

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 2261 Fillmore Street (aka Clay Theatre)]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 2261 Fillmore Street (aka Clay Theatre), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0630, Lot No. 002, as a Landmark consistent with the standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; making public necessity, convenience, and welfare findings under Planning Code, Section 302; and making 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. Unless prohibited by state law, 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. (Planning Code § 1006; Charter of the City and County of San Francisco, § 4.135.) Thus, landmark designation generally affords a high degree of protection to historic and architectural structures of merit in the City. There are currently approximately 295 individual landmarks in the City under Article 10, in addition to structures and districts in the downtown area that are protected under Article 11. (See App. 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 Clay Theatre, located at 2261 Fillmore Street (aka Clay Theatre), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0630, Lot No. 002.

The ordinance finds that the Clay Theatre is eligible for designation as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of San Francisco history (National Register Criterion A) and as an example that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction (National Register Criterion C). Specifically, designation of the Clay Theatre, constructed in 1913 as a nickelodeon movie theater and one of the oldest single-screen nickelodeon movie houses in San Francisco, is proper for its association with the initial development of neighborhood theaters during the pioneering period of moving picture theaters and the development of the film industry in San

Francisco in the early 20th century. Further, the Clay Theatre is significant as the first dedicated foreign film theater in San Francisco and as an important exhibitor of foreign and independent art house films through the late 1980s. Designation of Clay Theatre is also proper as it is architecturally significant as a building that embodies the distinctive characteristics of both an early 20th century Nickelodeon and a single-screen neighborhood movie theater, increasingly rare building types that are vibrant features of the built environment and important and unique cultural institutions in San Francisco.

As required by Section 1004, the ordinance lists the particular features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined necessary.

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