

BOARD of SUPERVISORS




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MEMORANDUM

Date: April 12, 2023

To: Jonas Ionin, Commission Secretary, Historic Preservation Commission
Rich Hillis, Director, Planning Department

From:  Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board, Board of Supervisors

Subject: Initiating Landmark Designation - Alexandria Theatre (File No. 230266)

On March 14, 2023, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 122-23 sponsored by Supervisor Connie Chan (File No. 230266, Initiating Landmark Designation - Alexandria Theatre); enacted on March 24, 2023.

A copy of the Resolution is being forwarded to you pursuant to Planning Code, Section 1004.2(b).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Board at (415) 554-5184, or by email: board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org.

c: Member of the Board of Supervisors; Supervisor Connie Chan
Dan Sider, Chief of Staff, Planning Department
Corey Teague, Zoning Administrator, Planning Department
Tina Tam, Zoning Administrator, Planning Department
Lisa Gibson, Environmental Review Officer, Planning Department
Devyani Jain, Deputy Environmental Review Officer
AnMarie Rodgers, Legislative Affairs, Planning Department
Aaron Starr, Manager of Legislative Affairs, Planning Department
Joy Navarrete, Major Environmental Analysis, Planning Department
Elizabeth Watty, Current Planning Division, Planning Department
Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, Deputy City Attorney

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1 [Initiating Landmark Designation - Alexandria Theatre]

2
3 **Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for**
4 **the Alexandria Theatre, at 5400 Geary Boulevard, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 1450,**
5 **Lot No. 048.**

6
7 WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may, by
8 Resolution, initiate landmark designation; and

9 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre, located at 5400 Geary Boulevard, Assessor's
10 Parcel Block No. 1450, Lot No. 048, is representative of Neighborhood Movie Palaces in San
11 Francisco, known for their bright lights and elaborate character; and

12 WHEREAS, The construction and operation of the Alexandria Theatre was undertaken
13 by the Levin family, owners of San Francisco Theaters, Inc., as part of the family's circuit of
14 San Francisco neighborhood theaters; and

15 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre was the Levin family's flagship theater amongst
16 the other neighborhood theaters in San Francisco that were erected, owned, and operated by
17 San Francisco Theaters, Inc.; and

18 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre was built in 1923 in the Egyptian Revival
19 architectural style, and designed by one of San Francisco's leading architectural firms, Reid
20 Brothers; and

21 WHEREAS, Reid Brothers, after beginning their career in Illinois, became one of the
22 most successful firms in San Francisco, designing numerous important buildings in San
23 Francisco and California including the Fairmont Hotel, the Cliff House, and many movie
24 theaters in the Bay Area; and

1 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre was remodeled in 1941 in the Streamline
2 Moderne style by architect Alexander Aimwell (A.A.) Cantin, one of California's first registered
3 architects, and a prominent San Francisco architect with an active career that included design
4 of several other notable movie theaters; and

5 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre is a representative and significant example of the
6 work of architectural firm of merit, Reid Brothers, and of architect of merit, A.A. Cantin; and

7 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theater had a special significance for its sheer magnitude,
8 with one of the largest capacities of any neighborhood theater in San Francisco; and

9 WHEREAS, The original 2000-seat interior of the Alexandria Theatre was converted to
10 a three-screen multi-plex in 1976; and

11 WHEREAS, While the Alexandria Theatre was, for much of its life, a second-run
12 neighborhood theater, in the late 1950s it was converted to a first-run, reserved seat operation
13 with several films running for nearly a year or more; and

14 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre was constructed within a neighborhood
15 commercial strip, and falls into the period of significance for Neighborhood Movie Palaces as
16 documented in the draft report of San Francisco Neighborhood Movie Theater Non-
17 Contiguous Multiple Property Historic District Context Statement; and

18 WHEREAS, Many of San Francisco's single-screen movie theaters and Neighborhood
19 Movie Palaces have closed or have been converted to other uses in the past few decades
20 and these Neighborhood Movie Palaces are important and unique cultural
21 institutions in San Francisco; and

22 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre had served as a beacon to the central and outer
23 Richmond District neighborhoods, drawing in people from around the city to watch a movie
24 and frequent local small businesses; and

1 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre was a cultural hub for the Richmond District
2 community, as a central point where neighbors would come to socialize and patronize the
3 Geary Boulevard corridor; and

4 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre exhibits and retains many of the character-
5 defining features of a Neighborhood Movie Palace; and

6 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theater was found eligible for listing on the California
7 Register of Historical Resources individually and as part of a historic district in a CEQA
8 evaluation determined by the Planning Department; and

9 WHEREAS, The Alexandria Theatre's physical structure, with blade sign, marquee,
10 chandelier, Egyptian revival motif murals, and the six rounded columns also holds unique
11 architectural and aesthetic interest and value; and

12 WHEREAS, The landmark should preserve generally all of its particular exterior
13 features, including the features described as the blade sign, the marquee, the chandelier, and
14 the murals; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the Board hereby initiates landmark designation of the Alexandria
16 Theatre, built in 1923, and located at 5400 Geary Boulevard; and, be it

17 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests that the Planning
18 Department prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation
19 Commission for its consideration of the unique historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest
20 and value of property and existing structure; and, be it

21 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests that the Historic
22 Preservation Commission consider whether the Alexandria Theatre warrants landmark
23 designation and submit its recommendation to the Board according to Article 10 of the
24 Planning Code.
25



City and County of San Francisco
Tails
Resolution

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

File Number: 230266

Date Passed: March 14, 2023

Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for the Alexandria Theatre, at 5400 Geary Boulevard, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 1450, Lot No. 048.

March 14, 2023 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

File No. 230266

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 3/14/2023 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned

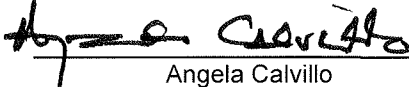
London N. Breed
Mayor

3/24/2023

Date Approved

File No. 230266

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.



Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board



Date