

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco 94102-4689
Tel. No. 554-5184
Fax No. 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. 554-5227

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tom DeCaigny, Director of Cultural Affairs, Arts Commission
Susan Pontious, Director of Public Art Program, Arts Commission
Mohammed Nuru, Director, Public Works

FROM: *ll*
fn Alisa Somera, Legislative Deputy Director
Land Use and Transportation Committee

DATE: February 6, 2017

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee has received the following proposed legislation, introduced by Supervisor Peskin on January 31, 2017:

File No. 170132

Resolution authorizing the placement of thirteen street plaques commemorating historical landmarks in the Top of Broadway Community Benefit District, at the sidewalks located along the Broadway Street Corridor and Columbus Avenue, in accordance with Public Works Code, Sections 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance; and accepting the named plaques as a gift to the City and County of San Francisco.

If you have comments or reports to be included with the file, please forward them to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: alisa.somera@sfgov.org.

c: Rebekah Krell, Arts Commission
Sharon Page Ritchie, Arts Commission
Frank Lee, Public Works
John Thomas, Public Works
Lena Liu, Public Works

1 [Commemorative Street Plaques - Historical Markers - Top of Broadway Community Benefit
District]

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3 **Resolution authorizing the placement of thirteen street plaques commemorating**
4 **historical landmarks in the Top of Broadway Community Benefit District, at the**
5 **sidewalks located along the Broadway Street Corridor and Columbus Avenue, in**
6 **accordance with Public Works Code, Sections 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street**
7 **Plaque Ordinance; and accepting the named plaques as a gift to the City and County of**
8 **San Francisco.**

9
10 WHEREAS, Italian American Bank, located at 270 Columbus Ave, has been identified
11 as an established landmark financial institution; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1899, Andrea Sbarboro opened the second bank for the Italian
13 community with a cooperative structure similar to modern day credit unions; and

14 WHEREAS, Sbarbora was a member of the group of community leaders rebuilding San
15 Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire; and

16 WHEREAS, The North Beach location was opened on January 2, 1923, and the
17 original vaults remain in the building's basement; and

18 WHEREAS, The Italian American Bank was eventually absorbed by the Bank of
19 America; and

20 WHEREAS, 12 Adler located at 12 Saroyan Place (formerly Adler Street), is now
21 known as the legendary North Beach Dive Bar; and

22 WHEREAS, San Francisco's gay bars found their roots in the Barbary Coast; and

23 WHEREAS, In the 1950's, 12 Adler and the adjoining 529 Broadway were two lesbian
24 bars; and

1 WHEREAS, Tommy Vasu, the first known lesbian to legally own a bar in San
2 Francisco, operated both establishments; and

3 WHEREAS, It closed in 1954 as a result of a citywide crackdown on gay bars; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1968, the eclectic Spec's 12 Adler Museum Café opened, and became
5 a favorite watering hole for strippers, longshoreman and artists; and

6 WHEREAS, Devil's Acre & Battle Row located at the area bounded by Kearny Street,
7 Columbus Avenue, and Broadway Street was the home of the worst criminals in town; and

8 WHEREAS, Saloons, gambling dens, brothels, and opium dens, the Devil's Acre was
9 the most notorious section on the Barbary Coast; and

10 WHEREAS, The word "hoodlum" originated here, referring to ruffians of the area; and

11 WHEREAS, Battle Row was home of the infamous underground saloon, The
12 Slaughterhouse, later renamed The Morgue after the owner smashed a bottle over the head
13 of a drunkard; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1851 concerned citizens formed the first Vigilance Committee to clean
15 up the area; and

16 WHEREAS, Terrific Street and the International Settlement located at Pacific Avenue
17 between Kearny and Montgomery Streets was known as the birthplace of San Francisco jazz;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In the 1890s, musicians nicknamed Pacific Ave from Montgomery to
20 Stockton "Terrific Street" because of the quality of music played in the bars and dance halls;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Sarah Bernhardt and Al Jolson performed at the Hippodrome, and Terrific
23 Street was home to San Francisco's first jazz clubs; and

24 WHEREAS, In the 1930s it became an entertainment zone known as the International
25 Settlement, and was popular until the late 1950s; and

1 WHEREAS, The Lusty Lady located at 1030 Kearny Street, was known as the first
2 successfully unionized sex workers in America; and

3 WHEREAS, The Lusty Lady opened in 1976 as a theater showing 16mm adult films in
4 private booths; and

5 WHEREAS, Live dancers were introduced in 1983; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1997, the employees formed the Exotic Dancers Union, the only sex
7 worker organization of its kind; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2003, the employees of The Lusty Lady purchased the business and
9 converted it to a worker-owned cooperative; and

10 WHEREAS, The Lusty Lady closed in September, 2013; and

11 WHEREAS, Mona's Club 440 located at 440 Broadway also was known as "Where
12 Girls Will Be Boys"; and

13 WHEREAS, Mona's moved to 440 Broadway in 1939, and is credited with being the
14 first openly lesbian bar in the United States; and

15 WHEREAS, The club featured female entertainers dressed as men, and was popular
16 during World War II; and

17 WHEREAS, Mona's became Ann's 440 Club in 1948, and comedian Lenny Bruce and
18 singer Johnny Mathis both got their starts here; and

19 WHEREAS, Mabuhay Gardens located 443 Broadway Street, was once known as the
20 City's World Famous Punk Rock Palace; and

21 WHEREAS, Originally a Filipino restaurant and club, the Mabuhay Gardens became
22 the premier venue for punk rock in San Francisco in the late 1970's and early 80's; and

23 WHEREAS, Blondie, Joan Jett, The Ramones, Iggy Pop, Patti Smith, and Devo took
24 the stage at the "Fab Mab", and the Sex Pistols played their final show here in 1978; and

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1 WHEREAS, Comedians Whoopi Goldberg and Robin Williams also performed at the
2 Mabuhay Gardens, which closed in 1986; and

3 WHEREAS, The Jazz Workshop located at 473 Broadway Street, was the Center of
4 North Beach Jazz Scene; and

5 WHEREAS, Popular in the 1950s and 60s, The Jazz workshop featured jazz artists like
6 Charlie Mingus, Stan Getz, John Coltrane, Dizzy Gillespie, and Miles Davis; and

7 WHEREAS, Between 1961 and 1964 several “Live at the Jazz Workshop” albums were
8 recorded here; and

9 WHEREAS, Comedian Lenny Bruce also performed at the Jazz Workshop, and in
10 1961 was arrested here on obscenity charges; and

11 WHEREAS, The Jazz Workshop closed in the late 60s; and

12 WHEREAS, Ristorante Fior d’Italia located at 492 Broadway, was known as “America’s
13 Oldest Italian Restaurant”; and

14 WHEREAS, Opened May 1, 1886, originally to serve the clients of a Broadway
15 bordello; burned down in 1893, and its replacement was lost in the 1906 earthquake and fire;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Legend has it they served food out of a tent for a year while a larger
18 location was being built that would serve 750 diners and 1500 meals a day; and

19 WHEREAS, “American’s Oldest Italian Restaurant” eventually relocated to Washington
20 Square, where it was a North Beach mainstay for more than 50 years; and

21 WHEREAS, El Matador located at 492 Broadway, was “The Town’s Favorite Nightcap
22 Spot”; and

23 WHEREAS, San Francisco native Barnaby Conrad became a bullfighter in Spain,
24 where he was known as the “California Kid”; and

25

1 WHEREAS, He wrote the best seller “Matador”, and used the royalties to open a bar
2 and restaurant in 1953; and

3 WHEREAS, It attracted local journalists, Hollywood stars, authors, and politicians; and

4 WHEREAS, Duke Ellington and Hoagy Carmichael performed at El Matador, which
5 Playboy magazine called “the town’s favorite nightcap spot”; and

6 WHEREAS, Barnaby Conrad sold El Matador in the 1960s; and

7 WHEREAS, Peter Macchiarini Steps located the 1100 block of Kearny Street honoring
8 a San Francisco legend; and

9 WHEREAS, Bordering the infamous neighborhood of Sydney Town (bound by Kearny,
10 Sansome, Green and Broadway Streets), populated by former convicts from the penal
11 colonies of Australia; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2001, these steps were renamed in honor of Italian-American,
13 Modernist Jeweler, and Sculptor, Peter Macchiarini (1909-2001); and

14 WHEREAS, Macchiarini began making jewelry in 1936, and for more than 50 years
15 maintained an art studio and jewelry shop on Upper Grant Avenue in North Beach; and

16 WHEREAS, Finocchio’s located at 506 Broadway Street was “America’s Most Unusual
17 Nightclub”; and

18 WHEREAS, Opened in 1936, this cabaret featured female impersonators; and

19 WHEREAS, “Welcome to the world-famous Finocchio’s, where the most beautiful
20 women onstage are men”, was the club’s well-known introduction; and

21 WHEREAS, “Impersonators” termed used by the Nightclub, had both gay and straight,
22 performed in elaborate drag shows; and

23 WHEREAS, Welcomed were interracial audiences during a time of segregation, and
24 sexual minorities before gay liberation; and

25 WHEREAS, Finocchio’s closed in 1999 after 63 years; and

1 WHEREAS, The Old Broadway Jail located at 534 Broadway Street and Romolo Place
2 (formerly Pinkney) is San Francisco's First County Jail in 1851; and

3 WHEREAS, The jail was damp and dark, with 60 cells that held approximately 200
4 prisoners; and

5 WHEREAS, Executions took place in the jail's enclosed yard; and

6 WHEREAS, By the start of the 20th century, the Broadway Jail had become severely
7 dilapidated and escapes were common; and

8 WHEREAS, The building was seriously damaged in the 1906 earthquake and prisoners
9 were transported to Alcatraz; and

10 WHEREAS, The Old Broadway Jail was destroyed by dynamite shortly thereafter; and

11 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors declares its intent to place the thirteen historical
12 marker commemorative street plaques on the sidewalks alongside Broadway Street Corridor
13 and Columbus Avenue in honor of the colorful history of Broadway Street since the 1800s and
14 in remembrance of the iconic establishments that were once the celebrated figures of San
15 Francisco entertainment industry way ahead of its time; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors accepts thirteen historical marker
17 commemorative plaques in honor of the historical landmarks located along Broadway Street
18 Corridor and Columbus Avenue as a gift to the City and County of San Francisco from the
19 Top of Broadway Community Benefit District; and, be it

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with Public
21 Works Code, Section 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance, authorizes
22 the placement of the thirteen historical marker commemorative street plaques on the sidewalk
23 at the named locations; and, be it

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1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby urges the Arts
2 Commission to approve the design and the placement of the thirteen historical marker
3 commemorative plaques; and, be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Department of
5 Public Works to take all actions necessary to implement the intent of this Resolution, including
6 approval of the installation of the aforementioned plaque; and, be it

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Department of
8 Public Works to add aforementioned plaques at the aforementioned locations on the City's
9 official list of commemorative sites effective immediately from the date of passage of this
10 Resolution.

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