



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

HEARING DATE: August 5, 2015
CASE NUMBERS: 2015.0041680DES – 350 University Street
TO: Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Shannon Ferguson
Preservation Planner, 415-575-9074
REVIEWED BY: Tim Frye
Preservation Coordinator, 415-575-6822
RE: Landmark Recommendation Resolution

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

Dear President Wolfram and Members of the Commission:

On May 20, 2015, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) adopted Resolution No. 747 to initiate Article 10 landmark designation of 350 University Street, known historically as the University Mound Old Ladies Home. Under Article 10, initiation and recommendation are two distinct steps of the landmark designation process which require separate hearings and resolutions.

Attached is a draft Resolution to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors the designation of 350 University Street, the University Mound Old Ladies Home, as a San Francisco landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code, Section 1004.1. The Planning Department (Department) recommends adopting this Resolution.

Also attached is a revised Landmark Designation Report that incorporates various minor edits and an expanded appendix on Retirement and Old Age Homes.

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft Resolution
Draft Landmark Designation Report (Revised August 5, 2015)
Designation Ordinance
May 20, 2015 Case Report
Resolution 747



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Landmark Designation Case Report

Hearing Date: May 20, 2015
Case No.: 2015-004168DES
Project Address: 350 University Street
Zoning: RH-1 (Residential - House, One Family)
Block/Lot: 5992/001
Property Owner: AgeSong Genesis LLC
551 Page Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
Staff Contact: Shannon Ferguson – (415) 575-9074
shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

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PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS & SURROUNDING LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

350 University Street, historically known as University Mound Old Ladies' Home, is located on the west side of University Street between Burrows and Bacon streets in San Francisco's Portola area. Irregularly shaped in plan, the building has a two-and-half story main building flanked by two-story L-shaped wings and a two-story plus basement service wing perpendicular to the rear of the main building. Designed in the Colonial Revival architectural style by master architects Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey, the convalescent/nursing home was constructed of reinforced concrete and brick in 1931-1932.

The subject building is located in San Francisco's Portola area, a residential neighborhood characterized by two-story single family homes constructed in the 1950s through 1960s. It is located directly across from the University Mound Reservoir.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The case before the Historic Preservation Commission is the consideration of the initiation of landmark designation of 350 University Street as a San Francisco landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code, Section 1004.1, and recommending that the Board of Supervisors approve of such designation.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS

The Planning Department has determined that actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (specifically in this case, landmark designation) are exempt from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class Eight - Categorical).

GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

The Urban Design Element of the San Francisco General Plan contains the following relevant objectives and policies:

- OBJECTIVE 2: Conservation of Resources that provide a sense of nature, continuity with the past, and freedom from overcrowding.
- POLICY 4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

Designating significant historic resources as local landmarks will further continuity with the past because the buildings will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission review proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made.

SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1 – GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Code Section 101.1 – Eight Priority Policies establishes and requires review of permits for consistency with said policies. On balance, the proposed designation is consistent with the priority policies in that:

- a. The proposed designation will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved. Landmark designation of 350 University Street will help to preserve an important historical resource that is architecturally significant as an embodiment of the Colonial Revival style and as a work of two by master architects, Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey.

BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS ACTIONS

On June 18, 2014, Belles Yelda, a nearby resident, submitted a "Potential San Francisco Landmarks Evaluation Form" (Preservation Bulletin No. 19) for the University Mound Old Ladies' Home (see attached). On July 29, 2014, Mr. Yelda submitted to the Department a petition in support of preserving the building that contained 222 signatures of nearby residents (see attached). Supervisor Campos expressed support for landmark designation in a letter dated August 20, 2014 (see attached). 350 University Street, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home, was added to the Landmark Designation Work Program on October 8, 2014.

OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

If the Historic Preservation Commission adopts a resolution to initiate designation of the subject property as an Article 10 landmark at its May 20, 2015 hearing and directs staff to finalize the landmark designation report, a second Historic Preservation Commission hearing will be scheduled for the Commission's recommendation of approval of the designation. At the second hearing, if the Historic Preservation Commission recommends approval of the designation, its recommendation will be sent by the Department to the Board of Supervisors. The nomination would then be considered at a future Board of Supervisors hearing for formal Article 10 landmark designation.

APPLICABLE PRESERVATION STANDARDS

ARTICLE 10

Section 1004 of the Planning Code authorizes the landmark designation of an individual structure or other feature or an integrated group of structures and features on a single lot or site, having special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value, as a landmark. Section 1004.1 also outlines that landmark designation may be initiated by the Board of Supervisors or the Historic Preservation Commission and the initiation shall include findings in support. Section 1004.2 states that once initiated, the proposed designation is referred to the Historic Preservation Commission for a report and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to approve, disapprove or modify the proposal.

Pursuant to Section 1004.3 of the Planning Code, if the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation, a copy of the resolution of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors and without referral to the Planning Commission. The Board of Supervisors shall hold a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation.

In the case of the initiation of a historic district, the Historic Preservation Commission shall refer its recommendation to the Planning Commission pursuant to Section 1004.2(c). The Planning Commission shall have 45 days to provide review and comment on the proposed designation and address the consistency of the proposed designation with the General Plan, Section 101.1 priority policies, the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation, and the Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Bay Area. These comments shall be sent to the Board of Supervisors in the form of a resolution.

Section 1004(b) requires that the designating ordinance approved by the Board of Supervisors shall include the location and boundaries of the landmark site, a description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation, and a description of the particular features that should be preserved.

Section 1004.4 states that if the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days.

ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK CRITERIA

The Historic Preservation Commission on February 4, 2009, by Resolution No. 001, adopted the National Register Criteria as its methodology for recommending landmark designation of historic resources. Under the National Register Criteria, the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, workmanship, and association, and that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or properties that have yielded, or may likely yield, information important in prehistory or history.

PUBLIC / NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

There is no known public or neighborhood opposition to designation of 350 University Street as an Article 10 landmark. The Department will provide any public correspondence received after the submittal of this report in the Historic Preservation Commission's correspondence folder.

PROPERTY OWNER INPUT

On April 13, 2015 Planning Department staff toured the property with Ami Champaneri, AgeSong Genesis Executive Director of the University Mound Old Ladies' Home, who verbally expressed support for landmark designation.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The case report and analysis under review was prepared by Department preservation staff. The Department has determined that the subject property meets the requirements for Article 10 eligibility as an individual landmark. The justification for its inclusion is outlined below under the Significance and Integrity sections of this case report.

SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1931-1932, University Mound Old Ladies' Home at 350 University Street is a convalescent/nursing home that is architecturally significant as an embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction and represents the work of two master architects. With its front door accentuated by a broken pediment, recessed tetrastyle portico supported by tall slender columns, numerous fanlights and multi-pane windows, and symmetrically composed façade, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home illustrates the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style that was popular following the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s. Architects Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey, both separately and in partnership were well known for their designs of institutional buildings, such as schools and hospitals. Rist was known on a state level for his execution of revival style architecture. In September 1932 his recent body of work was featured in *The Architect & Engineer* and included a two page spread on the University Mound Old Ladies' Home. Alfred I. Coffey was well known locally for his work designing school buildings as City architect in 1910. Their best

known work during the early 1930s is the Art Deco style Psychopathic Ward at San Francisco General Hospital (1932-1935) designed in partnership shortly before Coffey's death. Furthermore, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home is a rare property type in San Francisco as it is one of the few high style Colonial Revival institutional buildings that retains a high degree of physical integrity having undergone very few alterations since its construction.

INTEGRITY

The building retains integrity of association, as it has remained in continual use as a convalescent/nursing home since its construction. It likewise retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling. Based on a review of the building permit history and visual inspection, known exterior alterations are relatively limited in scope and remain subordinate to the building's overall design and ornamentation. Similarly, interior spaces including the living room, dining room and chapel have experienced few alterations and readily convey their association with the building's historic use. The Home's original large park like setting of 25 acres has diminished to just 2.5 acres, however, with its set back from the street, mature trees and shrubs, and as the only building on the west side of University Street, it retains the feeling of a much larger property.

Overall, the Department has determined that the building's primary character defining features, both exterior and interior, are largely unaltered since the building's construction in 1931-1932 and 350 University Street retains outstanding integrity to convey its historical significance.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Whenever a building, site, object, or landscape is under consideration for Article 10 landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to identify character-defining features of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

As described in the Landmark Designation Report, the following is a list of exterior and interior character defining features of the University Mound Old Ladies' Home.

The character-defining *exterior* features of the building are identified as:

- All primary exterior elevations, form, massing, structure, architectural ornament and materials identified as:
 - Form and massing, including rectangular, two and a half story, side-gabled roof with arched dormers of main building flanked by two story L-shaped, flat roofed wings
 - Symmetrically balanced façade with centered door and regular fenestration pattern with six-over-six, double-hung windows and arched fanlight windows.
 - Architectural ornament including broken pediment at the main entry, recessed tetrastyle portico supported by tall slender columns, decorative frieze and dentil molding, spandrel panels below first story windows, and balusters at the parapet of the wings
 - Materials including Flemish bond red face brick, slate roof tiles on main building and chapel and painted wood ornamentation

The character-defining *interior* features of the building identified as:

- Living room
 - Arched openings at north, south, and west walls. Multi lite wood French doors and transoms at east wall
 - Fireplace with marble surround and wood mantle
 - Decorative plaster bas relief pilasters with urns of flowers and plaster molding
 - Board formed concrete beamed ceiling with decorative painting and two brass chandeliers
- Dining room
 - Windows with fanlights at north and south walls
 - Fireplace with marble surround and wood mantle
 - Built-in sideboards with leaded glass top cabinet fronts
 - Plaster chair rail molding
 - Board formed concrete beamed ceiling with decorative painting and brass chandeliers
- Chapel
 - Arched windows and shutters at north and south walls
 - Multi lite window with sidelights and fanlight on east wall
 - Raised, recessed half round chancel with decorative lintel and brackets
 - Peaked ceiling with rough sawn beams and brass carriage lamp chandeliers

INTERIOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Because the living room, dining room and chapel in the University Mound Old Ladies' Home are the principal interior spaces and are largely unaltered, landmark designation of these interior features is authorized under Section 1004(c) of the Planning code, which states that:

(c) The property included in any such designation shall upon designation be subject to the controls and standards set forth in this Article 10. In addition, the said property shall be subject to the following further controls and standards if imposed by the designating ordinance:

- (1) For a publicly-owned landmark, review of proposed changes to significant interior architectural features.
- (2) For a privately-owned landmark, review of proposed changes requiring a permit to significant interior architectural features in those areas of the landmark that are or historically have been accessible to members of the public. The designating ordinance must clearly describe each significant interior architectural feature subject to this restriction.

BOUNDARIES OF THE LANDMARK SITE

The proposed landmark site encompasses Assessor's Block 3992, Lot 001 – on which the subject building is located.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Based on the Department's analysis, 350 University Street is individually eligible for Article 10 Landmark designation as an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architectural style applied to an institutional building and as the work of master architects Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey. The Department recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission initiate designation of 350 University Street as a San Francisco landmark. If the Historic Preservation Commission takes action to initiate Article 10 designation on May 20, 2015, the Department may undertake further research on the design of hospital/convalescent homes in the 1930s as part of the final designation report.

The Historic Preservation Commission may recommend approval, disapproval, or approval with modifications of the proposed designation of 350 University Street as a San Francisco landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors pursuant to Planning Code Section 1004.1. If the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation, a copy of the motion of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors, which holds a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation (Section 1004.4). If the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days (Section 1004.5).

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Landmark Designation Report
- B. Draft Motion initiating designation
- C. Potential San Francisco Landmarks Evaluation Form, submitted June 18, 2014; Petition of Support, submitted July 29, 2014; Supervisor Campos Letter of Support, dated August 20, 2014.