

1 [Initiating Landmark Designation - Mother's Building, Situated Within San Francisco Zoo, 1  
2 Zoo Road, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006]

3 **Resolution initiating landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code of the**  
4 **Mother's Building, situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, Assessor's**  
5 **Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006.**

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7 WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by  
8 resolution, initiate landmark designation; and

9 WHEREAS, The Mother's Building, situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road,  
10 Assessor's Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006, was built in 1925 by renowned architect  
11 George W. Kelham; and

12 WHEREAS, The Mother's Building is part of the premises of the San Francisco Zoo,  
13 which is operated by the San Francisco Zoo Society pursuant to its lease with the Recreation  
14 and Parks Department; and

15 WHEREAS, The Mother's Building was donated to the City in 1925 by Herbert and  
16 Mortimer Fleishhacker; and

17 WHEREAS, The Mother's Building was built to honor the Fleishhackers' late mother  
18 and was dedicated to serve as a resting place for mothers and young children, which was also  
19 one of the only structures in the West that focused on the needs of mothers, offering  
20 amenities such as water, milk, and medical advice for guests; and

21 WHEREAS, During the Works Progress Administration (WPA) era of the 1930's,  
22 employment options for women were limited; however, the Public Works of Art Project  
23 (PWAP) and Federal Art Project (FAP) offered rare opportunities for women artists, such as  
24 the one at the Mother's Building; and

1           WHEREAS, San Francisco female artists Helen Forbes and Dorothy Puccinelli were  
2 selected to create artwork for the Mother’s Building; they used egg tempera to paint four  
3 murals inside the building that were inspired by the animals they saw at the Zoo and that  
4 depicted the story of Noah’s Ark, symbolizing the theme of renewal and recovery post-  
5 Depression; and

6           WHEREAS, During the same era, Margaret, Helen, and Ester Bruton, also known as  
7 the Bruton Sisters, were selected to adorn the panels outside the Mother’s Building with two  
8 intricate tile mosaics named the *Children and Their Friends* and *St. Francis*; their work played  
9 a significant role in the “modern mosaic revival”; and

10           WHEREAS, The artwork of the Mother’s Building is the only large-scale WPA art  
11 project created solely by women; and

12           WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building, which is also known as the Delia Fleishhacker  
13 Memorial Building, is listed on the National Register of Historical Places; and

14           WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building has been closed since 2002 to visitors; the building  
15 and the murals experienced water damage and needs repair and restoration; and

16           WHEREAS, With the support of former Supervisor Katy Tang, the San Francisco  
17 Historical Preservation Fund helped to assess the building and provide funds for immediate  
18 renovation; and

19           WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building is a historically significant building and an asset that  
20 honors the history of local women artists and centers the experience of motherhood; now,  
21 therefore, be it

22           RESOLVED, That the Board hereby initiates landmark designation of the Mother’s  
23 Building , situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, Assessor’s Parcel Block No.  
24 7281, Lot No. 006; and, be it

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1           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Planning Department  
2     prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission  
3     for its consideration of the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of  
4     the property; and, be it

5           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation  
6     Commission review the Landmark Designation Report and any other information the Planning  
7     Department may have related to the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and  
8     value of the Mother’s Building; and, be it

9           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation  
10    Commission consider whether the Mother’s Building warrants landmark designation and  
11    submit its recommendation to the Board pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

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