



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Commission Draft Resolution HEARING DATE DECEMBER 5, 2019

Project Name: Retained Elements Special Topic Design Guidelines
Case Number: 2018-017235CWP
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RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE RETAINED ELEMENTS SPECIAL TOPIC DESIGN GUIDELINES TO BE APPLIED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PLANNING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSIONS FOR PROJECTS THAT PROPOSE RETENTION OF EXISTING BUILDING ELEMENTS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT. ADOPTING FINDINGS, INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS, AND FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1.

WHEREAS, in 2018 the Historic Preservation Commission requested that the Planning Department develop design guidelines for approval by the Planning Commission to improve the outcomes for projects that retain building elements in new development as a design review process;

WHEREAS, the Planning Department, in response, has developed Retained Elements Special Topic Design Guidelines derived through an analysis of best professional architectural practices that cover the topics of Site Design and Architecture;

WHEREAS, the Retained Elements Special Topic Design Guidelines support the built environment goals and values found in the General Plan that include that new projects be contextual and reflect existing neighborhood architecture and urban patterns; contribute high quality design to the city based on best professional standards and practices; enhance neighborhood uniqueness and cultural character; support an active pedestrian environment and human-scaled design; and reinforce sustainability practices.

WHEREAS, the Retained Elements Special Topic Design Guidelines are developed to work in concert with the Urban Design Guidelines and to supersede them in case of conflict, and will not modify the General Plan;

WHEREAS, the proposed guidelines are not defined as a project under the California Environmental Quality Act Sections 15378 and 15060(c)(2) because they do not intensify development or change or affect zoning or transportation in the built environment;

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at public hearings and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of Department staff and other interested parties on December 8, 2015; April 6, 2016; August 2, 2017; and the Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission have heard further testimony and considered written materials on the joint hearing on January 24, 2019.

WHEREAS, 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

MOVED, that the Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed Retained Elements Special Topic Design Guidelines (included as Exhibit A) for application at the discretion of the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions.

Department staff will report annually to the Planning Commission on any proposed updates, functionality, compliance, or guideline interpretation issues. The effective date for application of the Retained Elements Special Design Guidelines will be for site permits or project applications submitted on or after December 5, 2019 at the discretion of the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions.

FINDINGS

Having reviewed the materials identified in the preamble above, and having heard all testimony and arguments, this Commission finds, concludes, and determines as follows:

1. **General Plan Compliance.** The proposed Special Topic Design Guidelines (RE-STDGs) are consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

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.

The proposed RE-STDGs encourage the re-use of existing building elements—facades in particular-- in places where the urban fabric is defined, consistent, and harmonious.

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.

The proposed RE-STDGs include the guideline S3.1 to “Sustain Existing Features that Define a Neighborhood,” which promotes the re-use and adaptation of important features that maintain neighborhood fabric.

Policy 2.5

Use care in remodeling of older buildings, in order to enhance rather than weaken the original character of such buildings.

The proposed RE-STDGs include the guideline S6.1 to “Restore and Highlight Existing Features,” which requires that the restoration and recognition of the original design character as an element be incorporated into a new development structure.

Policy 2.6

Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.

The proposed RE-STDGs include the guideline A2.2 to “Articulate a Clear Relationship between New Development and Retained Elements,” which requires new development to complement and enhance existing elements that are being retained.

OBJECTIVE 3

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

Policy 3.2

Avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.

The proposed RE-STDGs include the guideline A3.1 to “Harmonize Materials in New Development with Retained Elements,” which requires new development to complement and augment existing retained elements so that they have a clear and intentional relationship that honors the retained piece.

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.

The proposed RE-STDGs include the guideline A8.1 to “Revive and Animate Retained Ground Floor Elements,” which requires projects to provide active uses and potentially uncover past changes in the ground floor of retained elements, particularly facades.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 6

MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN VIABLE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL AREAS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO CITY RESIDENTS.

Policy 6.7

Promote high quality urban design on commercial streets.

The proposed RE-STDGs include the guideline A8.1 to "Revive and Animate Retained Ground Floor Elements" which requires projects to provide active uses and potentially uncover past changes in the ground floor of retained elements, particularly retail facades commonly found in neighborhood commercial areas

2. **Planning Code Section 101 Findings.** The proposed amendments to the Planning Code are consistent with the eight Priority Policies set forth in Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

The proposed RE-STDGs would enhance neighborhood-serving retail by retaining and supporting the maintenance of its use and built environment character.

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

The proposed RE-STDGs would enhance the retention and maintenance of neighborhood character by requiring that new projects be compatible with neighborhood characteristics at the site design, architecture and public realm scales.

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;

The proposed RE-STDGs would not have an adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.

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

The proposed RE-STDGs would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI transit service or overburdening the streets or neighborhood parking.

5. 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 proposed RE-STDGs would not cause displacement of the industrial or service sectors due to office development, and future opportunities for resident employment or ownership in these sectors would not be impaired.

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake;

The proposed RE-STDGs would not have an adverse effect on City's preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

The proposed RE-STDGs would not have an adverse effect on the City's Landmarks and historic buildings because the application of these guidelines to historic resources does not lessen the impacts to less than significant.

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;

The proposed RE-STDGs would not have an adverse effect on the City's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas.

3. The application of the RE-STDGs will support neighborhood compatibility and encourage the use of best professional design practices in the retention of existing elements in new development.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby APPROVES the proposed Retained Elements Special Topic Design Guidelines as described in this Resolution.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Commission at its meeting on DECEMBER 5, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: