# **Executive Summary**Planning Code Text Amendment Adoption

HEARING DATE: MARCH 24, 2016

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Planning Information:

Project Name: Midblock Alley and Rooftop Screening and Enclosure Controls

Case Number: 2015-017728PCA

Initiated by: San Francisco Planning Department

1650 Mission Street, Ste. 400 San Francisco, CA 94103

Staff Contact: Tina Chang, Planner

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Reviewed by: AnMarie Rodgers, Senior Policy Advisor

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Recommendation: Recommend Approval

The action before the Commission is adoption of the Code amendments described below. On March 3, 2016, the Commission initiated the subject Planning Code Amendments as noted in Planning Commission Resolution No. 19581. The Commission's recommendation shall be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

### PLANNING CODE AMENDMENT

The proposed Ordinance amends the San Francisco Planning Code, including Sections 260(b)(1)(F), 270.1, 270.2, 309, 735, 743 and 744 to allow for greater flexibility in the screening of rooftop mechanical equipment and make mid-block alley controls more consistently applied throughout the zoning districts in which mid-block alleys are required; and other technical and clerical amendments.

### The Way It Is Now:

- 1. Section 260(b)(1)(F): Rooftop Screen and Enclosure Controls.
  - o RC-1 and RC-2 are referenced, however, no longer exist.
  - o Controls for rooftop enclosures or screens are listed within a single paragraph, causing the text to be more difficult to digest and understand.

### 2. Section 270.1: Horizontal Mass Reduction Controls.

 Section 270.1 applies to all buildings in the Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts with street frontage greater than 200 feet in length.

### 3. Section 270.2: Mid-block Alley Controls.

o Mid-block alleys apply to large lot development in the Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use, South of Market Mixed-Use, C-3, C-M and DTR Districts that have one or more street frontages of over 200 linear feet on a block face longer than 400 feet between intersections. o In Eastern Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts, mid-block alleys must be at least 60% open to the sky. The "60% open to the sky" does not apply to any other districts where mid-block alleys are required.

### 4. Section 309: Permit Review in C-3 Districts.

- Subsection (a)(6) regarding exceptions to freight loading and service vehicle space requirements references 161(i), however, the relevant text has been moved to 161(f).
- o Exceptions to volumetric measurements of roof enclosure and screens are not currently permitted.

### 5. Section 329: Large Project Authorization in Eastern Neighborhood Mixed-Use Districts

- Subsection (d)(8) references 219.1, which no longer exists.
- o Exceptions to volumetric measurements of roof enclosure and screens are not currently permitted.

### 6. Section 735: SOMA Neighborhood Commercial Transit District (NCT)

- o Midblock alleys do not currently apply.
- o Subsection 735.10 within Table 735, the SOMA NCT zoning control table, does not currently reference 270.2, which provides controls for mid-block alleys.

### 7. Section 743: Folsom Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit District (NCT)

- o Midblock alleys do not currently apply.
- o Subsection 743.10 within the Table 743, the Folsom Street NCT zoning control table, does not currently reference 270.2, which provides controls for mid-block alleys.

### 8. Section 744: Regional Commercial Transit District (RCD)

- o Midblock alleys do not currently apply.
- Subsection 744.10 within the Table 744, the RCD zoning control table, does not currently reference 270.2, which provides controls for mid-block alleys.

### The Way It Would Be:

### 1. Section 260(b)(1)(F): Rooftop Screen and Enclosure Controls.

- o References to the obsolete zoning districts, RC-1 and RC-2, would be stricken.
- Controls for rooftop enclosures or screens are enumerated and listed as separate paragraphs for greater legibility and ease of comprehension.

### 2. Section 270.1: Horizontal Mass Reduction Controls.

Section 270.1 would apply to all buildings in the Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts with street *or alley* frontages greater than 200 feet in length.

### 3. Section 270.2: Mid-block Alley Controls.

Mid-block alleys would also apply to the SOMA NCT and RCD districts in addition to large lot development in the Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use, South of Market Mixed-

- Use, C-3, C-M and DTR Districts that have one or more street or alley frontages of over 200 linear feet on a block face longer than 400 feet between intersections.
- The "60% open to the sky" would apply to all zoning districts were mid-block alleys are required.

### 4. Section 309: Permit Review in C-3 Districts.

- Subsection (a)(6) regarding exceptions to freight loading and service vehicle space requirements would reference Section 161(f).
- Exceptions to volumetric measurements of roof enclosure and screens would be permitted, pursuant and subject to design review per Section 309.

### 5. Section 329: Large Project Authorization in Eastern Neighborhood Mixed-Use Districts

- Subsection (d)(8) would reference Section 210.3C, where Section 219.1 was redesignated.
- o Exceptions to volumetric measurements of roof enclosure and screens would be permitted, pursuant and subject to design review per Section 329.

### 6. Section 735: SOMA Neighborhood Commercial Transit District (NCT)

- o Midblock alleys controls would apply.
- Subsection 735.10 within Table 735, the SOMA NCT zoning control table, would reference 270.2, which provides controls for mid-block alleys.

### 7. Section 743: Folsom Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit District (NCT)

- o Midblock alleys controls would apply.
- o Subsection 743.10 within Table 743, the Folsom Street NCT zoning control table, would reference 270.2, which provides controls for mid-block alleys.

### 8. Section 744: Regional Commercial Transit District (RCD)

- o Midblock alleys controls would apply.
- Subsection 744.10 within the Table 744, the RCD zoning control table, would reference 270.2, which provides controls for mid-block alleys.

### ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

### Mid-Block Alley Controls

When adopted, Section 270.2 only applied to the Eastern Neighborhood Mixed Use and DTR Districts, and required that mid-bock alleys in Eastern neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts be at least 60% open to the sky. In 2010, the Board adopted legislation to extend the mid-block alley requirement to all Zoning Districts in the Eastern Neighborhoods, South of Market Mixed-Use, C-M and South of Market C-3 Districts; however the "60% open to the sky" qualification was not extended to apply to C-3 Districts. To more consistently apply mid-block alley requirements throughout the City, this ordinance amends the Planning Code to make clear that mid-block alleys, where applicable, will be at least 60 percent open to the sky.

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The changes to the mid-block alley controls do not deviate from the original intent of Section 270.2 to divide large industrial blocks into more walkable, people friendly places. Rather, the changes would apply the existing controls more consistently across all applicable zoning districts and expand its applicability, namely to include the Regional Commercial District (RCD), South of Market (SOMA) Neighborhood Commercial Transit (NCT) and Folsom Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit (NCT) zoning districts because they apply to nearly all other adjacent zoning districts (e.g. Mixed-Use General, Mixed-Use Office, Urban Mixed Use, Residential Enclave- Mixed, Western SOMA Mixed Use General, Western SOMA Mixed Use Office).

Additionally, since large frontages may occur on alleys as well as streets, the subject mid-block alley controls and Section 270.1, which governs Horizontal Mass Reduction in Eastern Neighborhoods and Mixed-Use Districts, would be amended to make clear that such controls apply to projects with street or alley frontage, rather than just street frontage as is currently the case.

The text amendment changes zoning control tables accordingly for the RCD, SOMA NCT, and Folsom Street NCT to reference Section 270.2.

### Rooftop Screen and Enclosure Controls

As written, Planning Code controls for rooftop screens and enclosures may not always adequately screen mechanical equipment, or allow for better urban design, such as the improvement to the sky-line when viewed from a distance. Currently, to take advantage of the maximum permitted height of 20 feet for a rooftop screen or enclosure, a setback must be provided at the building's terminus. This may prove inconsistent with the building's overall design. In some instances<sup>1</sup>, projects may provide a screen without a setback; however, the height of the screen must be reduced by 25 percent to 15 feet. This lowered height can prevent mechanical features from being adequately screened because the height of many mechanical features is 16 feet or more. The proposed Ordinance allows the volumetric controls to be modifiable in Sections 309 and 329, such that the screen or enclosure may reach a height of 20 feet for up to 100 percent of the upper tower roof area, rather than 75 percent as currently allowed. Additionally, the proposed Ordinance revises Section 260(b)(1)(F) to make the language easier to understand.

Although the rooftop screen and enclosure controls would be changed to allow a potential increase in volume of such structures, the change would not increase the permitted height. Additionally, the volume increase is not categorically permitted, but must be sought as an exception pursuant to Sections 309 and 329, and subject to design review. The volumetric increase of the screen or enclosure may not be granted if found to negatively affect the overall building's massing and scale, or be found to block light and air intended to be preserved by upper tower setbacks required by Section 132.1 or sun access planes required by Section 146 of the Planning Code. The proposed Ordinance is intended to allow for greater flexibility to achieve stated urban design goals, namely the screening of mechanical equipment, and the contribution to an interesting sky-line.

### Planning Code Corrections

Finally, the Ordinance makes several corrections, updating references and / or striking references to Code Sections that no longer exist or are incorrect, as indicted above.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This occurs when 100 percent of the upper tower roof area is screened.

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### REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION

The proposed Resolution is before the Commission so that it may approve or disapprove the initiation of the Planning Code amendments.

### RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the Commission initiate the proposed amendments and adopt the attached Draft Resolution so that the Commission may consider approval of the Ordinance on or after March 24, 2016.

### BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends initiation of the proposed amendment because the changes would allow mid-block alley controls to be consistently applied throughout all applicable zoning districts and also expand their applicability to RCD and SOMA NCT, adjacent to districts where such controls already apply and large industrial blocks may also be found. The proposed Ordinance would also increase the maximum permitted volume of rooftop screens and enclosures without increasing their permitted height. This would allow for more graceful building terminations while also adequately screening unsightly mechanical equipment, as intended for such screens and enclosures.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The project is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

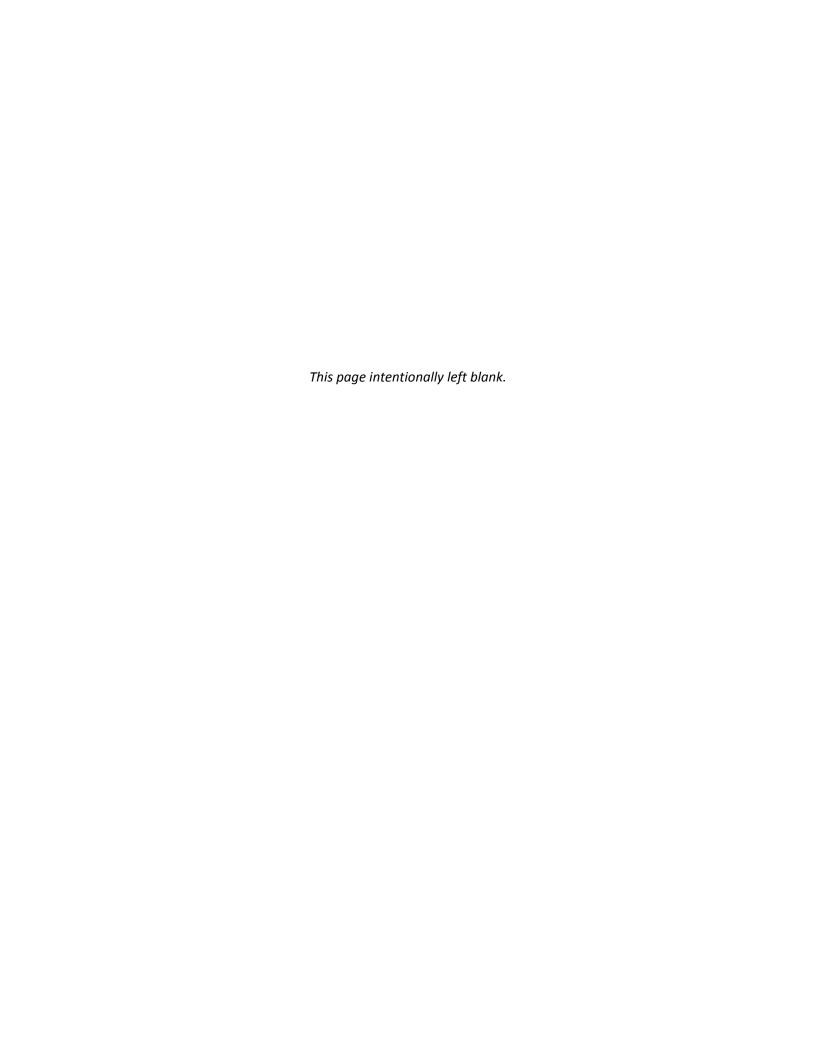
As of the date of this report, the Planning Department has received correspondence from Livable Cities, who provided feedback to the Department regarding the legislation, most of which has been incorporated into the proposed Ordinance. Staff has also received an email from Sue Hestor requesting to see the draft Ordinance.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Initiate and Schedule Adoption hearing for March 24, 2016

### **Attachments:**

Draft Commission Resolution for Adoption Planning Code Amendment Draft Planning Code Amendment Ordinance Zoning Maps Depicting Applicability of Mid-block Alley Controls – Current and Proposed Graphics Depicting 260(b)(1)(F) – Current and Proposed Signed Commission Resolution for Initiation of Planning Code Amendment.



[Planning Code - Mid-Block Alley and Rooftop Screening and Enclosure Controls]

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Ordinance amending the Planning Code to allow for greater flexibility in the screening and enclosure of rooftop mechanical equipment and to make mid-block alley controls more consistent and clarify that bulk limitations take alleys into account; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1, and findings of public convenience, necessity, and welfare under Planning Code Section 302.

NOTE:

Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*; deletions are strike-through italics Times New Roman. Board amendment additions are <u>double-underlined</u>; Board amendment deletions are strikethrough normal. Asterisks (\* \* \* \*) indicate the omission of unchanged Code subsections

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco: Section 1. Findings.

- (a) Environmental Findings. The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seg.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this determination.
- (b) On the Planning Commission, in Resolution No. adopted findings that the actions contemplated in this ordinance are consistent, on balance, with the City's General Plan and eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1(b). The

Board adopts these findings as its own. A copy of said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No.\_\_\_\_\_, and is incorporated herein by reference.

- (c) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed Planning Code amendments will serve the public necessity, convenience, and welfare for the reasons set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_\_, and the Board incorporates such reasons herein by reference.
  - (d) General Findings.
- (1) The introduction of mid-block alleys in certain Planning Districts was adopted in 2008 as part of the Eastern Neighborhoods Community Planning effort. This design feature divides large industrial blocks into more walkable segments and transforms historically industrial neighborhoods into urban, people-friendly places.
- (2) Policy 3.2.7 of the East SoMa Area Plan states that pedestrian networks should be strengthened by extending alleys to adjacent streets or alleys wherever possible, or by providing new publicly accessible mid-block rights of way. Policy 3.2.7 was codified in Planning Code Section 270.2.
- (3) When enacted, Section 270.2 only applied to the Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts and DTR Districts, and required that mid-block alleys in Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts be at least 60 percent open to the sky.
- (4) In 2010, the City enacted Ordinance No. 85-10 extending the mid-block alley requirement to \ South of Market Mixed-Use, C-M and South of Market C-3 Districts. However, the "60 percent open to the sky" requirement was not similarly extended.
- (5) To more consistently apply mid-block alley requirements throughout the City, this ordinance requires that mid-block alleys, where required, will be at least 60 percent open to the sky.

- (6) Long street frontages can occur on alleys as well as streets, implicating the special bulk requirements of Planning Code Sections 270.1 and 270.2.
- (7) Planning Code Section 260(b)(1)(F) allows additional building volume to screen certain rooftop features (e.g., mechanical equipment, elevator and stair penthouses, etc.), as described in Section 260(b)(1)(A) and (B) in C-3, Eastern Neighborhoods, and South of Market Mixed Use Zoning Districts. However, the allowable volume, as measured in cubic feet, may not exceed ¾ of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by 20, which may preclude adequate screening of rooftop features.
- (8) A building's terminus is a critical element of its design, as evidenced by Planning Code provisions permitting exceptions to height limits for architectural elements to add interest to the city skyline. Under current Code requirements, to take advantage of the maximum permitted height of 20 feet for the rooftop screen, a permit applicant must provide a setback at the building's terminus, which may not accomplish stated urban design goals of improving the appearance of the sky-line when viewed from a distance.
- (9) Because rooftop screen controls are measured in terms of volume, Projects currently may provide a screen without a setback, but certain screens that are not set back must be reduced by 25 percent of the maximum permitted height, or 15 feet, which may prevent mechanical features from being adequately screened, especially considering that many mechanical features reach a height of 16 feet.
- (10) To help ensure a building's terminus is consistent with the rest of the building's design, and to allow for more adequate screening of rooftop features, this ordinance allows the volume of rooftop screens and/or enclosures to be modifiable, subject to design review, in C-3 and Eastern Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts, allowing the screen to reach a maximum volume equal to 100 percent of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by twenty.

Section 2. The Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Section 260, to read as follows:

### SEC. 260. HEIGHT LIMITS: MEASUREMENT.

Code, in an amount up to but not exceeding that which is specified.

- (b) Exemptions. In addition to other height exceptions permitted by this Code, the features listed in this <u>subsection</u> (b) shall be exempt from the height limits established by this
- (1) The following features shall be exempt; provided the limitations indicated for each are observed; provided further that the sum of the horizontal areas of all features listed in this *Paragraph subsection* (b)(1) shall not exceed 20 percent of the horizontal area of the roof above which they are situated, or, in C-3 Districts, and in the Rincon Hill Downtown Residential District, where the top of the building has been separated into a number of stepped elements to reduce the bulk of the upper tower, of the total of all roof areas of the upper towers; and provided further that in any R, *RC-1*, *RC-2*, RC-3, or RC-4 District the sum of the horizontal areas of all such features located within the first 10 feet of depth of the building, as measured from the front wall of the building, shall not exceed 20 percent of the horizontal area of the roof in such first 10 feet of depth.

As an alternative, the sum of the horizontal areas of all features listed in this <u>subsection</u>

Paragraph (b)(1) may be equal <u>to</u> but not exceed 20 percent of the horizontal area permitted for buildings and structures under any bulk limitations in Section 270 of this Code applicable to the subject property.

Any such sum of 20 percent heretofore described may be increased to 30 percent by unroofed screening designed either to obscure the features listed under (A) and (B) below or to provide a more balanced and graceful silhouette for the top of the building or structure.

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(A) Mechanical equipment and appurtenances necessary to the operation or maintenance of the building or structure itself, including chimneys, ventilators, plumbing vent stacks, cooling towers, water tanks, panels or devices for the collection of solar or wind energy and window-washing equipment, together with visual screening for any such features. This exemption shall be limited to the top 10 feet of such features where the height limit is 65 feet or less, and the top 16 feet of such features where the height limit is more than 65 feet.

(B) Elevator, stair and mechanical penthouses, fire towers, skylights and dormer windows. This exemption shall be limited to the top 10 feet of such features where the height limit is 65 feet or less, and the top 16 feet of such features where the height limit is more than 65 feet. However, for elevator penthouses, the exemption shall be limited to the top 16 feet and limited to the footprint of the elevator shaft, regardless of the height limit of the building. The design of all elevator penthouses in Residential Districts shall be consistent with the "Residential Design Guidelines" as adopted and periodically amended for specific areas or conditions by the City Planning Commission.

(F) <u>Rooftop enclosures and screening for features listed in subsections (b)(1)(A)</u>

and (B) above that add additional building volume Iin any C-3 District except as otherwise allowed in the S-2 Bulk district according to subsection (M) below, Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts, or South of Market Mixed Use District. additional building volume used to enclose or screen from view the features listed under Subsections (b)(1)(A) and (B) above. The rooftop form created by the added volume shall not be subject to the percentage coverage limitations otherwise applicable to this subsection but shall meet the requirements of Section 141 and shall not exceed 20 feet in height, measured as provided in Subsection (a) above, and may not exceed a total volume, including the volume of the features being enclosed, equal to ¾ of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof

1	areas of the building measured before the addition of any exempt features times 20. The rooftop
2	enclosure or screen creating the added volume:
3	(i) shall not be subject to the percentage coverage limitations otherwise
4	applicable to this Section 260(b) but shall meet the requirements of Section 141;
5	(ii) shall not exceed 20 feet in height, measured as provided in subsection
6	(a) above;
7	(iii) may have a volume, measured in cubic feet, not to exceed three-
8	fourths of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by the maximum permitted height
9	of the enclosure or screen;
10	(iv) shall not be permitted within the setbacks required by Sections 132.1,
11	132.2, and 132.3;
12	(v) shall not be permitted within any setback required to meet the sun
13	access plane requirements of Section 146; and
14	(vi) shall not be permitted within any setback required by Section 261.1.
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17	Section 3. The Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Section 270.2, to read
18	as follows:
19	SEC. 270.1. SPECIAL BULK LIMITATIONS: HORIZONTAL MASS REDUCTIONS IN
20	LARGE LOTS IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBORHOODS MIXED USE DISTRICTS.
21	* * * *
22	(b) <b>Applicability</b> . This Section <u>270.1</u> applies to all buildings in the Eastern
23	Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts <u>that have</u> street <u>or alley</u> frontage greater than 200 feet in
24	length, and that receive their first site or building permit after the effective date of this Section
25	<u>270.1</u> .
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Section 4. The Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Section 270.2, to read as follows:

SEC. 270.2. SPECIAL BULK AND OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENT: MID-BLOCK ALLEYS IN LARGE LOT DEVELOPMENT IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBORHOODS MIXED USE <u>DISTRICTS</u>, <u>SOUTH OF MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT</u>

<u>DISTRICT, FOLSOM STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT</u>,

<u>REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT</u>, SOUTH OF MARKET MIXED USE <u>DISTRICT</u>, C-3

<u>DISTRICT</u>, C-M, AND DTR DISTRICTS.

- (e) **Design and Performance Standards**. The alleys provided per subsections (a) and (b) above shall meet the following standards:
- (1) Generally be located as close to the middle portion of the subject block face as possible, perpendicular to the subject frontage and connect to existing adjacent streets and alleys;
  - (2) Provide pedestrian access;

- (3) Provide no, limited, or full vehicular access, as specific conditions warrant;
- (4) Have a minimum width of 20 feet *from building face to building face*, exclusive of those obstructions allowed *within setbacks* pursuant to Section 136, *and a minimum clearance height from grade of 15 feet at all points*. In RED, RED-MX, WMUG, WMUO, and SALI Districts, the minimum width shall be 30 feet;
- (5) Have a minimum clear walking width of 10 feet free of any obstructions in the case of a pedestrian-only right-of-way, and dual sidewalks each of not less than *6six* feet in width with not less than *4four* feet minimum clear walking width in the case of an alley with vehicular access;
- (6) Have at least 60 percent of the area of the alley or pathway open to the sky.

  Obstructions permitted within setbacks pursuant to Section 136 may be located within the portion of the alley or pathway that is required to be open to the sky. All portions of the alley or pathway not open to the sky shall have a minimum clearance height from grade of 15 feet at all points; In the Eastern

  Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts, be at least 60% open to the sky, including those encroachments permitted in front setbacks by Section 136 of this Code;
- (7) Provide such ingress and egress as will make the area easily accessible to the general public;
  - (8) Be protected from uncomfortable wind, as called for elsewhere in this Code;
- (9) Be ungated and publicly accessible 24 hours per day, as defined elsewhere in this Section <u>270.2</u>;
- (10) Be provided with appropriate paving, furniture, and other amenities that encourage pedestrian use, and be landscaped to greatest extent feasible;
- (11) Be provided with ample pedestrian lighting to ensure pedestrian comfort and safety;

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(12<u>3</u>) Exceptions to the bulk requirements as permitted in Sections 270 and 272.

Section 6. The Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Section 329, to read as follows:

SEC. 329. LARGE PROJECT AUTHORIZATION IN EASTERN NEIGHBORHOODS MIXED USE DISTRICTS.

(c) Planning Commission Design Review. As set forth in Subsection (e), below, the Planning Commission shall review and evaluate all physical aspects of a proposed project at a public hearing. At such hearing, the Director of Planning shall present any recommended project modifications or conditions to the Planning Commission, including those which may be in response to any unique or unusual locational, environmental, topographical or other relevant factors. The Commission may subsequently require these or other modifications or conditions, or disapprove a project, in order to achieve the objectives and policies of the General Plan or the purposes of this Code. This review shall address physical design issues including but not limited to the following:

(5) The provision of mid-block alleys and pathways on frontages between 200 and 300 linear feet per the criteria of Section\_270, and the design of mid-block alleys and pathways as required by and pursuant to the criteria set forth in Section 270.2;

(d) **Exceptions**. As a component of the review process under this Section 329, projects may seek specific exceptions to the provisions of this Code as provided for below:

- (C) the resulting location and mix of uses increases the project's consistency with nearby land uses.
- (109) Relief from dwelling unit exposure requirements for buildings which are designated landmark buildings or contributory buildings within designated historic districts under Article 10 of this Code, and/or buildings recorded with the State Historic Preservation Office as eligible for the California Register, when the following criteria are met:
- (A) literal enforcement of Section 140 would result in the material impairment of the historic resource; and
- (B) the project complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, (36 C.F.R. § 67.7 (2001 )) and/or Section 1006 and any related Article 10 appendices of this Code.
- (1140) Flexible Units: Modification of the accessory use provisions of Section 803.3(b)(1)(c) for Dwelling Units. Dwelling Units modified under this Subsection shall continue to be considered Dwelling Units for the purposes of this Code and shall be subject to all such applicable controls and fees. Additionally, any building that receives a modification pursuant to this Subsection shall (i) have appropriately designed street frontages to accommodate both residential and modified accessory uses and (ii) obtain comment on the proposed modification from other relevant agencies prior to the Planning Commission hearing, including the Fire Department and Department of Building Inspection. Modifications are subject to the following:
- (A) A modification may only be granted for the ground floor portion of Dwelling Units that front on a street with a width equal to or greater than 40 feet.
- (B) The accessory use may only include those uses permitted as of right at the subject property. However, uses permitted in any unit obtaining an accessory use modification may be further limited by the Planning Commission.

(C) The Planning Commission may grant exceptions to the size of the accessory use, type and number of employees, and signage restrictions of the applicable accessory use controls.

(12H) Where not specified elsewhere in this Subsection (d), modification of other Code requirements which could otherwise be modified as a Planned Unit Development (as set forth in Section 304), irrespective of the zoning district in which the property is located.

Section 7. The Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Sections 735, 743 and 744, to read as follows:

SEC. 735. SOMA NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT.

# Table 735. SOMA NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT ZONING CONTROL TABLE

No.	Zoning Category	§ References	<del>SoMa</del> SoMa Transit <del>Controls</del> Controls			
BUILDING STANDARDS						
735.10	Height and Bulk Limit	§§ 102.12, 105, 106,250- 252, 260, 261.1 270 <u>, 270.2,</u> 271	See Zoning Map. I, Height Sculpting on Alleys: § 261.1			

SEC. 743. FOLSOM STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT.

Table 743. FOLSOM STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT ZONING CONTROL TABLE

No.	Zoning Category	§ References	Folsom Street Controls					
BUILDI	BUILDING STANDARDS							
743.10	Height and Bulk Limit	§§ 102.12, 105, 106, 250- 252, 260, 270, <u>270.2,</u> 271	65-X to 75-X. See Sectional Zoning Maps 1 and 7. Height sculpting required on narrow streets, § 261.1					

SEC. 744. REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.

### Table 744. REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT **ZONING CONTROL TABLE**

No.	Zoning Category	§ References	Regional Commercial Controls				
BUILDING STANDARDS							
744.10	Height and Bulk Limit	§§ 102.12, 105,106, 250- 252, 260,261.1, 263.18, 270, 270.2, 271	55-X, 65-X. See Sectional Zoning Maps 1 and 7. Height sculpting required on narrow streets, § 261.1				

Section 8. The Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Section 803.9, to read as follows:

SEC. 803.9. COMMERCIAL USES IN MIXED USE DISTRICTS.

(h) Vertical Controls for Office Uses.

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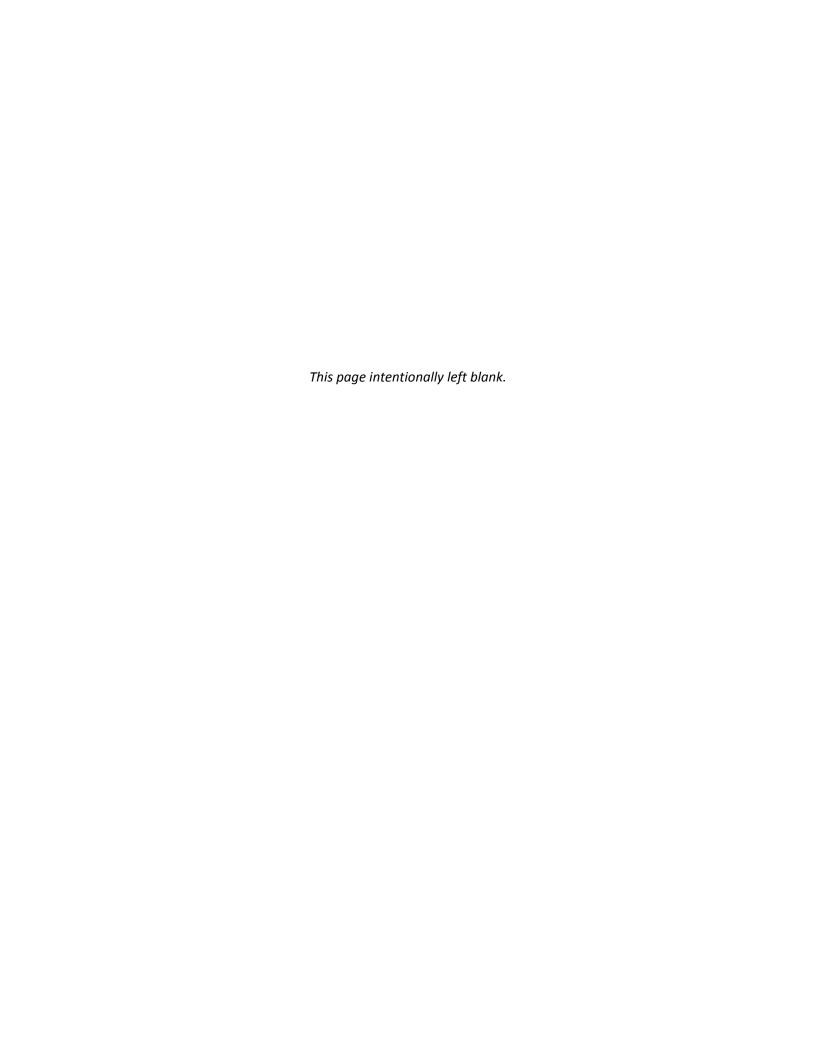
(4) Controls. Section 329(d)(98). title of the ordinance. APPROVED AS TO FORM: DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney By: Deputy City Attorne n:\legana\as2016\1600481\01089948(doc

(E) For projects in MUG and UMU Districts with multiple buildings, consolidation of permitted office stories may be permitted, pursuant to the controls set forth in

Section 9. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

Section 10. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, letters, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under the official title of the ordinance.

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## **Planning Commission Draft Resolution**

HEARING DATE: MARCH 24, 2016

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

Reception: 415.558.6378

Fax: **415.558.6409** 

Planning Information: 415.558.6377

Project Name: Midblock Alley and Rooftop Screening and Enclosure Controls

Case Number: 2015-017728PCA

Initiated by: San Francisco Planning Department

1650 Mission Street, Ste. 400 San Francisco, CA 94103

Staff Contact: Tina Chang, Planner

tina.chang@sfgov.org, 415-575-9197

Reviewed by: AnMarie Rodgers, Senior Policy Advisor

anmarie.rodgers@sfov.org, 415-558-6395

Recommendation: Recommend Adoption of Planning Code Amendments

RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO PLANNING CODE SECTIONS 260, 270, 309, 329, 735, 743 AND 744 AND ADOPT RELATED FINDINGS TO ALLOW FOR GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE SCREENING OF ROOFTOP MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND MAKE MID-BLOCK ALLEY CONTROLS MORE CONSISTENTLY APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE ZONING DISTRICTS IN WHICH MID-BLOCK ALLEYS ARE REQUIRED AND MAKE AND ADOPT FINDINGS, INCLUDING FINDINGS UNDER PLANNING CODE SECTION 302 AND FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE EIGHT PRIORITY POLICIES OF PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1.

### **PREAMBLE**

WHEREAS, Planning Code Section 260(b)(1)(F) allows additional building volume to screen certain rooftop features (e.g., mechanical equipment, elevator and stair penthouses, etc.), as described in Section 260(b)(1)(A) and (B) in C-3, Eastern Neighborhoods, and South of Market Mixed Use Zoning Districts. However, the allowable volume, as measured in cubic feet, may not exceed ¾ of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by 20, which may preclude adequate screening of rooftop features; and

WHEREAS, a building's terminus is a critical element of its design, as evidenced by Planning Code provisions permitting exceptions to height limits for architectural elements to add interest to the city skyline. Under current Code requirements, to take advantage of the maximum permitted height of 20 feet for the rooftop screen, a permit applicant must provide a setback at the building's terminus, which may not accomplish stated urban design goals of improving the appearance of the sky-line when viewed from a distance; and

WHEREAS, because rooftop screen controls are measured in terms of volume, Projects currently may provide a screen without a setback, but screens that are not set back must be reduced by 25 percent of the

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maximum permitted height, or 15 feet, which may prevent mechanical features from being adequately screened, especially considering that many mechanical features reach a height of 16 feet; and

WHEREAS, to help ensure a building's terminus is consistent with the rest of the building's design, and to allow for more adequate screening of rooftop features, this ordinance allows the volume of rooftop screens and/or enclosures to be modifiable, subject to design review, in C-3 and Eastern Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts, allowing the screen to reach a maximum volume equal to 100 percent of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by twenty; and

WHEREAS, the introduction of mid-block alleys in certain Planning Districts was adopted in 2008 as part of the Eastern Neighborhoods Community Planning effort. This design feature divides large industrial blocks into more walkable segments and transforms historically industrial neighborhoods into urban, people-friendly places; and

WHEREAS, Policy 3.2.7 of the East SoMa Area Plan states that pedestrian networks should be strengthened by extending alleys to adjacent streets or alleys wherever possible, or by providing new publicly accessible mid-block rights of way. Policy 3.2.7 was codified in Planning Code Section 270.2; and

WHEREAS, long street frontages can occur on both streets and alleys; and

WHEREAS, when enacted, Section 270.2 only applied to the Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts and DTR Districts, and required that mid-block alleys in Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts be at least 60 percent open to the sky; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the City enacted Ordinance No. 85-10 extending the mid-block alley requirement to the South of Market Mixed-Use, C-M and South of Market C-3 Districts. However, the "60 percent open to the sky" requirement was not similarly extended; and

WHEREAS, to more consistently apply mid-block alley requirements throughout the City, this ordinance requires that mid-block alleys, where required, will be at least 60 percent open to the sky; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance corrects errors found in the affected Sections of the Planning Code, namely in Sections 260, 309 and 329; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.); 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 Department staff and other interested parties; and

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

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WHEREAS, the Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinance amending the Planning Code, which Ordinances are attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Planning Code Section 302(b), the Commission adopted a Resolution 19581 to Initiate Amendments to the Planning Code on March 3, 2016;

The Commission has reviewed the proposed Planning Code Text Amendments Ordinance; and

**MOVED**, that the Commission hereby recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the proposed Planning Code Amendment Ordinance, and adopt the attached Resolution to that effect.

### **FINDINGS**

Having reviewed the materials identified in the preamble above, and having heard all testimony and arguments and the record as a whole, including all information pertaining to the Project in the Planning Department's case files, this Commission finds, concludes, and determines as follows:

1. **General Plan Compliance.** The Project is, on balance, consistent with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan as set forth below.

### **URBAN DESIGN**

**Objectives and Policies** 

### **OBJECTIVE 3.**

MODERATION OF MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENT TO COMPLEMENT THE CITY PATTERN, THE RESOURCES TO BE CONSERVED, AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT.

### Policy 3.3

Promote efforts to achieve high quality of design for buildings to be constructed at prominent locations.

This project meets this policy. The proposed Planning Code Amendments moderate new developments in the City, helping to ensure that large blocks are broken up such that more pedestrian friendly environments are created. Additionally, creating additional flexibility to rooftop screen and enclosures will help projects achieve a high quality of design at prominent locations. Projects requiring Downtown or Large Project Authorization tend to be larger in scale and therefore more prominent, thus warranting greater flexibility in screening mechanical rooftop features. If improperly screened, urban design goals of improving the City's sky-line and creating visual interest to the termination of a building would not be achieved.

### **OBJECTIVE 4.**

IMPROVEMENT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT TO INCREASE PERSONAL SAFETY, COMFORT, PRIDE AND OPPORTUNITY.

### Policy 4.13

Improve pedestrian areas by providing human scale and interest.

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This project meets this policy. The proposed Planning Code Amendments add clarity, expand the applicability of and increase consistency in application of mid-block alley controls. The result is smaller, more pedestrian-scaled blocks which are more pedestrian-friendly and contribute to greater comfort and safety.

### TRANSPORTATION

**Objectives and Policies** 

### **OBJECTIVE 23.**

IMPROVE THE CITY'S CIRCULATION SYSTEM TO PROVIDE FOR EFFICIENTM PLEASANT, AND SAFE MOVEMENT.

### Policy 23.8

Support pedestrian needs by incorporating them into regular short-range and long-range planning activities for all city and regional agencies and include pedestrian facility funding in all appropriate funding requests.

This project supports this policy. The proposed Planning Code Amendment helps extend mid-block alleys to the Folsom Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit, South of Market Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit, and Regional Commercial Districts.

- 2. **Planning Code Section 101.1(b)** The Project is, on balance, consistent with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan as set forth below.
  - 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.

Existing neighborhood-serving retail uses would not be affected by the Project.

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

The Project would not affect existing housing and neighborhood character nor the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.

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

The Project would not affect the City's supply of affordable housing.

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

The Project would not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our Streets or neighborhood parking.

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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 Project will not affect the City's industrial and service sectors.

F. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of

life in an earthquake.

The Project will not affect the City's Earthquake preparedness.

G. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

The Project would not affect the City's historic buildings.

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

development.

The Project would not affect parks and open space nor their access to sunlight or vistas.

3. Based on the foregoing, the public necessity, convenience and general welfare require the

proposed Planning Code amendments.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the San Francisco Planning Commission

on March 24, 2016.

Jonas P. Ionin

**Commission Secretary** 

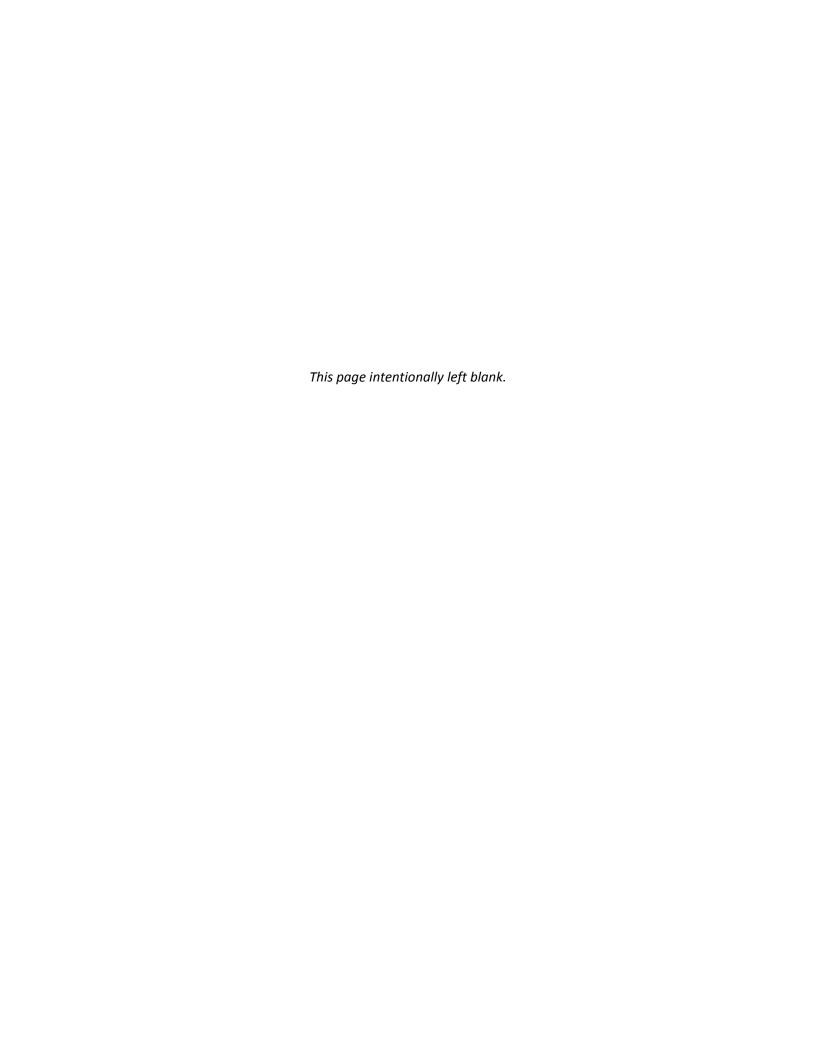
AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED:

March 24, 2016



# Planning Commission Resolution No. 19581

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Reviewed by: AnMarie Rodgers, Senior Policy Advisor

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INITIATING AMENDMENTS TO PLANNING CODE SECTIONS 260, 270, 309, 329, 735, 743 and 744 TO ALLOW FOR GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE SCREENING OF ROOFTOP MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND MAKE MID-BLOCK ALLEY CONTROLS MORE CONSISTENTLY APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE ZONING DISTRICTS IN WHICH MID-BLOCK ALLEYS ARE REQUIRED.

### **PREAMBLE**

WHEREAS, Planning Code Section 260(b)(1)(F) allows additional building volume to screen certain rooftop features (e.g., mechanical equipment, elevator and stair penthouses, etc.), as described in Section 260(b)(1)(A) and (B) in C-3, Eastern Neighborhoods, and South of Market Mixed Use Zoning Districts. However, the allowable volume, as measured in cubic feet, may not exceed ¾ of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by 20, which may preclude adequate screening of rooftop features; and

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Resolution No. 19581 Hearing Date: March 3, 2016

WHEREAS, to help ensure a building's terminus is consistent with the rest of the building's design, and to allow for more adequate screening of rooftop features, this ordinance allows the volume of rooftop screens and/or enclosures to be modifiable, subject to design review, in C-3 and Eastern Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts, allowing the screen to reach a maximum volume equal to 100 percent of the horizontal area of all upper tower roof areas multiplied by twenty; and

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WHEREAS, to more consistently apply mid-block alley requirements throughout the City, this ordinance requires that mid-block alleys, where required, will be at least 60 percent open to the sky; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance corrects errors found in the affected Sections of the Planning Code, namely in Sections 260, 309 and 329; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.); 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 Department staff and other interested parties; and

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

WHEREAS, the Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinances amending the Planning Code, which Ordinances are attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference;

Resolution No. 19581 Hearing Date: March 3, 2016 CASE NO. 2015-017728PCA Mid-block Alley & Rooftop Screening Controls

**MOVED**, that pursuant to Planning Code Section 302(b), the Commission Adopts a Resolution of Intent to Initiate Amendments to the Planning Code;

**AND BE IT FURTHER MOVED**, that pursuant to Planning Code Section 306.3, the Planning Commission authorizes the Department to provide appropriate notice for a public hearing to consider the above referenced Planning Code amendments contained in the draft Ordinance, approved as to form by the City Attorney in **Exhibit A**, to be considered at a publicly noticed hearing on or after March 24, 2016.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the San Francisco Planning Commission on March 3, 2016

Jonas P. Ionin

Commission Secretary

AYES:

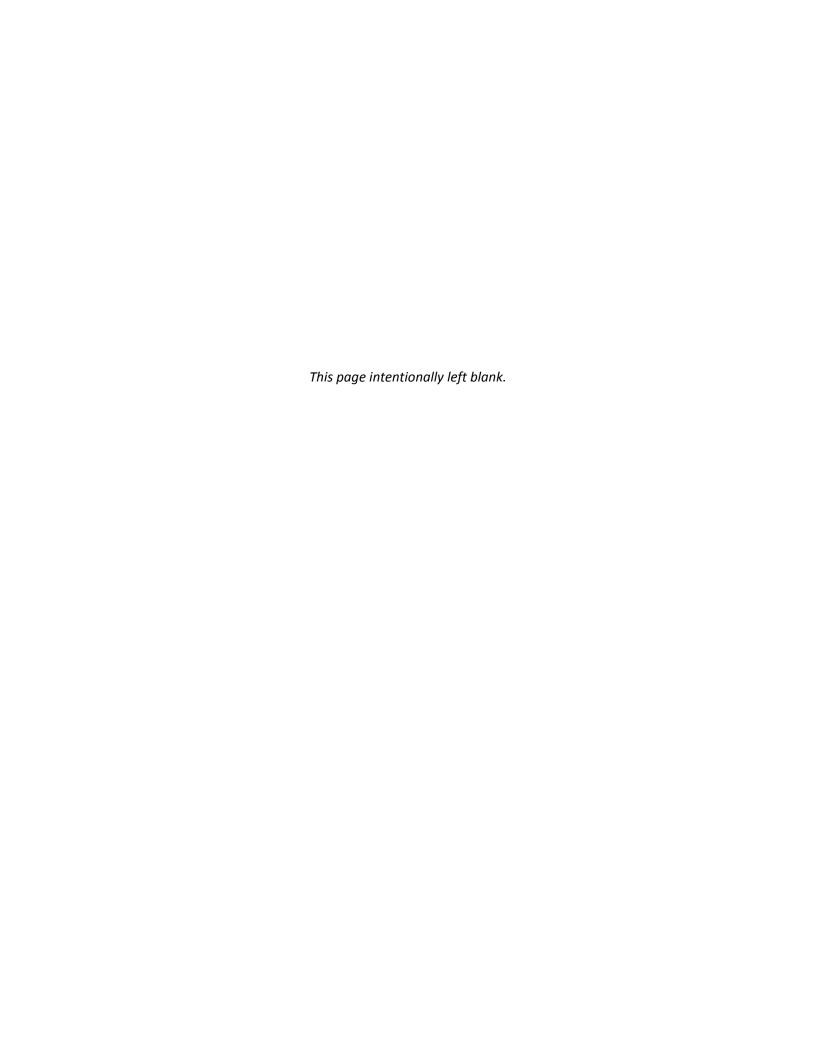
Antonini, Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Moore, Richards

NOES:

None

ABSENT:

Wu

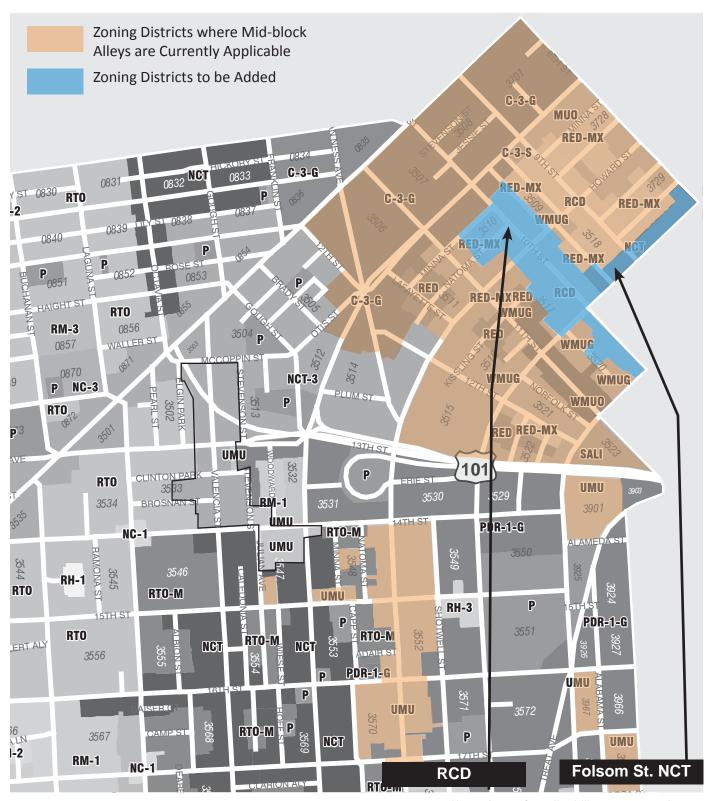


# Mid-Block Alley Zoning Districts - (1 of 3)



Mid-block Alley controls currently apply to all Eastern Neighborhood Mixed-Use, South of Marked Mixed Use, and C-3 Districts that are South of Market. Mid-block alley controls are proposed to apply to the South of Market Neighborhood Commercial Transit, the Folsom Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit, and the Regional Commercial Districts.

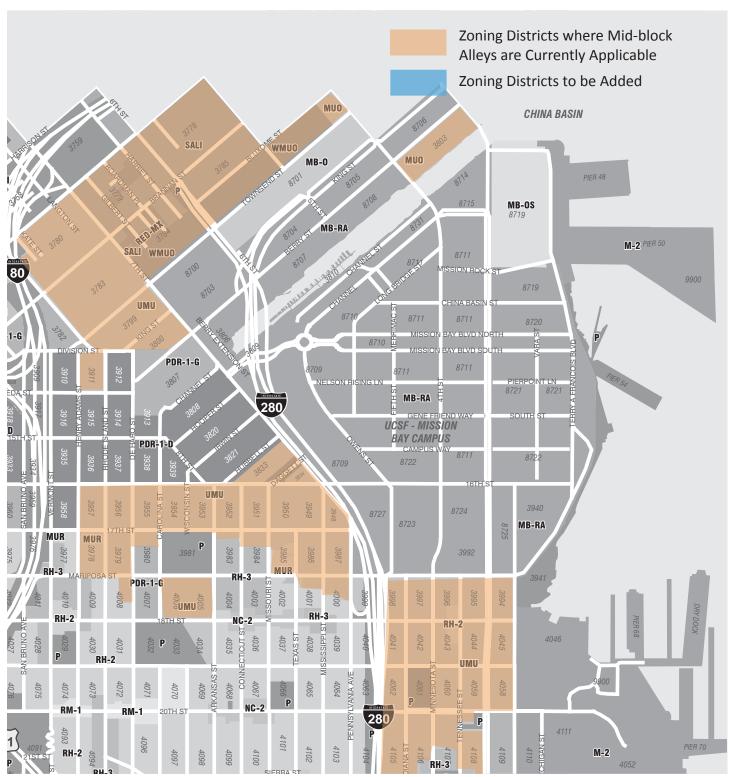
## Mid-Block Alley Zoning Districts - (2 of 3)



\*Locations of applicability are approximate

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## Mid-Block Alley Zoning Districts - (3 of 3)

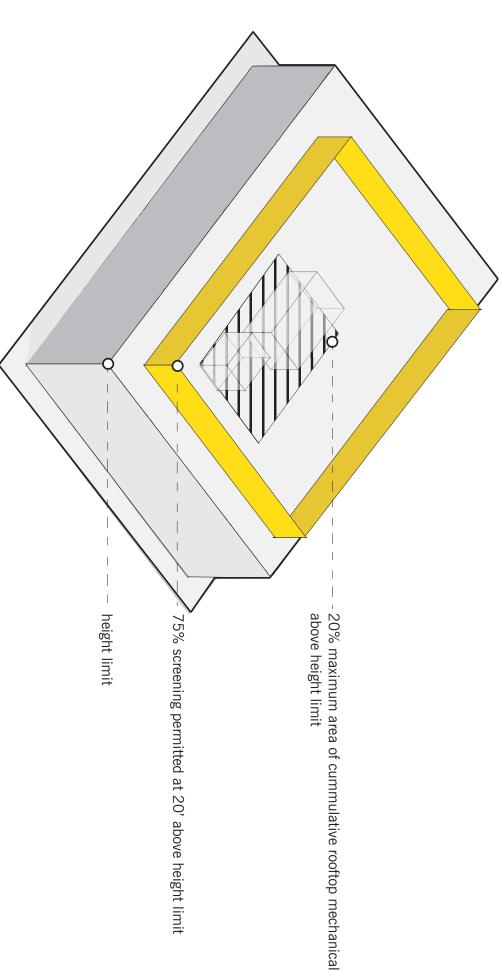


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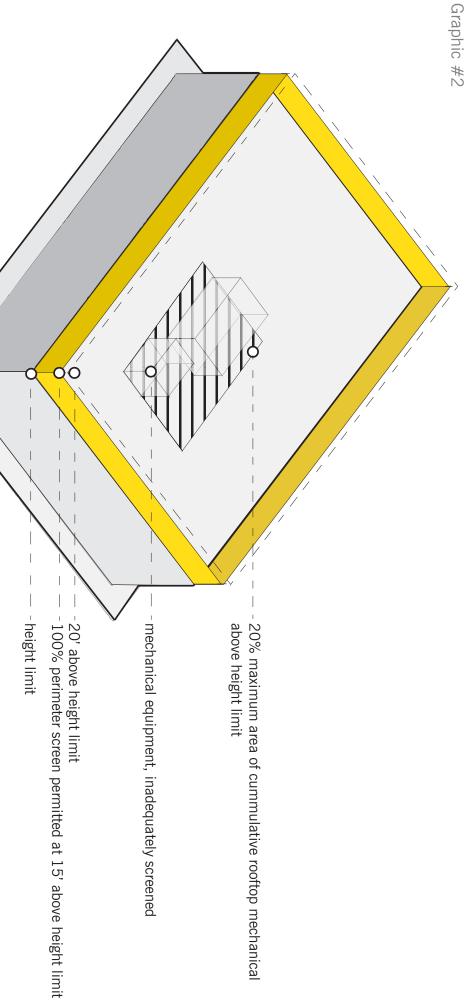
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# PLANNING CODE SECTION 260(b)(1)(F): THE WAY IT IS NOW

Graphic #1



# PLANNING CODE SECTION 260(b)(1)(F): THE WAY IT IS NOW



# PLANNING CODE SECTION 260(b)(1)(F): THE WAY IT WOULD BE

