



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Article 11 Initiation Case Report Conservation District Boundary Change; Change in Designation HEARING DATE: MARCH 21, 2018

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*Case No.* 2018-002775DES  
*Project:* Kearny Market Mason Sutter Conservation District  
*Re:* Initiation of Change in Article 11 Designation and Article 11  
Conservation District Boundary Change  
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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The case before the Historic Preservation Commission is initiation and recommendation to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors the designation of 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street (Hotel Lankershim), an unrated building, to a Category IV (Contributing) resource pursuant to Section 1106 of the Planning Code; and the change in the boundary of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District to include 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street (Hotel Lankershim), 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 898 Mission Street (Pickwick Hotel) pursuant to Section 1107 of the Planning Code.

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Central SoMa Historic Resources Survey (2013-2014) determined numerous properties as eligible for a change in Article 11 designation, including 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The survey also identified 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and 898 Mission Street as eligible additions to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District. The Planning Department (Department) conducted the survey in response to the Central SoMa Plan in order to provide information on the location and distribution of resources within the Central SoMa Plan Area for the purposes of long-range policy planning and for use in permit processing, environmental review, and making recommendations for official nominations to historic registers. In conjunction with the survey, the Department developed the Central SoMa Historic Context Statement (2015) in order to provide a framework for consistent, informed evaluations of the area's age-eligible properties that had not been previously surveyed or for which survey information was incomplete.

- The Central SoMa Plan Area is comprised of approximately 28 blocks bounded by Market Street to the north, Townsend Street to the south, Second Street to the east, and Sixth Street to the west.
- The Central SoMa Historic Survey examined a total of 134 parcels within the Central SoMa Plan area that had not been previously surveyed, or for which prior survey information was incomplete. Of these, 72 parcels were not documented, typically because the properties were

vacant or not age eligible. A total of 31 properties were determined eligible for the California Register.

- Based on the findings of the historic context statement and surveys, the Central SoMa Plan recommends policies that would recognize and protect historic resources. Such policies include protecting Significant and Contributory cultural heritage properties through designation to Article 11 of the Planning Code.
- The Historic Preservation Commission adopted the survey and historic context statement for the Central SoMa Plan on March 16, 2016.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS**

The Planning Department has determined that actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (specifically in this case, Article 11 designation) are exempt from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class Eight - Categorical).

### **REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTIONS**

The items before the Historic Preservation Commission are:

- 1) Consideration of initiation of designation of 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street as Category IV (Contributing) building.
- 2) Consideration of initiation of a boundary change to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District to include 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street; 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 898 Mission Street.

On each of the items, the HPC may choose to take an action in the form of a resolution. The HPC may approve, modify, or disapprove the initiation of the proposed boundary change or designation.

Alternatively, the Commission may request additional research and information from the Planning Department to justify any of these three actions, and may continue the discussion to a future hearing pending submittal of any additional information the Commission may require.

### **OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED**

If the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) decides to initiate the Boundary Change to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Street Conservation District and/or the designation and change of designation of properties under Article 11 at the March 21, 2018 hearing, these cases will be brought back to the HPC at a future hearing. At such future hearing, the HPC shall consider and have opportunity to act upon the nomination of the Boundary Change and/or Designation and Change of Designation of Buildings and shall forward that recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

### **PREVIOUS ACTIONS**

The Historic Preservation Commission adopted the Central SoMa survey and historic context statement for the Central SoMa Plan on March 16, 2016.

### Central SoMa Historic Context Statement

The Central SoMa Historic Context Statement (2015) was developed as part of the Central SoMa Plan effort to provide a historical foundation and framework for consistent evaluations of the area's age-eligible properties. The context statement's study area extended beyond the boundaries of the Central SoMa Plan Area and documented the history of SoMa, including significant themes, design elements, architectural styles, and character-defining features. The study developed significance and integrity thresholds and included analysis of conservation, landmark and historic districts and their relationship to previously undocumented buildings.

### Central SoMa Survey

The Central SoMa Historic Resource Survey (2013-2014) involved gathering baseline property information for all buildings located within the Central SoMa Plan Area that had not been addressed by prior historic resources surveys, and those that had not been previously assigned California Historic Resource Status Codes (CHRSC). The Central SoMa Historic Survey examined a total of 134 parcels within the Central SoMa Plan Area. Of these, 72 parcels were not documented, typically because the properties were vacant or not age eligible. A total of 31 properties were determined eligible for the California Register.

## **APPLICABLE PRESERVATION STANDARDS**

### **ARTICLE 11 – Conservation District Boundary Change**

Planning Code Section 1107 authorizes the designation or boundary change of a Conservation District through amendment of Section 1103.1 of Article 11 if they contain "...substantial concentrations of buildings that together create subareas of special architectural and aesthetic importance" (Section 1103). The designation of an area of the C-3 District as a Conservation District or the change of District boundaries may be initiated by motion of the Board of Supervisors, by resolution of the Planning Commission or the Historic Preservation Commission, by application of the owners of greater than 25 percent of the structures in the area proposed for designation, or by any historic preservation organization or group, or upon the verified application of at least 150 registered voters of the City. Once initiated, the proposed designation is referred to the Planning Commission for review and comment on the designation or boundary change of a Conservation District.

If the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation or boundary change, a copy of the resolution of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors, which holds a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation or boundary change (Section 1107(d)). If the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation or boundary change, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal.

### **ARTICLE 11 – Designation of Buildings**

Planning Code Section 1106 authorizes the designation or change of designation of a building through amendment of Appendices A, B, C and D of Article 11. Such designation or change of designation of a building may be initiated by motion of the Board of Supervisors, by resolution of the Planning Commission or the Historic Preservation Commission [former Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board], by application of the owner of the affected property, or by application of any historic preservation organization or group, or by the application of at least 50 registered voters of the City.

If the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation, a copy of the resolution of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors, which holds a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation (Section 1106(d)). If the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal.

Pursuant to Planning Code Section 1106(h), the designation of a building may be changed if changes in Conservation District boundaries warrant such reclassification, or if physical changes to the building warrant such reclassification, or if due to passage of time, the building has become at least 40 years old and, therefore, eligible for reclassification, or if new information makes the building eligible for reclassification.

## OWNER NOTIFICATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The following includes a timeline of the notifications, announcements, and outreach activities that have occurred for the Central SoMa Plan.

- **The Central SoMa Historic Resources Survey web page** was launched on the Department's website in March 2014. The web page includes links to the draft Central SoMa Historic Context Statement, as well as a map illustrating the draft findings of the Central SoMa Historic Resources Survey. The website remains active and can be accessed at: <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=3964>.
- **Public outreach meetings** were held at the SPUR Urban Center on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015, to present the draft Central SoMa Historic Context Statement and the draft findings of the Central SoMa Historic Resources Survey. In preparation for this meeting, postcards were mailed to the owners of surveyed properties informing them that the draft survey findings were available for review on the project website, and inviting them to attend the outreach meeting at the Spur Urban Center. A second public meeting at the SPUR Urban Center was held on December 9, 2015 to solicit feedback on public benefits, including historic preservation. A postcard was mailed to public on February 29, 2016 in anticipation of the adoption hearing on March 16, 2016.
- **Presentation to SF Heritage** regarding the draft historic context statement and survey findings in July 2015.
- **Meetings with the Central SoMa Survey Advisory Group**, on October 3, 2014 and January 15, 2014, The purpose of these meetings was to solicit comments and suggestions based on the draft *Central SoMa Historic Context Statement* and the draft findings of the Central SoMa Historic Resources Survey.
- **Notification of Historic Preservation Commission** initiation hearing was mailed to property owners on March 1, 2018.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Since hearing notice was mailed out, the Department has not received comments or inquiries from the public.

## STAFF ANALYSIS



*The Hotel Lankershim at left, and the Pickwick Hotel at right (Google Maps)*



*Pickwick Hotel Garage, 898 Mission Street (Planning Department)*

The change in the boundary of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Street Conservation District is proposed to include 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and 898 Mission Street. The buildings are located directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the District. Designed by the Reid Brothers, the Lankershim Hotel (55 5<sup>th</sup> Street) was constructed in 1913 for James B. Lankershim, who had previously constructed another Hotel Lankershim in downtown Los Angeles in 1905. The reinforced concrete frame building is clad in rusticated stucco and features restrained Classical Revival ornamentation. The building retains excellent

integrity on the upper floors. The ground floor rustication is not original. The building is not currently listed on any local, state or national historic register.

The Pickwick Hotel (67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street) and garage (898 Mission Street), constructed in 1923, is an excellent example of Gothic Revival style architecture. The building is currently a Category I (Significant Building). The base of the eight-story reinforced concrete building is clad in buff-colored terra cotta. The upper stories are clad in brick with terra cotta trim. Gothic Revival ornament includes statuary niches and pendant tracery on the niche hoods. The garage is similarly ornamented and is also clad in terra cotta tile and features two arched garage door openings, pilasters projecting above the building's roofline, and punched window openings on the upper level.

The height, scale, massing, and design of 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and 898 Mission Street relate to the established historical context and architectural character of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Street Conservation District, which consists of multi-bay buildings ranging in height from four to eight stories. Buildings in the district are almost exclusively built to their front property lines and frequently feature two or three-part vertical compositions consisting of a base and a shaft or a base, shaft and capital. Cladding materials consist of terra cotta, brick, stone and stucco primarily in light to medium earth tones. Classical, Renaissance and Gothic detailing can be found on buildings throughout the Conservation District.

### **Case No. 2018-002775DES: Initiate Change of Article 11 Conservation District Boundary**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends that the HPC adopt a resolution to initiate a Boundary Change to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Street Conservation District to expand the district to include two (2) additional properties along Mission and 5th streets.

#### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- The district expansion meets the eligibility requirements for listing on both the California Register of Historical Places and as a San Francisco Article 11 Conservation District.
- The proposed district expansion contains two (2) Significant and Contributory Buildings which possesses substantial overall architectural, aesthetic or historic qualities justifying additional controls in order to protect and promote those qualities as required in Planning Code Section 1103.
- The two properties advance the basic principles of the Downtown Plan and reinforce the unique sense of place provided by the Conservation District. The proposed expanded area contains some notable buildings and relates strongly to the context of the District and strengthens its overall historic character.
- The Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Street Conservation District is cohesive concentration of early twentieth century commercial architecture that exhibits a high level of historic architectural integrity and create a cohesive district of four-to-eight story masonry buildings of similar scale, massing, setback, materials, fenestration pattern, style, and architectural detailing.

## **Case No. 2018-002775DES: Initiate Change of Article 11 Designation**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends that the HPC adopt a resolution to initiate a change in the boundary of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation district to include 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and 898 Mission Street and to initiate a change of designation for one (1) property from unrated to Category IV (Contributing) under Article 11 of the Planning Code.

### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 67-99 5<sup>th</sup> Street/898 Mission Street, currently designated as a Category I (Significant) would meet the historic context of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District.
- 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street is currently designated as a unrated building and appears to meet the criteria for designation as a Category IV (Contributing) as specified in Planning Code Section 1102(a-e).
- 55 5<sup>th</sup> Street would be located within the boundaries of a Conservation District and would meet the historic context of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District, and should be appropriately designated as a Category IV (Contributing) building as specified in Planning Code Section 1102(d).
- The properties proposed for designation advance the basic principles of the Downtown Plan and reinforce the unique sense of place of the Plan Area. The Downtown Plan of the San Francisco General Plan contains the following relevant objectives and policies:

OBJECTIVE 12: Conserve resources that provide continuity with San Francisco's past.

POLICY 12.1: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural, or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

POLICY 12.2: Use care in remodeling significant older buildings to enhance rather than weaken their original character.

- The properties proposed for designation advance the basic principles and objectives of the Central SoMa Plan. The Central SoMa Plan contains the following relevant objectives and policies:

OBJECTIVE 7.2: Support the preservation, recognition, and wellbeing of the neighborhood's cultural heritage resources.

OBJECTIVE 7.3.2: Support the preservation of buildings and features that reflect the industrial and arts legacy of the neighborhood.

OBJECTIVE 7.4: Prevent demolition of or insensitive alterations to cultural heritage resources in the built environment.

OBJECTIVE 7.4.2: Protect “Significant” and “Contributory” cultural heritage properties through designation to Article 11 of the Planning Code.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix E to Article 11 Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District

Map of Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District

Draft Resolution to Initiate Change in Article 11 Designation and Article 11 Conservation District  
Boundary Change