

1 [Initiating Landmark Designation Amendment - Sylvester House (1556 Revere Street)]

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3 **Resolution initiating an amendment to the landmark designation of 1556 Revere Street**

4 **(aka Sylvester House), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 5340, Lot No. 006, under Article 10**

5 **of the Planning Code.**

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7 WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by

8 Resolution initiate a historic landmark designation; and

9 WHEREAS, Planning Code, Section 1004.2(b), requires the Historic Preservation

10 Commission to respond to historic landmark designation initiations from the Board within 90

11 days, but that the Board of Supervisors may, by Resolution, extend the time within which the

12 Historic Preservation Commission is to render its decision; and

13 WHEREAS, Sylvester House was designated as Landmark #61, under Article 10 of the

14 Planning Code, pursuant to Ordinance No. 124-74, passed by the Board on March 4, 1974

15 (BOS File No. 90743); and

16 WHEREAS, Sylvester House, built in the Italianate architectural style between 1865

17 and 1870, is an exceptionally fine and unique variation of the Italianate architectural style with

18 Gothic details; and

19 WHEREAS, The two-story, four square, wood frame structure sits high on a tall, raised

20 basement that was partially built over the foundation of a former barn when the building was

21 moved in 1913; and

22 WHEREAS, The building's main features include an expansive first floor porch,

23 prominent upper story fenestration, and a projecting roof cornice. The front porch spans the

24 entire façade with its roof covering the first-floor windows and central front entrance. The

25 porch is capped by a dentilated cornice supported by six wood Corinthian columns and

1       enclosed by a low balustrade of turned wood spindles that extends along a wide, centered  
2       staircase to front walkway; and

3           WHEREAS, A large archway frames the paneled double door entry and overhead  
4       fanlight with framing finished in Gothic detailing; and

5           WHEREAS, Fenestration is regular with double-hung arched windows framed with  
6       Gothic detailing, including fluted pilasters, projecting curvilinear pediments, consoles, and  
7       ornamental keystones; and

8           WHEREAS, There is a decorated, deeply projecting roof cornice; and

9           WHEREAS, Sylvester House was built by Stephen L. Piper, a prominent carpenter and  
10      housing builder in the southern portion of San Francisco, now known as Bayview, formerly  
11      known as Butchertown; and

12           WHEREAS, The house was built for Daniel Sylvester, his wife Maria, and their eight  
13      children. The home served as the 'farmhouse' for a cattle ranch that included the mansion and  
14      several stables and other out-buildings, serving the Sylvester's business as wholesale  
15      butchers and cattle dealers in the surrounding Butchertown neighborhood. The Sylvester  
16      family occupied the house until 1901; and

17           WHEREAS, In 1978, Linda Blacketer found and purchased, along with her husband,  
18      Dan Dodt, the abandoned and dilapidated Sylvester Houses with the intent to restore the  
19      house to its original conditions - not just to modernize its interior behind a historic façade - to  
20      achieve a historically relevant showplace; and

21           WHEREAS, The four-decades-long, dedicated and faithful restoration included  
22      upgrades or replacement of all systems, significant decorative enhancements, with added  
23      furnishing and art collections; and

24           WHEREAS, Members of Artistic License, a guild of artisans, based in San Francisco,  
25      along with other highly talented individuals, assisted in the restoration; and

1           WHEREAS, The restored architectural gem as seen today is a testament to the vision  
2 and creative spirit of her former owner, Linda Blacketer, who was recognized by San  
3 Francisco Beautiful with the Robert C. Friese Preservation Award in 2005; and

4           WHEREAS, Sylvester House is a rare example of a continually inhabited, single family  
5 dwelling in San Francisco, and remains a masterpiece of vision, construction and preservation  
6 efforts in the City and is as an important landmark of the Bayview neighborhood; and, be it

7           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby initiates an amendment to the  
8 landmark designation under Planning Code, Section 1004.1 of Sylvester House, located at  
9 1556 Revere Street (Assessor's Block/Lot 5340/006); and, be it

10          FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors requests that the Planning  
11 Department prepare a landmark designation report to submit to the Historic Preservation  
12 Commission for its consideration of the full historical, architectural, aesthetic, and cultural  
13 interest and value, including but not limited to the restoration and preservation efforts  
14 undertaken by Linda Blacketer, of Sylvester House; and, be it

15          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests that the Historic  
16 Preservation Commission consider what amendments to the landmark designation are  
17 warranted to capture the property's full historical significance, and submit its recommendation  
18 to the Board of Supervisors, according to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

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