



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Motion No. 0216

HEARING DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2013

Filing Date: May 24, 2013
Case No.: **2013.0663A**
Project Address: **333 Dolores Street**
Historic Landmark: No. 137 – The Notre Dame School
Zoning: RM-1 (Residential, Mixed, Low-Density)
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 3567/057
Applicant: Molly Huffman
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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 RETENTION OF THREE TEMPORARY CLASSROOM STRUCTURES ON THE PROPERTY LOCATED ON LOT 057 IN ASSESSOR’S BLOCK 3567, LANDMARK No. 137, LOCATED WITHIN A RM-1 (RESIDENTIAL, MIXED, LOW-DENSITY) DISTRICT AND A 40-X HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICT.

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, on May 24, 2013, Valerie Veronin on behalf of Children’s Day School (Project Sponsor) filed an application with the San Francisco Planning Department (hereinafter “Department”) for a Certificate of Appropriateness to retain three existing temporary classroom structures located on the subject property located on lot 057 in Assessor’s Block 3567 for an additional period not to exceed 10.5 years. No physical work is proposed for the structures.

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 November 20, 2013, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the current project, Case No. 2013.0663A (“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 Certificate of Appropriateness, in conformance with the architectural plans dated received May 1, 2013 and labeled Exhibit A on file in the docket for Case No. 2013.0663A based on the following findings:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- That the project sponsor will remove the three temporary classroom structures from the subject landmark site within 10.5 years from the date of Planning Commission approval for the conditional use authorization.
- That the project sponsor shall maintain the three temporary classroom structures in safe, sanitary, and good physical condition. Any evidence suggesting that the structures are not being properly maintained will be corrected by the project sponsor in a timely manner.
- The site (including landscaping) shall be maintained in a manner so as to keep the temporary structures screened from view.
- Within five years from the date of this approval, the Project Sponsor will provide an update to the Commission in the form of an informational hearing on the progress of CDS fund raising and general capital improvements that would result in the removal of the temporary classroom structures from the subject site.
- Every two years, beginning at the date of this approval, the Project Sponsor will provide the Department’s Preservation Coordinator with a written update on the progress of CDS fund raising efforts and general capital improvements in accordance with the Facilities Master Plan Timeline that was provided to the Department for review and consideration.

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:

Based on the requirements of Article 10 and the Secretary of Interior's Standards, staff has determined that the retention of the existing temporary structures would not adversely affect the subject landmark site.

While the retention of temporary structures on a landmark site is not ideal, staff finds that the historic character of the property will be retained and preserved because the temporary structures are small in size and clustered in the corner at the opposite end of the site from St. Joseph's Hall, furthermore, the structures are well maintained and screened from view by existing dense vegetation and trees.

After contemplating the construction of a permanent building on the subject site to deal with the space constraints of operating a pre-kindergarten through eighth grade day school for approximately 400 students on the subject property CDS purchased another site at 601 Dolores Street in 2011 for \$6.6 million. CDS received authorization to convert 601 Dolores Street into a school in September 2012 and anticipates starting construction in march 2014 on Phase 1 of the conversion which is expected to take 12-15 months and cost \$12,000,000. Classes at 601 Dolores Street are estimated to be completed the Summer of 2015. 601 Dolores will be partially operational by this time and classes are scheduled to begin September 2015. Phase 2 of the project is expected to cost \$3,000,000 and is scheduled to commence Summer 2016 and be completed by Summer 2017 at which point 601 Dolores would be fully operational.

The CDS Middle School will be relocated from 333 Dolores to 601 Dolores after Phase 1 is completed in 2015 which will open up space at 333 Dolores to make seismic improvements and the necessary improvements to St. Joseph's Hall to accommodate Kindergarten and Pre-K students which have different occupancy requirements than older students.

It was clear to staff after speaking with CDS representatives that the school is moving towards the goal of removing the temporary classrooms from the subject site but is not prepared at this time to remove them as originally authorized. Department staff supports the 10.5 year request to retain the temporary structures with the condition of approval that CDS will work more closely with the Department and the Historic Preservation Commission over the next decade to report more frequently on their progress in raising the funds needed to meet the objectives of their capital improvements timeline so that if necessary an alternative plan can be developed to allow the temporary structures to be removed in a timely manner to avoid another extension request.

The project is compatible with the character of the landmark site as described in the designation report dated March 4, 1981 as discussed below.

- The proposal will not entail the removal, alteration or obstruction of any significant character-defining historic feature;
- The temporary classroom structures are small when compared to the size of the existing three-story St. Joseph's Hall building on the property and are only temporary (not to exceed an additional period of 10.5 years from the date of conditional use approval);

- The proposed structures are located more than 100 feet away from Saint Joseph's Hall and 80 feet away from the Notre Dame Senior Housing Complex (contributory structures to the site);
- Since the location of subject property is tucked behind the Notre Dame Senior Housing Complex on Dolores Street and cannot be seen from the public right-of-way, there will be no significant visual impact from the public view;
- The proposed work would retain the historic school use of the historic property and would allow it to continue to grow and meet the future needs of the student population.
- The design of the classroom structures is sufficiently differentiated from the historic St. Joseph's Hall and the Notre Dame Senior Housing Complex (contributory structures to the site).
- The temporary structures will not become permanent structures on the site. The Project Sponsor will work closely with Department Staff and the Commission to ensure that the structures are removed with 10.5 years. Once removed, the essential form and integrity of the site would remain intact.
- The temporary classroom structures will be maintained in a safe, sanitary, and good physical condition so not to detract from the Landmark site.
- The proposed project meets the following Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

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.

The project would retain and strengthen the historic use of the site as a school. The project would not alter the historic St. Joseph's Hall and would retain the overall openness of the site because the structures in question are small in scale and located far from the landmark buildings on the site.

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.

The project involves the retention of structures already present on the site. No physical work is proposed for the structures. The structures are differentiated from the historic St. Joseph's Hall by their size and exterior materials. St. Joseph's Hall is finished in stucco while the temporary structures are clad in T-11 siding. The temporary structures are located on the opposite side of the lot and screened by landscaping to protect the spatial relationship of St. Joseph's Hall to the property.

Standard 10.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.

The classroom structures are temporary and designed to be removed after they have fulfilled the school's temporary space needs. When removed the essential form and integrity of the historic property 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 2.7

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 Landmark No. 137, the Notre Dame School, for the future enjoyment and education of San Francisco residents and visitors.

4. 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 would strengthen an existing school that primarily serves the Mission, Upper Market, Noe Valley, Bernal Heights, and Potrero Hill neighborhoods.

- 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 landmark in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

- C) The City's supply of affordable housing will be preserved and enhanced:

The project will not reduce the affordable housing supply as the subject property is occupied by an institutional use.

- 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 will 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.

The project involves no physical work to existing structures, therefore, it would not affect the ability of the City to achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

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

The proposed project is in conformance with 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 will not impact the access to sunlight or vistas for the parks and open space.

5. 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 a Certificate of Appropriateness** for the property located at Lot 057 in Assessor's Block 3567 for proposed work in conformance with plans dated May 1, 2013 and labeled Exhibit A on file in the docket for Case No. 2013.0663A.

APPEAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF MOTION: The Commission's decision on a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be final unless appealed within thirty (30) days. Any appeal shall be made to the Board of Appeals, unless the proposed project requires Board of Supervisors approval or is appealed to the Board of Supervisors as a conditional use, in which case any appeal shall be made to the Board of Supervisors (see Charter Section 4.135).

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. The project involves existing structures on the site. No physical work is proposed for the structures, therefore, a building permit is not required.

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.

I hereby certify that the Historical Preservation Commission ADOPTED the foregoing Motion on November 20, 2013.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Hasz, Hyland, Johnck, Johns, Diane Matsuda, and Pearlman

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Wolfram

ADOPTED: November 20, 2013