

1 [Landmarks]

2 DESIGNATING 4040 SEVENTEENTH STREET, THE MCCORMICK HOUSE, AS  
3 LANDMARK NO. 208 PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE PLANNING CODE.

4 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San  
5 Francisco:

6  
7 Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 4040  
8 Seventeenth Street, the McCormick House, Lot 12 in Assessor's Block  
9 2623, has a special character and special historical, architectural  
10 and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a  
11 Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the standards  
12 set forth in Article 10 of the City Planning Code.

13  
14 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning  
15 Code, Chapter II, Part II of the San Francisco Municipal  
16 Code, 4040 Seventeenth Street, the McCormick House, is  
17 hereby designated as Landmark No. 208. This designation  
18 has been fully approved by Resolution No. 14874 of the  
19 Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file with the  
20 Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 992041  
21 and which Resolution is incorporated herein and made part  
22 hereof as though fully set forth.

23 (b) Required Data:

24  
25

Supervisors Becerril, Bierman, Brown 1

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

(1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site is all of Lot 12 in Assessor's Block 2623.

(2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described and shown in a Final Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on June 16, 1999 and other supporting materials contained in Planning Department Docket No. 1999.372L.

(3) That the particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the Landmark Designation Report, which can be found in case docket 1999.372L, and is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth.

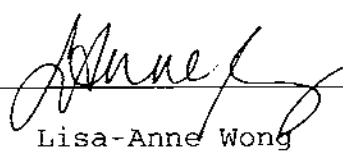
APPROVED AS TO FORM:

RECOMMENDED:

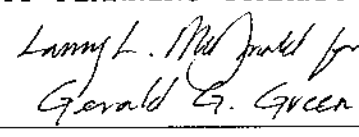
LOUISE RENNE, CITY ATTORNEY

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

BY

  
Lisa-Anne Wong

BY

  
Gerald G. Green

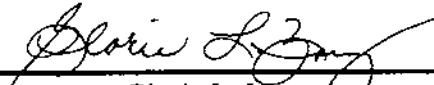
Deputy City Attorney

Gerald G. Green

Director of Planning

File No. 992041

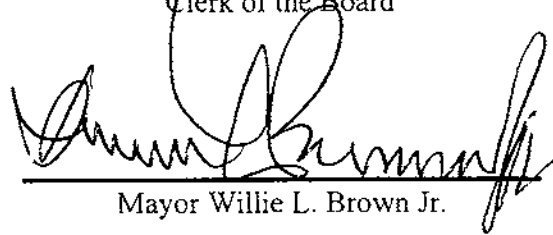
I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was **FINALLY PASSED** on December 13, 1999 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.



Gloria L. Young  
Clerk of the Board

DEC 23 1999

Date Approved



Mayor Willie L. Brown Jr.

Case No. 1999.372L  
4040-4042 17th Street  
The McCormick House  
Assessor's Block 2623, Lot 12

SAN FRANCISCO

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 14874

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF A LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 4040-4042 SEVENTEENTH STREET, THE MC CORMICK HOUSE, AS CITY LANDMARK NO. 208 AND REFERRAL OF THE LANDMARK DESIGNATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.**

1. On October 21, 1998, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmark Designation Work Program for fiscal year 1998-1999. Ten sites were chosen to have Landmark Designation Reports developed and brought to the Landmarks Board for review and comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included on that list was the McCormick House.
2. On October 16, 1998 a draft Landmark Designation Report was submitted by Judith Hoyem, the property owner with a request that the Landmarks Board consider initiating landmark designation of the McCormick House. The Report documented the significance of the McCormick House as an essentially unaltered example of the high Queen Anne architectural style. Ms. Hoyem concurred with the findings of the report and recommended Landmarks Board initiation of her property.
3. The Landmarks Board, in considering landmark designation of the McCormick House employed the "Kalman Methodology" rating criteria, and determined the property to be "Excellent " in seven of the 13 categories at its regular meeting of June 16, 1999.
4. The Landmarks Board has reviewed documents and correspondence from the elected officials, other City departments, neighborhood residents, community organizations, and received oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, in a duly noticed Public Hearing of June 16, 1999.
5. On September 2, 1999 the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing, considered the recommendation of the Landmarks Board as set forth in Resolution 514 and approved the designation of the McCormick House as City Landmark No. 208.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

**Case No. 1999.372L**  
The McCormick House  
4040-4042 17th Street  
Assessor's Block 2623, Lot 12  
Resolution No. 14874  
Page 2

**The Planning Commission hereby Approves** the landmark designation of 4040-4042 Seventeenth Street, Assessor's Block 102, Lot 12, the McCormick House as Landmark No. 208, pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

**The Planning Commission hereby recommends** that the Board of Supervisors approve the landmark designation of 4040-4042 Seventeenth Street, Assessor's Block 2623, Lot 12, the McCormick House, as Landmark No. 208, pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

**The Planning Commission hereby directs** its Secretary to transmit this Resolution, the McCormick House Landmark Designation Report, and other pertinent materials in the Case file 1999.372L to the Board of Supervisors.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of September 2, 1999.

Jonis P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Antenore, Joe, Martin, Richardson and Theoharis.

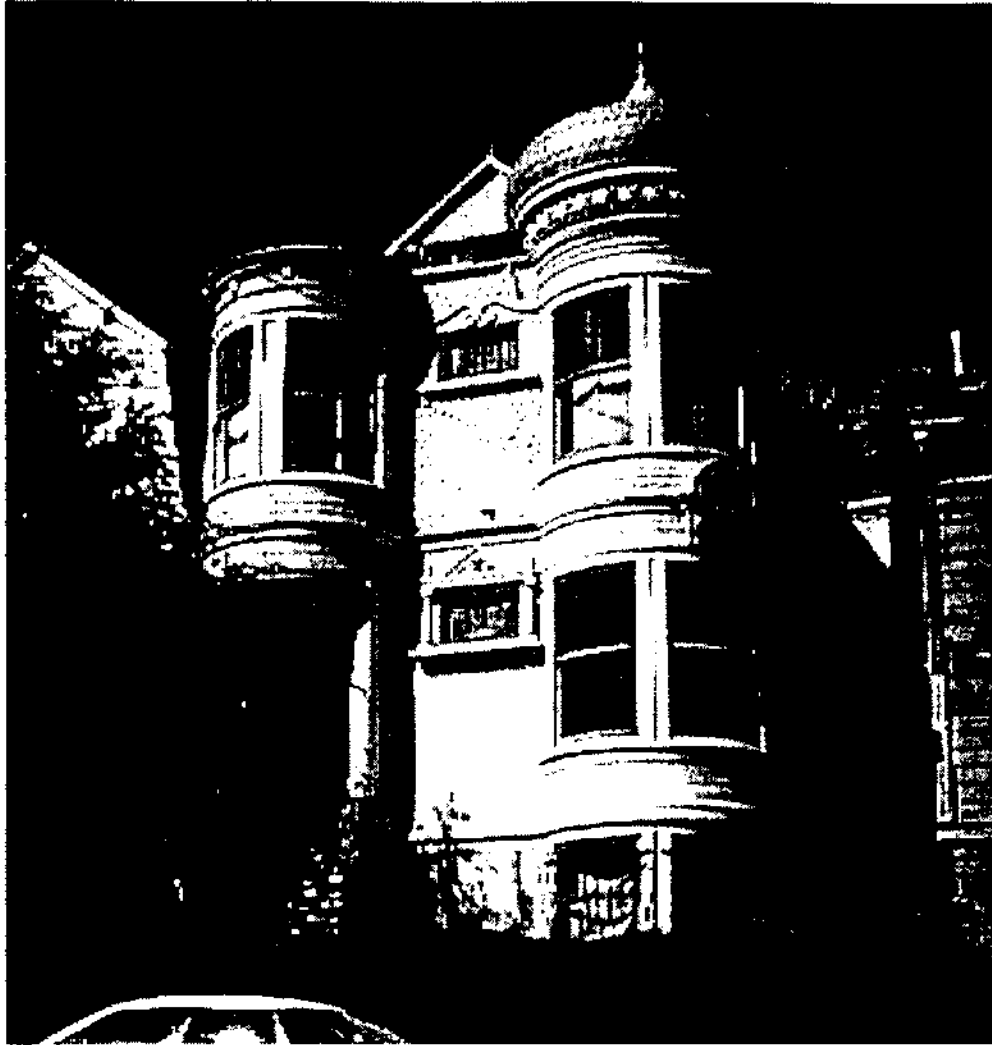
NOES: Commissioners Chinchilla and Mills.

ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ADOPTED: September 2, 1999.

GGG\MRP\wp51\MCCOR.CPC



# **The McCormick House**

**4040-4042 Seventeenth Street**

Case Report Prepared by:  
Tim Kelley  
4104 24th St. #120  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
(415) 337-5824  
Final Draft September, 1999

**HISTORIC BUILDING NAME:** McCormick House  
**ADDRESS:** 4040-4042 17th Street  
**POPULAR BUILDING NAME:** McCormick House  
**ORIGINAL USE:** Flats  
**CURRENT USE:** Flats  
**STYLE:** Queen Anne  
**NUMBER OF STORIES:** 2 1/2  
**OWNER:** Judith L. Hoyem  
**BLOCK/LOT:** 2623-012  
**ZONING:** RH-3  
**ARCHITECT:** John T. Kidd (Kidd & Anderson)  
**CONSTRUCTION DATE:** 1902  
**EXTERIOR MATERIALS:** Redwood siding & shingles, plaster ornament  
**LANDMARK NO:** 208      **LPAB VOTE:** 6/16/99; 6 aye, 0 nay, 2 absent, 1 recused

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:** The McCormick House is significant as an essentially unaltered example of high Queen Anne style flats which survived the 1906 earthquake and fire (built 1902)<sup>1</sup>. The most distinctive feature in a well composed design is the unusual onion dome which tops the eastern tower. The building occupies a prominent position on the rise of 17th Street just above the Castro, Market, 17th Street intersection; and thus, although its visibility has already been compromised by the imposition of a 1960s apartment building two doors to the east, it is still an important contributor to a streetscape famous worldwide.

## CRITERIA

### A. ARCHITECTURE

#### 1. STYLE: Significance as an Example of a Particular Architectural Style or Convention

The McCormick House is a spirited example of the Free Classic<sup>2</sup> variant of Queen Anne style. The prominent tower is the most typical of its Queen Anne features. However, the shingle work and the grouped classical columns or pilasters are also distinguishing characteristics. (E)

**2. CONSTRUCTION TYPE/USE CATEGORY:** Significance as an Example of a Particular Occupancy Type or Use, Method of Construction or Material

Built as two flats, as it is still configured, the McCormick House is a particularly elegant expression of the type. (G)

**3. DATE BUILT:** Significance as an Example of a Particular Period in San Francisco History

The McCormick House was built in 1902, before the earthquake and fire of 1906. (E)

**4. ARCHITECT:** Designed or built by an Architect or Builder Who Has Made a Significant Contribution to the Community, State or Nation

Design credit goes to the firm of Kidd and Anderson<sup>3</sup> (John T. Kidd & William J. Anderson). Kidd, the senior partner was probably responsible for the design. He was also involved in the design of the cottage to the east of the McCormick House for the same owners fourteen years previously<sup>4</sup>.

English born, Kidd trained under Laver and Curlett. Although he practiced in San Francisco for forty years (1881-1921) his work is little known. (G)

**5. DESIGN:** Quality of Composition, Detailing and Ornament Measured in Part in Originality, Urban Design, Craftsmanship or Uniqueness

Quality of composition and design is this building's salient virtue. The basic narrow gable front form, which so often results in a flat, angular expression, here becomes positively voluptuous. The matching round bay and tower, assisted by a subtly curved stair structure at the entrance—and crowned by the astonishing onion dome with its sinuous finial—establish a depth and movement unique among San Francisco Victorian facades.

The narrow remaining flat surface is textured with varying widths of planking, both plain and fish scale shingles, two leaded glass windows with ornate surrounds, and bands of molding. There is also a horseshoe shaped ornamental detail between the first and second story on the tower. (E)

**6. INTERIOR:** Interior Arrangement, Finish, Craftsmanship, and/or Use Detail is/are Particularly Attractive or Unique

The interiors of both flats retain fine woodwork, paneling, mantles and other detail. There has been no alteration of the original floor plan. (E)



## B. HISTORIC CONTEXT

**7. PERSONS:** Associated with the Life or Activities of a Person, Group or Institution that has Made a Significant Contribution to the Community, State or Nation

The original owners, whose tenure covered seventy years<sup>5</sup>, were prosperous members of the middle class. The patriarch was an insurance agent, and his son was a fireman.<sup>6</sup> There is no known association with any person, group or institution that can be said to have made a significant contribution to the community, state or nation. (F)

**8. EVENTS:** Associated with Events that Have Made a Significant Contribution to the Community, State or Nation

Other than having survived the earthquake and fire of 1906, there is no known connection with an event of importance. (F)

**9. PATTERNS:** Associated with or Illustrative of Broad Patterns of City's Cultural, Social, Political or Economic History or Development

In 1902, a decade long national economic depression—the worst on record prior to the Great Depression of the 1930s—finally came to an end. In San Francisco, the building industry had nearly come to a halt. But in the first half of 1902, there was a dramatic turn around as records were set for new building activity<sup>7</sup>.

The McCormick House graphically illustrates this pattern of economic history and development. John W. McCormick and his family had lived in the modest cottage next door at 4038 17th Street throughout the years of the economic depression. But as soon as the economy began to improve, McCormick built this effusive monument to a suddenly rosier future.

The house also reflects the contemporaneous transformation of the Eureka Valley neighborhood from working class to middle class. (E)

## C. PHYSICAL CONTEXT

**10. CONTINUITY:** Contributes to the Continuity or Character of the Street, Neighborhood or Area

This block of 17th Street was severely impacted by the building of the Twin Peaks tunnel in 1917 and the extension of Market Street in the early 1920s. Several properties adjacent on the east were condemned, resulting in the loss of at least seven Victorian buildings. Because of this, the streetscape from the northwest corner of Castro and Market around to the 4000 block of 17th Street is now characterized by undistinguished modern buildings.

The severed Victorian fabric begins again at the cottage immediately to the east of the

McCormick House<sup>8</sup>. However, because this cottage is now largely obscured by a monolithic 1960s apartment house, and because the cottage is a relatively modest structure, the McCormick House visually marks the beginning of the mainly Victorian and Edwardian streetscape ascending the eastern slope of Twin Peaks. (VG)

**11. SETTING:** Setting and/or Landscape Contributes to the Continuity or Character of the Street, Neighborhood or Area

The McCormick House makes a significant contribution to the character of the street and area. (E)

**12. VISUAL SIGNIFICANCE:** Significant as a Visual Landmark to the Neighborhood, City, Region or Nation as a Whole

Set on a slightly elevated lot, which itself is several feet above the busy intersection of Castro and Market streets, the McCormick House is an extremely significant visual landmark. It is significant certainly to the neighborhood, and because the neighborhood itself is internationally famous, it can be said that the McCormick House is a significant visual landmark of international scope. (VG)

#### D. INTEGRITY

**13. ALTERATIONS:** The Degree to Which the Property Has Retained Original Materials from which its Significance is Derived or which Characterize its Period

Both exterior and interior appear almost entirely original. Details such as the brass speaking tubes from the entrance to the flats, the curved glass windows, including the basement level, and the "patent stone entrances" and steps mentioned in the 1902 builder's notice<sup>9</sup> are still in place.

There is a course of floral patterned molding immediately below the second floor tower windows which is in place on only one side of the tower, and which probably originally extended fully around the tower, perhaps even across the rest of the facade. This appears to be the only original element that is now missing.

The round bay window has had no cap on it since at least the time of a 1927 photo. A 1917 photo, the earliest found, is inconclusive, but appears to show no cap. It is unknown whether the original design included any cap. (E)

**THREATS TO SITE:** NONE ( ) DEVELOPMENT ( X ) ZONING ( )  
VANDALISM ( ) PUBLIC WORKS ( ) OTHER ( )

#### REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS:

**CALIFORNIA STATE REGISTER:** No (perSHPO) **HERE TODAY:** No

**HERITAGE SURVEYS:** No

**DCP 1976 SURVEY:** Yes Rated 3 overall

**DCP AREA PLANS:** No

**OTHER:** None known

**SUBMITTED TO LANDMARKS BOARD BY:**

**NAME:** Tim Kelley for Judith L. Hoyem  
**ADDRESS:** 4104 24th Street #120  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
**TELEPHONE:** (415) 337-5824  
**FAX:** (415) 239-6385

**DATE SUBMITTED:****BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

- Corbett, Michael, *Splendid Survivors*, San Francisco: California Living Books, 1979
- Delehanty, Randolph, *In the Victorian Style*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991
- Hicks-Judd Company, *San Francisco Block Book*, San Francisco: Hicks-Judd, 1894-1906
- Issei, William and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986
- Kirker, Harold, *California's Architectural Frontier; Style and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*, Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1960
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995
- Moudon, Anne Vernez, *Built for Change, Neighborhood Architecture in San Francisco*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989
- Olmsted, Roger, and T. H. Watkins, *Here Today, San Francisco's Architectural Heritage*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1968
- Waldhorn, Judith Lynch, and Sally B. Woodbridge, *Victoria's Legacy, Tours of San Francisco Bay Area Architecture*, San Francisco: 101 Productions, 1978
- Waldhorn, Judith Lynch, and Carol Oiwell, *A Gift to the Street, A Celebration of Victorian Architecture*, San Francisco: Antelope Island Press, 1976
- Whithey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Whithey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970
- Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States-1910, Population Schedule*  
*Fourteenth Census of the United States-1920, Population Schedule*
- Department of City Planning, *Citywide Architectural Survey*, San Francisco, 1976
- San Francisco Assessor, *Sales Ledger*, 1913-1979
- San Francisco, *California Architect and Builders News*, Building Intelligence section, December 1887
- San Francisco Call*, Builders Contracts section, March 6, 1902
- San Francisco Directory*, Crocker-Langley and various publishers, 1888-1972
- San Francisco Real Estate Circular*, Thomas Magee & Sons, March 1902

**BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)**

San Francisco Water Department, *Application for Service, 4040-4042 17th Street, 1902*

Sanborn Map Company, *Maps of San Francisco, 1899, 1899 corrected to 1905, 1913, 1913 corrected to 1950, 1980*

McEnery Case #6419, 1908

1 *San Francisco Call*, Builders Contracts section, March 6, 1902:

*"John W. McCormick (owner) with Frank Demartini & Brothers (contractors) architects Kidd and Anderson —All work except mantels, shades, concrete and cement work, plumbing, gas and sewers, painting, plastering and patent stone entrance, electric work, bells, speaking tubes and letter boxes for a two-story and rough basement frame building (2 flats) on N line of Seventeenth street 245 W of Castro, ...\$4075"*

The earliest Sanborn Map to show the building is an 1899 edition corrected to 1905

2 McAlester, Virginia and Lee; *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995 (p264)

3 *Call*

4 *San Francisco, California Architect and Builders News*, Building Intelligence section, December 1887. Credit is given to Charles V. Pierce. Pierce and Kidd began a short lived partnership in December 1887 that lasted only until July 1888. (City Directory 1888; various listings in *CABN*)

5 In 1913 the property was deeded to thirteen year old Claire McCormick. It remained in her name until 1972. Claire McCormick is reported to have been institutionalized for most of her life because of mental incompetency. It is a mystery why the family put the property in her name. Her parents and older brother were alive and mentally competent. Claire is not listed in city directories, which is not necessarily significant, since they commonly failed to list women. Her brother, John W. McCormick Jr., is listed in the building.

6 City Directories, various years

7 *San Francisco, San Francisco Real Estate Circular*, Thomas Magee & Sons, March 1902, p1, Lumber and Building:

*"The demand for real estate last month was the best we have had for the past eleven years. ...There has never been greater activity in building in this city than at present. Prices are high for all kinds of building material, but money is plentiful, and owners of property do not now stop to split hairs about the cost of improvements."*

8 *Sanborn Maps, 1899, 1905, 1913, 1950 et seq.* showing reconfiguration of 17th and Castro intersection during construction of the Market Street extension in the 1920s, and the resulting loss of 9 Victorian structures.

9 *Call*