

## LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - Poole-Bell House]

**Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate the Poole-Bell House, located at 192-196 Laidley Street, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 6665, Lot Nos. 107-110, on the west side of Laidley Street between Fairmount Street and Harper Street, 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 more than 300 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: the Poole-Bell House, located at 192-196 Laidley Street, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 6665, Lot Nos. 107-110. The ordinance finds that the Poole-Bell House is eligible for local designation as an early example of Glen Park development, and for its association with the Bell family. The property was constructed in 1887 in the Fairmount District, now considered the Glen Park neighborhood. The home was built by attorney John Pascoe Poole, who passed in 1895, though his widow Annie Poole continued to live at the property until 1906. At the time of construction, the low-lying parts of Fairmount were being developed with narrow houses on smaller lots. The subject home was constructed in the middle of four lots perched on a hillside with impressive city views. When first constructed it included a hen house, windmill, and well. In 1906 the property was sold to Teresa Bell, widow of financier Thomas Bell. The lives of the Bells are well documented, including their close relationship with Mary Ellen Pleasant, who is known as the Mother of Civil Rights in California. While Pleasant never resided at the Poole-Bell house, as Bell purchased the home after Pleasant's death, the home has been mired in narratives surrounding

Pleasant's relationship with the Bell family. The home was constructed in the Italianate style, though Theresa Bell added the additional story, giving the building a Second Empire appearance.

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

### Background Information

On May 20, 2026, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation and having considered the specialized analyses reviewed by Planning Department staff and the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, the Historic Preservation Commission voted to recommend landmark designation of the Poole-Bell House to the Board of Supervisors.