



The Swedish Society of San Francisco
owners of The Swedish-American Hall
2174 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
www.swedishamericanhall.com



March 4, 2015

Historic Preservation Commission
City Hall, Room 400
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA

RE: Landmarking the Swedish American Hall — **2011.0910L** (J.Lammers: 415/575-9093)

Dear President Hasz, Director Rahaim, Coordinator Frye, and Commissioners,

My name is Ted Olsson. A third generation San Franciscan, I am Secretary of the Swedish Society of San Francisco. The Society is the oldest extant local Swedish club, the owner, builder, continuous occupant, and conservator of the Swedish American Hall. We thank the commission for postponing until today this decision to allow our board to decide and comment on the landmark proposal.

My grandfathers were founders of the Society, which, before Social Security, like all ethnic clubs, provided health and death benefits, accommodated and acclimated new immigrants, and helped the community become American. Immediately before The 'Quake, the Society owned Skandia Hall, with its library of 5,000 books in Swedish, located across the street from the yet-to-be City Hall, location now of our San Francisco Public Library, Main Library.

My paternal grandfather, publisher of the local Swedish newspaper, was Secretary at the time of the 1906 earthquake and on the building committee for the hall, which my maternal grandfather managed for the next 30 years. Both pairs of grandparents lived on Sharon Street, across Market Street from the hall, where I live today. This is why I am personally and profoundly involved with the landmarking of our hall.

Therefore I thank Director Rahaim of the Planning Department, Preservation Coordinator Frye, Preservation Planner Jonathan Lammers and Moses Corette for the City's efforts to landmark the hall as the masterpiece of Swedish San Franciscan Master Architect August Nordin. They consider it to be among the top 5% of city landmarks and worthy of national landmark status. It is a classic of the Arts and Crafts movement and a hallmark of Swedish craftsmanship. It was completed the year after the great fire.

In addition to preserving the hall, by renovating it during this past year and a half, we have strengthened it and even installed the elevator connecting all floors. The hall was designed and built with an elevator shaft; today, 107 years later, we finally have that elevator. Now we have a fully functioning facility because of our partnering with the Upper Market Vikings. They have shared in all details of rehabilitating the structure and will give new life to the hall for this century. Our neighborhood has become one of the most dynamic in the city. And our hall will play its role both in hosting neighborhood events and in serving as an entertainment and refreshment center for all, as was its purpose from the beginning. Our mutual success strengthens our partnership to serve not merely the Swedish and Scandinavian communities, once centered on this large Upper Market Area, but also the neighborhood and city.

Our Society encourages you to landmark our Swedish American Hall. We hope that this may be expedited before our rededication ceremony on Saturday, May 2, 2015. Thank you all for your official role in preserving our city's heritage amidst this, our largest building boom since the recovery from the 1906 earthquake and fire to our hosting of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915, which centennial we commemorate all this year.

Thank you for your support. I will answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Ted Olsson

Secretary, Swedish Society of San Francisco

From: [Desiree Smith](#)
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Cc: [Jonin, Jonas \(CPC\)](#); [Frye, Timothy \(CPC\)](#); [Lammers, Jonathan \(CPC\)](#); [Mike Buhler](#)
Subject: Support for Landmark Designation of Swedish American Hall
Date: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 11:45:06 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear President Hasz and Commissioners,

On behalf of San Francisco Heritage, please accept this email as a demonstration of our support for the landmark designation of the Swedish American Hall at 2168-2174 Market Street. We regret that we are unable to testify in person at today's hearing, but are very interested in this property and nomination. We have followed the progress of this nomination through the public process and very much look forward to its final adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

The landmark nomination of the Swedish American Hall, prepared by the San Francisco Planning Department, does an exceptional job at explaining the building's significance and makes a strong case for Article 10 Landmark designation. Designed by August Nordin and built by Andrew Olson in 1907, the Swedish American Hall at 2168-2174 Market Street is the most significant building associated with the city's Swedish community, as well as the larger Scandinavian enclave in the Mission Dolores and Upper Market area that developed at the turn of the century. Also significant for its architecture, 2168-2174 Market Street retains a high level of integrity and serves as an important visual marker for the surrounding neighborhood with its signature combination of Scandinavian and Arts & Crafts design elements.

The building is also home to Café du Nord, a certified SF Legacy Bar. As documented through our *SF Legacy Bars & Restaurants* program, Café du Nord began its operations in the basement of the building shortly after the debut of the Swedish American Hall, and it remained open through Prohibition as a speakeasy. Eventually, live music was added to the line-up, and the underground venue earned acclaim for supporting local talent. Having prospered for over 100 years, the club has maintained its intimate mood of a speakeasy.

The Swedish American Hall represents an important part of San Francisco's architectural, social, and cultural history. Heritage commends the HPC and Planning Department for working with community members to add the Swedish American Hall to the Landmark Designation Work Program and see its designation through to completion.

Thank you,
Desiree Smith



Desiree Smith
Senior Project Manager

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