



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Landmark Designation Case Report

Hearing Date: December 17, 2014
Case No.: 2014.0951L
Project Address: 182-198 Gough Street
Zoning: (NCT) Hayes-Gough Neighborhood Commercial Transit
Block/Lot: 0837/014
Property Owner: Hirsch Family Trust
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Mill Valley, CA 94941
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PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS & SURROUNDING LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

182-198 Gough Street, historically known as the R. L. Goldberg Building, is located at the southeast corner of Gough and Oak streets in San Francisco's Civic Center area. The building is a steel-frame, two-story mixed-use building with three ground story storefronts and two dwelling units at the upper story. Built in 1911, it was designed with Classical Revival influences by prominent architect, Bernard J. Joseph. The footprint of the building occupies the entirety of its 3,300 sq. ft. lot, with the primary facade facing west onto Gough Street. The attached draft Landmark Designation Report contains a detailed building description on pages 7-39.

The subject building is located in a transitional area between the Civic Center and Hayes Valley neighborhoods. Its immediate surroundings are characterized by two- to five-story residential and mixed use buildings constructed in the years following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Several institutional buildings are also located in the vicinity, including the French American School and San Francisco Conservatory of Music. San Francisco Fire Department Station 36 is also located at the eastern end of the subject block.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The case before the Historic Preservation Commission is consideration to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the designation of 182-198 Gough Street as a San Francisco landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code, Section 1004.1.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS

The Planning Department has determined that actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (specifically in this case, landmark designation) are exempt from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class Eight - Categorical).

GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

The Urban Design Element of the San Francisco General Plan contains the following relevant objectives and policies:

- OBJECTIVE 2: Conservation of Resources that provide a sense of nature, continuity with the past, and freedom from overcrowding.
- POLICY 4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

Designating significant historic resources as local landmarks will further continuity with the past because the buildings will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission review proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made.

SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1 – GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Code Section 101.1 – Eight Priority Policies establishes and requires review of permits for consistency with said policies. On balance, the proposed designation is consistent with the priority policies in that:

- a. The proposed designation will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved. Landmark designation of 182-198 Gough Street will help to preserve an important historical resource that is architecturally significant as an example of a Classical Revival style mixed use building. The property may also be significant for its association with Reuben (Rube) Lucius Garrett Goldberg, a Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist and author who commissioned the building's construction.

BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS ACTIONS

This item was initially calendared at the HPC's request following public comment at its regularly scheduled hearing on June 18, 2014 in support of Article 10 designation. On November 19, 2014 the HPC reviewed the draft Landmark Designation Report prepared by Edward Yarbrough, senior architectural historian of ICF International, on behalf of the requestors, Jacqui Naylor and Beverly Upton. The HPC also reviewed the Department's Case Report and heard public testimony regarding landmark designation. The HPC then passed Resolution No. 741 to initiate Article 10 Landmark Designation of 182-198 Gough Street.

OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

If the Historic Preservation Commission decides to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the designation of the subject property as an Article 10 landmark at its December 17, 2014 hearing, the item will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for consideration at a future Board of Supervisors hearing for formal Article 10 landmark designation.

APPLICABLE PRESERVATION STANDARDS

ARTICLE 10

Section 1004 of the Planning Code authorizes the landmark designation of an individual structure or other feature or an integrated group of structures and features on a single lot or site, having special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value, as a landmark. Section 1004.1 also outlines that landmark designation may be initiated by the Board of Supervisors or the Historic Preservation Commission and the initiation shall include findings in support. Section 1004.2 states that once initiated, the proposed designation is referred to the Historic Preservation Commission for a report and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to approve, disapprove or modify the proposal.

Pursuant to Section 1004.3 of the Planning Code, if the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation, a copy of the resolution of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors and without referral to the Planning Commission. The Board of Supervisors shall hold a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation.

In the case of the initiation of a historic district, the Historic Preservation Commission shall refer its recommendation to the Planning Commission pursuant to Section 1004.2(c). The Planning Commission shall have 45 days to provide review and comment on the proposed designation and address the consistency of the proposed designation with the General Plan, Section 101.1 priority policies, the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation, and the Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Bay Area. These comments shall be sent to the Board of Supervisors in the form of a resolution.

Section 1004(b) requires that the designating ordinance approved by the Board of Supervisors shall include the location and boundaries of the landmark site, a description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation, and a description of the particular features that should be preserved.

Section 1004.4 states that if the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days.

ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK CRITERIA

The Historic Preservation Commission on February 4, 2009, by Resolution No. 001, adopted the National Register Criteria as its methodology for recommending landmark designation of historic resources. Under the National Register Criteria, the quality of significance in American history, architecture,

archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, workmanship, and association, and that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or properties that have yielded, or may likely yield, information important in prehistory or history.

PUBLIC / NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

The Department received a letter from the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association (dated 18 August 2014) expressing support for landmark designation of the building. On November 20, 2014 the Department received an email from Leonardo DiGiovanni opposing landmark designation of the building. The Department will provide any public correspondence received after the submittal of this report in the Historic Preservation Commission's correspondence folder.

PROPERTY OWNER INPUT

On August 19, 2014 the Department received an email from Kenneth S. Hirsch, representative of the Hirsch Family Trust, owners of the property, stating his preference that the building not be designated as a landmark (attached). Department staff met with Mr. Hirsch on October 29, 2014. At that time Mr. Hirsch reiterated his preference that the building not be designated pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The case report and analysis under review was prepared by Department preservation staff based upon the attached draft Landmark Designation Report as well as staff research. The draft Landmark Designation Report was prepared by Edward Yarbrough, senior architectural historian of ICF International.

The Department has determined that the subject property meets the requirements for Article 10 eligibility as an individual landmark. The justification for its inclusion is outlined below under the Significance and Integrity sections of this case report.

SIGNIFICANCE

Architecture

The Department finds that 182-198 Gough Street is eligible for local designation due to its significant architectural expression as an early 20th century mixed-use building designed with Classically-inspired ornament and containing extraordinarily rare, intact storefronts.

On its upper floors, the building features rusticated stucco cladding, bay windows flanked by pilaster panels, molded window surrounds with keystones, and a bracketed cornice and shaped parapet. The ground floor contains three historic storefronts displaying a remarkable state of preservation, including their original bulkheads, display windows, vestibule paving, doors, and transom. Based on comparisons

with similar properties surveyed as part the Department's Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Survey in 2014, the storefronts at 182-198 Gough Street rank among the best preserved storefronts of their age.

The building was designed by architect Bernard J. Joseph. A definitive biography of Joseph remains to be written, but his involvement with the design of several prominent buildings in San Francisco could qualify him as a master architect. An initial review indicates that Joseph's best-known work was produced in partnership with Gustave Albert Lansburgh, including the Newman and Levinson Building (1909) on Stockton Street (Article 11, Category 1 Building), Hammersmith Building (1907) on Sutter Street (Landmark No. 117), Manx Hotel (1908) on Powell Street (Article 11, Category IV Building), and the second Emporium department store, located at 835 Market Street (Article 11, Category I Building). The draft Landmark Designation Report also identifies Joseph as the co-designer of the original Orpheum Theater on O'Farrell Street (1909—no longer extant).

Persons

The Department finds that the building may have tangential significance based on its association with Rueben (Rube) Lucius Garrett Goldberg, but its primary significance is derived from its architectural expression.

According to the Landmark Designation Report, the building was commissioned by Rube L. Goldberg, a Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist famed for his illustrations of elaborate contraptions designed to perform otherwise simple tasks. Goldberg was born in San Francisco and received a degree in engineering from U.C. Berkeley in 1904. After brief period of employment with the City of San Francisco Water and Sewers Department, Goldberg joined the staff of *The San Francisco Chronicle* where he submitted drawings and cartoons which were first published in 1905.

In 1907 Goldberg moved to New York where he was hired by the *New York Evening Mail* to draw daily cartoons. His drawings proved popular, and over the next few years he also began to appear on stage. Flush with his early success, Goldberg returned to San Francisco and commissioned the construction of the subject property, which includes his name, "R. L. Goldberg," inscribed on the building's frieze.

According to the Landmark Designation Report, one of the two residential units was used by Goldberg as his residence and studio during visits to San Francisco, while the other was occupied by his father, Max Goldberg, who at various times served as a police commissioner, fire marshal and banker. However, the only documentary evidence in support of the Goldbergs' residency at the property is a childhood reminiscence from Rube Goldberg's granddaughter, during which she recalls him describing the property. The report also does not identify other properties which may have a more intimate association with Goldberg's productive life.

Goldberg spent most of his career in New York City, and the Landmark Designation Report acknowledges that Goldberg's association with 182-198 Gough Street became less frequent after 1916—although he continued to own the property until his death in 1970.

Research performed by Department Preservation staff could not confirm Goldberg's use of the property as an occasional residence and studio, nor its use as a residence by Goldberg's father. For example, the 1914 city directory identifies Leonard Jones (steward), Frederick Littman (machinist) and William Black

as residents of the property. There are two Max Goldberg's listed in the directory of that year, neither of which is identified with the subject property.

Likewise, the 1915 city directory identifies Frederick Eggers (Sherriff of San Francisco) and Allen Walter (musician) as tenants. None of the four Max Goldbergs in the city directory of that year are shown at 182-198 Gough. Based on this research, it appears more plausible that the building was constructed as an income producing property, rather than as an occasional residence for the Goldberg family.

Considered as a whole, the Department finds that 182-198 Gough Street is eligible as an individual landmark due to its significant architecture, but cannot confirm its significance based on the building's association with Rube Goldberg.

The period of significance identified in the Landmark Designation Report is 1911 – 1970, which reflects its initial construction through the death of Rube Goldberg. Based on the analysis above, Department staff find that a period of significance of 1911 appears more appropriate, as it is based on the building's original construction and architectural significance rather than its association with Goldberg.

INTEGRITY

Based on a review of the building permit history and visual inspection, the building appears to be extraordinarily well preserved. Building permits for the property are few and indicate the first alteration to the property was made in 1958 for the installation of an exterior sign advertising a laundry. Another permit was issued to repair damage resulting from an automobile collision in 1977. The building was re-roofed in 1996. Other apparent alterations include the installation of awnings above the storefronts. Overall, the building retains a remarkable level of integrity relative to its 1911 construction. In particular, the retention of its three historic storefronts with nearly all original features intact is exceedingly rare for a commercial building of this age. A detailed discussion of integrity is contained in the draft Landmark Designation Report on page 48-49.

Overall, the Department finds that the building retains outstanding integrity relative to its eligibility for Article 10 landmark designation,

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Whenever a building, site, object, or landscape is under consideration for Article 10 landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to identify character-defining features of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

The Landmark Designation Report does not explicitly identify any character-defining features of the building, although the Department expects to receive an updated draft of the report from the consultant in the near future. Below is a preliminary list of character defining features based on a review by Department preservation staff.

The character-defining *exterior* features of the building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations, rooflines and ornamentation

- Rusticated stucco cladding
- Ground floor storefronts facing Gough Street featuring recessed and angled entry vestibules with fully glazed wood doors crowned with ventilators; paneled ceilings; large open display windows; marble risers with hexagonal tile thresholds; and black ceramic tile bulkheads with linear tile accents.
- Corner commercial entry featuring an angled, cut corner configuration; large open display windows; square column at the corner; black ceramic tile bulkhead with bead-and-lozenge tile accent; and paneled ceiling
- Recessed residential entries including paneled piers; wood walls and ceilings; hexagonal tiled thresholds; fully glazed wood doors topped with ventilators painted with address numerals; and bracketed hoods with guttae and open transoms
- Recessed awning box above the storefronts
- Continuous transom above the storefronts and residential entries featuring fixed and awning sashes with minimally opaque glazing
- Intermediate cornice above the transom featuring block modillions
- Combination angled and flat bays at the second story, including angled bays featuring spandrel panels and cornices, as well as flush bays featuring garland surrounds and keystones.
- Double-hung, wood sash windows at the second story
- Roofline featuring a bracketed cornice and shaped parapet
- Frieze inscribed with "R. L. GOLDBERG BUILDING"
- Keystones above secondary entrances and window bays on the Oak Street facade
- Punched window openings with stucco sills and wood-sash windows on the Oak Street facade
- Partially glazed and paneled wood doors, including one door with a glazed ventilator, on the Oak Street facade

The character-defining *interior* features of the building include portions of the ground floor storefronts, which have historically been accessible to the public:

- Window display areas for the storefronts at 182 and 190 Gough Street featuring paneled walls, paneled ceilings with decorative vents, and rear transoms.
- Raised display window platforms in the storefront at 190 Gough Street
- Hip roofed skylight with wire glass glazing illuminating the store interior at 190 Gough Street
- Interior mezzanine display area above paneled soffits and paneled ceiling with decorative vents in the storefront at 198 Gough Street

ISSUES

The Landmark Designation Report states that the interior portions of both residential units retain a high degree of integrity, including coved ceilings, door and window surrounds, fireplace mantels, stair railings, picture rails, wood flooring, light fixtures and bathroom fixtures. Based on a review of photos included with the report, Department staff concur that many of these features do appear original to the building. However, as historically private interior spaces, the interior portions of these residential units are not eligible for landmark designation as character-defining features of the building.

Section 1004(c) of the Planning code states that:

(c) The property included in any such designation shall upon designation be subject to the controls and standards set forth in this Article 10. In addition, the said property shall be subject to the following further controls and standards if imposed by the designating ordinance:

- (1) For a publicly-owned landmark, review of proposed changes to significant interior architectural features.
- (2) For a privately-owned landmark, review of proposed changes requiring a permit to significant interior architectural features in those areas of the landmark that are or historically have been accessible to members of the public. The designating ordinance must clearly describe each significant interior architectural feature subject to this restriction.

In prior cases regarding the designation of interior spaces, the Department has determined that examples of spaces that have been historically accessible to members of the public may include features such as a historic lobby or ground floor commercial space, as well as the interiors of public buildings such as a fire station or church that has been converted into a private residence. However, the Department, in consultation with the City Attorney, has determined that the Planning Code does not allow for designating the interiors of private residential units.

BOUNDARIES OF THE LANDMARK SITE

The proposed landmark site encompasses the entire lot – Assessor’s Block 0837, Lot 014 – on which the subject building is located.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Based on the Department’s analysis, 182-198 Gough Street is individually eligible for Article 10 Landmark designation for its significant architectural expression as an excellent example of a type, period and method of construction displaying high artistic values, and for its outstanding integrity. The Department recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the proposed designation of 182-198 Gough Street as a San Francisco landmark.

The Historic Preservation Commission may recommend approval, disapproval, or approval with modifications of the proposed designation of 182-198 Gough Street as a San Francisco landmark under

Article 10 of the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors pursuant to Planning Code Section 1004.1. If the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation, a copy of the motion of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors, which holds a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation (Section 1004.4). If the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days (Section 1004.5).

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Resolution recommending Article 10 designation to the Board of Supervisors
- B. Draft Ordinance
- C. Draft Landmark Designation Report
- D. HPC Resolution No. 741 initiating landmark designation
- E. Email from Kenneth S. Hirsch, property owner
- F. Letter from the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association
- G. Email from Leonardo DiGiovanni



R. L. Goldberg Building, 182-198 Gough Street