



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Planning Commission Resolution No. 17574 DESIGNATION

HEARING DATE MARCH 27, 2008

*Date:* March 20, 2008  
*Case No.:* **2008.0014GU**  
*Project Address:* **690 MARKET STREET**  
*Zoning:* C-3-O (Downtown Office)  
285-S Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 0311/006  
*Project Sponsor:* Scott Emblidge  
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**RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPT A PROPOSED ORDINANCE:  
ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO A REQUEST TO DESIGNATE 690 MARKET STREET,  
ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 311, LOT 6, AS A CATEGORY II (SIGNIFICANT) BUILDING PURSUANT TO  
ARTICLE 11 OF THE PLANNING CODE.**

**WHEREAS**, on October 23, 2007, Supervisors Peskin and Mirkarimi introduced a Resolution No. 581 under Board of Supervisors (hereinafter "Board") initiating the designation of 690 Market Street, the Chronicle Building, Lot 6 in Assessor's Block 311, as a landmark pursuant to Section 1004.1 of the Planning code and urging expedited consideration of the building's landmark status and a Mills Act contract associated with the building's rehabilitation and restoration; and

690 Market Street is currently undesignated under Article 10 or Article 11 of the Planning Code, and is not within a Conservation District; and

The Planning Department has determined that actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment are exempt from environmental review pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15308); and

The Planning Department, concurrent with findings of Ordinance Number 54-06, found the loss of substantial portions of the building's historic fabric precluded 690 Market Street from conforming to the standards set forth in Article 10 of the City Planning Code used to deem landmark status. Section 1004 requires that an individual structure have and retain its special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value. Being that 690 Market Street is within the downtown C-3 zoning district, the Planning Department found the structure to be better suited as a Significant Building

– Category II. A Category II designation allows alterations and additions to buildings of individual importance, so as long the architectural quality or relationship to the environment is not compromised, as referenced in Section 1102(b)(4); and

On January 3, 2008, Scott Emblidge, Esq., submitted a Historic Resource Evaluation, for the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (hereinafter “Landmarks Board”) to review regarding the potential Category II (Significant) designation of 690 Market Street; and

The Planning Department has reviewed the request to designate 690 Market Street as a Category II (Significant) Building pursuant to Article 11 of the Planning Code and recommends approval of the request; and

The Historic Resource Evaluation was reviewed by the Landmarks Board at a duly noticed public hearing on February 6, 2008, at which it considered the request to designate 690 Market Street, Assessor’s Block 311, Lot 6, as a Category II (Significant) building. The agenda item was continued to the duly noticed public meeting on February 20, 2008 at which the Landmarks Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 620, adopting findings that the proposal meets the applicable standards set forth in Article 11 of the Planning Code and recommended that the Planning Commission approve the Category II designation; and

At the same February 20, 2008 hearing, the Landmark Board reviewed and endorsed the description, location and boundary of the designation site as 690 Market Street, encompassing all of and limited to Lot 06 in Assessor’s Block 311; and

This proposal would make the property eligible for the Mills Act. Under Section 71.2 of the Administrative Code, buildings designated as significant (Categories I or II) or contributory pursuant to Article 11 may apply for a historical property contract. The Mills Act would take effect only after the designation of the building becomes final; and

At the same February 20, 2008 hearing, the Landmarks Board directed its Recording Secretary to transmit its Resolution No. 620, the Historic Resource Evaluation Report and other pertinent materials in the case file 2008.0014G to the Planning Commission; and

At a duly noticed public hearing held on March 27, 2008, the Planning Commission (hereinafter “Commission”) reviewed documents and heard oral testimony on the request to designate 690 Market Street, Assessor’s Block 311, Lot 6, as a Category II (Significant) building; and

The Commission finds that there are grounds for designation under Planning Code Section 1106, Subsection (h), providing, in relevant part:

The designation of a building may be changed if . . . (4) restoration of the building to its original quality and character warrants placing the building in a different category pursuant to the standards set forth in section 1102; and

The Commission finds that 690 Market Street merits designation as a Category II (Significant) building under Planning Code Section 1102, Subsection (b), providing, in relevant part:

- (1) Which meet the standards in Section 1102(a) [(1) are at least 40 years old; and (2) are judged to be Buildings of Individual Importance; and (3) are rated Excellent in Architectural Design and Relationship to the Environment.]
- (2) To which, because of their depth and relationship to other structures, it is feasible to add different and higher replacement structures or additions to height at the rear of the structure, even if visible when viewing the principal facades, without affecting their architectural quality or relationship to the environment and without affecting the appearance of the retained portions as separate structures when viewing the principal facades. The designation of Category II Buildings shall identify for each building the portion of the building beyond which such additions may be permitted; and

The proposal will promote the following relevant objectives and policies of the General Plan and Downtown Area Plan:

## 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.

## DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN

### Objectives and Policies

**OBJECTIVE 12:** CONSERVE RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE CONTINUITY WITH SAN FRANCISCO'S PAST.

**Policy 12.1:** 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 12.2:** Use care in remodeling significant older buildings to enhance rather than weaken their original character.

*Discussion: The proposed designation of the subject property under Article 11 is consistent with these general plan policies. The designation will make the property subject to Article 11 of the Planning Code,*

*which limits the alteration and demolition of Significant buildings and imposes specified maintenance requirements. The change of designation will make the property eligible for Mills Act, which will provide a financial incentive to offset the costs incurred during the rehabilitation and the continued annual maintenance of the historic resource.*

The Department has not received any letters or phone calls in support or in opposition to the proposed Ordinance.

The proposed amendments to the Planning Code are consistent with the eight Priority Policies set forth in Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code in that:

1. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved (Priority Policy 7);

*Discussion: The proposed designation of the subject property under Article 11 is consistent with this priority policy. The designation will make the property subject to Article 11 of the Planning Code, which limits the alteration and demolition of Significant buildings and imposes specified maintenance requirements. The designations will not have a significant effect on the other Priority Policies. It will not impact the City's supply of affordable housing; adversely impact existing housing or neighborhood character; adversely impact public transit or place a burden on the existing supply of parking in the neighborhood; involve any commercial office development or displace any industrial or service sector uses; or impact any parks or open spaces or their access to sunlight. Although the building has undergone significant seismic upgrade to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, the designation itself would not trigger the requirements for a seismic upgrade.*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby concur with the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board and approves the designation of 690 Market Street (Assessor's Block 311, Lot 6) as Category II (Significant) pursuant to Article 11 of the Planning Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Resolution No. 17574, the Historic Resource Evaluation, and other pertinent materials in the file for Case No. 2008.0014G to the Board of Supervisors.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Commission at its meeting on March 27, 2008.

Linda Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Antonini, S. Lee, Moore, Olague, and Sugaya

NOES: None

ABSENT: W. Lee

ADOPTED: March 27, 2008