

## LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - Mother's Building in San Francisco Zoo]

**Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate Mother's Building, situated within San Francisco Zoological Gardens, 1 Zoo Road, southeast of Great Highway and Sloat Boulevard, in Assessor's Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006, as a Landmark consistent with the standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making public necessity, convenience, and welfare findings under Planning Code, Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

### Existing Law

Under Article 10, Section 1004 of the Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors may, by ordinance, designate an individual structure that has special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value as a City landmark. Unless prohibited by state law, once a structure has been named a landmark, any construction, alteration, removal or demolition for which a City permit is required necessitates a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission. (Planning Code § 1006; Charter of the City and County of San Francisco, § 4.135.) Thus, landmark designation generally affords a high degree of protection to historic and architectural structures of merit in the City. There are currently approximately 301 individual landmarks in the City under Article 10, in addition to structures and districts in the downtown area that are protected under Article 11. (See App. A to Article 10.)

### Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance amends the Planning Code to add a new historic landmark to the list of individual landmarks under Article 10: Mother's Building, situated within San Francisco Zoological Gardens, 1 Zoo Road, southeast of Great Highway and Sloat Boulevard, in Assessor's Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006.

The ordinance finds that the Mother's Building is eligible for local designation as it is associated with events that have made a culturally, historically, and architecturally significant contribution to the broad patterns of San Francisco history and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The Mother's Building, constructed in 1925 for Herbert and Mortimer Fleishhacker to honor their late mother, was donated to the City and dedicated to serve as a place of rest for mothers and young children, with tile mosaics completed in 1934, titled *St. Francis and Children and Their Animal Friends*, by Helen Bruton (assisted by her sisters, Margaret and Esther Bruton), and an egg tempera on plaster mural cycle painted between 1933 and 1938, titled *Building the Ark, Loading of the*

*Animals, Landing of the Ark, and The Ark's Passengers Disembark*, by Helen K. Forbes and Dorothy Puccinelli, through the federal Public Works of Art Project and the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Specifically, designation of the Mother's Building is proper as it is individually eligible for its association with women's history, as one of the only recreation sites of the period focused on the comfort of mothers and their young children, and as the only large-scale WPA-era art project solely featuring female artists; with the WPA's art programs and with the outstanding murals and tile mosaics created by these female artists; with early recreational facilities in San Francisco; and as an excellent example of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture and work of architect of merit George W. Kelham.

As required by Section 1004, the ordinance lists the particular features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined necessary.

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