[Initiating Landmark Designation Amendment - Sylvester House (1556 Revere Street)]

Resolution initiating an amendment to the landmark designation of 1556 Revere Street (aka Sylvester House), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 5340, Lot No. 006, under Article 10 of the Planning Code.

WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by Resolution initiate a historic landmark designation; and

WHEREAS, Planning Code, Section 1004.2(b), requires the Historic Preservation Commission to respond to historic landmark designation initiations from the Board within 90 days, but that the Board of Supervisors may, by Resolution, extend the time within which the Historic Preservation Commission is to render its decision; and

WHEREAS, Sylvester House was designated as Landmark #61, under Article 10 of the Planning Code, pursuant to Ordinance No. 124-74, passed by the Board on March 4, 1974 (BOS File No. 90743); and

WHEREAS, Sylvester House, built in the Italianate architectural style between 1865 and 1870, is an exceptionally fine and unique variation of the Italianate architectural style with Gothic details; and

WHEREAS, The two-story, four square, wood frame structure sits high on a tall, raised basement that was partially built over the foundation of a former barn when the building was moved in 1913; and

WHEREAS, The building’s main features include an expansive first floor porch, prominent upper story fenestration, and a projecting roof cornice. The front porch spans the entire façade with its roof covering the first-floor windows and central front entrance. The porch is capped by a dentilated cornice supported by six wood Corinthian columns and

enclosed by a low balustrade of turned wood spindles that extends along a wide, centered staircase to front walkway; and

WHEREAS, A large archway frames the paneled double door entry and overhead fanlight with framing finished in Gothic detailing; and

WHEREAS, Fenestration is regular with double-hung arched windows framed with Gothic detailing, including fluted pilasters, projecting curvilinear pediments, consoles, and ornamental keystones; and

WHEREAS, There is a decorated, deeply projecting roof cornice; and

WHEREAS, Sylvester House was built by Stephen L. Piper, a prominent carpenter and housing builder in the southern portion of San Francisco, now known as Bayview, formerly known as Butchertown; and

WHEREAS, The house was built for Daniel Sylvester, his wife Maria, and their eight children. The home served as the 'farmhouse' for a cattle ranch that included the mansion and several stables and other out-buildings, serving the Sylvester’s business as wholesale butchers and cattle dealers in the surrounding Butchertown neighborhood. The Sylvester family occupied the house until 1901; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, Linda Blacketer found and purchased, along with her husband, Dan Dodt, the abandoned and dilapidated Sylvester Houses with the intent to restore the house to its original conditions - not just to modernize its interior behind a historic façade - to achieve a historically relevant showplace; and

WHEREAS, The four-decades-long, dedicated and faithful restoration included upgrades or replacement of all systems, significant decorative enhancements, with added furnishing and art collections; and

WHEREAS, Members of Artistic License, a guild of artisans, based in San Francisco, along with other highly talented individuals, assisted in the restoration; and

WHEREAS, The restored architectural gem as seen today is a testament to the vision and creative spirit of her former owner, Linda Blacketer, who was recognized by San Francisco Beautiful with the Robert C. Friese Preservation Award in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Sylvester House is a rare example of a continually inhabited, single family dwelling in San Francisco, and remains a masterpiece of vision, construction and preservation efforts in the City and is as an important landmark of the Bayview neighborhood; and, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby initiates an amendment to the landmark designation under Planning Code, Section 1004.1 of Sylvester House, located at 1556 Revere Street (Assessor's Block/Lot 5340/006); and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors requests that the Planning Department prepare a landmark designation report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission for its consideration of the full historical, architectural, aesthetic, and cultural interest and value, including but not limited to the restoration and preservation efforts undertaken by Linda Blacketer, of Sylvester House; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests that the Historic Preservation Commission consider what amendments to the landmark designation are warranted to capture the property's full historical significance, and submit its recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, according to Article 10 of the Planning Code.