

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 228-248 Townsend Street (aka New Pullman Hotel)]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 228-248 Townsend Street (aka New Pullman Hotel), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3787, Lot No. 018, as a Landmark under 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. 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 more than 270 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.)

228-248 Townsend Street is not currently designated as a City landmark under Planning Code Article 10.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed legislation would amend the Planning Code to designate 228-248 Townsend Street (aka New Pullman Hotel) as a City landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code.

The ordinance finds that the New Pullman Hotel is eligible for designation as a City landmark as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history and embodies 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, designation of the New Pullman Hotel is proper given it is the only known remaining building in San Francisco associated with Pullman porters – African American railroad workers who established the first all-Black union in the country, contributed to the development of an African American middle class, and laid important foundations for the Civil Rights Movement. Designation of the New Pullman Hotel is also

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proper given it is a rare and representative example of the residential hotels constructed in the South of Market following the 1906 earthquake and fire.

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.

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