

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 1830 Sutter Street (aka Japanese YWCA/Issei Women's Building)]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 1830 Sutter Street (aka Japanese YWCA/Issei Women's Building), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0676, Lot No. 035, 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. Unless prohibited by state law, 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 generally affords a high degree of protection to historic and architectural structures of merit in the City. There are currently 288 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: 1830 Sutter Street (aka Japanese YWCA/Issei Women's Building), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0676, Lot No. 035.

The ordinance finds that 1830 Sutter Street is eligible for designation as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of San Francisco history and it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Specifically, designation of 1830 Sutter Street is proper given its association with Japanese American history and culture in San Francisco, specifically, with Japanese American women who founded the first independent Japanese YWCA in the United States and commissioned what appears to be the only building purpose-built by and for Issei women in the United States. The building is also significant for its association with the African American civil rights movement, as the building served as the San Francisco chapter of the Committee on Racial Equality (CORE) and was the site of numerous meetings, events, trainings, and gatherings

organized to advance the civil rights of African Americans during the 1942-1959 tenancy of the American Friends Service Committee. The building is further significant for its association with the advancement of LGBTQ rights, as the building was the center of civil rights leader Bayard Rustin's organizing work early in his career, and the site of pioneering LGBTQ organization the Mattachine Society's first convention in 1954. Designation of 1830 Sutter Street is also proper given it is architecturally significant as the work of master architect Julia Morgan.

As required by Section 1004, the ordinance lists the particular features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined necessary.

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