

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 500-504-4th Street (aka Hotel Utah)]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 500-504-4th Street (Hotel Utah), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3777, Lot No. 001, 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.)

500-504 4th 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 500-504 4th Street (aka Hotel Utah) as a City landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code.

The ordinance finds that the Hotel Utah 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. Specifically, designation of the Hotel Utah is proper given it represents a pattern of development in the South of Market Street neighborhood that began in the nineteenth century when the neighborhood became the center of industrial production in San Francisco and continued through the post-1906 earthquake and fire reconstruction. The property is a notable example of the numerous residential hotels built largely to house itinerant and seasonal workers employed in nearby factories and along the waterfront. The hotel is also significant as an example of Edwardian-style architecture commonly employed in the design of residential hotel buildings constructed during the period.

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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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