

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation -1801 Green Street (aka Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library)]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 1801 Green Street (aka Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001, as a Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making public necessity, convenience and welfare findings under Planning Code, Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.

Existing Law

Under Article 10, Section 1004 of the Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors may, by ordinance, designate an individual structure that has special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value as a City landmark. Unless prohibited by state law, once a structure has been named a landmark, any construction, alteration, removal or demolition for which a City permit is required necessitates a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission. (Planning Code § 1006; Charter of the City and County of San Francisco, § 4.135.) Thus, landmark designation generally affords a high degree of protection to historic and architectural structures of merit in the City. There are currently more than 290 individual landmarks in the City under Article 10, in addition to structures and districts in the downtown area that are protected under Article 11. (See App. A to Article 10.)

Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance amends the Planning Code to add a new historic landmark to the list of individual landmarks under Article 10: 1801 Green Street (aka Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001.

The ordinance finds that the Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library is eligible for local designation as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Specifically, designation of the Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library is proper given its association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between class-based groups. The building is associated with the Carnegie Library Grant Program, established by wealthy Progressive industrialist Andrew Carnegie in 1886 and intended to fund the construction of libraries for the use of the public. Through this program, Carnegie funded the construction of 1,681 libraries across the United States, including seven Carnegie libraries in San Francisco.

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The Golden Gate Valley Library was designed in the Neoclassical style as part of the City Beautiful Movement and conforms to the aesthetic ideals of the Carnegie Corporation, which made recommendations on the construction and design of Carnegie-funded libraries. Designation of the Golden Gate Valley Library is also proper as it is an excellent example of an institutional building designed in the Neoclassical architectural style in San Francisco by master architect Ernest Coxhead.

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

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