

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 11, 2021

To: Jonas Ionin, Commission Secretary, Historic Preservation Commission
Rich Hillis, Director, Planning Department

From:  Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board, Office of the Clerk of the Board

Subject: Initiating Landmark Designation - 2261 Fillmore Street (aka the Clay Theatre) - Approval of 90-Day Extension for Historic Preservation Commission Review (File No. 210726)

On July 27, 2021, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 383-21, sponsored by Supervisors Stefani, Peskin, Preston, Melgar, Safai, and Chan, and approved by Mayor London N. Breed on August 4, 2021.

A copy of the Resolution is being forwarded to you pursuant to Planning Code, Section 1004.1.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Erica Major, Assistant Clerk, at (415) 554-4441 or by email at: Erica.Major@sfgov.org.

cc: Scott Sanchez, Zoning Administrator
Lisa Gibson, Environmental Review Officer
Corey Teague, Zoning Administrator
Devyani Jain, Deputy Environmental Review Officer
Adam Varat, Acting Director of Citywide Planning
AnMarie Rodgers, Legislative Affairs
Aaron Starr, Manager of Legislative Affairs
Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, Deputy City Attorney
Joy Navarrete, Major Environmental Analysis
Laura Lynch, Environmental Planning

EM: LW: AS

1 [Initiating Landmark Designation - 2261 Fillmore Street (aka the Clay Theatre) - Approval of
2 90-Day Extension for Historic Preservation Commission Review]

3 **Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for**
4 **2261 Fillmore Street (aka the Clay Theatre), Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 0630, Lot No.**
5 **002; and extending the prescribed time within which the Historic Preservation**
6 **Commission may render it’s decision by 90 days, for a total of 180 days**

7

8 WHEREAS, Under Planning Code Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by
9 resolution initiate landmark designation; and

10 WHEREAS, the 380-seat Clay Theatre, also known as “The Clay,” located at 2261
11 Fillmore Street, Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 0630, Lot No. 002, is one of the oldest single
12 screen nickelodeon movie houses in San Francisco; and

13 WHEREAS, the building was constructed strictly as a movie theatre, with no backstage
14 for other types of performances; and

15 WHEREAS, the Naify family, legendary film impresarios, renovated the nickelodeon in
16 1913 and opened the venture as the Regent; and

17 WHEREAS, the theatre, later known as The Avalon, was renamed in 1935 under
18 Herbert Rosener as The Clay International and became one of the most important
19 destinations for foreign and independent films throughout the 20th century; and

20 WHEREAS, theatre architect Vincent Raney later remodeled The Clay Theatre in 1946
21 and it became a top destination for midnight movies; and

22 WHEREAS, in 1972, the Clay Theatre made history and hosted San Francisco’s first-
23 ever midnight movie screening with the premiere of John Waters’ “Pink Flamingos”; and

24

25

1 WHEREAS, in 1985, the Clay Theatre hosted the premiere of the spaghetti western
2 parody “Lust in the Dust,” which starred Tab Hunter and Cesar Romero, who also attended
3 the screening, and the movie would later become a cult classic; and

4 WHEREAS, The Clay Theatre became renowned for showing foreign and art-house
5 content, including late night showings of “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” and Tommy
6 Wiseau’s “The Room,” which drew hundreds of patrons each month; and

7 WHEREAS, many of San Francisco’s single-screen movie theatres have closed or
8 have been converted to other uses in the past few decades; and

9 WHEREAS, these single-screen movie theatres are important and unique cultural
10 institutions in San Francisco; and

11 WHEREAS, the Clay Theatre’s relatively small scale reflects its age and origins as a
12 nickelodeon; and

13 WHEREAS, the Clay Theatre’s physical structure, with art deco design elements and
14 an elegant, simply decorated auditorium that recalls a jewel box, also holds unique
15 architectural and aesthetic interest and value; now, therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby initiates landmark designation of
17 2261 Fillmore Street (aka the Clay Theatre), Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 0630, Lot No. 002;
18 and be it

19 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Planning Department
20 prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission
21 for its consideration of the unique historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of
22 the property; and be it

23 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation
24 Commission consider whether the property warrants landmark designation, and submit its
25 recommendation to the Board according to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That Planning Code, Section 1004.2(b), requires the Historic
2 Preservation Commission to respond to landmark designation initiations from the Board within
3 90 days, but that the Board of Supervisors may, by resolution, extend the time within which
4 the Historic Preservation Commission is to render its decision; therefore, in order to allow the
5 Planning Department more time to complete its review of this landmark designation, this
6 Resolution shall also serve as a 90-day extension of that deadline, for a total of 180 days to
7 respond starting from the transmittal date.

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City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Tails
Resolution

File Number: 210726

Date Passed: July 27, 2021

Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for 2261 Fillmore Street (aka the Clay Theatre), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0630, Lot No. 002; and extending the prescribed time within which the Historic Preservation Commission may render it's decision by 90 days, for a total of 180 days.

July 26, 2021 Land Use and Transportation Committee - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE

July 26, 2021 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED AS AMENDED AS A COMMITTEE REPORT

July 27, 2021 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

File No. 210726

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 7/27/2021 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Handwritten signature of Angela Calvillo

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

Handwritten signature of London N. Breed

London N. Breed
Mayor

8/4/21

Date Approved