

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 320-326 Judah Street (the Doelger Building)]

Ordinance designating 320-326 Judah Street (the Doelger Building), Assessor's Block No. 1763, Lot Nos. 020 and 021, as a Landmark under Planning Code, Article 10; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code, Section 101.1, and environmental findings.

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 262 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: 320-326 Judah Street (the Doelger Building), Lots 020 and 021 in Assessor's Block 1763.

The ordinance finds that the Doelger Building is eligible for designation as a City landmark under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A (association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history), B (association with the lives of persons significant to our past), and C (embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction). Specifically, as to Criterion A, the Doelger Building is closely associated with Henry Doelger Builder Inc., an extraordinarily influential and productive building firm that led the large-scale transformation of the emerging Sunset District neighborhood from windswept sand dunes to a residential neighborhood dominated by single-family houses designed for the working and middle classes. As to Criterion B, the Doelger Building is closely associated with Henry Doelger, a master builder, entrepreneur, and prominent community figure in San Francisco's Sunset District from the late 1920s through 1950. Finally, as to Criterion C, the Doelger Building displays a high level of architectural expression, is an excellent example of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne design, and represents a successful merging of the two early Modern styles.

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 the Doelger Building on September 19, 2012. On October 3, 2012, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning Department staff and the Landmark Designation Case Report prepared by Mary Brown, the HPC voted to recommend approval of the proposed landmark designation of the Doelger Building to the Board of Supervisors.