



April 26, 2022

Ms. Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Honorable Supervisor Peskin
Board of Supervisors
City and County of San Francisco
City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

Via email only: angela.calvillo@sfgov.org

Re: **Transmittal of Planning Department Case Number 2021-007060DES**
200 Rhode Island Street / Takahashi Trading Company Landmark Designation
BOS File No. TBD

Dear Ms. Calvillo,

On February 16, 2021, the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission (hereinafter “HPC”) conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to landmark the “Takahashi Trading Company” at 200 Rhode Island St. At the hearing, the HPC voted to adopt a resolution to recommend landmark designation pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

The proposed amendments have been determined to be categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15060(c)(2).

Please find attached documents related to the HPC’s action. Also attached is an electronic copy of the proposed ordinance, drafted by Deputy City Attorney Victoria Wong. If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Aaron D. Starr
Manager of Legislative Affairs

Cc: Vicki Wong, City Attorney's Office
Megan Imperial, Legislative Aide (Supervisor Melgar)
Erica Major, Office of the Clerk of the Board
Natalie Gee, Legislative Aide (Supervisor Walton)
Maggie Smith, Planning Department, Survey and Designation (Acting Supervisor)
Alex Westhoff, Planning Department, Preservation Planner
Bos.legislation@sfgov.org
Board.of.Supervisors@sfgov.org

Attachments:

Draft Article 10 Landmark Designation Ordinance
Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 1213 (Initiation)
Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 1226 (Recommendation)
Planning Department Executive Summary dated February 16, 2022
Article 10 Landmark Designation Fact Sheet
Correspondence in Support of Landmark Designation

1 [Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 200 Rhode Island Street (aka Takahashi Trading
2 Company)]

3 **Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 200 Rhode Island Street (aka**
4 **Takahashi Trading Company), Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 3936, Lot No. 001, as a**
5 **Landmark consistent with the standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code;**
6 **affirming the Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental**
7 **Quality Act; and making public necessity, convenience, and welfare findings under**
8 **Planning Code, Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the**
9 **eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

10 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
11 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
12 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.
13 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.
14 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.
15 **Asterisks (* * * *)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code
16 subsections or parts of tables.

17 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

18 Section 1. Findings.

19 (a) CEQA and Land Use Findings.

20 (1) The Planning Department has determined that the Planning Code
21 amendment proposed in this ordinance is subject to a Categorical Exemption from the
22 California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et
23 seq., "CEQA") pursuant to Section 15308 of California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections
24 15000 et seq., the Guidelines for implementation of the statute for actions by regulatory
25 agencies for protection of the environment (in this case, landmark designation). Said

1 determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. _____
2 and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board of Supervisors affirms this determination.

3 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that
4 the proposed landmark designation of 200 Rhode Island Street (Assessor's Parcel Block No.
5 3936, Lot No. 001 (aka Takahashi Trading Company) ("200 Rhode Island Street"), will serve
6 the public necessity, convenience, and welfare for the reasons set forth in Historic
7 Preservation Commission Resolution No. _____, recommending approval of the
8 proposed designation, which is incorporated herein by reference.

9 (3) The Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed landmark designation of
10 200 Rhode Island Street is consistent with the General Plan and with Planning Code Section
11 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No.
12 _____.

13
14 (b) General Findings.

15 (1) Pursuant to Charter Section 4.135, the Historic Preservation Commission
16 has authority "to recommend approval, disapproval, or modification of landmark designations
17 and historic district designations under the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors."

18 (2) The Landmark Designation Fact Sheet was prepared by Planning
19 Department Preservation staff. All preparers meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional
20 Qualification Standards for historic preservation program staff, as set forth in Code of Federal
21 Regulations Title 36, Part 61, Appendix A. The report was reviewed for accuracy and
22 conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

23 (3) The Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of
24 _____, reviewed Planning Department staff's analysis of the historical significance of
25 200 Rhode Island Street set forth in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet dated _____.

1 (4) On _____, after holding a public hearing on the proposed initiation,
2 the Historic Preservation Commission initiated the proposed landmark designation of 200
3 Rhode Island Street by Resolution No. _____. Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of
4 the Board in File No. _____.

5 (5) On _____, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation
6 and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning Department staff and
7 the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended
8 designation of 200 Rhode Island Street as a landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code
9 by Resolution No. _____. Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board in File No.
10 _____.

11 (6) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the 200 Rhode Island Street
12 Street has a special character and special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and
13 value, and that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the
14 standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code. In doing so, the Board hereby
15 incorporates by reference the findings of the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet.

16
17 Section 2. Designation.

18 Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 200 Rhode Island Street, Assessor's
19 Block No. 3936, Lot No. 001 (aka Takahashi Trading Company), is hereby designated as a
20 San Francisco Landmark consistent with the standards set forth in Section 1004. Appendix A
21 to Article 10 of the Planning Code is hereby amended to include this property.

1 Section 3. Required Data.

2 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the Landmark site consists of the City
3 parcel located at 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company), Assessor's Block
4 No. 3936, Lot No. 001, in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood.

5 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and
6 shown in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet and other supporting materials contained in
7 Planning Department Record Docket No. 2021-007060DES. In brief, 200 Rhode Island Street
8 is eligible for local designation as it is associated with events that have made a culturally and
9 historically significant contribution to the broad patterns of San Francisco history and with
10 persons significant to San Francisco history. Specifically, designation of 200 Rhode Island
11 Street is proper given its association with Japanese American history and culture in San
12 Francisco. Specifically, for over 50 years, circa 1965-2019, the venue served as the
13 headquarters of the Takahashi Trading Company, which imported high-caliber home goods
14 from Japan for Takahashi retail stores in the Bay Area and New York City. The Takahashi
15 family acquired the property after their original Japantown shop was demolished due to a San
16 Francisco Redevelopment Agency program; thus, the building has an association with the
17 hardships faced by Japanese Americans who were forcibly displaced from Japantown due to
18 redevelopment. The building also served as the headquarters of the Henri & Tomoye
19 Takahashi Charitable Foundation, which was established in 1986 to support the Japanese
20 American community through cultural and educational projects. Furthermore, the original 1912
21 portion of the building is significant as an early distinctive project of famed San Francisco
22 master architect Gustave Albert Lansburgh. The property lies within the Showplace Square
23 Heavy Timber and Steel Frame Brick Warehouse and Factory District, which is eligible for the
24 California Register of Historical Resources as San Francisco's most important concentration
25 of large heavy timber and steel-frame American Commercial Style industrial buildings.

1 (c) The particular features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined
2 necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the Landmark
3 Designation Fact Sheet, which can be found in Planning Department Record Docket No.
4 2021-007060DES, and which are incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully
5 set forth. Specifically, all those physical and spatial features which define the historic
6 character of the building should be preserved or replaced in-kind, including:

7 (1) General

8 (A) Integrated plan of the original building and subsequent additions.

9 (2) 1912 Building

10 (A) Heavy timber frame;

11 (B) Five-story height;

12 (C) Irregular plan conforming to the triangular parcel;

13 (D) Flat roof;

14 (E) Red brick cladding laid in English bond pattern;

15 (F) Brick belt courses separating the first and second and fourth and fifth
16 stories;

17 (G) Shallow pilasters with diamond-shaped wall anchor plates;

18 (H) Fenestration with alternating columns of window types;

19 (I) Brick window surrounds with terra cotta keystones and springers;

20 (J) Yellow brick window sills;

21 (K) Yellow brickwork laid in a diamond-shaped pattern at the fifth story of
22 the west façade; and

23 (L) "Takahashi" signage, including metal lettering and painted brick.

24 (3) 1968 Concrete Tilt-Up Addition

25 (A) Two-story height;

- 1 (B) Irregular plan conforming to the triangular parcel;
- 2 (C) Flat roof;
- 3 (D) Boxy shape and massing;
- 4 (E) Exposed aggregate concrete walls;
- 5 (F) Shallow relief pilasters constructed of smooth concrete;
- 6 (G) Narrow, metal-sash windows across both stories;
- 7 (H) Overall austerity and lack of adornment; and
- 8 (I) Painted "Takahashi" signage on the transom window on the east
- 9 façade and on a wood panel affixed to the north façade.

10 (4) 1976 Brick Addition

- 11 (A) Three-story height;
- 12 (B) Rectangular plan;
- 13 (C) Flat roof;
- 14 (D) Brick veneer cladding laid in running bond pattern;
- 15 (E) Decorative brickwork cornice;
- 16 (F) North facing concrete belt course with "Takahashi" signage
- 17 separating the first and second stories;
- 18 (G) Fenestration including segmental arched, industrial windows at the
- 19 third story; and
- 20 (H) Height and width of the area at first floor of the east façade reflecting
- 21 the historic location and dimensions of original loading dock.

22
23 Section 4. Effective Date.

24 This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after enactment. Enactment occurs
25 when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance unsigned or does not

1 sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board of Supervisors overrides the
2 Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

3

4 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

5 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

6

7 By: /s/ Victoria Wong

8

VICTORIA WONG
Deputy City Attorney

9

n:\leganalas2021\1800206\01594440.docx

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25



LANDMARK RESOLUTION INITIATION RESOLUTION NO. 1213

HEARING DATE: NOVEMBER 17, 2021

Record No.: 2021-007060DES
Project Address: 200 RHODE ISLAND STREET / Takahashi Trading Company
Zoning: PDR-1-D - PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION & REPAIR - 1 - DESIGN Zoning District
58-X,68-X Height and Bulk Districts
Block/Lot: 3936/001
Project Sponsor: Ryan Payne, Four Corners Properties
339 S. San Antonio Road, Suite 2B
Los Altos, CA 94022
Property Owner: RHA 82 Owner, LLC
7121 Fairway Drive, Suite 410
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418
Staff Contact: Alex Westhoff 628-652-7314
Alex.Westhoff@sfgov.org

RESOLUTION TO INITIATE DESIGNATION OF 200 RHODE ISLAND STREET (AKA THE TAKAHASHI TRADING COMPANY), ASSESSOR'S PARCEL BLOCK NO. 3936, LOT NO. 001, AS A LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE PLANNING CODE.

Preamble

WHEREAS, a community-sponsored Landmark Designation Application for Article 10 Landmark Designation for 200 Rhode Island (aka Takahashi Trading Company) was submitted to the Planning Department by project sponsor Ryan Payne on behalf of the property owner RHA 82 Owner, LLC.

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission unanimously approved the addition of the subject property to the Landmark Designation Work Program at their September 1, 2021 hearing.

WHEREAS, Department Staff Alex Westhoff, who meets the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, reviewed the Landmark Nomination for 200 Rhode Island Street for accuracy and conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10.

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of November 17, 2021, reviewed Department staff's analysis of 200 Rhode Island Street's historical significance per Article 10 as part of the Landmark Designation Case Report dated November 17, 2021.

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street nomination is in the form prescribed by the Historic Preservation Commission and contains supporting historic, architectural, and/or cultural documentation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby initiates designation of 200 Rhode Island Street (aka Takahashi Trading Company), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3936, Lot No. 001, as a Landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

I hereby certify that the Historic Preservation Commission **ADOPTED** the foregoing Resolution on November 17, 2021.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Wright, Black, Foley, Johns, So, Nageswaran

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

RECUSED: Matsuda

ADOPTED: November 17, 2021



LANDMARK RESOLUTION RECOMMENDATION RESOLUTION NO. 1226

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 16, 2022

Record No.: 2021-007060DES
Project Address: 200 RHODE ISLAND STREET (Takahashi Trading Company)
Zoning: PDR-1-D PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION & REPAIR - 1 - DESIGN
58-X,68-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 3936/001
Project Sponsor: Four Corners Properties
339 S. San Antonio Road, Suite 2B
Los Altos, CA 94022
Property Owner: RHA 82 Owner, LLC
7121 Fairway Drive, Suite 410
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418
Staff Contact: Alex Westhoff, 628-652-7314
Alex.Westhoff@sfgov.org

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 200 RHODE ISLAND STREET (AKA TAKAHASHI TRADING COMPANY), ASSESSOR'S PARCEL BLOCK NO. 3936, LOT NO. 001, AS LANDMARK NO. XXX CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSES AND STANDARDS OF ARTICLE 10

1. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission unanimously approved the addition of the subject property to the Landmark Designation Work Program at their September 1, 2021 hearing.
2. WHEREAS, Department Staff, who meets the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, prepared the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet for 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company), and Architectural Resources Group consultants, who also meets the Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualification Standards, prepared the Application for Historic Landmark Designation, which was reviewed for accuracy and conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10; and
3. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of November 17, 2021, reviewed Department staff's analysis of 200 Rhode Island Street's (Takahashi Trading Company) historical significance pursuant to Article 10 as part of the Landmark Designation Executive Summary dated November 17, 2021, and initiated Landmark designation through Resolution No. 1213; and

4. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the nomination of 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) as a Landmark is in the form prescribed by the Historic Preservation Commission and contains supporting historic, architectural, and/or cultural documentation; and
5. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) is eligible for local designation for association with events that shaped San Francisco's Japanese American community including post-World War Two resettlement and redevelopment; and
6. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) is eligible for local designation for association with the Takahashi family, who were prominent Japanese American entrepreneurs and philanthropists; and
7. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) is eligible for local designation as an early example of the work of master architect G. Albert Lansburgh; and
8. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) meets two of the Historic Preservation Commission's four priority areas for designation: property types associated with underrepresented racial, ethnic, and social groups; and property types in underrepresented geographies in the city; and
9. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) advances the objectives outlined in Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Resolution No. 1127, adopted in 2020, otherwise called *Centering Preservation Planning on Racial and Social Equity*, which states goals for how the Commission and the Planning Department can develop proactive strategies to address structural and institutional racism and center their work and resource allocation on racial and social equity, focused on preservation; and
10. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company) meets the eligibility requirements of Section 1004 of the Planning Code and warrants consideration for Article 10 landmark designation; and
11. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the boundaries and the list of character-defining features, as identified in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, should be considered for preservation under the proposed landmark designation as they relate to 200 Rhode Island Street's (Takahashi Trading Company) historical significance and retain historical integrity; and
12. WHEREAS, the proposed designation is consistent with the General Plan priority policies pursuant to Planning Code, Section 101.1 and furthers Priority Policy No. 7, which states that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved, and will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare pursuant to Planning Code, Section 302; and
13. WHEREAS, the Department has determined that landmark designation is exempt from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class Eight - Categorical); and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends to the Board of Supervisors approval of landmark designation of 200 Rhode Island Street (Takahashi Trading Company), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3936, Lot No. 001 consistent with the purposes and standards of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on February 16, 2022.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Black, Foley, Johns, Nageswaran, So, Wright

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

RECUSED: Matsuda

ADOPTED: February 16, 2022



LANDMARK DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: February 16, 2022

Record No.: 2021-007060DES
Project Address: 200 RHODE ISLAND STREET (Takahashi Trading Company)
Zoning: PDR-1-D PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION & REPAIR - 1 - DESIGN
58-X,68-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 3936/001
Project Sponsor: Four Corners Properties
339 S. San Antonio Road, Suite 2B
Los Altos, CA 94022
Property Owner: RHA 82 Owner, LLC
7121 Fairway Drive, Suite 410
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418
Staff Contact: Alex Westhoff, 628-652-7314
Alex.Westhoff@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Recommend Landmark Designation to the Board of Supervisors

Project Description

On November 17, 2021, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) adopted Resolution No. 1213 to initiate landmark designation of 200 Rhode Island Street, known historically as the Takahashi Trading Company (“subject property”), pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code. Under Article 10, initiation and recommendation are two distinct steps of the landmark designation process which require separate hearings and resolutions.

The Department is not aware of any opposition to the Article 10 landmark designation of the subject property. The Department has received four letters of support from organizations including the Japantown Foundation, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation, Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, and Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California.

The item before the HPC is consideration of a Resolution to Recommend Article 10 landmark designation of the subject property to the Board of Supervisors under Article 10 of the Planning Code, Section 1004.2.

Basis for Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the Board of Supervisors landmark designation of the **Takahashi Trading Company** as it is individually eligible for association with San Francisco's Japanese American community, the Takahashi family, and an early example of the work of master architect G. Albert Lansburgh.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Resolution Recommending Landmark Designation
Exhibit A – Resolution No. 1213 Initiating Landmark Designation
Exhibit B – Draft Landmark Designation Ordinance
Exhibit C – Executive Summary Initiating Landmark Designation
Exhibit D – Landmark Designation Fact Sheet
Exhibit E - Maps and Context Images
Exhibit F – Application for Historic Landmark Designation
Exhibit G – Letters of Support



ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION FACT SHEET

Historic Name:	Takahashi Trading Company
Address:	200 Rhode Island Street
Block/ Lot(s):	3936/001
Parcel Area:	29,093 sq ft
Zoning:	PDR-1-D - PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION & REPAIR - 1 - DESIGN
Year Built:	1912
Architect:	G. Albert Lansburgh
Prior Historic Studies/Other Designations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1976 Department of City Planning Survey – 3 Rating (of 0-5) • 1978 Foundation for San Francisco Architectural Heritage Survey – B Rating (Major Importance) • 2011 Showplace Square / Northeast Mission Historic Resource Survey – appears eligible for CA Register both individually and as a contributor to a CA Register eligible district • 2020 SF Planning Department Historic Resource Evaluation Response Part 1
Prior HPC Actions:	On September 1, 2021, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) added the Takahashi Trading Company to the Landmark Designation Work Program. On November 17, 2021, the HPC initiated landmark designation of the Takahashi Trading Company.
Significance Criteria:	<p><u>Events:</u> Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.</p> <p><u>Persons:</u> Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.</p> <p><u>Architecture/Design:</u> Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, and/or represents the work of a master.</p>
Periods of Significance:	1912, 1965-2019
Statement of Significance:	The Takahashi Trading Company is significant for its association with San Francisco’s Japanese-American community. Prominent Japanese-American entrepreneurs and philanthropists Henri and Tomoye Takahashi owned the subject property from 1965 to 2019. Shortly after returning to San Francisco after being interned at the Topaz War Relocation Center during World War II, the couple established the original Takahashi Trading Company in Japantown. However, their building was demolished in 1961 as part of the

	<p>City’s redevelopment efforts, leading them to purchase 200 Rhode Island Street. The subject property served as headquarters for the Takahashi Trading Company which imported high-quality products from Japan including porcelain, pottery, furniture, folding screens, and other goods for sale at several retail stores located in San Francisco as well as in Sausalito and New York City. In 1985 the Takahashis, along with Tomoye’s sister Masako Martha Suzuki, established the Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, also headquartered at the subject property. The Foundation supported a variety of cultural organizations including the Japanese Wing of the San Francisco Asian Art Museum, Morikami Museum in Florida, Nichi Bei Weekly, documentary films featured on PBS, Cherry Blossom Festival, Stanford University curriculum, and the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California.</p> <p>The subject property is also significant for its architecture and design as an intact early example of the work of G. Albert Lansburgh. Specifically, the original 1912 heavy timber-frame and brick warehouse constitutes an early and distinctive project in the career of this architect, who was highly regarded as a designer of theaters in the early twentieth-century. This light industrial brick building that he designed early in his career is one of his few known warehouses.</p>
<p>Assessment of Integrity:</p>	<p>The Takahashi Trading Company maintains a high level of integrity. The seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service (NPS) and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association.¹</p> <p>The building remains in its original location and has been maintained over time. Changes to the 1912 structure have been fairly minor and include the replacement of fenestration on the first story of the north façade and east and south annexes which block lower portions of the respective facades. The additions have not been significantly altered. Plans were approved in 2021 with some changes to support proposed new building programming including a storefront addition where the loading dock currently is and fenestration changes on the southeast addition façade. Planning Department Preservation Staff found these changes to be categorically exempt under the CA Environmental Quality Act².</p>
<p>Character-Defining Features:</p>	<p><i>General:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated plan of the original building and subsequent additions. <p><i>1912 Building:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy timber frame; • Five-story height; • Irregular plan conforming to the triangular parcel; • Flat roof;

¹ “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” National Register Bulletin, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995, p. 44

² Case Number 2019-019531PRJ

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Red brick cladding laid in English bond pattern;• Brick belt courses separating the first and second and fourth and fifth stories;• Shallow pilasters with diamond-shaped wall anchor plates;• Fenestration with alternating columns of window types;• Brick window surrounds with terra cotta keystones and springers;• Yellow brick window sills;• Yellow brickwork laid in a diamond-shaped pattern at the fifth story of the west façade; and• “Takahashi” signage, including metal lettering and painted brick. <p><i>1968 Concrete Tilt-Up Addition:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two-story height;• Irregular plan conforming to the triangular parcel;• Flat roof;• Boxy shape and massing;• Exposed aggregate concrete walls;• Shallow relief pilasters constructed of smooth concrete;• Narrow, metal-sash windows across both stories;• Overall austerity and lack of adornment; and• Painted “Takahashi” signage on the transom window on the east façade and on a wood panel affixed to the north façade. <p><i>1976 Brick Addition:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three-story height;• Rectangular plan;• Flat roof;• Brick veneer cladding laid in running bond pattern;• Decorative brickwork cornice;• North facing concrete belt course with “Takahashi” signage separating the first and second stories;• Fenestration including segmental arched, industrial windows at the third story; and• Height and width of the area at first floor of the east façade reflecting the historic location and dimensions of original loading dock.
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Statement of Significance Summary

The Takahashi Trading Company at 200 Rhode Island Street is significant for its association with prominent Japanese American entrepreneurs and philanthropists Henri and Tomoye Takahashi who owned the subject property from 1965 to 2019. Henri, born in 1914, immigrated from Tokyo with his parents at the age of three³; and Tomoye, born in San Francisco in 1915, was the daughter of a successful Japantown businessman who owned the Starlight Laundry and part-owner of the Nichi Bei Bank and Nichi Bei Securities Company.⁴ They met in San Francisco in 1938, got married in 1941, and shortly after were forcibly relocated to the concentration camp in Topaz, Utah following the bombing of Pearl Harbor during World War II. Upon their return to San Francisco in 1945,

³ “Henri Takahashi”, San Francisco Chronicle, April 19, 2002

⁴ “Philanthropist Tomoye Takahashi Dies at 100”, Discover Nikkei, June 16, 2016

the couple opened the original Takahashi Trading Company on Post Street in Japantown, originally selling sundries.⁵ Additionally, the family made strong commitments to assist local Japanese Americans with sending money, food, and clothing to relatives in war torn Japan. During this time, many Issei (first generation Japanese Americans), were interested in helping relatives living in Japan with recovery efforts, though language barriers and logistical challenges made this difficult. Thus, to aid the community over a ten year span the Takahashis shipped several thousand care packages to Japan to provide emergency supplies to family members of Isseis who were facing starvation and other threats.⁶ The company also began importing goods from Japan such as toys for young children, including kami fusen (paper balloons), kendama (a wood skill toy), and origami. Objectives of the activities included both assisting with post-war economic recovery of Japan, as well as introducing Japanese products to children of different races at young ages to help build race relations.⁷ However, the Post Street shop was demolished in 1961 as a part of San Francisco's large-scale urban renewal efforts, thus displacing the business. This initiative was amongst the first federally funded urban renewal projects in the nation, and cleared vast swaths of the Western Addition, including much of Japantown, for new development in the late 1950s and early 1960s, thus displacing thousands of residents and numerous businesses. The hardships faced by the Takahashis parallel stories of other Japanese Americans during this period.

In 1965 the Takahashis purchased the subject property, which served as headquarters for the Trading Company.⁸ The Trading Company transitioned to importing high-quality products from Japan including porcelain, pottery, furniture, folding screens, and other goods for sale at several retail stores located in San Francisco (on Grant Avenue and Geary Boulevard, in Ghirardelli Square, and on Main Street near Market Street), Sausalito, and New York City. Their goods proved to be popular amongst midcentury US shoppers at a time of growing US fascination with Japan.⁹ The subject property also served as a wholesale warehouse selling to retail stores and major museums throughout the country. Of the couple, Tomoye was the fluent Japanese speaker, having studied it for twelve years including majoring in it at UC Berkeley. Due to her language fluency, Tomoye played a critical role in negotiating with manufacturers in Japan, though many distributors at the time had reservations in working with a woman.¹⁰ Through her extensive efforts Tomoye became well known as a subject matter expert on importing high-quality Japanese merchandise, and served as an ad-hoc consultant and liaison.¹¹ The Trading Company received credit with helping to diminish Japanese-American prejudice through introducing beautifully designed Japanese goods to the American public.

Tomoye's sister, Mrs. Masako Martha Suzuki also played an important role in the Trading Company's efforts, since joining the business in the 1950s. Like her sister, Masako was a San Francisco native, born in 1921. Martha was also forcibly removed from San Francisco, first relocated to the Tanforan detention center and then to the Topaz, Utah concentration camp. She was, however allowed to leave Topaz and complete her degree in Minnesota during the war. She returned to the Bay Area after the war upon accepting a microbiologist position at UC Berkeley. However, she left her position at Cal to assist with the Trading Company.¹² Along with her husband Risaburo Suzuki, they

⁵ Ibid

⁶ "Announcement of the Recipient of the 2010 Spring Conferment of Decoration" The Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, 2010

⁷ Ibid

⁸ "The Gateway to the Pacific, Japanese Americans and the Remaking of San Francisco", Meredith Oda, 2018

⁹ Ibid, page 1

¹⁰ Ibid, page 1

¹¹ "Announcement of the Recipient of the 2010 Spring Conferment of Decoration" The Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, 2010

¹² "Obituary: Masako Martha Suzuki", Nichi Bei, March 1, 2012

established the Tozai Kogei K.K. in Japan as the Takahashi export arm in purchasing various handcrafted items from rural prefectures throughout the country. Masako was also successful negotiator with Japanese craftsmen. Her efforts led to widespread appreciation in the American market for high-quality Japanese import products.¹³ These import initiatives played a critical role in supporting the economic and cultural vitality of communities within Japan who were struggling to survive after World War II. Many of the artisans had long family histories as craftsmen, dating back many generations with unique and specialized skills. The opportunities to export goods to the United States thus provided valuable employment during this extremely financially unstable time. Additionally, these opportunities supported cultural preservation, continuing long standing family traditions through the production of handcrafted products.¹⁴

The Takahashi's success supported their purchase of a spacious Richmond District home, at the time when the neighborhood was primarily a white neighborhood. While faced with racism from some neighbors, Tomoye earned her real estate license and assisted Japanese and Chinese American families with settling in the neighborhood.¹⁵ Their success also let them to establish the Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation in 1985. The couple along with Masako began the Foundation with a goal of developing and encouraging an understanding and appreciation of Japanese culture, values, and arts.¹⁶ Having personally experienced the hardships of incarceration during World War II the family felt education of the American public on the Japanese experience was critical to ensure that such tragic events were never repeated.¹⁷ The Foundation was also headquartered at the subject property. The Foundation supported a variety of cultural organizations including the Japanese Wing of the San Francisco Asian Art Museum, Morikami Museum in Florida, Nichi Bei Weekly, documentary films featured on PBS, Cherry Blossom Festival, Stanford University School of Oriental Studies, and the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California. Henri passed away in 2002 at the age of 87.¹⁸

In 2010 Tomoye and Masako received the Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Rays award from the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco for their contributions to Japanese culture, history, and arts in the United States. At the time of the award the Foundation had distributed over \$3 million in funding towards various cultural organizations throughout California and other places.¹⁹ Masako died in 2012 at the age of 90²⁰ and Tomoye died in 2016 at the age of 100.²¹

The subject property is also significant for its association with the work of famed San Francisco master architect Gustave Albert Lansburgh who designed the original 1912 warehouse. During his career Lansburgh designed more than fifty theater buildings throughout the U.S., in addition to several prominent San Francisco downtown commercial buildings, four of the City's branch library buildings, and advised on acoustics for a few major public venues in California.²² Thus, the 1912 building represents an earlier distinctive project in the career of this master architect as one of his few known warehouses.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ "The Gateway to the Pacific, Japanese Americans and the Remaking of San Francisco", Meredith Oda, 2018 , page 2.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ "Henri Takahashi", San Francisco Chronicle, April 19, 2002

¹⁹ "Announcement of the Recipient of the 2010 Spring Conferment of Decoration" The Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, 2010

²⁰ "Obituary: Masako Martha Suzuki", Nichi Bei, March 1, 2012

²¹ "Philanthropist Tomoye Takahashi Dies at 100", Discover Nikkei, June 16, 2016

²² "Application for Landmark Designation". Architectural Resources Group, July 2021

The periods of significance for the subject property are 1912 and 1965 - 2019. The 1912 date encompasses the completion of the original heavy timber-frame and brick warehouse and the period from 1965-2019 reflects the Takahashi family's ownership of the property.

Bibliography

Books & Reports

Architectural Resources Group. *Application for Landmark Designation*. Submitted to San Francisco Planning Department, July 2021.

Oda, Meredith. *The Gateway to the Pacific, Japanese Americans and the Remaking of San Francisco*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

Newspapers & Articles

Kim, Ryan. "Henri Takahashi", San Francisco Chronicle, April 19, 2002.

The Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco. Announcement of the Recipient of the 2010 Spring Conferment of Decoration (Press Release). April 2010.

Nichei Bei Weekly Staff. "Obituary: Masako Martha Suzuki", Nichi Bei, March 1, 2012

The Rafu Shimpo. "Philanthropist Tomoye Takahashi Dies at 100", Discover Nikkei, June 16, 2016

Photos



Above: View from Southeast. Planning Department Staff, August 2021
Below: Southeast façade. Architectural Resources Group, May 2019



Above Left: Southeast entrance with signage. Architectural Resources Group, July 2019

Above Right: View from northeast along facade. Planning Department Staff, August 2021

Below: Detail of signage at roofline of east façade. Architectural Resources Group, July 2019



Above: North façade. Architectural Resources Group, July 2019
Below: Northwest façade Planning Department Staff, August 2021



South façade of original building. Planning Department Staff, August 2021.



Above: Southeast addition interior, second story. Planning Department Staff, August 2021
Middle: Northeast addition interior, second story. Planning Department Staff, August 2021
Below: Main building interior, second story. Planning Department Staff, August 2021



Left: Tomoye Takahashi (above) and Martha Suzuki (middle) receiving Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Rays award from the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco. Photographer unknown, 2010.

Above Right: Tomoye and Henri Takahashi. University of California, San Francisco Osher Center, date unknown.

Bottom: Hand Decorated Takahashi Cloisonne porcelain soap dish and mug, dated 1981 (left), Pair of porcelain Takahashi Kimono mugs with signature stamp (right). Janis McCormick, January 2022.

October 28, 2021

San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission
1660 Missions Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

RE: Takahashi Trading Company

Dear San Francisco Historic Preservation Commissioners:

I am writing today on behalf of the Japantown Task Force in strong support of the initiation of the Takahashi Trading Company (200 Rhode Island) as a San Francisco Landmark. Currently only two buildings with Japanese-American associations are designated as San Francisco Landmarks; the Kinmon Gakuen and the Japanese YWCA/Issei Women's Building. If designated, the Takahashi Trading Company would be only the third City Landmark with a Japanese-American association, and the first located outside of Japantown.

The Takahashi family's story is emblematic of the hardships which Japanese-Americans faced at the time. Uprooted from their home in San Francisco Henri and Tomoye Takahashi were sent to concentration camps in the early 1940s. After returning from the camps, in 1945 after purchasing a building on Post Street they were once again displaced due to redevelopment which demolished homes and businesses throughout Japantown and the Western Addition.

For decades, the Takahashi Trading Company served as importers of high-quality goods from Japan. With numerous retail outlets, they were able to put beautifully designed products into the homes of many Americans, helping to diminish anti-Japanese sentiment that was prevalent following World War Two. The Takahashi Foundation, established in 1985, continues to support a myriad of arts and educational organizations that help showcase Japanese culture to a broad audience.

The Japantown Task Force recognizes the important role the Takahashi family played in supporting San Francisco's Japanese-American community. Landmarking this building would help ensure the stories and memories of these community leaders are retained into the future. Once again as the historic landmarking process moves forward with the Commission and the Planning Department, I offer full support for this designation.

Sincerely,

Steve Nakajo, Japantown Task Force



cc: Jonas Ionin, Director of Commission Affairs, San Francisco Planning Department
Alex Westhoff, Senior Preservation Planner, San Francisco Planning Department
Shamann Walton, San Francisco District 10 Supervisor
Erica Major, Assistant Clerk, San Francisco Board of Supervisors



Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation
1770 Post Street, #196
San Francisco, CA 94115
Email: takahashifoundation@gmail.com

November 10, 2021

Dear SF Historic Preservation Commission:

It is my understanding that the Takahashi Building located at 200 Rhode Island Avenue is being considered for Landmark Designation by your Commission.

I am the daughter of Henri and Tomoye Takahashi, and niece of Martha Masako Suzuki-previous owners of 200 Rhode Island Avenue. The building was owned by my family from 1965-2019.

The family business, Takahashi Trading Company, was housed in this building for the majority of the time they owned the property. Takahashi's was not only a wholesale distributor of Japanese imported goods, but also a retail store located in various districts of San Francisco, and with stores in Sausalito and New York.

My mother, Tomoye, ran the retail store of Takahashi's located on Rhode Island Avenue after the family decided to close their other shops. This store attracted many interior design companies and individuals interested in purchasing authentic and antique ceramics, textiles and furniture from Japan. Many customers visited the store just to talk with her, and ask for her opinion and advise about all matters dealing with Japanese culture, tradition and etiquette. Some referred to her as the "Walking Encyclopedia of Japan".

Further, Takahashi's was awarded 52 Good Design Awards from the Museum of Modern Art in New York for items made and designed in Japan such as dinnerware, shoji screens, (a term coined by my father Henri), and other home goods. These awards helped introduce Japanese design and excellence in craftsmanship to the American public.

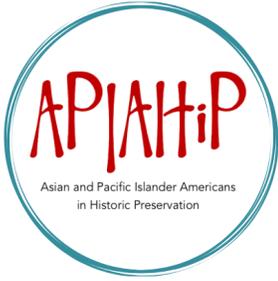
Tomoye and Martha were born and raised in San Francisco. They, along with over 120,000 individuals of Japanese descent, were incarcerated during World War II in desolate parts of the United States until the end of the war. Because of this painful experience, Tomoye and my father Henri were committed to doing whatever they could to make sure that their incarceration experience would never be repeated.

In 1985, the family created a family foundation to provide support to nonprofit organizations to promote and preserve Japanese and Japanese American culture, history and traditions. We continue the work of the Foundation today to continue the legacy and goals of the family.

Thank you for recognizing the Takahashi family history.

Sincerely,

Masako Takahashi
President



November 11, 2021

Diane Matsuda, President
City and County of San Francisco
Historic Preservation Commission
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

RE: Support of Landmark Nomination of Takahashi Trading Company

Dear President Matsuda and Historic Preservation Commissioners:

I am writing to you on behalf of the board of directors of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans for Historic Preservation in support of the initiation of the Takahashi Trading Company (200 Rhode Island Street) as a San Francisco Landmark. If designated, the building would join a short list of San Francisco Landmarks with associated with Asian and Pacific Islander Americans.

The mission statement of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation is protect historic places and cultural resources significant to Asian and Pacific Islander Americans through historic preservation and heritage conservation.

Currently only two buildings with Japanese American associations are designated as San Francisco Landmarks; the Kinmon Gakuen and the Japanese YWCA/Issei Women's Building. APIAHiP applauds the San Francisco Planning's efforts to better integrate racial and social equity into the department's historic preservation work. Landmarking this site would help advance these efforts by designating a building associated with Japanese Americans as a city landmark, ensuring the stories and memories of this special place are preserved into the future.

The Takahashi Trading Company at 200 Rhode Island Street is significant for its association with prominent Japanese American entrepreneurs and philanthropists Henri and Tomoye Takahashi who owned the subject property from 1965 to 2019 as it exemplifies the history of Japanese Americans in San Francisco. Both Henri and Tomoye have deep roots in San Francisco as Henri (as a child) immigrated with his family to the city in 1917 and Tomoye was born here in 1917. They met in the city in 1938, married in 1941, and were forcibly relocated during World War II. Following their incarceration at the Topaz War Relocation Center, they returned to San Francisco in 1945 and opened the original Takahashi Trading Company on Post Street in Japantown. However, in 1961, the Post Street shop was demolished as a part of San Francisco's large-scale urban renewal efforts, displacing the business (and many other businesses, cultural institutions, and families in Japantown). In 1965, the Takahashi family purchased the subject property, which served as headquarters for the Trading Company. The family continued to own and operate the business until 2019. Both the Takahashi Trading Company and the Takahashi Foundation helped showcase Japanese arts, culture and heritage to a broad audience in the Bay Area and other parts of the nation.

It is of utmost importance that city landmarks and other historically designated sites better reflect the broad and diverse stories of our nation. APIAHiP seeks to elevate local and statewide efforts to document and preserve Asian and Pacific Islander Americans stories and we offer full support for this designation. I strongly urge you and the Cultural Heritage Commission to support the nomination of the Takahashi Trading Company as a city landmark.

Sincerely,

Michelle G. Magalong, PhD

Board of Directors

Michelle Magalong, PhD
President
Washington, DC

Bill Watanabe
Chair
Los Angeles, CA

Karen Kai
Vice Chair
San Francisco, CA

Lisa Hasegawa
Secretary
Los Angeles, CA

Grant Din
Treasurer
Oakland, CA

Tejpal Singh Bainiwal
Stockton, CA

Caroline Calderon
Los Angeles, CA

Erika Gee
San Francisco, CA

Kristen Hayashi, PhD
Los Angeles, CA

Sojin Kim, PhD
Washington, DC

Alan Kumamoto
Los Angeles, CA

Munson A. Kwok, PhD
Los Angeles, CA

Christina Park
Los Angeles, CA

Huy Pham
Seattle, WA

Joseph Quinata
Hagåtña, Guam

M. Rosalind Sagara
Riverside, CA

Jason Sarmiento
West Sacramento, CA

APIAHiP
2279 Glendale Blvd., #3
Los Angeles, CA 90039
www.apiahip.org



February 2, 2022

Ms. Diane Matsuda
President
SF Historic Preservation Commission
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Landmark Designation of 200 Rhode Island Avenue, San Francisco, CA

Dear President Matsuda and Commissioners of the SF Historic Preservation Commission:

I write this letter in strong support of the landmark designation of 200 Rhode Island Avenue in San Francisco, better known to the Japanese American community as the Takahashi Building.

I visited this building frequently. It has very distinct and wonderful memories because of its association with the former owners, Henri and Tomoye Takahashi and Martha Masako Suzuki. Mr. and Mrs. Takahashi and Mrs. Suzuki were initial donors to help us create the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC) where I have served as the Executive Director of JCCCNC for over 30 years.

My regular visits to 200 Rhode Island Avenue were to seek advice and guidance on ways in which JCCCNC could create programs and activities to further preserve Japanese culture and traditions. Mrs. Tomoye Takahashi in particular provided me with personal, in depth knowledge about Japanese customs, history and traditions. Because of her frequent visits to Japan to purchase artifacts and create custom hand crafted items, she was extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of the products Takahashi sold to the American market. She was also well versed in Japanese history and would take the time to explain the different styles of Japanese ceramics; clothing; furniture and woodwork that they imported on a regular basis.

In short, Takahashi was more than an import business. It was a place where you could learn about the Japanese culture and why it was important to treasure and preserve the items they sold. There will never be another "Takahashi", and I feel very privileged to have been a recipient of their knowledge, generosity and their tenacity to keep our culture alive.

I urge your strong support of honoring this important family.

Sincerely,



Paul Osaki
Executive Director