



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 0670

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 18, 2012

Project Name: Amendments relating to:
Parking, Awning, Signs, Exposure, Open Space, and Limited
Conforming Uses.

Case Number: 2011.0532T [Board File No. 11-0548]

Initiated by: Supervisor Chiu / Introduced May 3, 2011

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Recommendation: **Recommend Approval with Modifications**

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RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPT A PROPOSED ORDINANCE WITH MODIFICATIONS THAT WOULD AMEND THE SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE BY REPEALING SECTIONS 136.2, 136.3, 158, 187, 249.15, 263.2, 263.3, 602.25, 602.26, 607.3 AND 607.4 AND AMENDING VARIOUS OTHER CODE SECTIONS TO (1) INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF PRINCIPALLY PERMITTED PARKING SPACES FOR DWELLINGS IN RC-4 AND C-3 DISTRICTS, (2) MAKE OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS IN THE VAN NESS SPECIAL USE DISTRICT AND RC-3 DISTRICTS CONSISTENT WITH THOSE OF RC-4 DISTRICTS, (3) ELIMINATE MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CHINATOWN MIXED USE DISTRICTS AND NORTH BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, (4) ALLOW EXCEPTIONS FROM REQUIRED PARKING UNDER SPECIFIED CIRCUMSTANCES, (5) AMEND THE RESTRICTIONS ON OFF-STREET PARKING RATES AND EXTEND THEM TO ADDITIONAL ZONING DISTRICTS, (6) REVISE SIGN, AWNING, CANOPY AND MARQUEE CONTROLS IN SPECIFIED ZONING DISTRICTS, (7) INCREASE THE PERMITTED USE SIZE FOR LIMITED CORNER COMMERCIAL USES IN RTO AND RM DISTRICTS, AND ALLOW REACTIVATION OF LAPSED LIMITED COMMERCIAL USES IN R DISTRICTS, (8) REVISE THE BOUNDARIES OF AND MODIFY PARKING AND SCREENING REQUIREMENTS IN THE WASHINGTON-BROADWAY AND WATERFRONT SPECIAL USE DISTRICTS, (9) MODIFY CONTROLS FOR USES AND ACCESSORY USES IN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, (10) PERMIT CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS FROM EXPOSURE AND OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS, AND (11) MODIFY CONFORMITY REQUIREMENTS IN VARIOUS USE DISTRICTS; ADOPTING FINDINGS, INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS, SECTION 302 FINDINGS, AND FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE PRIORITY POLICIES OF PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1.

PREAMBLE

Whereas, on May 3, 2011 Supervisor Chiu introduced a proposed Ordinance under Board of Supervisors (hereinafter "Board") File Number 11-0548 which would amend the San Francisco Planning Code by repealing Sections 136.2, 136.3, 158, 187, 249.15, 263.2, 263.3, 602.25, 602.26, 607.3 and 607.4 and amending various other Code sections to (1) increase the amount of principally permitted parking spaces for dwellings in RC-4 and C-3 Districts, (2) make off-street parking requirements in the Van Ness Special Use District and RC-3 Districts consistent with those of RC-4 Districts, (3) eliminate minimum parking requirements for the Chinatown Mixed Use Districts and North Beach Neighborhood Commercial Districts, (4) allow exceptions from required parking under specified circumstances, (5) amend the restrictions on off-street parking rates and extend them to additional zoning districts, (6) revise sign, awning, canopy and marquee controls in specified zoning districts, (7) increase the permitted use size for limited corner commercial uses in RTO and RM districts, and allow reactivation of lapsed limited commercial uses in R districts, (8) revise the boundaries of and modify parking and screening requirements in the Washington-Broadway and Waterfront Special Use Districts, (9) modify controls for uses and accessory uses in Commercial and Residential-Commercial Districts, (10) permit certain exceptions from exposure and open space requirements for historic buildings, and (11) modify conformity requirements in various use districts; and

Whereas, on January 18, 2012, the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider aspects in the proposed Ordinance that directly impact Articles 10 and 11 buildings, and historic resources; and

Whereas, the proposed zoning changes have been determined to be exempt from environmental review under the General Rule Exclusion (Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines); and

Whereas, the Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of the applicant, Department staff, and other interested parties; and

Whereas, the all pertinent documents may be found in the files of the Department, as the custodian of records, at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco; and

Whereas, the Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinance; and

MOVED, that the Commission hereby recommends that the Board of Supervisors **approve** the proposed ordinance with modifications.

COMMENTS

Having reviewed the materials identified in the recitals above, and having heard all testimony and arguments, this Commission has provided the following comments regarding the proposed project:

1. The Commission recommends approval with Staff's recommendations:

- a. Remove the prohibition on reinstating LCUs that have been converted to residential units.
 - b. The proposed legislation should be amended to reflect the recent change to Section 602.9, keeping a clear distinction between Vintage Signs and Historic Movie Theater Signs and Marquees.
 - c. Remove the prohibition on logos stricken from the proposed text for Section 602.9(e)(5)(B)(ii).
2. The Commission also recommends that more should be done to make it easier for small businesses to occupy abandoned Limited Conforming Uses (LCUs).

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 propose ordinance would encourage the reuse and preservation of existing buildings and allow greater flexibility in the transfer of development rights, helping to preserve San Francisco's unique character.

Priority Polices. The proposed replacement project is 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 Ordinance will encourage neighborhood-serving retail uses or opportunities for employment in or ownership of such businesses by allowing expired Limited Conforming Uses to be reestablished.

- 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 Ordinance would help preserve existing neighborhood character by encouraging the reuse of existing building.

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

The proposed Ordinance will not negatively impact affordable housing in the City.

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

The proposed Ordinance seeks to reduce the impact that private automobiles have on City streets by eliminating minimum parking requirements and replacing them with maximum parking requirements.

- 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 Ordinance would not adversely affect the industrial or service sectors or future opportunities for resident employment or ownership in these sectors.

- 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 new construction or alteration associated with a use would be executed in compliance with all applicable construction and safety measures.

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

The proposed ordinance would allow Landmark and historic buildings to be adaptively reused more easily by exempting them from certain provisions in the Planning Code, which would reduce the amount of change that is required to add housing to historic buildings and help preserve them for the future.

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

The City's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas would be unaffected by the proposed amendments. It is not anticipated that permits would be such that sunlight access, to public or private property, would be adversely impacted.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Motion was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 18, 2012

Linda D. Avery
Commission Secretary

YES: Commissioners Chase, Damkroger, Hasz, Johns, Martinez, Matsuda, Wolfram
NO: None
ABSENT: None
ADOPTED: January 18, 2012