Investigation provides specific recommendations and requirements concerning site preparation and foundations, retaining walls, and rock-slope support. These are further discussed below.

Foundations. The Geotechnical Investigation noted that the proposed improvements including the addition of a new third-floor bedroom would be adequately supported by drilled pier foundations. Drilled piers should be at least 18-inches in diameter and drilled at least five feet into the underlying bedrock beneath the existing building.

Rock-Slope Stabilization. The Geotechnical Investigation noted that due to former quarry operations, which included blasting has resulted in over-steepened and shattered slopes. Aggressive quarrying that was common in the Telegraph Hill area left exposed bedrock in the eastern slope, and the Geotechnical Investigation found evidence of recent rockfalls, with debris and rock fragments, that have fallen from the eastern slope at the rear of the property and have accumulated in the rear yard of the adjacent property at 358 Vallejo Street.

A Supplemental Geotechnical Analysis was performed and revised recommendations for rock-slope stabilization were recommended. Due to the unique features of the eastern slope at the rear of the site, the previous recommendation to construct a concrete wall to stabilize the slope was deemed infeasible. The Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation therefore recommended that the best solution for reducing

³ Gilpin Geosciences, Inc. – Earthquake & Engineering Geology, *Engineering Geologic and Geotechnical Investigation, Residential Improvements, 26 Hodges Alley, San Francisco, California, May 28, 2013*. This report is available for review as part of Case No. 2013.0783E.

rockfall hazards at the project site would be to include the installation of a steel wire mesh net that would contain loose rock from impacting the residence at 358 Vallejo Street, and the installation of concrete encased steel rock bolts that would reinforce the rock slope. The netting would be supported by vertical rock bolts drilled into the slope at the top and bottom.

The Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation⁴ identified this strategy as the most feasible since the process will essentially stitch the rock together to prevent pieces of rock from becoming dislodged. Finally, a closely spaced steel mesh net will be attached to the slope to contain pieces of rock that may become dislodged in the future. The selected approach stabilizes loose rock by scaling the rock face and applying mesh. Stability of the existing rock slope is increased by pinning potential wedge-type rock failures with the vertical rock bolts.

The Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation ultimately concluded that the project site is suitable to support the proposed project, provided that its recommendations are incorporated into the design and construction of the proposed project. The project sponsor has agreed to implement these recommendations, subject to Building Code requirements and implementation would not result in foreseeable significant impacts.

The San Francisco Building Code ensures the safety of all new construction in the City. Decisions about appropriate foundation and structural design are considered as part of the DBI permit review process. Prior to issuing a building permit for the proposed project, the DBI would review the geotechnical report to ensure that the security and stability of adjoining properties and the subject property is maintained during and following project construction. Therefore, potential damage to structures from geologic hazards on the project site would be addressed through compliance with the San Francisco Building Code.

EXEMPT STATUS:

CEQA State Guidelines Section 15301(e)(1), or Class 1, provides an exemption for minor alteration of existing private structures, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of determination. Additionally, Class 1 exempts additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than 50 percent of the floor area of the structures before the addition, or 2,500 square feet, whichever is less. The proposed project would include the addition of approximately 460 square feet for a new third-floor bedroom suite and the interior remodel of the existing two-story residence. Therefore, the proposed demolition meets the criteria for exemption from environmental review under Class 1.

⁴ Gilpin Geosciences, Inc. – Earthquake & Engineering Geology, *Supplemental Engineering Geologic and Geotechnical Investigation, Residential Improvements, 26 Hodges Alley, San Francisco, California, August 14, 2014*. This report is available for review as part of Case No. 2013.0783E.

CONCLUSION:

CEQA State Guidelines Section 15300.2 states that a categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. There are no unusual circumstances surrounding the current proposal that would suggest a reasonable possibility of a significant effect. The proposed project would have no significant environmental effects. The project would be exempt under the above-cited classification. For the above reasons, the proposed project is appropriately exempt from environmental review.

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