



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Historic Preservation Commission Final Motion No. 0040

HEARING DATE: DECEMBER 16, 2009

*Hearing Date:* December 16, 2009  
*Filing Date:* June 13, 2006  
*Case No.:* **2006.0747A**  
*Project Address:* **890 Grove Street**  
*Historic District:* Alamo Square Historic District  
*Zoning:* RH-3 (Residential, House, Three-Family)  
50-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 0797/019  
*Applicant:* Mark Topetcher, Architect  
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**ADOPTING FINDINGS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR PROPOSED WORK DETERMINED TO BE APPROPRIATE FOR AND CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSES OF ARTICLE 10, TO MEET THE STANDARDS OF ARTICLE 10 AND TO MEET THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION, FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED ON LOT 019 IN ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 0797, WITHIN AN RH-3 (RESIDENTIAL, HOUSE, THREE-FAMILY) ZONING DISTRICT, THE ALAMO SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT, AND A 50-X HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICT.**

### PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2006, Mark Topetcher (Project Sponsor) filed an application with the San Francisco Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a one-story vertical addition at the roof and to install a four-car garage at the basement level of the existing two-story-over basement tourist hotel building.

WHEREAS, the Project was determined by the Department to be categorically exempt from environmental review. The Historic Preservation Commission (hereinafter "Commission") has reviewed and concurs with said determination.

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2009, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the current project, Case No. 2006.0747A ("Project") for its appropriateness.

WHEREAS, in reviewing the Application, the Commission has had available for its review and consideration case reports, plans, and other materials pertaining to the Project contained in the Department's case files, has reviewed and heard testimony and received materials from interested parties during the public hearing on the Project.

MOVED, that the Commission hereby grants with conditions the Certificate of Appropriateness, in conformance with the architectural plans dated November 18, 2008 and labeled Exhibit B on file in the docket for Case No. 2006.0747A based on the following findings:

## CONDITIONS

- That the addition will be clad in flush wood siding.
- And, that the height of the proposed addition be reduced by six inches.

## FINDINGS

Having reviewed all the materials identified in the recitals above and having heard oral testimony and arguments, this Commission finds, concludes, and determines as follows:

1. The above recitals are accurate and also constitute findings of the Commission.
2. Findings pursuant to Article 10:

The Historical Preservation Commission has determined that the proposed work is compatible with the character of the Alamo Square Historic District as described in Appendix E of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

- That the proposed addition of an innkeeper's residential unit will result in a visible rooftop structure that will impact the distinctive massing and form of the historic building. The addition will also alter the building's spatial relationship to the surrounding historic district as it will be visible from the public rights-of-way for approximately 100 feet to the north, west, and south.
- That the proposed conversion of basement area into a garage will not cause a significant change in the building's distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships as it will not cause the removal of significant material or features and will essentially retain the plane of the façade and the building's relationship to the streetscape along Fillmore Street.
- That most aspects of the historic character of the building will be retained and preserved. No distinctive materials, architectural elements, or spaces that characterize the property will be removed. However, the addition will impact the building's characteristic rectangular massing and will increase its scale. These impacts have been minimized by locating the addition at the far rear corner of the building footprint, by creating deep setbacks from the street-facing facades, and by utilizing a low rectangular form that follows the lines of the historic building and minimizes the height of the addition.

- That the contemporary design of the proposed structure will clearly identify the addition as a new building element and will preserve the sense of historical development for the building and the district. The addition will also be sufficiently set back from the street-facing facades to distinguish the new structure from the historic building form and will be designed in a manner which does not detract from the character of the building or streetscape when viewed from afar. The proposed design employs traditional elements found in the district such as a wood cladding, painted finishes, framed openings, and a defined cornice element while maintaining a contemporary and light appearance that will not compete with the subject or adjacent building forms. Also, the fenestration of the addition has been designed to compliment the historic window pattern below without strictly mimicking the pattern of openings.
- That the two early additions to the property that occurred during the period of significance for the Alamo Square Historic District will be preserved and/or restored.
- That no changes are proposed to the any distinctive materials, features, finishes, or construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the property.
- That the new addition will relate to the historic building and the district through the use of wood cladding, framed openings, wood-framed sash windows and doors, painted finishes, flat roof form, and defined cornice. The scale and location of the addition will allow the form of the historic building to continue to be read. Also, the volume of the proposed addition will not overwhelm the scale of the existing building or interrupt the rhythm of heights and volumes within the streetscape.
- That when viewed from a distance (approximately 50 feet or more) the street-facing walls of the addition will be nearly fully visible; however, the positioning and design of the structure will create the appearance of being a separate background building so that the addition will blend into the streetscape. The Alamo Square Historic District contains buildings with a variety of roof forms and including at least five buildings with visible rooftop and/or horizontal additions. The proposed addition will not be an obtrusive element among this diverse array of building forms.
- That the new addition and door openings may be removed or filled in without harm to the integrity of the property.
- That the proposal respects the character-defining features within the Alamo Square Historic District.
- The proposed project meets the following Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

***Standard 1.***

*A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

**Standard 2.**

*The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

**Standard 3.**

*Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

**Standard 4.**

*Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

**Standard 5.**

*Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

**Standard 9.**

*New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

**Standard 10.**

*New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

3. **General Plan Compliance.** The proposed Certificate of Appropriateness is, on balance, consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

I. URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

THE URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT CONCERNS THE PHYSICAL CHARACTER AND ORDER OF THE CITY, AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

GOALS

*The Urban Design Element is concerned both with development and with preservation. It is a concerted effort to recognize the positive attributes of the city, to enhance and conserve those attributes, and to improve the living environment where it is less than satisfactory. The Plan is a definition of quality, a definition based upon human needs.*

OBJECTIVE 1

EMPHASIS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC PATTERN WHICH GIVES TO THE CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AN IMAGE, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, AND A MEANS OF ORIENTATION.

POLICY 1.3

*Recognize that buildings, when seen together, produce a total effect that characterizes the city and its districts.*

OBJECTIVE 2

CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES WHICH PROVIDE A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST, AND FREEDOM FROM OVERCROWDING.

POLICY 2.4

*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.*

POLICY 2.5

*Use care in remodeling of older buildings, in order to enhance rather than weaken the original character of such buildings.*

POLICY 2.7

*Recognize and protect outstanding and unique areas that contribute in an extraordinary degree to San Francisco's visual form and character.*

*The goal of a Certificate of Appropriateness is to provide additional oversight for buildings and districts that are architecturally or culturally significant to the City in order to protect the qualities that are associated with that significance.*

*The proposed project qualifies for a Certificate of Appropriateness and therefore furthers these policies and objectives by maintaining and preserving the character-defining features of the Alamo Square Historic District for the future enjoyment and education of San Francisco residents and visitors.*

1. The proposed project is generally consistent with the eight General Plan priority policies set forth in Section 101.1 in that:
  - A) The existing neighborhood-serving retail uses will be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses will be enhanced:

*The proposed project is for a tourist hotel building located within a residential restrict; the proposed project would not have any impact on neighborhood serving retail uses.*
  - B) The existing housing and neighborhood character will be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods:

*The proposed project will strengthen neighborhood character by respecting the character-defining features of the Alamo Square District in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.*
  - C) The City's supply of affordable housing will be preserved and enhanced:

*The subject building is a tourist hotel; the proposed project will have no adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.*

- D) The commuter traffic will not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking:

*The proposed project will not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI transit service or overburdening the streets or neighborhood parking.*

- E) A diverse economic base will be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development. And future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors will be enhanced:

*The proposed project is for a residential building located within a residential restrict; the proposed project would not have any impact on industrial and service sector jobs.*

- F) The City will achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

*Preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake is unaffected by the proposed amendments. Any construction or alteration associated would be executed in compliance with all applicable construction and safety measures.*

- G) That landmark and historic buildings will be preserved:

*The proposed project is in conformance with Appendix E of Article 10 of the Planning Code and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.*

- H) Parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas will be protected from development:

*The proposed project is at the rear of the subject building and below the roof line of the existing property; it would not impact the City's parks and open space.*

4. For these reasons, the proposal overall, is appropriate for and consistent with the purposes of Article 10, meets the standards of Article 10, and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, General Plan and Prop M findings of the Planning Code.

**DECISION**

That based upon the Record, the submissions by the Applicant, the staff of the Department and other interested parties, the oral testimony presented to this Commission at the public hearings, and all other written materials submitted by all parties, the Commission hereby **GRANTS WITH CONDITIONS Certificate of Appropriateness No. 2006.0747A** attached hereto as "EXHIBIT A" which is incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth.

**APPEAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF MOTION: APPEAL: Any aggrieved person may appeal this Motion to the Board of Appeals within fifteen (15) days after the date of this Motion No. XXXXX. The effective date of this Motion shall be the date of this Motion. For further information, please contact the Board of Appeals in person at 1650 Mission Street, (Room 304) or call 575-6880.**

I hereby certify that the Historical Preservation Commission **ADOPTED** the foregoing Motion on December 16, 2009.

Linda D. Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Chase, Damkroger, Martinez, Matsuda, Wolfram

NAYS: Buckley, Hasz

ABSENT: 0

ADOPTED: December 16, 2009

EXHIBIT A

## Certificate of Appropriateness

Case No: 2006.0747A

Assessor's Block: Lot: 0797/019

Address of Property: 890 Grove Street

Date Application Filed: June 13, 2006

Historic Landmark: Alamo Square Historic District

### Description of Work Proposed:

The proposal is to construct a one-story vertical addition at the roof of the existing two-story-over basement building and install a four-car garage at the basement level. The proposed addition will measure approximately 31' wide x 48' deep and rise approximately 9' above the top of the existing parapet wall. The flat-roofed addition will be set back approximately 15' from the south façade, 7' from the west façade, and 5' from the north façade. It will be clad in painted wood horizontal siding. The proposed windows for the addition will be a combination of wood-framed double-hung windows and French doors. A 3'-6"-tall (1'-9" above the top of the parapet) metal railing will be installed at the roof perimeter and set back approximately 2' from the parapet wall. An elevator shaft will be installed at the rear (east) wall of the building to serve all floors and a new pedestrian entrance will be installed within the recessed portion of the west facade. The proposed wood-paneled garage door will be located at the northern end of the west façade. The opening will be approximately 9' wide and will have a 6" reveal. The work will be in conformity with the drawing stamped Exhibit B, on file in the docket for Case No. 2006.0747A, dated November 18, 2008.

### Final Action by the Historic Preservation Commission on December 16, 2009:

The Commission has reviewed the proposed work and has determined that the work would not have a significant impact upon and would not be potentially detrimental to the Alamo Square Historic District. A motion to APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS the work was passed X-X by the Historic Preservation Commission in conformance with the drawings stamped Exhibit B, on file in the docket for Case No. 2006.0747A, based upon the following findings:

### Condition:

- That the visibility of the proposed addition from the public right-of-way be reduced by increasing the south and west setbacks, decreasing the height of the addition, or both.

### Findings of the Historic Preservation Commission:

- That the proposed addition of an innkeeper's residential unit will result in a visible rooftop structure that will impact the distinctive massing and form of the historic building. The addition



will also alter the building's spatial relationship to the surrounding historic district as it will be visible from the public rights-of-way for approximately 100 feet to the north, west, and south.

- That the proposed conversion of basement area into a garage will not cause a significant change in the building's distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships as it will not cause the removal of significant material or features and will essentially retain the plane of the façade and the building's relationship to the streetscape along Fillmore Street.
- That most aspects of the historic character of the building will be retained and preserved. No distinctive materials, architectural elements, or spaces that characterize the property will be removed. However, the addition will impact the building's characteristic rectangular massing and will increase its scale. These impacts have been minimized by locating the addition at the far rear corner of the building footprint, by creating deep setbacks from the street-facing facades, and by utilizing a low rectangular form that follows the lines of the historic building and minimizes the height of the addition.
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- That the two early additions to the property that occurred during the period of significance for the Alamo Square Historic District will be preserved and/or restored.
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- The proposed project meets the following Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

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For these reasons, the proposal overall, is appropriate for and consistent with the purposes of Article 10, meets the standards of Article 10, and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the General Plan and Prop M Findings of the Planning Code.

**Duration of this Certificate of Appropriateness:** This Certificate of Appropriateness is issued pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code and is valid for a period of three (3) years from the effective date of approval by the Historic Preservation Commission. Implementation of this Certificate of Appropriateness is accomplished by completion of construction work (verified through a job card signed by a District Building Inspector) after issuance of an appropriate Building Permit.

**APPEAL:** Any aggrieved person may appeal the action on this Certificate of Appropriateness by appeal of the issuance of the Building Permit required to implement the proposed work. Contact the Board of Appeals (575-6880) for instructions on filing a permit appeal.

**THIS IS NOT A PERMIT TO COMMENCE ANY WORK OR CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY UNLESS NO BUILDING PERMIT IS REQUIRED. PERMITS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION (and any other appropriate agencies) MUST BE SECURED BEFORE WORK IS STARTED OR OCCUPANCY IS CHANGED.**