



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Article 11 Change of Designation Case Report

HEARING DATE: APRIL 2, 2014

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*Date:* March 25, 2014  
*Case No.:* **2014.0159G**  
*Project Address:* **1007 Market Street (James G. Walker Building)**  
*Zoning:* C-3-G (Downtown-General)  
120-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 3703/078  
*Project Sponsor:* Community Arts Stabilization Trust (C.A.S.T.)  
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*Reviewed By:* Timothy Frye – (415) 575-6822  
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*Recommendation:* **Approve reclassification of the property from Category V (Unrated) to Category III (Contributory) under Article 11 of the San Francisco Planning Code.**

### BACKGROUND

The case before the Historic Preservation Commission is the consideration to recommend a change of designation of 1007 Market Street from a Category V (Unrated) building to a Category III (Contributory) building pursuant to Article 11 Section 1106 of the Planning Code. The Article 11 Change of Designation Report was prepared by architectural historian, Michael R. Corbett, at the request of Leiasa Beckham, representative of the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (C.A.S.T.), building owners.

### PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

1007 Market Street, historically addressed as 1007-1009 Market Street, is located along the south side of Market Street between Sixth Street and Seventh Street in San Francisco's Mid-Market area. The building is a two-story (plus basement and mezzanine) commercial loft designed by the architects Cunningham and Politeo and completed in 1911. The building features an enframed window wall, terra cotta Art Nouveau ornamentation and is a contributor to the National Register listed Market Street Theater and Loft District.

In 1986 the property was listed on the National Register as a contributor to the Market Street Theater and Loft District. As such, it was assigned a California Historical Resource Status Code of 1D, meaning that it is a contributor to a district or multiple property listed in the National Register by the Keeper.

### 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).

## **OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED**

If the Historic Preservation Commission adopts a resolution recommending approval of the change of designation, its recommendation will be sent by the Department to the Board of Supervisors. The recommendation would then be considered at a future Board of Supervisors hearing for formal Article 11 change of designation.

## **APPLICABLE PRESERVATION STANDARDS**

### **ARTICLE 11**

Section 1106 of the Planning Code authorizes the designation or change of designation of an individual structure or group of structures. Section 1106(a) outlines that a change of designation may be initiated by the Board of Supervisors, the Historic Preservation Commission, the property owner, an organization that has historic preservation stated as one of its goals in its bylaws or articles of incorporation, or by the application of at least 50 registered voters of the City. An application by the property owner, qualified organization, or 50 registered voters must contain historic, architectural, and/or cultural documentation to support the change of designation. If initiated by the Board of Supervisors, the change of designation would be referred to the HPC for its review and recommendation prior to passage by the Board of Supervisors.

Section 1102 of the Planning Code outlines the applicable standards for the five categories of Article 11 buildings which include Significant Buildings (Categories I and II), Contributory Buildings (Category III and IV), and unrated (Category V).

Section 1106(h) of the Planning Code outlines the six grounds for an Article 11 change of designation. The designation of a building is warranted if changes in the area in the vicinity of a building impact its relationship to the environment and therefore place it in a different category; or changes in Conservation District boundaries make a building eligible or ineligible for designation; or changes in the physical features of the building due to circumstances beyond the control of the owner; or restoration of the building to its original quality and character; or by the passage of time, the building has become at least 40 years old; or the discovery of new factual information makes the building eligible for rating as a Building of Individual or Contextual Importance.

Section 1106(e) states that if the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days. An appeal, however, is not necessary in cases whereby the Board of Supervisors initiates the change of designation.

## **PUBLIC / NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT**

Pursuant to Section 1106(b)(2), the Department mailed a hearing notification to all property owners located within 150' of 1007 Market Street. There is no known opposition to the proposed Article 11 change of designation of 1007 Market Street. The Department will provide any public correspondence received after the submittal of this report in the Historic Preservation Commission's correspondence folder.

## **PROPERTY OWNER INPUT**

The property owner, the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (C.A.S.T.), initiated the request to change the designation to an Article 11 Category III (Contributory) building.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The case report and analysis under review was prepared by Department preservation staff based upon the attached Change of Designation Report for 1007 Market Street, as well as additional research.

The Department finds that the subject property is eligible for a change of designation to an Article 11 Category III (Contributory) building. The building's design and function is emblematic of post-1906 reconstruction in the Mid-Market area, and is an increasingly rare example of a small scale commercial loft. One of the building's most outstanding features is its retention of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century storefront featuring a deep vestibule flanked by display windows on raised platforms. The survival of such storefronts along Market Street, as well as San Francisco as a whole, is rare.

In support of these conclusions, the Department has attached additional information not included in the Change of Designation Report. This information was prepared by preservation staff and includes historic photographs of the property, as well as additional building permit records and details about the building's occupancy. Such information can help inform the Historic Preservation Commission, planners, owners and tenants about future work at the property, including restoration, as well as provide a more complete portrait of the building's history. This information is included as Attachment A.

The justification for an Article 11 change of designation for 1007 Market Street from a Category V (Unrated) property to a Category III (Contributing) building is outlined below.

Pursuant to Section 1102(c) of the Planning Code, a Category III (Contributory) building must meet the following criteria:

- (1) Is located outside a designated Conservation District; and
- (2) Is at least 40 years old; and
- (3) Is judged to be a Building of Individual Importance; and
- (4) Is rated either Very Good in Architectural Design or Excellent or Very Good in Relationship to the Environment.

1007 Market Street meets the first and second criteria in that the subject building is not located within a designated Conservation District, and it was constructed 103 years ago and therefore meets the age eligibility requirement.

1007 Market Street meets the third criterion regarding Individual Importance. The Department concurs with the Change of Designation Report prepared for the Community Arts Stabilization Trust by Michael R. Corbett, an architectural historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications for Historic Preservation. 1007 Market Street is judged to be of Individual Importance for the following reasons as set forth on pages 42-43 of the Change of Designation Report:

Architecturally, it is a notable representative of an important San Francisco building type — the commercial loft or store-and-loft type — in its steel and reinforced concrete structure and its open floor plan. Considered a "fireproof" building, it represents the response of the city in its revised building laws, and the better understanding and practice of architects, engineers, and builders in building structures resistant to earthquakes and fires. It is also important for the design and materials of its façade, which is original to the building, and of

its storefront, a remodeling from about 1940. The original 1911 façade is an enframed window wall in composition, with Art Nouveau trim in terra cotta. As such, it is a high-end example of a store-and-loft building façade with the best and most expensive materials. Its storefront, with its symmetrical design, deep central entrance vestibule, and glass display cases, is a notable example of a type of storefront that was once common and is now rare and which represents a period of economic striving and optimism at the end of the Depression.

Historically, the building is characteristic of the best efforts of the period of reconstruction of the downtown district after the 1906 earthquake and fire.

Its designers, Cunningham & Politeo, architects, and Maurice C. Couchot, engineer, were distinguished members of their respective professions. Cunningham & Politeo were noted for their work in the Art Nouveau style, a simultaneously harmonious and conspicuous contribution to San Francisco and Bay Area architecture. The value of this building as an example of the style is enhanced by the loss of many others including buildings designed by Cunningham & Politeo and by other architects. The engineer, Couchot, as an “early advocate of reinforced concrete construction,” was significant for his contribution to one of the most important and influential engineering developments in San Francisco — the adoption of reinforced concrete as a safer way of building against fire and earthquake dangers, representing a commitment to San Francisco’s future on the part of property owners. It is also of interest for its association with the owner of the property, James G. Walker, for whom it was built. Walker was a Scottish-born businessman who prospered in the wholesale liquor business in the 1870s-1890s, and subsequently a “capitalist” who managed his real estate investments to provide a substantial estate for his family upon his death in 1914. Among his heirs, his daughter Alice Leslie Walker Kosmopoulos, who was an owner of this building until her death in 1954, was a pioneer among American women archeologists, responsible for the excavation at Corinth and other Greek sites. The income from this building provided support for Alice Kosmopoulos and other American archeologists for thirty years, an unlikely association for any San Francisco building.

1007-1009 Market Street meets the fourth criterion in that it appears “very good” in architectural design and/or “excellent” in relationship to the environment. The Department concurs with the Change of Designation Report for the following reasons as set forth on page 44 of the report:

1007-1009 Market Street is rated Very Good in Relationship to the Environment. As a contributor to the Market Street Theater and Loft District, listed in the National Register, it is compatible with and supportive of a notable ensemble of historic buildings. As a loft building in a district characterized in substantial part by its loft buildings, it is a strong contributor to the group. As a two-story building in a district whose significant historic character is recognized for the varied sizes of its buildings, from one to sixteen stories, it is a strong contributor to the group. As a building whose façade is an enframed window wall in composition, with a cornice derived from Renaissance and Baroque sources, and Art Nouveau trim around the window, it is a harmonious variation of the dominant stylistic character of its neighbors and a strong contributor to the group.

The Department has further determined that the subject property meets the following grounds for an Article 11 change of designation per Section 1106(h)(6):

The discovery of new factual information (for example, information about the history of the building) makes the building eligible for rating as a Building of Individual or

Contextual Importance and, therefore, eligible to be designated as a Significant or Contributory Building.

1007 Market Street meets the grounds for a change of designation per Section 1106(h)(6) in that the discovery of new factual information about the building's history and significant associations—documented above and in the Article 11 Change of Designation Report—makes the building eligible for rating as a Building of Individual Importance and, therefore, eligible to be designated as a Contributory building.

#### **CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES**

The Historic Preservation Commission identifies the character-defining features of a property to enable property owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the property's historical and architectural character. While interior character-defining features may be present, Article 11 limits designation to the exterior features.<sup>1</sup>

A list of character-defining features for 1007 Market Street, the James G. Walker Building, are included on page 46 of the Change of Designation Report. The features below are adapted from that list.

- Rectangular plan
- Structural fabric of steel and reinforced concrete
- Two-story (plus mezzanine) massing with flat roof
- Enframed window wall composition of façade
- Cladding of façade including
  - Granite panels at base
  - Terra cotta between base and cornice with flat units imitating masonry blocks on wall surface and organic forms of Art Nouveau trim around central window wall; also flat units and a simple cornice between mezzanine and second floor windows
- Ground floor storefront with recessed central entrance vestibule between faceted glass display cases. Includes marble bulkhead and stainless steel window framing. (Does not include vestibule flooring or the door with transom and sidelights entering the store from within the vestibule.)
- Galvanized iron window framing in the second floor
- Galvanized iron cornice

#### **GENERAL PLAN POLICIES**

The Urban Design Element of the San Francisco General Plan contains the following relevant objectives and policies:

- OBJECTIVE 2:** Conservation of resources that provide a sense of nature, continuity with the past, and freedom from overcrowding.

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<sup>1</sup> Interiors are subject to Article 11 if proposed interior alterations result in any visual or material impact to the exterior of the building (per Planning Code Section 1110(g)(3)).

POLICY 4: 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.

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.

*Designating 1007 Market Street as an Article 11 Category III (Contributory) building is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Urban Design Element and the Downtown Plan of the San Francisco General Plan. Article 11 designation will further continuity with the past because the building will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Article 11 incentivizes preservation through the transfer of unused development rights. Designation as an Article 11 Contributory building will also require that the Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission review proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made.*

#### **SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1 – GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Planning Code Section 101.1 – Eight Priority Policies establishes and requires review of permits for consistency with said policies. On balance, the proposed change of designation is consistent with the priority policies in that:

*The proposed change of designation will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved. The Article 11 designation of 1007 Market Street as a Category III (Contributory) building will help to preserve an important historical resource that is associated with reconstruction efforts and building design following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire; with the careers of prominent architects, Cunningham & Politeo, and engineer Maurice C. Couchot; with historically significant trends in storefront design; and with the evolution of what is today known as the Market Street Theater and Loft District—a significant concentration of theaters, lofts and commercial buildings that help to define the historic character of the Mid-Market area.*

#### **BOUNDARIES OF THE ARTICLE 11 SITE**

The proposed Article 11 designation covers Assessor's Block 3703, Lot 078—on which the subject building is located.

## **PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the Department's analysis presented in this Case Report, 1007 Market Street meets the designation criteria for an Article 11 Category III (Contributory) building pursuant to Planning Code Section 1102. Likewise, a change of designation is warranted as the subject building meets the Grounds for Designation as outlined in Planning Code Section 1106(h)(6).

The Department recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the proposed change of designation for 1007 Market Street from a Category V (Unrated Building) to a Category III (Contributory) building.

The Historic Preservation Commission may recommend approval, disapproval, or approval with modifications of the proposed Article 11 change of designation of 1007 Market Street.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Additional Historical Information
- B. Article 11 Change of Designation Report
- C. Draft Resolution
- D. Designation Ordinance (will be sent separately prior to hearing)
- E. Letter of Support