

## LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 200 Rhode Island Street (aka Takahashi Trading Company)]

**Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 200 Rhode Island Street (aka Takahashi Trading Company), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3936, Lot No. 001, as a Landmark consistent with the standards set forth in 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. 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: 200 Rhode Island Street (aka Takahashi Trading Company), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3936, Lot No. 001.

The ordinance finds that 200 Rhode Island Street is eligible for designation as it is associated with events that have made a culturally and historically significant contribution to the broad patterns of San Francisco history and with persons significant to San Francisco history. Specifically, designation of 200 Rhode Island Street is proper given its association with Japanese American history and culture in San Francisco. Specifically, for over 50 years, circa 1965-2019, the venue served as the headquarters of the Takahashi Trading Company, which imported high-caliber home goods from Japan for Takahashi retail stores in the Bay Area and New York City. The Takahashi family acquired the property after their original Japantown shop was demolished due to a San Francisco Redevelopment Agency program; thus, the building has an association with the hardships faced by Japanese Americans who were

forcibly displaced from Japantown due to redevelopment. The building also served as the headquarters of the Henri & Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, which was established in 1986 to support the Japanese American community through cultural and educational projects. Furthermore, the original 1912 portion of the building is significant as an early distinctive project of famed San Francisco master architect Gustave Albert Lansburgh. The property lies within the Showplace Square Heavy Timber and Steel Frame Brick Warehouse and Factory District, which is eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources as San Francisco's most important concentration of large heavy timber and steel-frame American Commercial Style industrial buildings.

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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