

File No. 110448 Committee Item No. 3  
 Board Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

AGENDA PACKET CONTENTS LIST

Committee: Land Use and Economic Development Date September 19, 2011

Board of Supervisors Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Cmte Board**

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**OTHER (Use back side if additional space is needed)**

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Planning Commission Resolution No. 18428</u>                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Reuben &amp; Junius Letter, dtd 9/9/11 (w/o Attachments due to size)*</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Hearing Notice</u>  |
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Completed by: Alisa Miller Date September 16, 2011  
 Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

An asterisked item represents the cover sheet to a document that exceeds 25 pages.  
 The complete document can be found in the file.

1 [Planning Code - Zoning Map Amendment - Establishing City Center Special Sign District]

2  
3 **Ordinance amending the San Francisco Planning Code by amending Sections 602.10,**  
4 **607.1, 608, adding Section 608.16, and amending Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map**  
5 **to establish the City Center Special Sign District encompassing the real property**  
6 **bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street**  
7 **(Assessor's Block No. 1094, Lot No. 001) to allow additional projecting signs,**  
8 **freestanding identifying and directional signs, and to modify existing controls on**  
9 **business wall signs; adopting findings, including environmental findings pursuant to**  
10 **the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 302 findings, and findings of**  
11 **consistency with the General Plan and the Priority Policies of Planning Code Section**  
12 **101.1.**

13 NOTE: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;  
14 deletions are *strike-through italics Times New Roman*.  
15 Board amendment additions are double-underlined;  
Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough-normal~~.

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

17 Section 1. Findings.

18 (a) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this  
19 ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public  
20 Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the  
21 Board of Supervisors in File No. 110448 and is incorporated herein by reference.

22 (b) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that this  
23 ordinance will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons specified in  
24 this legislation and in Planning Commission Resolution No. 18428, which is

25  
Supervisor Farrell  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1 incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth. A copy of said Resolution is on file  
2 with the Clerk of the Board in File No. 110448.

3 (c) This Board finds that these Planning Code amendments are consistent with the  
4 General Plan and the Priority Policies of Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code for the  
5 reasons set forth in said Planning Commission Resolution No. 18428, and the Board  
6 hereby incorporates such reasons into this ordinance by this reference.

7 Section 2. The San Francisco Planning Code is hereby amended by amending  
8 Sections 602.10, 607.1 and 608 to read as follows:

9 **SEC. 602.10. IDENTIFYING SIGN.**

10 A sign for a use listed in Article 2 of this Code as either a principal or a conditional use  
11 permitted in an R District, regardless of the district in which the use itself may be located,  
12 which sign serves to tell only the name, address and lawful use of the premises upon which  
13 the sign is located, or to which it is affixed. A bulletin board of a public, charitable or religious  
14 institution, used to display announcements relative to meetings to be held on the premises,  
15 shall be deemed an identifying sign. With respect to shopping malls containing five or more  
16 stores or establishments in NC Districts, and shopping centers containing five or more stores  
17 or establishments in NC-S Districts or in the City Center Special Sign District, identifying signs  
18 shall include signs which tell the name of and/or describe aspects of the operation of the mall  
19 or center. Shopping malls, as that term is used in this Section, are characterized by a  
20 common pedestrian passageway which provides access to the businesses located therein.

21 **SEC. 607.1. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS.**

22 Signs located in Neighborhood Commercial Districts shall be regulated as provided  
23 herein in this Section, except for those signs ~~which~~ that are exempted by Section 603 of this Code  
24 or as more specifically regulated in a Special Sign District under Sections 608 et seq. In the event of  
25 conflict between the provisions of Section 607.1 and other provisions of Article 6, the

1 provisions of Section 607.1 shall prevail in Neighborhood Commercial Districts, provided,  
2 however, that with respect to properties *also*-located in the Upper Market Special Sign District,  
3 the provisions of Section 608.10 of this Code shall prevail and in the City Center Special Sign  
4 District, the provisions of Section 608.16 of this Code shall prevail.

5 In each such Special Sign District, signs, other than those signs exempted by Section  
6 603 of this Code, shall be subject to the special limitations of controls in Sections 608.1 through  
7 608.15 608.16, respectively, in addition to all other or, if so expressly specified in those Sections, in  
8 lieu of other applicable sign provisions of this Code. In the event of inconsistency with any other  
9 provision of Article 6, the most restrictive provision shall prevail unless this Code specifically  
10 provides otherwise.

11 (a) **Purposes and Findings.** In addition to the purposes stated in Sections 101  
12 and 601 of this Code, the following purposes apply to Neighborhood Commercial Districts.  
13 These purposes constitute findings that form a basis for regulations and provide guidance for  
14 their application.

15 (1) As Neighborhood Commercial Districts change, they need to maintain their  
16 attractiveness to customers and potential new businesses alike. Physical amenities and a  
17 pleasant appearance will profit both existing and new enterprises.

18 (2) The character of signs and other features projecting from buildings is an  
19 important part of the visual appeal of a street and the general quality and economic stability of  
20 the area. Opportunities exist to relate these signs and projections more effectively to street  
21 design and building design. These regulations establish a framework that will contribute  
22 toward a coherent appearance of Neighborhood Commercial Districts.

23 (3) Neighborhood Commercial Districts are typically mixed use areas with  
24 commercial units on the ground or lower stories and residential uses on upper stories.  
25 Although signs and other advertising devices are essential to a vital commercial district, they

1 should not be allowed to interfere with or diminish the livability of residential units within a  
2 Neighborhood Commercial District or in adjacent residential districts.

3 (4) The scale of most Neighborhood Commercial Districts as characterized by  
4 building height, bulk, and appearance, and the width of streets and sidewalks differs from that  
5 of other commercial and industrial districts. Sign sizes should relate and be compatible with  
6 the surrounding district scale.

7 (b) **Signs or Sign Features Not Permitted in NC Districts.** Roof signs as defined  
8 in Section 602.16 of this Code, wind signs as defined in Section 602.22 of this Code, and  
9 signs on canopies, as defined in Section 136.1(b) of this Code, are not permitted in NC  
10 Districts. No sign shall have or consist of any moving, rotating, or otherwise physically  
11 animated part, or lights that give the appearance of animation by flashing, blinking, or  
12 fluctuating, except as permitted by Section 607.1(i) of this Code. In addition, all signs or sign  
13 features not otherwise specifically regulated in this Section 607.1 shall be prohibited.

14 (c) **Identifying Signs.** Identifying signs, as defined in Section 602.10, shall be  
15 permitted in all Neighborhood Commercial Districts subject to the limits set forth below.

16 (1) One sign per lot shall be permitted and such sign shall not exceed 20 square  
17 feet in area. The sign may be a freestanding sign, if the building is recessed from the street  
18 property line, or may be a wall sign or a projecting sign. The existence of a freestanding  
19 identifying sign shall preclude the erection of a freestanding business sign on the same lot. A  
20 wall or projecting sign shall be mounted on the first-story level; a freestanding sign shall not  
21 exceed 15 feet in height. Such sign may be nonilluminated, indirectly illuminated, or directly  
22 illuminated.

23 (2) One sign identifying a shopping center or shopping mall shall be permitted  
24 subject to the conditions in Paragraph (1), but shall not exceed 30 square feet in area. Any  
25 sign identifying a permitted use listed in zoning categories .40 through .70 in Section 703.2(a)

1 in an NC District shall be considered a business sign and subject to Section 607.1(f) of this  
2 Code. Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly illuminated, or directly illuminated during  
3 the hours of operation of the businesses in the shopping center or shopping mall.

4 (d) **Nameplates.** One nameplate, as defined in Section 602.12 of this Code, not  
5 exceeding an area of two square feet, shall be permitted for each noncommercial use in NC  
6 Districts.

7 (e) **General Advertising Signs.** General advertising signs, as defined in Section  
8 602.7, shall be permitted in Neighborhood Commercial Districts, except in the Inner Sunset  
9 Neighborhood Commercial District where they are not permitted, as provided for below. In NC  
10 Districts where such signs are permitted, general advertising signs may be either a wall sign  
11 or freestanding, provided that the surface of any freestanding sign shall be parallel to and  
12 within three feet of an adjacent building wall. In either case, the building wall shall form a  
13 complete backdrop for the sign, as the sign is viewed from all points from a street or alley from  
14 which it is legible. No general advertising sign shall be permitted to cover part or all of any  
15 windows. Any extension of the copy beyond the rectangular perimeter of the sign shall be  
16 included in the calculation of the sign, as defined in Section 602.1(a) of this Code.

17 (1) **NC-2, NCT-2, and NC-S Districts.** No more than one general advertising sign  
18 shall be permitted per lot or in NC-S Districts, per district. Such sign shall not exceed 72  
19 square feet in area nor exceed 12 feet in height. Such sign may be either nonilluminated or  
20 indirectly illuminated.

21 (2) **NC-3, NCT-3, and Broadway Districts.** No more than one general advertising  
22 sign not exceeding 300 square feet or two general advertising signs of 72 square feet each  
23 shall be permitted per lot. The height of any such sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or the height  
24 of the wall to which it is attached, or the height of the lowest of any residential windowsills on  
25

1 the wall to which it is attached, whichever is lower, if a wall sign, or the adjacent wall or the top  
2 of the adjacent wall if a freestanding sign, whichever is lower.

3 (A) **NC-3 and NCT-3 Districts.** Signs may be either nonilluminated or indirectly  
4 illuminated.

5 (f) **Business Signs.** Business signs, as defined in Section 602.3 shall be  
6 permitted in all Neighborhood Commercial Districts subject to the limits set forth below.

7 (1) **NC-1 and NCT-1 Districts.**

8 (A) **Window Signs.** The total area of all window signs, as defined in Section  
9 602.1(b), shall not exceed 1/3 the area of the window on or in which the signs are located.  
10 Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly illuminated, or directly illuminated.

11 (B) **Wall Signs.** The area of all wall signs shall not exceed one square foot per  
12 square foot of street frontage occupied by the business measured along the wall to which the  
13 signs are attached, or 50 square feet for each street frontage, whichever is less. The height of  
14 any wall sign shall not exceed 15 feet or the height of the wall to which it is attached. Such  
15 signs may be nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated; or during business hours, may be  
16 directly illuminated.

17 (C) **Projecting Signs.** The number of projecting signs shall not exceed one per  
18 business. The area of such sign, as defined in Section 602.1(a), shall not exceed 24 square  
19 feet. The height of such sign shall not exceed 15 feet or the height of the wall to which it is  
20 attached. No part of the sign shall project more than 75 percent of the horizontal distance from  
21 the street property line to the curblin, or six feet six inches, whichever is less. The sign may  
22 be nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated, or during business hours, may be directly  
23 illuminated.

24 (D) **Signs on Awnings.** Sign copy may be located on permitted awnings in lieu of  
25 wall signs and projecting signs. The area of such sign copy as defined in Section 602.1(c)

1 shall not exceed 20 square feet. Such sign copy may be nonilluminated or indirectly  
2 illuminated.

3 (2) **NC-2, NCT-2, NC-S, Broadway, Castro Street, Inner Clement Street, Outer**  
4 **Clement Street, Upper Fillmore Street, Inner Sunset, Haight Street, Hayes-Gough,**  
5 **Upper Market Street, North Beach, Ocean Avenue, Polk Street, Sacramento Street,**  
6 **SoMa, Union Street, Valencia Street, 24th Street-Mission, 24th Street - Noe Valley, and**  
7 **West Portal Avenue Neighborhood Commercial Districts.**

8 (A) **Window Signs.** The total area of all window signs, as defined in Section  
9 602.1(b), shall not exceed 1/3 the area of the window on or in which the signs are located.  
10 Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly illuminated, or directly illuminated.

11 (B) **Wall Signs.** The area of all wall signs shall not exceed two square feet per foot  
12 of street frontage occupied by the use measured along the wall to which the signs are  
13 attached, or 100 square feet for each street frontage, whichever is less. The height of any wall  
14 sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or the height of the wall to which it is attached, or the height of  
15 the lowest of any residential windowsill on the wall to which the sign is attached, whichever is  
16 lower. Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly, or directly illuminated.

17 (C) **Projecting Signs.** The number of projecting signs shall not exceed one per  
18 business. The area of such sign, as defined in Section 602.1(a), shall not exceed 24 square  
19 feet. The height of such sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or the height of the wall to which it is  
20 attached, or the height of the lowest of any residential windowsill on the wall to which the sign  
21 is attached, whichever is lower. No part of the sign shall project more than 75 percent of the  
22 horizontal distance from the street property line to the curblin, or six feet six inches,  
23 whichever is less. Such signs may be nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated; or during  
24 business hours, may be directly illuminated.



1 (D) **Signs on Awnings and Marquees.** Sign copy may be located on permitted  
2 awnings or marquees in lieu of projecting signs. The area of such sign copy as defined in  
3 Section 602.1(c) shall not exceed 30 square feet. Such sign copy may be nonilluminated or  
4 indirectly illuminated; except that sign copy on marquees for movie theaters or places of  
5 entertainment may be directly illuminated during business hours.

6 (E) **Freestanding Signs and Sign Towers.** With the exception of automotive gas  
7 and service stations, which are regulated under Paragraph 607.1(f)(4), one freestanding sign  
8 or sign tower per lot shall be permitted in lieu of a projecting sign, if the building or buildings  
9 are recessed from the street property line. The existence of a freestanding business sign shall  
10 preclude the erection of a freestanding identifying sign on the same lot. The area of such  
11 freestanding sign or sign tower, as defined in Section 602.1(a), shall not exceed 20 square  
12 feet nor shall the height of the sign exceed 24 feet. No part of the sign shall project more than  
13 75 percent of the horizontal distance from the street property line to the curblin, or six feet,  
14 whichever is less. Such signs may be nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated; or during  
15 business hours, may be directly illuminated.

16 (3) **Mission Street NCT, NC-3, and NCT-3 Neighborhood Commercial Districts.**

17 (A) **Window Signs.** The total area of all window signs, as defined in Section  
18 602.1(b), shall not exceed 1/3 the area of the window on or in which the signs are located.  
19 Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly illuminated, or directly illuminated.

20 (B) **Wall Signs.** The area of all wall signs shall not exceed three square feet per  
21 foot of street frontage occupied by the use measured along the wall to which the signs are  
22 attached, or 150 square feet for each street frontage, whichever is less. The height of any wall  
23 sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or the height of the wall to which it is attached, or the height of  
24 the lowest of any residential windowsill on the wall to which the sign is attached, whichever is  
25 lower. Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly, or directly illuminated.

1 (C) **Projecting Signs.** The number of projecting signs shall not exceed one per  
2 business. The area of such sign, as defined in Section 602.1(a), shall not exceed 32 square  
3 feet. The height of the sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or the height of the wall to which it is  
4 attached, or the height of the lowest of any residential windowsill on the wall to which the sign  
5 is attached, whichever is lower. No part of the sign shall project more than 75 percent of the  
6 horizontal distance from the street property line to the curblineline, or six feet six inches,  
7 whichever is less. Such signs may be nonilluminated, indirectly, or directly illuminated.

8 (D) **Sign Copy on Awnings and Marquees.** Sign copy may be located on  
9 permitted awnings or marquees in lieu of projecting signs. The area of such sign copy, as  
10 defined in Section 602.1(c), shall not exceed 40 square feet. Such sign copy may be  
11 nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated; except that sign copy on marquees for movie theaters  
12 or places of entertainment may be directly illuminated during business hours.

13 (E) **Freestanding Signs and Sign Towers.** With the exception of automotive gas  
14 and service stations, which are regulated under Paragraph 607.1(f)(4) of this Code, one  
15 freestanding sign or sign tower per lot shall be permitted in lieu of a projecting sign if the  
16 building or buildings are recessed from the street property line. The existence of a  
17 freestanding business sign shall preclude the erection of a freestanding identifying sign on the  
18 same lot. The area of such freestanding sign or sign tower, as defined in Section 602.1(a),  
19 shall not exceed 30 square feet nor shall the height of the sign exceed 24 feet. No part of the  
20 sign shall project more than 75 percent of the horizontal distance from the street property line  
21 to the curblineline, or six feet, whichever is less. Such signs may be nonilluminated or indirectly  
22 illuminated, or during business hours, may be directly illuminated.

23 (4) **Special Standards for Automotive Gas and Service Stations.** For  
24 automotive gas and service stations in Neighborhood Commercial Districts, only the following  
25

1 signs are permitted, subject to the standards in this Paragraph (f)(4) and to all other standards  
2 in this Section 607.1.

3 (A) A maximum of two oil company signs, which shall not extend more than 10 feet  
4 above the roofline if attached to a building, or exceed the maximum height permitted for  
5 freestanding signs in the same district if freestanding. The area of any such sign shall not  
6 exceed 180 square feet, and along each street frontage, all parts of such a sign or signs that  
7 are within 10 feet of the street property line shall not exceed 80 square feet in area. No such  
8 sign shall project more than five feet beyond any street property line. The areas of other  
9 permanent and temporary signs as covered in Subparagraph (B) below shall not be included  
10 in the calculation of the areas specified in this Subparagraph.

11 (B) Other permanent and temporary business signs, not to exceed 30 square feet in  
12 area for each such sign or a total of 180 square feet for all such signs on the premises. No  
13 such sign shall extend above the roofline if attached to a building, or in any case project  
14 beyond any street property line or building setback line.

15 (g) **Temporary Signs.** One temporary nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated sale  
16 or lease sign or nonilluminated sign of persons and firms connected with work on buildings  
17 under actual construction or alteration, giving their names and information pertinent to the  
18 project per lot, shall be permitted. Such sign shall not exceed 50 square feet and shall  
19 conform to all regulations of Subsection 607.1(f) for business signs in the respective NC  
20 District in which the sign is to be located. All temporary signs shall be promptly removed upon  
21 completion of the activity to which they pertain.

22 (h) **Special Sign Districts.** Additional controls apply to certain Neighborhood  
23 Commercial Districts that are designated as Special Sign Districts. Special Sign Districts are  
24 described within Sections 608.1 through ~~608.11~~608.16 of this Code and with the exception of  
25

1 Sections 608.1, 608.2 and 608.11, their designations, locations and boundaries are provided  
2 on Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map of the City and County of San Francisco.

3 (i) **Restrictions on Illumination.** Signs in Neighborhood Commercial Districts  
4 shall not have nor consist of any flashing, blinking, fluctuating or otherwise animated light  
5 except those moving or rotating or otherwise physically animated parts used for rotation of  
6 barber poles and the indication of time of day and temperature, and in the following special  
7 districts, all specifically designated as "Special Districts for Sign Illumination" on Sectional  
8 Map SSD of the Zoning Map of the City and County of San Francisco.

9 (1) **Broadway Neighborhood Commercial District.** Along the main commercial  
10 frontage of Broadway between west of Columbus Avenue and Osgood Place.

11 (2) **NC-3. NC-3 District along Lombard Street from Van Ness Avenue to**  
12 **Broderick Street.**

13 (3) Notwithstanding the type of signs permissible under subparagraph (i), a video  
14 sign is prohibited in the districts described in subparagraphs (1) and (2).

15 (j) **Other Sign Requirements.** Within Neighborhood Commercial Districts, the  
16 following additional requirements shall apply:

17 (1) **Public Areas.** No sign shall be placed upon any public street, alley, sidewalk,  
18 public plaza or right-of-way, or in any portion of a transit system, except such projecting signs  
19 as are otherwise permitted by this Code and signs, structures, and features as are specifically  
20 approved by the appropriate public authorities under applicable laws and regulations not  
21 inconsistent with this Code and under such conditions as may be imposed by such authorities.

22 (2) **Maintenance.** Every sign pertaining to an active establishment shall be  
23 adequately maintained in its appearance. When the activity for which the business sign has  
24 been posted has ceased operation for more than 90 days within the Chinatown Mixed Use  
25 Districts, all signs pertaining to that business activity shall be removed after that time.

1 (3) **Temporary Signs.** The provisions of Section 607.1(g) of this Code shall apply.

2 (4) **Special Standards for Automotive Gas and Service Stations.** The  
3 provisions of Section 607.1(f)(4) of this Code shall apply.

4 **SEC. 608. SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICTS.**

5 In addition to the zoning districts that are established under other Articles of this Code,  
6 there shall also be in the City such Special Sign Districts as are established in this Article 6 in  
7 order to carry out further the purposes of this Code. The designations, locations and  
8 boundaries of these Special Sign Districts shall be as provided in this Article and as shown on  
9 the Zoning Map referred to in Section 105, subject to the provisions of Section 105. The  
10 original of the sectional map of the Zoning Map for Special Sign Districts (numbered SSD)  
11 referred to in this Article is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No.  
12 138-62. In each such Special Sign District, signs, other than those signs exempted by Section  
13 603 of this Code, shall be subject to the special *limitations-of-controls in* Sections 608.1 through  
14 *608.15608.16*, respectively, in addition to all other, *or, if so expressly specified in those Sections, in*  
15 *lieu of other*, applicable *sign* provisions of this Code. In the event of inconsistency with any  
16 other provision of Article 6, the most restrictive provision shall prevail unless this Code  
17 specifically provides otherwise.

18  
19 Section 3. The San Francisco Planning Code is hereby amended by adding Section  
20 608.16 to read as follows:

21 **SEC. 608.16. CITY CENTER SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICT.**

22 (a) **General.** *There shall be a special sign district known as the "City Center Special Sign*  
23 *District" in the block bounded by Geary Boulevard on the north, Masonic Avenue on the west,*  
24 *O'Farrell Street on the south and Lyon Street on the east, as designated on Sectional Map SSD of the*  
25 *Zoning Map of the City and County of San Francisco. The original copy of said Sectional Map with this*

1 Special Sign District indicated thereon is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File  
2 No. 110448 . Signs in the City Center Special Sign District shall be subject to the provisions of  
3 Article 6 except that the controls as provided in this Section 608.16 shall apply in lieu of the sign  
4 controls specified in Section 607.1. Further, in the event of a conflict between the provisions of Section  
5 608.16 that authorize specified signs and other provisions of Article 6, the provisions of Section 608.16  
6 shall prevail notwithstanding any provision of the Code to the contrary.

7 (b) Purpose and Findings. In addition to the purposes stated in Sections 101 and 601 of  
8 this Code, the following purposes apply to the City Center Special Sign District. These purposes  
9 constitute findings that form a basis for these regulations and provide guidance for their application.

10 (1) The City Center was built in 1951 as an approximately seven-acre, single-tenant, multi-  
11 level Sears department store on a site spanning four city blocks bounded by Geary Boulevard, Masonic  
12 Avenue, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street. The Sears store historically maintained projecting signs on  
13 the north and south elevations of the building, on a centrally located sign tower, in alcoves below the  
14 roofline of the building, and above pedestrian entries. The signs were scaled and located to provide  
15 visibility from the wide roadways bordering the City Center.

16 (2) In 1994, the City Center reopened as a multi-tenant shopping center. Signs on the sign  
17 towers and in roofline alcoves were removed at that time, limiting the visibility of the City Center and  
18 its tenants from Geary Boulevard.

19 (3) The City Center has experienced significant vacancy in recent years since its conversion  
20 to multi-tenant use, resulting in a loss of sales tax revenue to the City. Adequate, well-placed signs on  
21 both the building and at parking entrances are necessary to ensure that the City Center remains a  
22 viable retail center providing goods and services to residents, while generating sales tax revenue for  
23 the City.

24 (4) The City Center has six separate surface parking lots with separate entrances accessible  
25 from Geary Boulevard, Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street, which are built at different grades and

1 cannot feasibly be connected. Directional signs at parking lot entrances are necessary to direct  
2 motorists to the lot adjacent to the store they intend to visit and to minimize traffic congestion on  
3 surrounding streets.

4 (5) The City Center has multiple entrances and levels, with commercial units on the lower  
5 and upper stories with access to stores from streets or from one of the six separate surface parking lots.  
6 Signs and other advertising devices for on-site businesses are essential to the general quality and  
7 economic stability of the City Center. Current sign regulations, which are tailored to smaller  
8 storefronts typical of the City's neighborhood commercial districts, do not provide sufficient visibility  
9 for businesses located in the City Center, a large-scale development with a building height, bulk,  
10 appearance and site configuration that differs from that of other neighborhood commercial districts.

11 (6) Sign sizes, number, height and placement should take into account the configuration of  
12 the site development and the adjacent wide streets and an expressway, in order to provide visual relief  
13 to the large area of the building, visibility for its businesses and identity for the City Center as a whole.

14 (7) Additional projecting signs, wall signs, and directional signs at parking lot entrances  
15 would improve the visual appeal, identity, and long-term viability of the City Center, while improving  
16 access to its parking facilities and minimizing traffic congestion.

17 (c) **Definitions.** Within the City Center Special Sign District, the following definitions shall  
18 apply in addition to the applicable definitions in Sections 602 et seq.:

19 (1) **Copy Area.** On a directional sign, projecting sign, or sign tower, copy area shall refer  
20 to the entire area within a single continuous rectangular perimeter formed by extending lines around  
21 the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character.

22 (2) **Directional Sign.** A directional sign shall mean a sign identifying the location of a  
23 parking lot entry and the names of the businesses accessible from such lot. A directional sign may also  
24 identify the number of parking spaces available in the adjacent parking lot and the name of the  
25 shopping center.

1           (3) **Internal Wayfinding Signs.** Internal wayfinding signs shall mean signs located entirely  
2 on private property which are intended to direct vehicles and pedestrians within the site. Internal  
3 wayfinding signs shall be designed to be minimally visible from any public right of way.

4           (d) **Controls Generally.** The sign controls applicable in the City Center Special Sign  
5 District are specified in this Section 608.16. All signs or sign features not otherwise specifically  
6 authorized in this Section 608.16 or exempted in Sections 603 or 604 shall be prohibited.

7           (e) **Illumination.** All signs may be non-illuminated, indirectly or directly illuminated.  
8 Signs may not be flashing, blinking, fluctuating or otherwise animated light.

9           (f) **Business Signs.** Business signs, as defined in Section 602.3, shall be permitted subject  
10 to the limits set forth below.

11           (1) **Wall Signs.** Wall signs, as defined in Section 602.22, shall be permitted as follows:

12           (A) **Wall Signs Above Pedestrian Entries from a Parking Lot.** For a business occupying  
13 8,000 square feet or more, one wall sign up to 200 square feet in area shall be permitted above each  
14 pedestrian entry to the business from a parking lot. For a business occupying less than 8,000 square  
15 feet, one wall sign up to 75 square feet in area shall be permitted above each pedestrian entry to the  
16 business from a parking lot. The height of any parking lot entry wall sign shall not exceed 28 feet.

17           (B) **Wall Signs Above Pedestrian Entries from a Public Sidewalk.** The area of all wall  
18 signs located above pedestrian entries from a public sidewalk shall not exceed three square feet per  
19 foot of street frontage occupied by the use measured along the wall to which the signs are attached, or  
20 150 feet for each street frontage, whichever is less. The height of any street entry wall sign shall not  
21 exceed 24 feet.

22           (C) **Other Wall Signs.** The following additional wall signs shall be permitted:

23           (i) Up to three additional wall signs shall be permitted on each of the Masonic Street and  
24 Geary Street frontages. The area of each sign shall be limited to a maximum of 115 square feet. The  
25 height of such wall signs shall not exceed 48 feet.



1           (ii) At the intersection of Geary and Lyon Streets, up to 500 square feet of wall signs shall  
2 be permitted, provided that no wall sign for a single use shall occupy more than 80 square feet. The  
3 height of such wall signs shall not exceed the height of the wall on which they are located.

4           (iii) One wall sign shall be permitted in each of the two existing sign alcoves located below  
5 the roofline of the building on the primary west and east building elevations perpendicular to Geary  
6 Boulevard, subject to the following conditions: wall signs shall be no higher than the wall to which  
7 they are attached, shall have a maximum area of 170 square feet, and shall be identifying signs, as  
8 defined in Section 602.10, for the shopping center.

9           (2) Window Signs. The total area of all window signs, as defined in Section 602.1(b), shall  
10 not exceed 1/3 the area of the window on or in which the signs are located.

11           (3) Projecting Signs. A total of six projecting signs shall be permitted within the Special  
12 Sign District, subject to the following limitations, provided, however, that the limits on the number of  
13 projecting signs per business and size of projecting signs set forth elsewhere in this Code shall not  
14 apply.

15           (A) Projecting signs may be identifying signs for the shopping center, business signs or may  
16 contain seasonal messages.

17           (B) No projecting sign shall project more than eight feet over the property line or exceed the  
18 height of the wall to which it is attached by more than 10 feet.

19           (C) Five projecting signs shall be permitted on Geary Street, each with up to 2 faces. One  
20 such sign shall be permitted to have an area up to 540 square feet per face and a maximum copy area  
21 of 240 square feet per face. Four such signs shall be permitted to have an area up to 470 square feet  
22 per face, and a maximum copy area of 240 square feet per face.

23           (D) One projecting sign shall be permitted on the building fronting the parking lot at the  
24 intersection of Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street. Such sign shall be permitted to have an area up  
25 to 752 square feet per face, and a maximum copy area of 240 square feet per face.

1           (4) Freestanding Signs and Sign Towers. Freestanding signs and sign towers shall be  
2 permitted as follows:

3           (A) One freestanding sign shall be permitted near the intersection of Masonic Avenue and  
4 O'Farrell Street. Such sign shall be located wholly on private property and shall identify the name of  
5 the shopping center and its tenants. Such sign may have up to 2 faces and shall be limited to a height  
6 of 35 feet, a total area of 260 square feet per face and a copy area of 140 square feet per face

7           (B) One freestanding directional sign with up to 2 faces shall be permitted at each parking  
8 lot entry, up to a maximum of seven within the Special Sign District. Directional signs shall not exceed  
9 a height of 15 feet. The area of a directional sign tower shall not exceed 50 square feet per face, and  
10 the copy area shall not exceed 20 square feet per face.

11           (C) On the existing central sign tower, located approximately in the center of the property  
12 and adjacent to the rooftop penthouse, two signs shall be permitted subject to the following conditions:  
13 the copy area shall not exceed 240 square feet per sign, the height shall not exceed the height of the  
14 existing central sign tower to which they are attached, and such signs shall be limited to identifying  
15 signs for the shopping center.

16           (g) Exempt signs. In addition to signs exempted under Sections 603 and 604, internal  
17 wayfinding signs shall be exempt in the City Center Special Sign District.

18           (h) Temporary signs. Signs authorized in Section 607.1(g) pertaining to temporary signs  
19 shall be authorized in the City Center Special Sign District .

20  
21           Section 4. The San Francisco Planning Code is hereby amended by amending  
22 Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map of the City and County of San Francisco, as follows:  
23

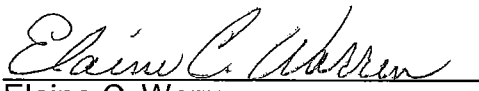
<u>Description of Property</u>	<u>Sign District Hereby Approved</u>
Assessor's Block 1094, Lot 001	City Center Special Sign District

1  
2 Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days from the  
3 date of passage.

4 Section 6. This section is uncodified.

5 In enacting this Ordinance, the Board intends to amend only those words, phrases,  
6 paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, punctuation, charts, diagrams or any  
7 other constituent part of the Planning Code that are explicitly shown in this legislation as  
8 additions, deletions, Board amendment additions, and Board amendment deletions in  
9 accordance with the "Note" that appears under the official title of the legislation. This  
10 Ordinance shall not be construed to effectuate any unintended amendments. Any additions or  
11 deletions not explicitly shown as described above, omissions, or other technical and non-  
12 substantive differences between this Ordinance and the Planning Code that are contained in  
13 this legislation are purely accidental and shall not effectuate an amendment to the Planning  
14 Code. The Board hereby authorizes the City Attorney, in consultation with the Clerk and other  
15 affected City departments, to make those necessary adjustments to the published Planning  
16 Code, including non-substantive changes such as renumbering or relettering, to ensure that  
17 the published version of the Planning Code is consistent with the laws that this Board enacts.

18  
19 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

20  
21 By:   
Elaine C. Warren  
22 Deputy City Attorney

## LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Zoning Map Amendment - Establishing City Center Special Sign District]

**Ordinance amending the San Francisco Planning Code by amending Sections 602.10, 607.1, 608, adding Section 608.16, and amending Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map to establish the City Center Special Sign District encompassing the real property bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street (Assessor's Block No. 1094, Lot No. 001), to allow additional projecting signs, freestanding identifying and directional signs and to modify existing controls on business wall signs; adopting findings, including environmental findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 302 findings, and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1.**

### Existing Law

The Planning Code regulates signs in various land use districts in the City and specifically regulates signs in Neighborhood Commercials Districts through Planning Code Section 607.1. The Planning Code also provides for special sign controls in certain established special sign districts. The real property affected by the proposed ordinance is in an NC-3 zoning district and sign controls that apply to it are for the most part those contained in Planning Code Section 607.1.

### Amendments to Current Law

The ordinance would establish the City Center Special Sign District, for the area bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street and O'Farrell Street (Assessor's Block 1094/Lot 001) by adding Section 608.16 to the Planning Code. Sign controls in Section 608.16 would apply in this special sign district instead of the sign controls that generally apply to NC-3 districts under Section 607.1. Conforming amendments would be made to Sections 602.10, 607.1 and 608. In addition, the Zoning Map would be amended to show the new special sign district. The special sign district allows certain specified types of business signs in the area. The proposed controls would allow additional business projecting signs and freestanding signs that identify the shopping center and provide directional guides, and would change some of the business wall sign controls.

### Background Information

The legislation is proposed to fashion sign controls for the area that recognize the distinct features of the existing shopping center, which is unlike typically buildings in NC-3 areas. The sign controls are design to assist the shopping center in remaining a viable retail area by attracting customers and potential new businesses.

CITY CENTER SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICT: PROPOSED BOUNDARIES  
AMENDMENT TO ZONING MAP SHEET SSD, INSET





# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

August 16, 2011

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

**Re: Transmittal of Planning Case Number 2011.0656TZ  
BF No. 11-0448: Amending Planning Code Sections 602.10, 607.1, 608,  
adding Section 608.16, and Amending Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning  
Map to Establish the City Center Special Sign District.**

**Recommendation: Approval with Modifications**

Dear Supervisor Farrell and Ms. Calvillo,

On August 11, 2011, the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance under Board of Supervisors File Number 11-0448.

At the August 11th hearing, the Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval with modifications of the proposed Ordinance which would create the City Center Special Sign District in order to facilitate appropriate new signage for the existing shopping center site including the proposed new formula retail use and other commercial tenants. At that hearing, the Commission requested that the proposal be amended to reduce the maximum height of the proposed new freestanding sign on Masonic Avenue from 35 feet to 20 feet in height. In addition, the Commission recommended that the four new blade signs proposed for Geary Boulevard be designed in a manner that makes them clearly distinct from and subordinate to the existing blade sign.

Supervisor, please advise the City Attorney at your earliest convenience if you wish to incorporate the changes recommended by the Commission. The attached resolution provides more detail about the Commission's action. If you have any questions or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AM-Rodgers", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

AnMarie Rodgers  
Manager of Legislative Affairs

Cc: City Attorney Elaine Warren

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

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Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

Attachments (one copy of the following):

Planning Commission Resolution No. 18428  
Department Executive Summary



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## Planning Commission Resolution No. 18428

HEARING DATE: AUGUST 11, 2011

*Project Name:* City Center Special Sign District  
*Case Number:* 2011.0656TZ [Board File No. 11-0448]  
*Initiated by:* Supervisor Farrell / Introduced June 7, 2011  
*Staff Contact:* Sophie Hayward, Legislative Affairs  
sophie.hayward@sfgov.org, 415-558-6372  
*Reviewed by:* AnMarie Rodgers, Manager Legislative Affairs  
anmarie.rodgers@sfgov.org, 415-558-6395  
*Recommendation:* **Recommend Approval with Modifications**

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RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPT WITH MODIFICATIONS A PROPOSED ORDINANCE AMENDING PLANNING CODE SECTIONS 602.10 (DEFINITIONS), 607.1 (SIGNS IN NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS), 608 (SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICTS), ADDING SECTION 608.16 (THE CITY CENTER SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICT), AND AMENDING SECTIONAL MAP SSD OF THE ZONING MAP TO ESTABLISH THE CITY CENTER SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICT ENCOMPASSING THE REAL PROPERTY ON ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 1094, LOT 001, BOUNDED BY MASONIC AVENUE, GEARY BOULEVARD, LYON STREET, AND O'FARRELL STREET TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL PROJECTING SIGNS, FREESTANDING IDENTIFYING AND DIRECTIONAL SIGNS, AND TO MODIFY EXISTING CONTROLS ON BUSINESS WALL SIGNS.

### PREAMBLE

Whereas, on June 7, 2011, Supervisor Farrell introduced a proposed Ordinance under Board of Supervisors (hereinafter "Board") File Number 11-0448 that would amend Planning Code Sections 602.10 (Definitions), 607.1 (Neighborhood Commercial Districts), 608 (Special Sign Districts), and add Section 608.16 ("City Center Special Sign District"), and amend Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map to establish the "City Center Special Sign District" encompassing the real property bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street (Assessor's Block 1094, Lot 001), to allow additional projecting signs, freestanding identifying and directional signs, and to modify existing controls on business wall signs. The proposed Ordinance for a Sectional Map Amendment and Planning Code Text Changes has been introduced in order to facilitate appropriate new signage for the existing shopping center site including the proposed new formula retail use and other commercial tenants; and

Whereas, on August 11, 2011, the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance; and



Whereas, on August 10, 2011, the proposed zoning changes were determined to be exempt from environmental review under Section 15061(b)(3)) of the CEQA Guidelines; and;

Whereas, the Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of the applicant, Department staff, and other interested parties; and

Whereas, the all pertinent documents may be found in the files of the Department, as the custodian of records, at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco; and

Whereas, the Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinance; and

MOVED, that the Commission hereby recommends that the Board of Supervisors recommends *approval of the proposed Ordinance with modifications* and adopts the attached Draft Resolution to that effect. Specifically, the Commission recommends the following modifications:

The Commission recommends two substantive modifications regarding the proposed freestanding signs that would be permitted within the SSD:

- That the large freestanding sign on Masonic Avenue near O'Farrell (described in Section 608.16(f)(4)(A)) be reduced in height from the proposed maximum of 35 feet in height to a **maximum of 20 feet in height**, and that the sign's maximum width not exceed its current width.
- That the four new projecting blade signs proposed for the Geary Street elevation (described in Section 608.16(f)(3)(c)) be visually distinct from and subordinate to the existing blade sign on the structure.

In addition, the Commission recommends a minor modification to the text of Section 608.16(f)(1)(C)(i). The subsection includes a reference to Masonic Street, which should be referred to as Masonic Avenue.

## FINDINGS

Having reviewed the materials identified in the preamble above, and having heard all testimony and arguments, this Commission finds, concludes, and determines as follows:

1. The existing shopping center is an unusual suburban-style structure within an urban setting that includes both commercial sites and residential areas in the immediate vicinity;
2. That commercial uses on the subject and facing blocks include office supply stores, electronics stores, restaurants, bars, dental offices, hair salons, and other professional offices, but that the majority of buildings in the surrounding area are residential structures, and that buildings facing the subject block range from two- to four-stories tall with several taller buildings interspersed;
3. Current sign regulations for the NC-3 District do not provide sufficient visibility for businesses located within the City Center, given its particular configuration of site development, and that the

existing signage is insufficient to adequately direct customers to existing businesses from the various parking lots and pedestrian entrances;

4. That a new Special Sign District would improve the existing signage and would facilitate a unified tenant sign program for the subject site as well as respond to the particular configuration and topography of the subject lot;
5. That with the Commission's recommended amendments to the proposed Ordinance, the Special Sign District would facilitate a sign program that would better respond to the surrounding context of low-scale residential buildings while still improving the signage on-site to facilitate access to both the large and small commercial tenants;
6. **General Plan Compliance.** The proposed Ordinance is consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

**I. COMMERCE & INDUSTRY ELEMENT**

THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN SETS FORTH OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE BROAD RANGE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, FACILITIES, AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS THAT CONSTITUTE SAN FRANCISCO'S EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE BASE.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE A SOUND AND DIVERSE ECONOMIC BASE AND FISCAL STRUCTURE FOR THE CITY.

**Policy 2.1:**

Seek to retain existing commercial and industrial activity and to attract new such activity to the City.

*The proposed Ordinance will facilitate a Special Sign District that would allow a unified tenant sign program for the subject site that would provide improved way finding, directional, and identifying signage for businesses located within the shopping center in order to improve its economic viability.*

**OBJECTIVE 6**

MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN VIABLE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL AREAS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO CITY RESIDENTS.

**POLICY 6.3**

Preserve and promote the mixed commercial-residential character in neighborhood commercial districts. Strike a balance between the preservation of existing affordable housing and needed expansion of commercial activity.

*The existing shopping center is well served by MUNI and is easily accessible to City residents. The proposed new Special Sign District would improve access to the site by providing clearer way finding to*

*existing and new businesses located within the shopping center, while responding, through the careful arrangement of signs, to the surrounding residential and commercial uses.*

## II. URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

THE URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT CONCERNS THE PHYSICAL CHARACTER AND ORDER OF THE CITY, AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

### OBJECTIVE 1

EMPHASIS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC PATTERN WHICH GIVES TO THE CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AN IMAGE, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, AND A MEANS OF ORIENTATION.

#### Policy 1.9

Increase the clarity of routes for travelers.

General Plan Text under Policy 1.9: The clutter of wires, signs and disordered development should be reduced. Conflict between unnecessary private signs and street directional signs should be avoided.

*While this Section of the Urban Design Element is generally discussing the importance of distinguishing a "citywide pattern" through better street design and treatments, it does discuss the importance of reducing clutter and conflict between private signage and street signage. These policies support the recommendation to lower the parking lot freestanding directional signage.*

## III. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

### POLICY 19.2

*Promote increased traffic safety, with special attention to hazards that could cause personal injury.*

General Plan Text under Policy 19.2: In some cases redesign of the roadway and of intersections to reduce conflicts between vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians is required; in others all that is necessary is to improve clarity of signs and of routing so that there is less driver uncertainty and hesitation.

*The existing shopping center has six separate surface parking lots with separate entrances from Geary Boulevard, Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street, which are built at different grades. In addition, the shopping center has multiple entrances and levels with commercial spaces on the upper and lower stories, and access to stores from streets as well as from each of the six surface parking lots. The separate parking lots cannot be feasibly connected and require that drivers have directional information so they enter and park in the associated lot. As proposed, with the modifications recommended, the City Center Special Sign District would permit signs that assist drivers in locating the proper entrance.*

7. The proposed replacement project is consistent with the eight General Plan priority policies set forth in Section 101.1 in that:
  - A) The existing neighborhood-serving retail uses will be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses will be enhanced:

*The proposed Ordinance will encourage neighborhood-serving retail uses or opportunities for employment in or ownership of such businesses by improving the viability of the commercial spaces within the shopping center by facilitating an appropriate sign program for the site.*

- B) The existing housing and neighborhood character will be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods:

*The proposed Ordinance would create a Special Sign District in order to facilitate appropriate new signage for the existing shopping center site including the proposed new formula retail use and other commercial tenants. With the recommended modifications, the Special Sign District would permit signs that respond to the character of the surrounding neighborhood in order to conserve and protect the character of the district, including its cultural and economic diversity.*

- C) The City's supply of affordable housing will be preserved and enhanced:

*The proposed Ordinance will have no adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.*

- D) The commuter traffic will not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking:

*The proposed Ordinance will not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI transit service or overburdening the streets or neighborhood parking.*

- E) A diverse economic base will be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development. And future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors will be enhanced:

*The proposed Ordinance would not adversely affect the industrial or service sectors or future opportunities for resident employment or ownership in these sectors.*

- F) The City will achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

*Preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake is unaffected by the proposed amendments. Any new construction or alteration associated with the Special Sign District would be executed in compliance with all applicable construction and safety measures.*

- G) That landmark and historic buildings will be preserved:

*Landmarks and historic buildings would be unaffected by the proposed amendments.*

- H) Parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas will be protected from development:

*The City's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas would be unaffected by the proposed amendments. It is not anticipated that permits would be such that sunlight access to public or private property would be adversely impacted.*

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission ADOPTED the foregoing Resolution on August 11, 2011.

Linda Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Antonini, Fong, Miguel, Moore, Olague, and Sugaya

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Borden

ADOPTED: August 11, 2011



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## Executive Summary Planning Code Text Change and Map Amendment HEARING DATE: JULY 28, 2011

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*Project Name:* City Center Special Sign District  
*Case Number:* 2011.0656TZ [Board File No. 11-0448]  
*Initiated by:* Supervisor Farrell / Introduced June 7, 2011  
*Staff Contact:* Sophie Hayward, Legislative Affairs  
sophie.hayward@sfgov.org, 415-558-6372  
*Reviewed by:* AnMarie Rodgers, Manager Legislative Affairs  
anmarie.rodgers@sfgov.org, 415-558-6395  
*Recommendation:* **Recommend Approval with Modifications**

### PLANNING CODE AMENDMENT

The proposed Ordinance would amend Planning Code Sections 602.10 (Definitions), 607.1 (Neighborhood Commercial Districts), 608 (Special Sign Districts), and add Section 608.16 ("City Center Special Sign District"), and amend Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map to establish the "City Center Special Sign District" encompassing the real property bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street (Assessor's Block 1094, Lot 001), to allow additional projecting signs, freestanding identifying and directional signs, and to modify existing controls on business wall signs.

An associated project that requests Conditional Use Authorization (Case No. 2010.0623C) is also scheduled to be before the Planning Commission for this same hearing. The related Conditional Use authorization seeks to authorize a formula retail use in spaces formerly occupied by formula uses and a large-scale retail use. The associated project would, if approved, permit a Target retail store to occupy the first and second levels of the existing shopping center. The proposed Ordinance for a Sectional Map Amendment and Planning Code Text Changes has been introduced in order to facilitate appropriate new signage for the existing shopping center site including the proposed new formula retail use and other commercial tenants.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT USE

The proposed Ordinance would impact Assessor's Block 1094, Lot 001, which is located at the southeast corner of Geary Boulevard and Masonic Avenue within an NC-3 (Moderate-Scale Neighborhood Commercial) District and 40-X/80-D Height and Bulk Districts. The property is developed as a three-story shopping center (the City Center Shopping Plaza) that occupies the entire block, bounded by Geary Boulevard to the north, Masonic Avenue to the west, O'Farrell Street to the south, and Lyon Street to the east. The main shopping center structure fronts on the northern half of the lot facing Geary Boulevard while terraced surface parking lots cover the southern half of the lot facing O'Farrell Street. The shopping center measures approximately 202,530 square feet with three levels of retail space and 601 off-street parking spaces divided between the three retail levels and one rooftop parking lot.

The shopping center was constructed in 1951 and was used as a Sears Department Store until the early 1990s. After Sears vacated the center, the retail space was subdivided and reoccupied by several large retailers, including Mervyns, Toys R Us, the Good Guys, and Office Depot. The Good Guys vacated its space on the second level of the shopping center in 2005, and Mervyns vacated its first and second levels in December of 2008. Toys R Us has also vacated its space, which is currently occupied by Best Buy. Both retail spaces previously occupied by Mervyns and the Good Guys are still vacant.

**The Way It Is Now:**

The subject block is located within an NC-3 Zoning District, where current sign regulations are tailored to the small-stores of neighborhood shopping streets. There are no special sign controls unique to the subject block. The current sign regulations do not permit signage that is intended for a large-scale, multi-tenant retail center with multiple street frontages and multiple parking entries. The existing sign controls for the subject property are outlined in Planning Code Section 607.1: Neighborhood Commercial Districts, and are summarized below. Existing controls that would be substantially amended by the proposed Ordinance include:

- **Section 607.1(f)(3)(B): Wall Signs Within the NC-3.** This Section restricts wall signs within the NC-3 Districts to no more than three square feet per foot of street frontage occupied by the use, or 150 square feet for each street frontage, whichever is less. The height of any wall sign may not exceed 24 feet. There is no maximum number of wall signs permitted per lot; rather, the total area of wall signs permitted is based on the number of businesses on the lot and their respective street frontage. In effect, the existing controls allow for one wall sign with a maximum dimension of 150 square feet for the proposed Target Store on each of four elevations (the Geary Street elevation, the Masonic Avenue elevation, the Lyon Street elevation, and the O'Farrell Street elevation). The other ten businesses located within the shopping center are permitted wall signs that are varied in size, based on their amount of street frontage.
- **Section 607.1(f)(3)(C): Projecting Signs Within the NC-3.** This Section limits projecting signs to one per business. The area of the projecting sign may not exceed 32 square feet in area or 24 feet in height, nor may projecting signs project more than 6 feet, 6 inches. Given that the existing shopping center includes eleven stores (including one vacant space and the proposed Target Store), eleven projecting signs would be allowed at this site under existing controls. Please note that the permitted projecting signs are in addition to the permitted wall signs.
- **Section 607.1(f)(3)(E): Freestanding Signs and Sign Towers Within the NC-3:** This Section allows for one freestanding sign **per lot**, provided the sign is erected in-lieu of a projecting sign. The freestanding sign may not exceed 30 square feet, and its maximum height may be 24 feet. As the existing shopping center is contained within one lot, the existing controls would only allow one freestanding sign. The existing controls would permit a freestanding sign or a projecting sign – but not both.

Existing controls that would not be substantially amended by the proposed Ordinance include:

- **Section 607.1(f)(3)(D): Sign Copy on Awnings Within the NC-3.** This Section allows sign copy on awnings, however the sign copy may be provided only in-lieu of projecting signs.
- **Section 607(c): Identifying Signs.** This Section specifically limits shopping centers within NC Districts to one identifying sign that shall not exceed 30 square feet in area and 15 feet in height.

**The Way It Would Be:**

The proposed Ordinance would create a new Special Sign District (SSD) for the subject property by adding Planning Code Section 608.16: City Center Special Sign District. The Zoning Map SSD would be updated to include the newly create SSD.

**Note to the Reviewer:** The companion project for the Target Corporation, as proposed in the application for Conditional Use Authorization in Case No. 2010.0623C, includes a sign program that would be facilitated with the proposed Ordinance. Graphics for the Target sign program are attached as Exhibit C to this report. These exhibits identify the specific locations and dimensions for the proposed project's proposed new signage and help to provide a better understanding of the type of signage that this proposed Ordinance would allow.

The City Center SSD would allow three broad categories of signs on the site: Wall Signs, Projecting Signs, and Freestanding Signs and Towers. Specific quantities, locations, and dimensions of signs that would be allowed if the proposed Ordinance is approved are outlined as follows:

**Wall Signs: Section 608.16(f)(1)**

- **Section 608.16(f)(1)(A) Pedestrian Entrances from Parking Lot:** One wall sign would be permitted for large retail tenants (who occupy more than 8,000 square feet of space within the shopping center) above each pedestrian entrance to the business from the parking lot. These wall signs may have up to 200 square feet of area. For smaller tenants, one wall sign with up to 75 square feet of area would be permitted above each pedestrian entrance from the parking lot. No wall sign above a parking lot entry would exceed 28 feet in height. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Page 2 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**
- **Section 608.16(f)(1)(B) Pedestrian Entrances from Public Rights-of-Way:** Wall signs above pedestrian entries from public sidewalks would be permitted, provided that each sign does not exceed 3 square feet per foot of street frontage occupied by the use, or 150 feet per street frontage, whichever is less. No wall sign above a pedestrian entry would exceed 24 feet in height. **Please note that the associated project, Case No. 2010.0623C does not currently propose signage for pedestrian entrances from public rights-of-way. The proposed Ordinance would enable signs to be added at a future date.**
- **Section 608.16(f)(1)(C)(i) Wall Signs on Masonic And Geary Street Facades:** In addition to the wall signs outlined above, three additional wall signs would be permitted along Masonic Avenue and three additional signs would be permitted along Geary Street. The maximum area for each wall sign would be 115 square feet, and the height would not exceed 48 feet above grade. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Pages 10 and 11 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**
- **Section 608.16(f)(1)(D)(ii) Wall Signs on Building Corner at Geary and Lyon:** Wall signs would also be permitted on the building at the corner of Geary and Lyon Streets, with a maximum total



area of 500 square feet, provided that the signs do not exceed 80 feet in height on the building wall. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Page 12 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**

- **Section 608.16(f)(1)(D)(iii) Wall Signs in Existing Sign Alcoves:** Two additional wall signs would be permitted, one in each of the existing sign alcoves below the roofline on the east and west building elevations. These wall signs may not extend beyond the height of the walls to which they are attached, shall have a maximum area of 170 square feet, and may only be identifying signs for the shopping center. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Pages 13 and 14 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**

**Projecting Signs: Section 608.16(f)(3).** This new Section would allow a total of six projecting signs within the SSD, regardless of the number of businesses on the site. The new Section would allow the content of the projecting signs to include identification of the shopping center, identification of the businesses within the shopping center, and seasonal messages. Projecting signs would be allowed to extend up to 8 feet beyond the property line and up to 10 feet in height beyond the wall to which the signs are attached.

- **Section 608.16(f)(3)(C):** Five projecting signs would be permitted on Geary Street, each with two faces. The largest of the five permitted signs may have an area of up to 540 square feet with a copy area of up to 240 square feet per face, while the remaining four may have an area of up to 470 square feet and a copy area of 240 square feet per face. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Page 16 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**
- **Section 608.16(f)(3)(D):** One projecting sign would be permitted on the shopping center building frontage that faces the parking lot at the intersection of Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street. The sign may have an area of up to 752 square feet, and a maximum copy area of 240 square feet per face. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Page 16 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**

**Freestanding Signs and Towers: Section 608.16(f)(4)** . This new Section would allow up to eight new freestanding signs and an expansion of the existing central sign tower on the site, for a total of nine freestanding signs on the site.

- **Section 608.16(f)(4)(A):** One large freestanding sign would be permitted near the intersection of Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street to replace the existing freestanding sign at that location. The proposed Ordinance would allow a freestanding sign with the following characteristics: 1) up to a maximum of 35 feet in height with two faces, 2) up to a total area of 260 square feet of area per face, and 3) up to 140 square feet of copy per face. This freestanding sign would be allowed to identify both the shopping center and its tenants. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Page 27 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**
- **Section 608.16(f)(4)(B):** Up to seven freestanding directional signs, each with two faces, would be permitted at each parking lot entry. These directional signs may be a maximum of 15 feet in height, with a maximum area of 50 square feet per face and 20 square feet of copy area. **To view a graphic representation of this, please see Page 31 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**

- **Section 608.16(f)(4)(C):** Two identifying signs for the shopping center may be added to the existing central sign tower, provided that the area of copy be limited to 240 square feet per sign, and that their height not exceed that of the existing tower. **To view a graphic representation of this proposal, please see Page 39 of the Sign Program Exhibit attached as Exhibit C.**

Window signs and internal way finding signs would also be permitted within the SSD.

## REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION

The proposed Ordinance is before the Commission so that it may recommend adoption, rejection, or adoption with modifications to the Board of Supervisors.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the Commission recommend *approval with modifications* of the proposed Ordinance and adopt the attached Draft Resolution to that effect.

The Department recommends two substantive modifications regarding the proposed freestanding signs that would be permitted within the SSD:

- The Department recommends that the large freestanding sign on Masonic Avenue near O'Farrell (described in **Section 608.16(f)(4)(A)**) be reduced in height from the proposed maximum of 35 feet in height to a **maximum of 20 feet in height**. The Department recommends that the sign's maximum width not exceed its current width.
- The Department recommends that the freestanding directional signs permitted at each parking lot entry (described in **Section 608.16(f)(4)(B)**) be reduced in height from the proposed 15 feet to a **maximum height of 7 feet in height**.

In addition, the Department recommends a minor modification to the text of **Section 608.16(f)(1)(C)(i)**. The subsection includes a reference to Masonic Street, which should be referred to as Masonic Avenue.

## BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Department recognizes that the existing shopping center is an unusual suburban-style structure within an urban setting that includes both commercial sites and residential areas in the immediate vicinity. Commercial and institutional uses nearby include Trader Joe's on Masonic Avenue, the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, University of San Francisco, and, further afield, the Laurel Heights Shopping Center. The Divisadero Street commercial corridor is two blocks east of the Project Site. Commercial uses on the subject and facing blocks include office supply stores, electronics stores, restaurants, bars, dental offices, hair salons, and other professional offices. That said, the majority of the surrounding area is comprised of residential dwellings and residentially zoned districts. Buildings facing the subject block range from two- to four-stories tall with several taller buildings interspersed.

Current sign regulations for the NC-3 District do not provide sufficient visibility for businesses located within the City Center, given its particular configuration of site development. The City Center has six separate surface parking lots with separate entrances from Geary Boulevard, Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street, which are built at different grades. While there is a pedestrian entrance on Geary Boulevard, the existing configuration is largely oriented away from this major street. The separate parking lots cannot be feasibly connected and require that drivers have directional information so they

enter and park in the associated lot. In addition, the City Center has multiple entrances and levels, with commercial units on the upper and lower stories and access to stores from streets as well as from each of the six surface parking lots. Adequate signage for on-site businesses is essential to the economic stability of the City Center. As proposed, the City Center Special Sign District would permit signs that are consistent with a unified tenant sign program that would improve the viability of the existing complex. The current signage is insufficient to adequately direct customers to existing businesses from the various parking lots and pedestrian entrances.

The Department believes that the proposed sign program could be modified in order to better respond to the surrounding context of low-scale residential buildings while still improving the signage on-site to facilitate access to both the large and small commercial tenants. Lowering the maximum permitted height of the proposed freestanding sign on Masonic Avenue from 35 feet to 20 feet would serve to identify the shopping center and its tenants without overwhelming the surrounding residential area. Lowering the maximum height of the freestanding directional signs at the entrance to parking lots from 15 feet to 7 feet would better respond to the slow, low-volume residential O'Farrell Street at this location without overwhelming pedestrians.

In sum, the Department supports the proposed Ordinance to create a new Special Sign District in order to improve the signage and to facilitate a unified tenant sign program for the subject site. Modifications to the proposal as described above would better integrate the proposal with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposal to amend Planning Code Sections 602.10 (Definitions), 607.1 (Neighborhood Commercial Districts), 608 (Special Sign Districts), and add Section 608.16 ("City Center Special Sign District"), and amend Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map to establish the "City Center Special Sign District" is currently undergoing CEQA Review. Under Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, a GRE is expected to be issued on Wednesday, July 27. Planning staff will bring the required CEQA document to the Commission hearing.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

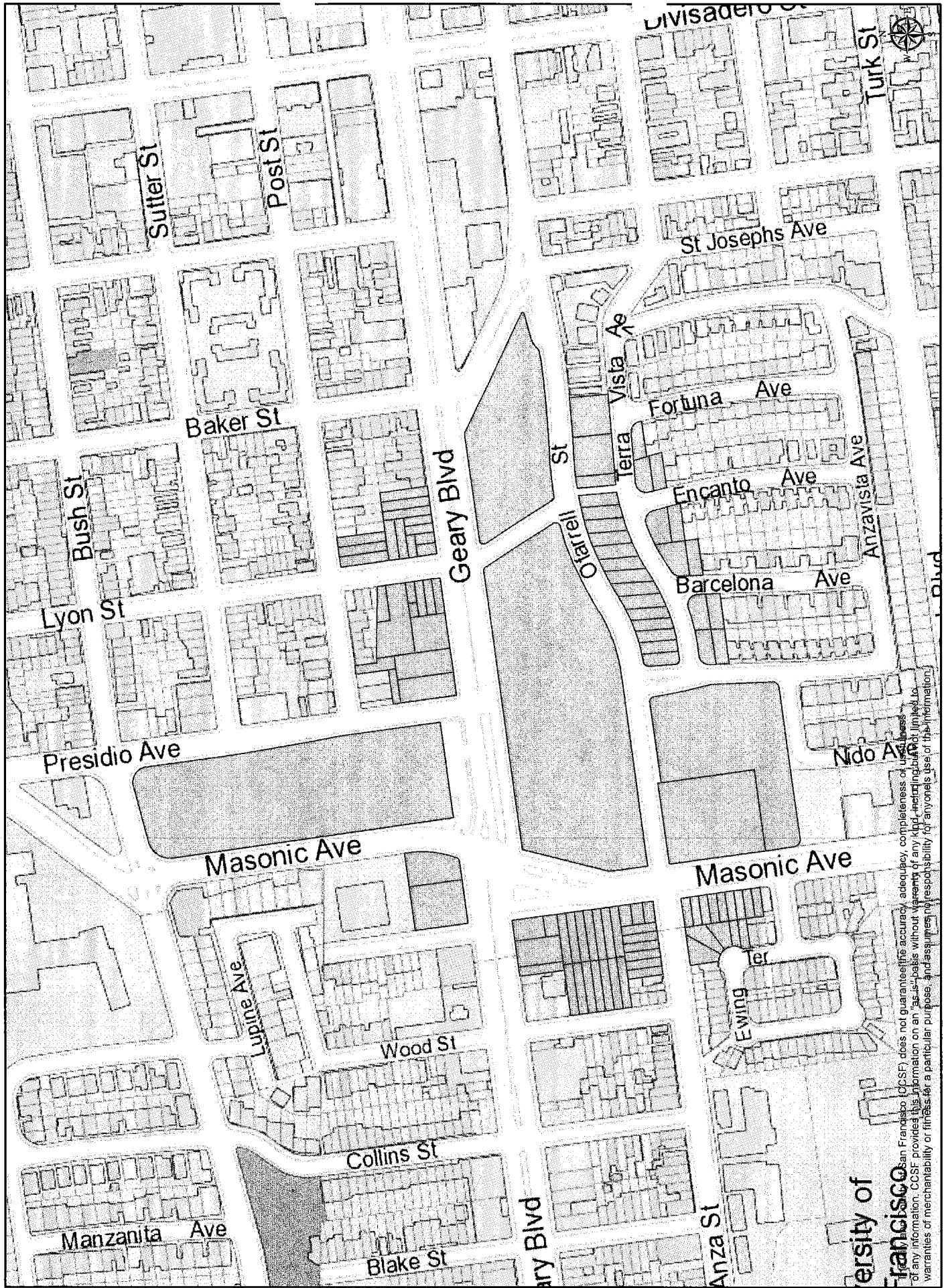
As of the date of this report, the Planning Department has received one emailed comment in regard to the proposed Ordinance. The comment was neither in support nor against the proposed Special Sign District; rather, it was in opposition to the Project's name, "City Center Special Sign District," and claimed that the Project name is not accurately descriptive of the Project location.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	<b>Recommendation of Approval with Modifications</b>
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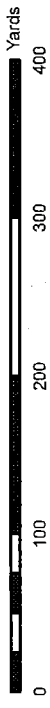
### **Attachments:**

- Exhibit A: Draft Planning Commission Resolution
- Exhibit B: Board of Supervisors File No. 11-0448
- Exhibit C: Proposed Sign Program for the associated project for the Target Corporation, as proposed in the application for Conditional Use in Case No. 2010.0623C.

Properties within 300 feet of City Center



San Francisco (CCSF) does not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, completeness or usefulness of any information. CCSF provides this information on an "as-is" basis without warranty of any kind, including but not limited to warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and assumes no responsibility for anyone's use of the information.



# REUBEN & JUNIUS<sup>LLP</sup>

September 9, 2011

## **By Hand Delivery**

Honorable Eric Mar, Supervisor  
Board of Supervisors  
City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl., Rm. 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: City Center Special Sign District/Target at Geary & Masonic  
Land Use Committee – September 19, 2011  
Board of Supervisors File No. 110548  
Our File No.: 5942.01**

Dear Supervisor Mar:

Our office represents KLA Geary, LLC, (“Owner”) owner of the City Center at 2675 Geary Boulevard at Masonic Avenue (“Property”). The Property is a 200,000 square-foot building that has been half-vacant since the departure of Mervyn’s in 2008. On July 28, 2011, the Planning Commission unanimously approved a conditional use authorization (“CU”) to allow the Target Corporation (“Target”) to open a retail store in vacant space at the Property.

In conjunction with Target’s occupancy, the Owner plans a comprehensive renovation of the Property and has agreed to fund off-site traffic improvements on Masonic Avenue. The Renovations will include an update of the façade, new landscaping, and an integrated sign program. The sign program includes new wayfinding signs to improve access to each of the Property’s separate parking lots, new blade signs to break the mass of the City Center’s Geary frontage, and other signs to improve tenant visibility and the identity of the Property as a whole. All improvements are scheduled to be completed prior to Target’s opening in March of 2013.

Supervisor Farrell is sponsoring legislation to create the City Center Special Sign District (“SSD”), which will be heard at the Land Use Committee on September 19, 2011. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended the SSD for approval on August 11, 2011, with two changes: (a) that the blade signs on Geary Boulevard be smaller than, and visually subordinate to, the existing Geary Blade sign, and (b) that the height of a freestanding sign at Masonic Avenue and O’Farrell Street (“Freestanding Sign”) be reduced

James A. Reuben | Andrew J. Junius | Kevin H. Rose | David Silverman | Sheryl Reuben<sup>1</sup> | Jay F. Drake  
Daniel A. Frattin | Lindsay M. Petrone | John Kevlin | Benjamin J. Schnayerson | Jared Eigerman<sup>2,3</sup> | John McInerney III<sup>2</sup>

1. Also admitted in New York 2. Of Counsel 3. Also admitted in Massachusetts

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to 20 feet, or about one foot lower than the current sign in the same location. The Owner has agreed to reduce the Geary Boulevard blade signs, and respectfully requests that the Land Use Committee recommend approval of the SSD with no modification of the Freestanding Sign.

**A. Summary of Project Benefits**

The new Target store and upgrades to the City Center will have many benefits for the neighborhood and the City as a whole:

- **The sign program will improve the architectural character of the Property and access to it.** At present, the City Center presents a massive and unarticulated wall along Geary Street. Along with other components of the renovation, the sign program would mitigate the apparent mass by introducing new blade sign elements along Geary Boulevard. It would also restore signs to existing façade alcoves and tower where Sears historically maintained signs. The City Center's six separate and disconnected parking lots can make it difficult for customers to navigate to the lots closest to the store they intend to visit. Directional signs at each parking entry will reduce confusion, and minimize unnecessary driving within and around the Property. **(Discussion at pp. 4-5)**
- **The Owner will fund traffic improvements to improve site access and safety on surrounding streets.** The Owner has reached an agreement in principle with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency ("MTA") to provide \$500,000 in funding to install a new left-turn signal from southbound Masonic onto O'Farrell Street, as well as a new traffic signal at Ewing Terrace and Masonic Avenue. These improvements will improve traffic circulation and safety on the streets near the Property. **(Discussion at pp. 5-6)**
- **The Project will create new jobs for San Francisco residents and generate new sales tax revenue.** The Project will create an estimated 225 construction jobs and an average of 200-250 permanent retail sales and managerial positions, with closer to 250 employees during peak shopping seasons. Both Target and the Owner are committed to working with the First Source Hiring Administration and other local hiring groups to ensure that San Francisco residents are well-represented in the workforce. Based on its nationwide experience with local hiring, Target expects roughly 85 percent of store employees to be local residents.

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In addition to providing jobs, the Project will improve the City's financial health by generating approximately \$5.4 million per year in sales tax revenue. **(Discussion at p. 6)**

- **The Project will strengthen Target's longstanding relationships with San Francisco's charities.** Every year, Target donates five percent of its income to charitable causes. The new store's manager will be able to make donations directly to local groups. Although it has not yet opened its first store in San Francisco, the City's cultural institutions and charities are longtime beneficiaries of Target's philanthropy. In 2009 Target's contributions to local San Francisco non-profit groups and educational programs equaled \$1 million in funding and gift in kind donations. Notable recipients included the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of the African Diapora, San Francisco Opera Association, San Francisco Symphony, Stop AIDS Project, San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Taproot Foundation, Raphael House, Community United Against Violence, Bayview Hunters Point YMCA, Chinatown Community Children's Center, and the Mission Learning Center.
- **The Project enjoys strong community support.** Target and the Owner have held several community outreach meetings. The first meeting was attended by about 150 people, who were overwhelmingly supportive. Several follow-up meetings were held with the Anza Vista Neighborhood Association, which is also in favor of the Project. In addition, both the Owner and Target participated in the community workshops for the redesign of Masonic Street. At the Planning Commission hearing, several residents of the Anza Vista and Ewing Terrace neighborhoods spoke in favor of the Project and/or the SSD. No one appeared to speak in opposition.

## **B. Property and Project Description**

The Property is an approximately seven-acre lot improved with a 202,529 sq. ft. shopping center and 601 parking spaces. It spans several city blocks and has frontage on four streets: Geary Boulevard, O'Farrell Street, Masonic Avenue and Lyon Street. Built in 1951 as a Sears Department Store, the Property has since been divided into smaller retail spaces.

The Project entails the reuse of existing space as a Target store, up to 120,000 square feet in size, along with Property-wide upgrades, including façade renovations, new landscaping and a comprehensive sign program to improve the identity of the Property and

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access to it. The primary objective in the renovation of the Property is to mitigate the mass of the building, modernize its appearance and improve the pedestrian experience. Key elements of these Property-wide improvements include:

- Façade Renovation. The building will be repainted with a color scheme that accentuates the modern lines of the architecture. Blade sign elements will be added to establish rhythm, movement and identity to the facades facing Geary Boulevard and Masonic Avenue. A key feature of the façade renovation will be new screen elements intended to provide an iconic element of warmth, color and texture.
- Street-front displays and entries. The project renovation will increase the amount of street-front display windows along Masonic Avenue, while maintaining and adding display cases along the Geary elevation to create visual interest at the pedestrian scale. The primary Masonic Avenue entrance will be reopened.
- Landscape, Graphics, and Signs. Landscape and graphics are important elements in the re-imagining of the Property. The overall design will include rehabilitating grade level planters and plantings along Geary Blvd., utilizing vines and graphics at existing retaining walls, improving site amenities such as benches and bicycle parking, and replacing landscape in existing planters with new drought-tolerant plants that will complement the unique architecture of the building. Moreover, new identifying signs for tenants and the City Center will be located throughout the site. Wayfinding signs will be placed at each parking entry.

Renderings showing the proposed improvements are included as **Exhibit A.**

**C. Comprehensive Sign Program and the SSD**

Current sign regulations in the NC-3 District are tailored to the small-scale stores of neighborhood shopping streets. These regulations do not permit appropriate signage for a multi-tenant retail center spread over several blocks. To facilitate signs better adapted to the Property's unique situation, Supervisor Farrell introduced legislation proposing the establishment of a City Center Special Sign District. The City Center SSD would permit signs consistent with a unified master plan that will complement the Property's architecture, increase the visibility of its tenants, and provide better guidance to motorists accessing its parking lots. (Plans showing the locations and dimensions of the sign program are included as **Exhibit B.**)

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To improve tenant visibility and provide for an attractive visual break in the large bulk of the building facade, new blade signs would be installed on the Geary Boulevard frontage. These signs were thoughtfully designed to complement the mid-century character of the building. Identifying signs for the City Center would be installed in sign alcoves in the main facade and on a sign tower where Sears formerly placed signs. Wall signs would be placed (or maintained) above pedestrian entries from parking lots and on the retaining wall at the northeast corner of the Property. Signs for major tenants would be placed on the screens near the Geary/Masonic intersection, and an identifying sign for all the Property's tenants placed at the corner of Geary and Masonic. Improved signage at parking entrances would better guide visitors to the appropriate parking lot, reducing unnecessary driving within and around the Property.

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the proposed SSD with two modifications. First, they recommended that the new blade signs on Geary Street be smaller than and visually subordinate to the existing blade sign. The Owner has agreed to this change, and it is reflected in the renderings enclosed as **Exhibit A**. Second, the Planning Commission recommended that the Freestanding Sign at the corner of Masonic Avenue and O'Farrell Street be reduced to a height of 20 feet and that it be no wider than the existing sign, which is 11.25 feet wide. The Owner requests that this sign be left in the tall, slender configuration originally proposed. The height (35 feet) is necessary to elevate the sign over visual clutter at the corner (stoplights, traffic signs, and utility poles) and to provide for a form that is consistent with the taller blade signs on the building. The taller sign proposed by the Sponsor would actually be narrower and have less copy area than the alternative suggested by the Commission.

#### **D. Transportation Improvements**

The Project will fill an existing building with a store similar to those that have operated there for sixty years. Although traffic volumes and patterns will be comparable to those in the recent past, the Owner has voluntarily committed to make numerous transportation-related improvements to the Property and surrounding streets:

- **New Signals/Signal Upgrades.** The Owner has reached an agreement in principle with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency ("MTA") to fund signal upgrades at nearby intersections, consistent with the comprehensive improvements proposed as part of the Masonic Streetscape Plan. In total, the Owner would contribute \$500,000 to fund a new left-turn signal from southbound Masonic onto O'Farrell Street, and to install a new traffic signal at Ewing Terrace and Masonic Avenue, approximately one-half block south of the Site. These

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Owner-funded improvements would advance traffic circulation and safety on the roads surrounding the Property.

- **Bicycle Parking.** The Project will increase the total number of customer bicycle parking spaces from 28 to 42. In addition, the Owner intends to work with existing tenants and Target to provide bike lockers for employees at the Property.
- **Parking Lot Access.** The current flow of traffic to and within the Property is frustrated by the fact that each of the Property's six parking lots are entirely separate, without internal connections to one another. To better guide motorists into the parking lots adjoining individual stores, freestanding signs would be installed on O'Farrell Street to indicate which stores are directly accessible from each lot. Four parking lots with a total of 351 parking spaces would be for Target, though all 601 parking spaces at the Property are non-exclusive and available to anyone visiting any of its stores.

#### **E. Providing Access to Jobs and New Sales Tax Revenue**

In May 2011, unemployment in San Francisco was 9.3 percent.<sup>1</sup> Job losses have been especially concentrated in the retail and construction sectors. Fostering new employment opportunities is therefore critical to alleviating the difficult economic circumstances many San Franciscans now face.

The Project will do just that. It will create an estimated 225 construction jobs and an average of 200-250 retail sales and managerial positions, with closer to 250 employees during peak shopping seasons. Based on Target's experience with local hiring efforts in other cities, it expects that 85 percent of its employees will be local residents. Target is committed to working with the First Source Hiring Administration and has already met with local hiring organizations like Jewish Vocational Services to ensure that San Francisco residents are well-represented at this new store.

The Project will also improve the City's financial health by creating a needed stream of sales tax revenue. Significant cuts to vital services have been made due to declining revenues. Declines in sales tax revenue have been especially substantial and are ongoing. Bringing new retail sales tax revenue into the City is critical to restoring the tax base and maintaining a minimum acceptable level of public services. Target estimates the store will generate \$5.4 million of annual sales tax revenue.

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Unemployment Rates for Metropolitan Areas, Monthly Rankings, Not Seasonally Adjusted, May 2011*, <http://www.bls.gov/web/metro/laummtrk.htm> (last visited July 11, 2011).

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F. **Conclusion**

The Project entails the reuse of space that has been occupied by national retailers since it was built in the 1950s. The Project will substantially benefit the City by creating new employment opportunities in construction and retail sectors, generating a new stream of sales tax revenue, and funding traffic improvements on Masonic Avenue and Geary Boulevard. Comprehensive upgrades to the Property, including façade renovations, landscaping and signage will improve the Property's aesthetic appeal and make it a more desirable location for businesses to locate. For all of these reasons, we respectfully request that you grant the conditional use authorization for the Target store and recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the City Center Special Sign District.

Very truly yours,

REUBEN & JUNIUS, LLP



James Reuben (cma)

Enclosures

cc: Supervisor Malia Cohen  
Supervisor Mark Farrell  
Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi  
Supervisor Scott Wiener  
Alisa Miller, Committee Clerk  
Anmarie Rodgers, Planning Department  
Sophie Hayward, Planning Department  
Adam Miller, KLA Geary, LLC  
Doris McDowall, KLA Geary, LLC  
John Dewes, Target

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**EXHIBIT LIST**

Exhibit A ..... Project Renderings

Exhibit B ..... Proposed Sign Program

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco 94102-4689  
Tel. No. 554-5184  
Fax No. 554-5163  
TDD/TTY No. 554-5227

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

### LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### SAN FRANCISCO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public, property owners, and interested parties that the Land Use & Economic Development Committee will hold a public hearing to consider the following proposed legislation that amends the Planning Code and Zoning Map:

- Date:** Monday, September 19, 2011
- Time:** 1:00 p.m.
- Location:** Committee Room 263 located at City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA
- Subject:** File No. 110448. Ordinance amending the San Francisco Planning Code by amending Sections 602.10, 607.1, 608, adding Section 608.16, and amending Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map to establish the City Center Special Sign District encompassing the real property bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street (Assessor's Block No. 1094, Lot No. 001) to allow additional projecting signs, freestanding identifying and directional signs, and to modify existing controls on business wall signs; adopting findings, including environmental findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 302 findings, and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1.

A copy of this measure and supporting data are available in the above-mentioned file in the Office of the Clerk of the Board. For more information regarding the above matter, call (415) 554-5184 or write to: Office of the Clerk of the Board, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102.

Persons who are unable to attend the hearing may submit written comments regarding this matter prior to the beginning of the hearing. These comments will become part of the official public record.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Calvillo".

Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco 94102-4689  
Tel. No. 554-5184  
Fax No. 554-5163  
TDD/TTY No. 544-5227

PROOF OF MAILING

Legislative File No. 110448

Description of Items:

September 19, 2011 @ 1:00 p.m.  
Land Use and Economic Development Committee Hearing

Ordinance amending the San Francisco Planning Code by amending Sections 602.10, 607.1, 608, adding Section 608.16, and amending Sectional Map SSD of the Zoning Map to establish the City Center Special Sign District encompassing the real property bounded by Masonic Avenue, Geary Boulevard, Lyon Street, and O'Farrell Street (Assessor's Block No. 1094, Lot No. 001), to allow additional projecting signs, freestanding identifying and directional signs and to modify existing controls on business wall signs; adopting findings, including environmental findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 302 findings, and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1.

I, Alisa Miller, an employee of the Office of the Clerk of the Board Supervisors, mailed the above described document(s) by depositing the sealed items with the United States Postal Service (USPS) with the postage fully prepaid as follows:

Date: September 9, 2011

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

USPS Location: Fox Plaza

Mailbox/Mailslot Pick-Up Times (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Upon completion, original must be filed in the above referenced file.

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2011 SEP 9 PM 3:11