



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Motion No. 0045 Permit to Alter

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 20, 2010

Hearing Date: January 20, 2010
Filing Date: December 2, 2009
Case No.: **2009.1104H**
Project Address: **456 Post Street (a.k.a. 450 Post Street)**
Art. 11 Rating: **Category I**
Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District

Zoning: C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial)
80-130-F Height and Bulk District

Block/Lot: 0296/009

Applicant: David Wessel, Architectural Resources Group
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ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO A PERMIT TO ALTER FOR A MAJOR ALTERATION DETERMINED TO BE APPROPRIATE FOR AND CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSES OF ARTICLE 11, MEET THE STANDARDS OF SECTION 1111.6 OF ARTICLE 11 AND MEET THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION TO A CATEGORY I (SIGNIFICANT) BUILDING AT 456 POST STREET, LOCATED ON LOT 009 IN ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 0296, WITHIN A C-3-G (DOWNTOWN GENERAL COMMERCIAL) ZONING DISTRICT AND 80-130-F HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICT.

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, On December 2, 2009, David Wessel of Architectural Resources Group (Project Sponsor) filed an application with the San Francisco Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") for a Permit to Alter pursuant to Article 11 of the *Planning Code* for the reconstruction of a third floor exterior balcony, including a new terra cotta balustrade and underside ornamentation, as well as, extensive repairs to the south elevation, including repointing of masonry, patching or replacing damaged masonry, and gentle cleaning of the facade at the subject Category I (Significant) Building, located on Lot 009 in Assessor's Block 0296.

WHEREAS, The subject steel frame building was designed by San Francisco architects F.H. Meyer and A.R. Johnson in the Spanish-Gothic architectural style and constructed in 1925 for the San Francisco Lodge No. 3 Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. The building is rated as Category 1 (Significant) under the Downtown Plan, a contributor to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District, was included in the 1976 Architectural Survey, and was assigned a rating of "A", the highest possible rating, in the 1978 Downtown Survey. The property is eligible for an individual listing on the National or the California Registers.

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 January 20, 2010, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the current project, Case No. 2009.1104H ("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 the Permit to Alter, in conformance with the architectural plans dated received January 13, 2010 and stamped "Exhibit A" on file in the docket for Case No. 2009.1104H based on the following findings:

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 Section 1111.6 of Article 11:
 - That the proposed alteration is consistent with and appropriate for the effectuation of the purposes of Article 11.
 - That the proposed alterations of structural elements and exterior features shall be consistent with the architectural character of the building, and comply with the following specific requirements of Section 1111.6:

(1) The proposed exterior work will not damage distinguishing original qualities or character of the building, but will require removal of original deteriorated portions of the terra cotta cladding and ornamentation of the third-floor balcony for the purposes of protecting the public safety. The existing steel framed, third-floor balcony is an original feature to the building, however it was modified with an aluminum railing sometime

between the 1960s and 1976 thereby removing original terra cotta features. These modifications have not gained significance in their own right. The terra cotta ornamentation once secured to the cantilevered balcony is failing and there is evidence of corrosion to the ties and rods securing the terra cotta sections to the structure. Expansion of these metal elements due to rust corrosion have, in turn, cracked and spalled the terra cotta cladding and ornamentation. A catch-net for the spalled terra cotta was installed in 2004 to reduce liability to the public safety. Limited sections to be removed will be recast with new terra cotta material and installed to return the balcony to its original appearance.

(2) The integrity of craftsmanship exhibited in most all of the Spanish-Gothic architectural features that characterize the façade will be preserved. One of the most distinctive features, the existing third-floor balcony, unfortunately underwent an unsympathetic modification sometime between the 1960s and 1976 thereby removing the original terra cotta ornamentation emphasized by tracery within the railing and a series of finial drops at the underside. Limited sections to be removed will be recast using similar methods of original craftsmanship, thus will return integrity to the distinctive third-floor balcony.

(3) In general, the original terra cotta is in good condition with deterioration limited to glaze spalling, biological growth, bisque spalling, cracking and deteriorated mortar joints. Cosmetic repairs to the masonry will be completed using conservation techniques and methods appropriate for historic terra cotta. Limited terra cotta blocks will be replaced at the window surrounds, piers and lintels, and around the balcony and will match the original material, dimensions, texture, and the visual qualities of the original glazing. Replacement of missing architectural features are limited to the third-floor balcony, where modification to the railing resulted in an aluminum replacement. Based on extensive research and site inspections, accurate reconstruction of the original terra cotta railing and its ornamentation is possible. Duplication is based on original detailed drawings, a 1926 photograph of the façade, and physical evidence and measurements. The new terra cotta material will match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities

(4) Contemporary design of alterations is not part of the proposed project scope. The design of the reconstructed balcony is based on historic pictorial and physical evidence, and therefore compatible with the original character of the building.

(5) The proposed project will alter elements constituting a part of the principal façade, specifically the 3rd floor balcony, a distinctive feature which will be retained and reconstructed based on historic pictorial and physical evidence. Removal of exterior elements on secondary facades or ground-floor street frontages are not part of the proposed project.

(6) Vertical additions to the height of the building, including new mechanical equipment and other roof top features, are not part of the proposed project.

- The proposed project meets the following *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*:
Standard 6.
Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
Standard 7.
Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
3. For these reasons, the proposal is appropriate for and consistent with Section 1111.6 of Article 11 of the *Planning Code* and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
 4. **General Plan Compliance.** The Project is consistent with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan in that:

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

Objectives and Policies

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.

5. **Planning Code Section 101.1(b)** establishes eight priority-planning policies and requires review of permits for consistency with said policies. On balance, the project does comply with said policies in that:
 - A. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses be enhanced.

The proposed project would not displace any existing neighborhood-serving businesses. The proposed project to repair the third-floor balcony and removed the catch-net installed since 2004 could indirectly enhance the existing ground floor businesses. .

- B. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.

The proposed project is located in an C-3-G Zoning District characterized by mid-rise office and tourist hotel buildings and continuous ground-floor commercial uses. The proposed project would further the goals of cultural diversity by conserving the neighborhood character.

- C. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced,

The Project would not remove or displace affordable housing.

- D. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.

The amount of commuter traffic generated by the proposed project would not impede Muni transit service or overburden streets or neighborhood parking. Located adjacent to Union Square, it is in close proximity to a variety of local and regional public transit options.

- E. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

The proposed project would not displace any tenants, and would have no material effect on industrial or service sector space.

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

The Project will conform to the structural and seismic requirements of the San Francisco Building Code.

- G. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

The proposed project would have no adverse effect on the interior or exterior character-defining architectural features of the historic Category I (Significant) Building. The Project preserves the architectural and historic importance of Elks Lodge No. 3 through sensitive repairs of original materials and reconstruction of missing elements. As a historic resource, the proposed project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitating historic buildings.

- H. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development.

The Project will not impact parks, open space, or their access to sunlight or vistas.

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 **APPROVES Permit to Alter Application No. 2009.1104H** in general conformance with the plans stamped "Exhibit A" and dated received January 13, 2010, 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. 0045. 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 January 20, 2010.

Linda D. Avery
Commission Secretary

AYES: Buckley, Damkroger, Hasz, Martinez, Matsuda, Wolfram

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Chase

ADOPTED: January 20, 2010