

From: [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS-Supervisors](#); [BOS-Legislative Aides](#)
Cc: [Calvillo, Angela \(BOS\)](#); [Mchugh, Eileen \(BOS\)](#); [Ng, Wilson \(BOS\)](#); [Somera, Alisa \(BOS\)](#); [De Asis, Edward \(BOS\)](#); [BOS-Operations](#); [BOS Legislation, \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: Board of Supervisors November 15th agenda item - File No. 221150
Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2022 9:18:15 AM

Dear Supervisors,

Please the following communication regarding:

File No. 221150 - Resolution extending by six months the prescribed time within which the Historic Preservation Commission may respond to the landmark designation initiation from the Board of Supervisors (File No. 220550), initiating an amendment to the landmark designation of 429-431 Castro Street (aka Castro Theatre), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3582, Lot No. 085, under Article 10 of the Planning Code.

Regards,

Richard Lagunte
Office of the Clerk of the Board
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
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San Francisco, CA 94102
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Pronouns: he, him, his

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From: Jen Reck <jreck@castrolgbtq.org>
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2022 10:19 PM
To: Board of Supervisors (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Cc: Breed, Mayor London (MYR) <mayorlondonbreed@sfgov.org>; MandelmanStaff, [BOS] <mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org>; Thornhill, Jackie (BOS) <jackie.thornhill@sfgov.org>; Cheu, Brian (MYR) <brian.cheu@sfgov.org>; CPC-Commissions Secretary <commissions.secretary@sfgov.org>
Subject: Board of Supervisors November 15th agenda item

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Dear President Walton and Members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors,

We write to you as co-chairs of the Castro LGBTQ Cultural District's Land Use Committee who serve as representatives of the Castro Theatre Community Stakeholders (aka Friends of Castro Theatre). We urge you to vote "No" on the November 15th consent calendar item for extension of the landmark designation update process for the Castro Theatre.

According to the current status of this item, the Historic Preservation Commission must render its decision on the amendment to the landmark designation by December 13th, or the status will be automatically approved. During the previous 90-day extension granted to the HPC to review the proposed landmark designation, Planning Department staff conducted the necessary research and provided the Commission with their report (Article 10 Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, 10/05/22). The Commission's agenda includes this item for December 7, thus the December 13th deadline is completely feasible and the extension is not necessary to support the City's process.

Additionally, the delay to the theater's renovations and the ongoing loss of programming under Another Planet's management have already caused irreparable negative cultural impacts on the community and financial losses for legacy businesses. An additional extension will only worsen these negative impacts on the Castro neighborhood and community.

The public has already expressed clear support of extending landmark designation to include the theater's interior. At an August community meeting at the theater, attended by an estimated 800 people who filled the orchestra level and overflowed onto the balcony, audience participation and public questions both demonstrated much more opposition than support for the seat removal plan.

Moreover, Another Planet has already shown they are unwilling to take community opinions and needs seriously. Despite offers of collaboration, support, and compromise from the Friends of the Castro Theatre Coalition — which includes the three queer Cultural Districts, the Castro Merchants, the LGBT Historical Society, SF Heritage, and other organizations — Another Planet has refused to budge on their business plan. Their plan demonstrates they are not prepared to do business in the world's foremost LGBTQ neighborhood operating a cultural institution as valued worldwide as the Castro Theatre. Typically, their venues operate 10-15 nights per month and are otherwise shuttered; in 2019, the Castro Theatre operated 360 out of 365 days. Their leadership does not appear to center LGBTQ representation. Even more concerning, they have declined repeated suggestions that they seek professional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training. A September meeting facilitated

by their lobbyist Alex Tourk showed Another Planet owner Gregg Perloff in his true form: as a bully. When community representatives and local political figures gently, but firmly requested a meaningful compromise, he grew upset and displayed aggressive and dismissive behavior towards community leaders. Mr. Tourk ended the meeting with a promise to get back in touch with community representatives with a compromise proposal; alas, this proposal never came.

Our stakeholders seek to connect theatre sustainability with historic preservation and community interest; Another Planet continues to see these as mutually exclusive. Prioritization of business interests has no due place in the City's review of a historic landmark. The raked floor, aisles, and seating at the Castro Theatre are character-defining features directly tied to community cultural intangibles as outlined in the HPC report. While Another Planet's business model relies on changing this movie palace and temple of LGBTQ culture into a live concert or high end event rental venue, it is historic preservation policies that must guide this decision.

We and other members of the Friends of the Castro Theatre are available to meet with you and answer any questions you may have about the nuances of the landmark designation update. The Castro Theatre is San Francisco Landmark #100, and we recognize its significance not just to the Castro, LGBTQ, and film communities, but to the city as a whole. Our sibling cultural districts and allied vulnerable communities are watching this process closely because of what it will mean for other cultural institutions at risk in other neighborhoods.

Again, we urge you to vote "no" on the November 15th consent calendar item regarding the theater.

Respectfully,

Jen Reck
Co-Chair, Land Use Committee
Castro LGBTQ Cultural District Advisory Board

Jesse Oliver Sanford
Co-Chair, Land Use Committee
Castro LGBTQ Cultural District Advisory Board

Cc:
The Honorable Mayor London Breed

Cc:
Rafael Mandelman, District 8 Supervisor
Jackie Thornhill, District 8 Legislative Aide

Cc:

San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Cc:

Brian Cheu, Director of Community Development
Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development

Cc:

Commissioners and Staff, Historic Preservation Commission