

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark District Designation - Chula-Abbey Early Residential Historic District]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to add a new Appendix P to Article 10, Preservation of Historical, Architectural, and Aesthetic Landmarks, to create the Chula-Abbey Early Residential Historic District; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making public necessity, convenience, and welfare findings under Planning Code, Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.

Existing Law

Under Article 10, Section 1004 of the Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors may, by ordinance, designate individual structures or groups of structures that have special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value as a City landmarks or historic districts. Once a structure or group of structures has been named a landmark or a district, any construction, alteration, removal or demolition for which a City permit is required and that may affect the character-defining features of the landmark or district 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 or historic district designation affords a high degree of protection to historic and architectural structures of merit in the City. There are currently more than 300 individual landmarks in the City and 14 historic districts under Article 10, in addition to other structures and districts in the downtown area that are protected under Article 11. (See Appendices to Article 10.)

Amendments to Current Law

This Ordinance amends the Planning Code by adding a new historic district to Article 10: Appendix P, the Chula-Abbey Early Residential Historic District. It sets forth the location of the district, in the Mission Dolores neighborhood, centered on Chula Lane, Abbey Street, and 17th Street, and its precise boundaries, as well as block and lot information. The district is comprised of 52 properties, 37 of which are contributing resources, and 15 are non-contributing properties.

The Ordinance also sets forth the historical significance of the district. Specifically, the Ordinance explains that the Chula-Abbey Early Residential District is significant as a representative collection of residential buildings that physically illustrate the neighborhood's pre- and post-1906 Earthquake and Fires development transition. Because it was spared from the 1906 fires that decimated many nearby neighborhoods, the district provides a unique

combination of early, small scale single-family homes along with post-1906 reconstruction-era's larger scale multi-family flats and apartments. The majority of buildings within the Chula-Abbey Early Residential District were constructed before the 1906 Earthquake and Fires, with only a small portion dating from the reconstruction period. The District provides a rare example of the neighborhood's small-scale residential and agricultural development patterns in the late nineteenth century. The Chula-Abbey Early Residential District is also architecturally significant as distinctive grouping of Victorian-era residential dwellings in Folk Victorian, Italianate, Stick-Eastlake, and Queen Anne styles. The Chula-Abbey Early Residential District is a representative collection of buildings where the overall scale and massing, wood construction, and rhythmic bays of the contributing buildings create a sense of continuity.

As required by Section 1004, the Ordinance lists in detail the character-defining features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined necessary. It distinguishes which types of scopes of work or alterations would require no Certificate of Appropriateness at all, which would require an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness from Planning Department staff, as authorized by Section 1006.2(b) of the Planning Code, and which would require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC.

Background Information

This historic district designation was initiated by the Board of Supervisors. On October 15, 2025, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning Department staff and the Landmark Designation Report also prepared by Planning Department staff, the HPC voted to recommend approval of the Chula-Abbey Early Residential District designation of the to the Board of Supervisors.

As required by the Charter and Article 10, the HPC recommendation was sent to the Planning Commission, and, on October 23, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation, the Planning Commission also recommended approval of the Chula-Abbey Early Residential District designation of the to the Board of Supervisors.

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