

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 600-32nd Avenue (aka George Washington High School)]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 600-32nd Avenue (aka George Washington High School), in Assessor's Parcel Block No. 1574, Lot No. 001, as a Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code; 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 an individual structure that has special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value as a City landmark. 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 more than 270 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: 600 32nd Ave. (aka George Washington High School).

The ordinance finds that George Washington High School is eligible for designation as a City landmark under Criterion A (associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and Criterion C (as it embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, conveys high artistic values, and represents the work of a master architect). Specifically, designation of 600 32nd Avenue (aka George Washington High School) is proper given it is associated with significant events, as it was built largely using Public Works Administration funds. It is also architecturally significant as it embodies the characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style, represents the work of master architect Timothy Pflueger, and exhibits high artistic values in its four New Deal murals and one outdoor frieze that were all sponsored by the Federal Art Project.

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.

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 George Washington High School on October 18, 2017. On December 6, 2017, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation and having considered the Landmark Designation Case Report prepared by Planning Department staff Shannon Ferguson, the HPC voted to recommend approval of George Washington High School to the Board of Supervisors.

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