

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code – Landmark Designation of 1890 Chestnut Street (Marina Branch Library).]

Ordinance designating 1890 Chestnut Street (Marina Branch Library), Lot 001 in Assessor's Block No. 0469, as a Landmark under Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1 and environmental findings.

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.¹ 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 ("HPC"). (Planning Code Section 1006; Charter of the City and County of San Francisco, Section 4.135.) Thus, landmark designation affords a high degree of protection to historic and architectural structures of merit in the City. There are currently 261 individual landmarks in the City under Article 10, in addition to other structures and districts in the downtown area that are protected under Article 11. (See Appendix 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: the Marina Branch Library, located at 1890 Chestnut Street (Lot 001 in Assessor's Block No. 0469.)

The ordinance finds that the Marina Branch Library is eligible for designation as a City landmark because it is a reflection of principles of the modern public library promoted by the American Library Association after World War II and it represents an innovative example of mid-century modern design in Northern California.

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.

¹ The Board of Supervisors may also designate areas of the city as historic districts, but because the landmark nomination at issue pertains to an individual structure, this Legislative Digest concentrates on the rules that apply to individual landmarks.

Background Information

The landmark designation was initiated by the HPC pursuant to its authority under the Charter to recommend approval, disapproval, or modification of landmark designations and historic district designations under the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors. The HPC held a hearing to initiate the landmark designation of the Marina Branch Library on October 7, 2009. At the time, the HPC initiated consideration of the all of the Appleton & Wolfard Libraries. The Marina Branch Library was one of the libraries included in the initiation Resolution.

On June 16, 2010, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning Department staff and the Landmark Designation Case Reports prepared by Johanna Street, the HPC voted to recommend approval of the proposed landmark designation of the Marina Branch Library to the Board of Supervisors.