

1 [Urging Support for the Enforcement of the Preservation and Restoration of Sacred Heart
2 Church.]
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4 Resolution urging the Department of Building Inspection to diligently monitor the
5 status and the condition of the Historic Sacred Heart Church, documenting the
6 understanding between the Megan Furth Academy and its neighbors, seeking re-
7 installation of the exterior stained glass windows and requesting the City Attorney to
8 open an investigation for the purpose of enforcing possible violation of the Building
9 and Planning codes.
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12 WHEREAS, San Francisco's unique architectural and historic character increase the
13 quality of life for all its residents, and help to make it a prime tourist destination; and,

14 WHEREAS, Sacred Heart Church has stood sentinel over the Western Addition
15 neighborhood for 108 years and is a landmark silhouette in the city's landscape having been
16 designed by famed architect Thomas J. Welsh who blended Lombard and Classical Revival
17 Styles and is his last standing ecclesiastical work in San Francisco; and,

18 WHEREAS, Sacred Heart Church was built by the Irish and became the largest Irish
19 parish west of Chicago and subsequently served all immigrant groups including Italians,
20 Latino, African-Americans, and Filipino-Americans during both prosperous and difficult times;
21 and,

22 WHEREAS, Sacred Heart Church is still loved for its architectural aspects and rich
23 history of service to a broad range of San Franciscans reflecting changing times and the
24 diversity of The City having served the Western Addition community and San Francisco since
25 1896;and,

1 WHEREAS, Sacred Heart Church, where generations of San Franciscans gathered as
2 a community and celebrated the passages of their lives, the historic building is seasoned with
3 the very spirit of San Francisco and serves as a living reminder of the enduring nature of San
4 Franciscans having survived the 1906 earthquake; and,

5 WHEREAS, The interior artscape of Sacred Heart is as fine as any grand cathedral
6 anywhere being embellished with rare frescoes, Carrera marble altars, delicate ceiling murals,
7 and the exquisite Fritz-Mayer rose windows; and,

8 WHEREAS, Sacred Heart Church was sold to Megan Furth Academy in 2005 with the
9 understanding that Megan Furth Academy would preserve, at a minimum, the exterior of the
10 church thereby maintaining the character of the neighborhood, and,

11 WHEREAS, The National Register of Historic Places Commission of the Office of
12 Historic Preservation met on January 29th, 2010 to discuss the local level of significance of
13 Sacred Heart Church, and,

14 WHEREAS, On April 5th, 2010, the Office of Historic Preservation of the California
15 Department of Parks and Recreation notified Kelley & VerPlanck Historical Resources
16 Consulting, LLC that Sacred Heart Church had been inducted into the National Register of
17 Historical Places (National Register) on March 23, 2010, a copy of said April 5th 2010 letter is
18 on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 100765, which is hereby declared to
19 be a part of this resolution as if set forth fully herein; and,

20 WHEREAS, Placement on the National Register affords a property the honor of
21 inclusion in the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation and provides a
22 degree of protection from adverse effects from federally funded or licensed projects; and,

23 WHEREAS, A project that may cause substantial adverse changes in the significance
24 of a registered property may require compliance with local ordinances or the California
25 Environmental Quality Act, under which "substantial adverse changes" include demolition,

1 destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of an historical resource would
2 be impaired; and

3 WHEREAS, On May 26, 2010, The City was notified that the north Rose window of the
4 church was missing and open to the elements; and,

5 WHEREAS, Further investigation of the site revealed that an apparent architectural
6 salvage operation was underway; and,

7 WHEREAS, According to the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for the Treatment
8 of Historic Properties", the subject of Preservation Statute 2 notes that "the historic character
9 of a property will be retained and preserved" and Preservation Statute 4 notes that "changes
10 to a property that have acquired historical significance in their own right will be retained and
11 preserved"; and,

12 WHEREAS, Simple visual inspection as well as eyewitness accounts indicate that
13 Sacred Heart Church has seen alterations to both its façade and interior the last two weeks in
14 apparent violation of both the spirit of the 2005 understanding as well as standards for
15 treatment of registered historic resources; and,

16 WHEREAS, The architectural salvage operation was in apparent violation of relevant
17 building and planning codes, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) issued Notice of
18 Violation June 2, 2010, following up with Stop-work order on June 3, 2010; documentary
19 evidence of said DBI actions is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in
20 File No. ¹⁰⁰⁷⁶⁵, which is hereby declared to be a part of this resolution as if set forth fully
21 herein; and

22 WHEREAS, It appears that the architectural salvage operation was completed over the
23 weekend of June 5-6, 2010 in violation of DBI express orders; now, therefore be it
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1 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County decries the
2 behavior of those responsible for demolishing parts of an historically significant building; and,
3 be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
5 hereby declares its unqualified support for preserving the character of the neighborhood
6 anchored by Sacred Heart Church and lauds the work of the Save our Sacred Heart
7 organization for its tenacious preservation efforts; and, be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
9 strongly urges the parties responsible for removal of the stained glass windows of Sacred
10 Heart be returned to their original, historic place in the façade of the church; and, be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
12 hereby requests that the City Attorney open an investigation into the matter of the apparent
13 architectural salvage of Sacred Heart Church and pursue all remedies available in equity and
14 at law to, if possible, compel the restoration of the stained glass windows and deter further
15 non-compliance with relevant city and State law pertaining to historical structures; and, be it
16 further

17 RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors send a copy of this Resolution
18 to the Department of Building Inspection, the San Francisco City Attorney, the owner of
19 record of the Sacred Heart Church located at 554 Fillmore St., and to the President of the
20 Save our Sacred Heart organization.