

March 13, 2018

Andrew Wolfram, President
San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission
Attn: Frances McMillen, Senior Planner
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear President Wolfram and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of San Francisco Heritage, I write in enthusiastic support of the nomination of the Hotel Utah for designation as a San Francisco City Landmark. Built in 1908, the hotel is not only a striking example of Edwardian-style architecture, but also possesses intangible significance as home to a succession of saloons occupying the ground-floor commercial space for over a century.

Constructed to house itinerant and seasonal workers employed in nearby factories, the Hotel Utah is a rare survivor of SoMa's early development between the mid-1800s and the post-1906 earthquake and fire reconstruction. As described by J.K. Dineen in Heritage's 2015 book, *High Spirits: The Legacy Bars of San Francisco* (co-published with Heyday), "The Hotel Utah has survived Prohibition, the building of the Bay Bridge, and the slow decline of the smokehouses, breweries, and metal shops that once thrived in the South of Market. It outlasted the bathhouses of the 1970s, the rave scene of the 1990s, [and] the dot-com bust of 2000." It is especially noteworthy that the building escaped demolition during the redevelopment frenzy of the mid-twentieth century that razed nearly all the residential hotels in SoMa.

Significantly, the building's namesake saloon on the ground floor was among the first twenty-five "Legacy Bars and Restaurants" identified by San Francisco Heritage when we launched the program in January 2013. Although not yet listed on the city's official Legacy Business Registry, the saloon's history and legend contributes an important layer of intangible heritage to the building's significance.

As the South of Market neighborhood braces for the next wave of development envisioned by the Central SoMa Plan, the Hotel Utah deserves recognition and protection as a San Francisco City Landmark.

Sincerely,



Mike Buhler
President & CEO