



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

**MEMO**

## Historic Resource Evaluation Response

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

**MEA Planner:** Moises Aceves  
**Project Address:** 1731-41 Powell Street  
**Block/Lot:** 0101/004  
**Case No.:** 2007.1117E  
**Date of Review:** November 12, 2008  
**Planning Dept. Reviewer:** Tim Frye  
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**PROPOSED PROJECT**      ☐ Demolition      ☒ Alteration

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes converting the existing theater into 18 residential units over ground-floor commercial space and 27 off-street parking spaces.

### PRE-EXISTING HISTORIC RATING / SURVEY

The subject building was identified on the Unreinforced Masonry Buildings (UMB) Survey and the North Beach Historic Resources Survey

### HISTORIC DISTRICT / NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The subject building is located within the North Beach Survey Area and within the boundaries of the eligible Washington Square Historic District.

1. **California Register Criteria of Significance:** Note, a building may be an historical resource if it meets any of the California Register criteria listed below. If more information is needed to make such a determination please specify what information is needed. *(This determination for California Register Eligibility is made based on existing data and research provided to the Planning Department by the above named preparer / consultant and other parties. Key pages of report and a photograph of the subject building are attached.)*

**Event: or**      ☒ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Unable to determine  
**Persons: or**      ☐ Yes      ☒ No      ☐ Unable to determine  
**Architecture: or**      ☒ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Unable to determine  
**Information Potential:**      ☐ Further investigation recommended.  
**District or Context:**      ☐ Yes, may contribute to a potential district or significant context

**If Yes; Period of significance:** 1906-1939

Notes: The subject building was previously identified as a contributor to the eligible Washington Square California Register District. Staff concurs with the Page & Turnbull Report dated, June 2007, that the subject building has been significantly compromised and due to a lack of integrity does not appear to be eligible for the California Register, individually or as a contributor to the Washington Square District.

The subject site, however, is located within the California Register eligible Washington Square District that qualifies under the Events and Architecture Criteria of Significance. This district is significant for its association with the development of Washington Square as a central focal point for the Italian immigrant community and the early development of North Beach up until the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition. The district is also significant for its fine collection of statues, markers, and memorials within Washington Square as well as the handsome representation of Edwardian, Art Deco, and Revival Style structures that surround the square.

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2. **Integrity** is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be a resource for the purposes of CEQA, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the California Register criteria, but it also must have integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The subject property has retained or lacks integrity from the period of significance noted above:

**Location:**    ☒ Retains    ☐ Lacks  
**Association:**    ☐ Retains    ☒ Lacks  
**Design:**    ☐ Retains    ☒ Lacks  
**Workmanship:**    ☐ Retains    ☒ Lacks

**Setting:**    ☒ Retains    ☐ Lacks  
**Feeling:**    ☐ Retains    ☒ Lacks  
**Materials:**    ☐ Retains    ☒ Lacks

Notes: The subject building has been subjected to a number of substantial alterations. The only remaining historic features are its blade sign and overall massing. The remainder of the historic fabric has been significantly compromised, including the removal of all interior partitions, finishes; the removal of the historic marquee, and the introduction of new openings on the primary elevation.

In contrast, the eligible Washington Square District still retains a high level of overall historic integrity.

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3. **Determination whether the property is an "historical resource" for purposes of CEQA**

☒ No Resource Present (*Go to 6. below*)                      ☐ Historical Resource Present  
(*Continue to 4.*)

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4. If the property appears to be an historical resource, whether the proposed project is consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards or if any proposed modifications would materially impair the resource (i.e. alter in an adverse manner those physical characteristics which justify the property's inclusion in any registry to which it belongs).

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☒ The project appears to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. (*Go to 6. below*)

Optional: ☐ See attached explanation of how the project meets standards.

☐ The project is NOT consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards; however the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the resource such that the significance of the resource would be materially impaired. (*Continue to 5. if the project is an alteration*)

☐ The project is NOT consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and is a significant impact as proposed. (*Continue to 5. if the project is an alteration*)

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5. Character-defining features of the building to be retained or respected in order to be consistent with the Standards and/or avoid a significant adverse effect by the project, presently or cumulatively. Please recommend conditions of approval that may be desirable to avoid or reduce any adverse effects.
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6. Whether the proposed project may have an adverse effect on off-site historical resources, such as adjacent historic properties.

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unable to determine

Notes: The proposed project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for new Construction within a historic district, specifically,

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

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 proposed project retains and rehabilitates the historic blade sign, which is still an important visual feature within the district. The proposal respects the overall massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the district and the Department has determined that all proposed materials are compatible with the district. The Department does not believe that

the proposed project or the change in use will have a significant adverse impact upon the character-defining features of the Washington Square District.

**PRESERVATION COORDINATOR REVIEW**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark Luellen, *Preservation Coordinator*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

11-12-08

cc: Sonya Banks, *Recording Secretary*, Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board  
Vernaliza Byrd / Historic Resource Impact Review File

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