Certificate of Appropriateness Case Report
HEARING DATE: MARCH 20, 2019
CONSENT

Filing Date: December 6, 2018
Case No.: 2018-016426COA
Project Address: 1088 SANSOME STREET
Historic Landmark: Northeast Waterfront Landmark District
Zoning: C-2 (Community Business)
65-X Height and Bulk District
Waterfront Special Use District No. 3
Northeast Waterfront Special Sign District
Block/Lot: 0135/009
Applicant: Angus McCarthy
465 Pacheco Street
San Francisco, CA 94116
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Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
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PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

1088 SANSOME STREET, east side between Green and Vallejo Streets, Assessor’s Block 0135, Lots 009, Supervisor District 3. The subject property, historically known as the Bemis Bag Building, is a four-story reinforced concrete industrial building constructed in approximately 1906 by an unknown architect. Built as an industrial warehouse and/or manufacturing facility, the building is currently used as office space. The property is within the C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District, the Waterfront Special Use District No. 3, a 65-X Height and Bulk District, and the Northeast Waterfront Special Sign District. It is contributory to the Northeast Waterfront Landmark District.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project involves the construction of a roof deck along the eastern half of the subject property’s flat roof. The deck would include new flooring, planters, railings, and wooden trellises. No aspects of the proposed work would be visible from surrounding public rights-of-way, barring the top of potential plants within the planters.

Although Historic Preservation Commission Motion No. 0349 (Delegation of Minor Scopes of Work) delegates the construction of non-visible roof decks on a flat roof to Department staff for review and approval, the construction of pergolas or other similar structures as part of the deck installation does not qualify for this staff-level review. As the proposal includes partially enclosed wooden trellises it therefore must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.
OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

No other actions are required for approval of the associated building permit application.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE PLANNING CODE PROVISIONS

The proposed project complies with all aspects of the Planning Code.

APPLICABLE PRESERVATION STANDARDS

ARTICLE 10

Pursuant to Section 1006.2 of the Planning Code, unless exempt from the Certificate of Appropriateness requirements or delegated to Planning Department Preservation staff through the Administrative Certificate Appropriateness process, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to review any applications for the construction, alteration, removal, or demolition of any designated Landmark for which a City permit is required. Section 1006.6 states that in evaluating a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for an individual landmark or a contributing building within a historic district, the Historic Preservation Commission must find that the proposed work is in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, as well as the designating Ordinance and any applicable guidelines, local interpretations, bulletins, related appendices, or other policies.

ARTICLE 10 – Appendix D – Northeast Waterfront Landmark District

In reviewing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Historic Preservation Commission must consider whether the proposed work would be compatible with the character of the Northeast Waterfront Landmark District as described in Appendix D of Article 10 of the Planning Code and the character-defining features specifically outlined in the designating ordinance.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS

Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The Rehabilitation Standards provide, in relevant part(s):

Standard 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

The project is limited to rooftop alterations and will not change the existing office use. The project will avoid changes to distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships of the contributing resource.

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 historic character of the property would be retained. No distinctive materials, architectural elements, or spaces that characterize the property would be altered. The project would be limited to the flat roof, which does not possess character-defining features. New flooring, planters, railing,
and wooden trellises would be added as part of a new roof deck along the eastern half of the roof, but no project elements (barring the top of potential plant types) would be visible from surrounding public rights-of-way. Therefore, no historic materials would be altered, and the property will continue to fully convey its historic character.

Standard 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

The project does not propose to add conjectural features or changes that create a false sense of historical development. Changes are limited to the construction of a non-visible roof deck along the eastern half of the subject property’s flat roof.

Standard 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

As the project pertains solely to non-historic rooftop, all distinctive materials, features, finishes, construction or craftsmanship examples that characterize the property will be retained.

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 exterior alterations will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. Alterations are limited to the flat roof, which does not possess character-defining features. New flooring, planters, railing, and wooden trellises would be added as part of a new roof deck along the eastern half of the roof, but no project elements (barring the top of potential plant types) would be visible from surrounding public rights-of-way. The trellises would be composed of wood, which is clearly differentiated from the industrial character of the building but befits their purpose well. Further, no trellis would be visible from the public rights-of-way. Therefore, no historic materials would be altered, and the property will continue to fully convey its historic character.

Standard 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

All project elements—planters, flooring, railing, and trellises—atop the flat roof could be removed in the future without impairing the essential form and integrity of both the historic property and the surrounding landmark district.

PUBLIC/NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

The Department has received no public input on the project at the date of this report.
STAFF ANALYSIS

Based on the requirements of Article 10 of the Planning Code and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, staff has determined that the proposed work is compatible with the character-defining features of the subject property and the Northeast Waterfront Landmark District.

The proposed alterations are limited to the flat roof of the subject property, which does not possess character-defining features. New flooring, planters, railing, and wooden trellises would be added as part of a new roof deck along the eastern half of the roof, but no project elements (barring the top of potential plant types) would be visible from surrounding public rights-of-way. The trellises would be composed of wood, which is clearly differentiated from the industrial character of the building but befits their purpose well. Further, no trellis would be visible from the public rights-of-way. Therefore, no historic materials would be altered, and the property will continue to fully convey its historic character.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS

The Planning Department has determined that the proposed project is exempt/excluded from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guideline Sections 15301 (Class One – Minor Alteration) because the project includes a minor alteration of an existing structure that meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Planning Department staff recommends APPROVAL of the proposed project as it appears to meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Motion
Parcel Map
1998 Sanborn Map
Northeast Waterfront Landmark District Map
Aerial Photograph
Zoning Map
Reduced Project Plans, including:
  • Current Site Photos
  • Visibility Analysis
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 PROPERTY LOCATED ON LOT 009 IN ASSESSOR’S BLOCK 0135, WITHIN A C-2 (COMMUNITY BUSINESS) ZONING DISTRICT, WATERFRONT SPECIAL USE DISTRICT NO. 3, NORTHEAST WATERFRONT SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICT, A 65-X HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICT, AND THE NORTHEAST WATERFRONT LANDMARK DISTRICT.

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, on December 6, 2018 Angus McCarthy (“Property Owner”) filed an application with the San Francisco Planning Department (hereinafter “Department”) for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a roof deck including new flooring, railing, planters, and trellises atop the flat roof of the building located at 1088 Sansome Street, a contributory property to the Northeast Waterfront Landmark District located on Lot 009 in Assessor’s Block 0135.

WHEREAS, the Project was determined by the Department to be categorically exempt from environmental review. The Historic Preservation Commission (“Commission”) has reviewed and concurs with said determination.
WHEREAS, on March 20, 2019, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the current project, Case No. 2018-016426COA (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 approves the Certificate of Appropriateness, in conformance with the architectural plans dated January 16, 2019 and labeled Exhibit A on file in the docket for Case 2018-016426COA based on the following findings:

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:

   The Historic Preservation Commission has determined that the proposed work is compatible with the character of the landmark as described in the designation report dated April 4, 1983.

   • That the proposed project is compatible with the character-defining-features of the subject contributing resource and Landmark District.

   • That the proposed project maintains and does not alter or destroy the building’s character-defining features or materials.

   • The proposed project will not remove distinctive materials nor irreversibly alter features, spaces, or spatial relationships that characterize the contributing resource or Landmark District.

   • No project elements, barring the top of potential plants within the new planters, will be visible from the surrounding public rights-of-way.

   • The proposed project meets the requirements of Article 10.

   • The proposed project meets the following Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation:

     **Standard 1.**

     A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
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.

Standard 3.
Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Standard 5.
Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

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.

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.

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 2.5
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 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 the contributory property and landmark district 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 will not have an effect on any existing neighborhood serving retail use as the proposal is tied solely to a space serving an office use.

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 respect the character-defining features of the contributory property and landmark district 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 affect the City’s affordable housing supply.
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 project will have no effect 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.

Preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake will not be affected by the project. All construction will be executed in compliance with all applicable construction and safety measures.

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 affect 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 the 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 APPROVES a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at Lot 009 in Assessor’s Block 0135 for proposed work in conformance with the renderings and architectural sketches dated January 16, 2019 and labeled Exhibit A on file in the docket for Case No. 2018-016426COA.

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 authorization and right vested by virtue of this action shall be deemed void and canceled if, within 3 years of the date of this Motion, a site permit or building permit for the Project has not been secured by Project Sponsor.

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 March 20, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: X

NAYS: X

ABSENT: X

ADOPTED: March 20, 2019
Sanborn Map*

*The Sanborn Maps in San Francisco have not been updated since 1998, and this map may not accurately reflect existing conditions.
Northeast Waterfront Landmark District

Certificate of Appropriateness
Case Number 2018-016426COA
1088 Sansome Street
Aerial Photograph
Existing Exterior Sightline Study

11.1.18 Planning Set aw/sk/cw

1088 Sansome St.
San Francisco, CA

01.16.19 Planning Revision sk/tm
Proposed Exterior Sightline Study

1.1.18 Planning Set aw/sk/cw

N

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2062 Divisadero Street
San Francisco, CA 94115

01.16.19 Planning Revision sk/tm
ENCLOSED PERIMETER LENGTH = 134'-7" + 36'-5" + 16'-9" = 207'-9"

ENCLOSED PERIMETER TO TOTAL DECK PERIMETER PERCENTAGE = 207'-9" / 339'-9" * 100% = 61.15%

PER SF PLANNING CODE SECTION 102, DEFINITION OF GROSS FLOOR AREA, (B)(10), ROOF DECK IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE GROSS FLOOR AREA IF THE ENCLOSED LENGTH OF THE ROOF DECK IS LESS THAN 70% OF THE OVERALL PERIMETER OF THE ROOF DECK.
Proposed Exterior Elevations

1.1.18 Planning Set aw/sk/cw

Date issue by/check

Project no. 16018

Scale: AS NOTED

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2062 Divisadero Street
San Francisco, CA 94115

Pattern

1088 Sansome St.
San Francisco, CA

01.16.19 Planning Revision sk/tm