

1 [Landmark Designation of the Doggie Diner sign, located in the median strip of Sloat
2 Boulevard and 45th Avenue.]

3 **Ordinance Designating the Doggie Diner sign, located in the median strip of Sloat**
4 **Boulevard and 45th Avenue, as a Landmark under Planning Code Article 10; and**
5 **adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b) and environmental findings.**
6

7 Note: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;
8 deletions are ~~*strikethrough italics Times New Roman*~~.
9 Board amendment additions are double underlined.
10 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

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

12 Section 1. Findings.

13 (a) On June 1, 2006, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning Commission in
14 Resolution No. 17253 found that the proposed landmark designation of the Doggie Diner sign,
15 located in the median strip of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue, was consistent with the City's
16 General Plan and with Planning Code Section 101.1(b). In addition, the Planning Commission
17 recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt the landmark designation. A copy of said
18 Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 060926 and
19 is incorporated herein by reference. The Board finds that the proposed landmark designation
20 is consistent with the City's General Plan and with Planning Code Section 101.1(b) for the
21 reasons set forth in said Resolution.

22 (b) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board finds that the proposed
23 landmark designation will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons
24 set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 17253, which reasons are incorporated
25 herein by reference as though fully set forth. A copy of said Resolution is on file with the Clerk
of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 060926.

1 (3) The sign shall be along sight lines of the Great Highway, the ocean, and the sign's
2 original location.

3 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and
4 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory
5 Board on April 5, 2006 and other supporting materials contained in Planning Department
6 Docket No. 2005.1135L. In brief, the National Register characteristics of the landmark that
7 justify its designation are as follows:

8 (1) Its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad
9 patterns of our history (Criterion A); and

10 (2) Its embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of
11 construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or
12 that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual
13 distinction (Criterion C).

14 The Doggie Diner sign is not only the last version of several popular dog signs used for
15 advertising the Bay Area fast-food chain "Doggie Diner," it is also the last doggie-head sign of
16 its kind to stand on its pole in public sight. The Doggie Diner sign is an excellent example of a
17 three-dimensional iconic and flamboyant roadside commercial sign and is unique and rare in
18 design.

19 (c) The particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as
20 determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the
21 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2005.1135L,
22 which is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth herein. In brief,
23 the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:

24 The size (an approximately eight-foot tall dog head on a 17-foot tall metal pole),
25 material (fiberglass plastic laminate), colors (based upon photo documentations), and novel



City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Tails Ordinance

File Number: 060926

Date Passed:

Ordinance Designating the Doggie Diner sign, located in the median strip of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue, as a Landmark under Planning Code Article 10; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b) and environmental findings.

August 1, 2006 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Ma, Maxwell,
McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin
Excused: 1 - Sandoval

August 8, 2006 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Maxwell, McGoldrick,
Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval
Absent: 1 - Ma

Case No. 2005.1135L
Median Strip of Sloat Boulevard
and 45th Avenue
**Landmark Designation of the
Doggie Diner Sign**

SAN FRANCISCO

PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 17253

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND
RECOMMENDING TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THE ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE
DESIGNATING THE DOGGIE DINER SIGN AS LANDMARK NO. 254.**

1. Whereas in 1999, Mary Koonts of the San Francisco Planning Department, using the Kamen's methodology, initially prepared the draft Landmark Designation Report for the Doggie Diner Sign;
2. Whereas in 1999, the Board of Supervisors, despite initiation and recommendation for approval by the Landmarks Board, the Board of Supervisors upheld the Planning Commission's disapproval recommendation and denied the landmark designation for the Doggie Diner Sign;
3. Whereas on February 14, 2005, after mutually agreed upon between the previous sign owner, Sloat Garden Center, and the current sign owner, the City and County of San Francisco, the sign was moved away from the property it was originally installed at (2750 Sloat Boulevard) and moved several yards away, on the median strip near 45th Avenue, across the street from the entrance to the San Francisco Zoo;
4. Whereas On August 17, 2005, Joel Schechter, on the behalf of Ocean Beach Historical Society, a local preservation organization, suggested to the Landmarks Board the Doggie Diner sign be reconsidered as a designated local landmark;
5. Whereas on October 19, 2005, the Landmarks Board voted to establish the Landmark Designation Work Program for Fiscal Year 2005-2006. The Doggie Diner Sign is among eleven sites chosen to have Landmark Designation Reports developed and brought to the Landmarks Board for review and comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation;
6. Whereas in early 2006, Tina Tam of the San Francisco Planning Department, updated and edited the draft Landmark Designation Report for the Doggie Diner Sign using National Register Criteria as its methodology for recommending historic district designation of historic resources. This method was adopted by the Landmarks Board in 2000;
7. Whereas at its duly noticed meeting of April 5, 2006, the Landmarks Board voted unanimously to adopt a resolution to initiate landmark designation of the Doggie Diner sign and to recommend to the Planning Commission approval of designating the Doggie Diner sign as Landmark No. 254;

8. Whereas on June 1, 2006, the Planning Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing on the Landmark Designation (Case No. 2005.1135L) for the above described project, at which time the Commission reviewed and discussed the findings prepared for its review by the Preservation Staff of the Planning Department of the City and County of San Francisco;
9. Whereas at the same hearing, the Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the location and boundaries of the landmark site as the footprint of the sign, currently located in the median strip on Sloat Boulevard at 45th Avenue, and the period of significance as 1966, the year when the sign was erected at the original location at the corner of Sloat Boulevard at 46th Avenue;
10. Whereas the Planning Commission, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the "National Register of Historic Places" rating criteria and found the Doggie Diner Sign to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion "A", association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and criterion "C", embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. The Doggie Diner Sign is not only the last version of several popular dog signs used for advertising the fast-food chain "Doggie Diner" that is born and raised in the Bay Area, but it is also the last doggie-head sign of its kind to stand on its pole in public sight. In terms of distinctive characteristics, the Doggie Diner Sign is an excellent example of a three-dimensional iconic and flamboyant roadside commercial signage that is unique and rare in design;
11. Whereas the Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:
 - a. The size (a five-foot tall dog head on a 17-foot tall metal pole), material (plastic), colors (based upon photo documentations), and novel sculptural form – as well as the orientation (the sign should be oriented toward visibility from an automobile);
12. Whereas the Planning Commission Board further agreed that any future movement of the Doggie Diner Sign shall follow these previously agreed upon conditions set forth by the Board of Supervisors (Resolution No.: 306-01), otherwise a Certificate of Appropriateness is required:
 - a. The sign shall be visible from the original location (a.k.a. 2750 Sloat Boulevard);
 - b. The sign shall be within a two block radius of the original location; and
 - c. The sign shall be along sight lines of the Great Highway, the ocean, and the sign's original location;
13. Whereas the designation of the Doggie Diner sign met the required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:
 - The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings or objects be preserved, such as the designation of the Doggie Diner sign

as City Landmark No. 254. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with one of the last remaining iconic signs being an outdoors performance space that has been important in San Francisco's cultural history and as an urban park landscape that is devoted to public performances and is a setting for public art.

- That the proposed project will have no significant effect on the other seven Priority Policies: (1) That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced. (2) That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods. (3) That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced. (4) That commuter traffic not impede Muni transit service or overburden our 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. (6) That the City achieves the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake; (8) That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development; and

14. Whereas the designation of the Doggie Diner sign is consistent with the following Urban Design Element of the General Plan:

OBJECTIVE 1: EMPHASIS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC PATTERN WHICH GIVES THE CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AN IMAGE, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, AND A MEANS OF ORIENTATION.

Policy 8: Increase the visibility of major destination areas and other points for orientation.

OBJECTIVE 2: CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES WHICH PROVIDE A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY OF THE PAST, AND FREEDOM FROM OVERCROWDING.

Policy 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 Urban Design Element of the General Plan has a direct correlation with the landmark designation of the Doggie Diner sign. Designating this significant historic resource as a local landmark will further give the Outer Parkside neighborhood by Ocean Beach a sense of an automobile past because the sign will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. As described in the proposed ordinance, landmark designation will require that any proposed work not exempt from conditions set forth by the Board of Supervisors (Resolution No.: 306-01), that may have an impact on character-defining features be reviewed by the Planning Department and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.

The use of the Secretary of Interior's Standards in the review will ensure that only appropriate and compatible alterations are made;

15. Whereas the Planning Department has received letters of support from various neighborhood and preservation organizations including Marc Duffett, Vice President of Sunset Parkside Education and Action Committee (SPEAK), Woody LaBounty, Director of the West Neighborhoods Project, and Bill Griffith, cartoonist of the nationally syndicated daily comic strip "Zippy the Pinhead" (See Attachment B). Planning Staff is not aware of any opposition; and
16. The Planning Commission has reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at a duly noticed Public Hearing held on June 1, 2006.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby approves landmark designation of the Doggie Diner sign in the median strip of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue as Landmark No. 254 pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance to designate the Doggie Diner sign as Landmark No. 254 pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution, the Doggie Diner Sign Landmark Designation Report and other pertinent materials in the Case File 2005.1135L to the Board of Supervisors.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission on June 1, 2006.

Linda Avery
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissions Sue Lee, Dwight S. Alexander, Michael J. Antonini; Kevin Hughes; William L. Lee; Shelley Bradford Bell, and Christina Olague

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: June 1, 2006

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE: April 5, 2006
CASE NO.: 2005.1135L

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE: 6-0

APPROVED: April 5, 2006
PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:
APPROVED:

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PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 254

HISTORIC NAME	Doggie Diner Sign
POPULAR NAME	Doggie Diner Sign
ADDRESS	Median Strip at the corner of Sloat Boulevard and 45 th Avenue
BLOCK & LOT	N/A
OWNER	Department of Public Works City and County of San Francisco
ORIGINAL USE	Advertising
CURRENT USE	Public sign standing for public enjoyment and as historic marker
ZONING	N/A

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

Check all National Register criteria applicable to the significance of the property that are then documented in the report. The criteria checked is (are) the basic justification for *why* the resource is important.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (A) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. |
| (B) <input type="checkbox"/> | Association with the lives of persons significant in our past. |
| (C) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. |
| (D) <input type="checkbox"/> | Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory. |

Period of Significance

Under Criterion A of the National Register (Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history), the Doggie Diner sign is significant as an example of work representing a particular period of sign creation in the Bay Area. The period of significance is between 1948 and 1986. The beginning year, 1948, is the year when the collection of the popular dog signs was first introduced to advertise the chain restaurants within the city and surrounding communities and the ending year, 1986, is 20 years ago, the commonly accepted minimum age for historic signs.

Under Criterion C of the National Register (Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.), the Doggie Diner sign is also significant as a three-dimensional icon, unique and rare in design. The Doggie Diner sign serves as an important point of reference for understanding the evolution of sign design that occurred along Sloat Boulevard from the early to late twentieth century. Designed in the 1960s, the dog-head sign illustrates the important characteristics of and materials used to create mid-twentieth century roadside commercial signage. Its hallmark mid-twentieth century characteristics include: size, height and novelty. The material, plastic, transformed signage construction during this same time. As such, the period of significance under this criterion is 1966, the year when the sign was first installed at the same time the Doggie Diner was constructed at the corner of Sloat Boulevard and 46th Avenue.

Integrity

Under National Register guidelines, the seven areas of integrity are considered to be location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling and association. Each of these aspects will be discussed

below. To summarize, the Doggie Diner Sign retains integrity in all of these areas except for setting.

Location

The Doggie Diner sign is the last of its kind to stand on its pole in public sight, as all the signs like it once stood. Integrity of location refers to whether a structure has been moved. While the sign was moved to the current location in the median strip at the intersection of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue in 2005, this move however, does not constitute a loss of integrity, since the new location is only one block from its original site outside a diner – which was and is still located at the northeast corner of Sloat Boulevard and 46th Avenue (2750 Sloat Boulevard). (There is precedent for landmarks standing near, but not on, their original site; Lotta's Fountain was moved in 1974, for example).

Design

The Doggie Diner sign is an example of mimetic signage; a sign using common objects or animals to symbolize and sell products. Mimetic signage is a sales device employed since the Middle Ages and continued today. Early American examples include merchants signs from nineteenth century main streets: giant watches advertised jewelers shops, mortars and pestles indicated the location of the druggist, and oversized boots publicized the cobbler's shop. An enlarged and more eccentric form of mimetic signage had its heyday in the early twentieth century in Los Angeles, California. During this time, stores and restaurants were actually built in the form of the product or advertising image. A well-known example is the Brown Derby. Examples of signage from the early to mid twentieth century include the Barkies Sandwich Shops and Sanderson's Stockings signs, also located in Los Angeles.

The sign is a larger-than-life fiberglass sculpture of a dachshund head, complete with chef's hat and bow tie. In the mimetic tradition, the hat represents the building use and the dachshund represents the contents of the menu (the hot dog). Etymologists and historians of popular culture do not agree on the origins of the terms "hot dog", however, all agree that the term "hot dog" has been associated with the dachshund throughout most of the twentieth century, due undoubtedly to the similarity of shape.

The sign on the median strip at the corner of Sloat Boulevard at 45th Avenue is the last one standing in the Bay Area. Additionally, though a survey of this type of sign has never been done in San Francisco, an article in the *San Francisco Examiner* ("Retro Refuge" by Louis Trager) suggests that there are only a few left anywhere (and certainly not standing) in the city. The article describes a proposal by Art Commissioner Stanlee Gatti to collect signs or San Francisco icons for preservation. The Doggie Diner sign is one of only a few listed in the article. Others on the list include the Mr. Peanut signs and the Hills Bros. Coffee sign.

While the Doggie Diner sign was an advertising sign for practically its entire existence, it is now a public sign standing for public enjoyment and as a historic marker. Aside from a few changes that occurred in the past five years (new paint and pole, and obviously new setting), the design is intact and retains integrity.

Materials

The dachshund head is made of a flame-resistant fiberglass plastic laminate, as manufactured from fiberglass cloth and Pittsburgh resin type 5800. The thickness is .25 inches per Los Angeles city approval. The dog head is supported by a galvanized steel pole. In the decades after WWII, plastics became the dominant medium for sign construction. Traditional materials - wood and metal - lacked many of the advantages that plastic offered sign makers. Plastic was very versatile with regard to shape and color, very durable, inexpensive, and could be mass-produced.

None of the contributing elements has been remodeled or altered using inappropriate materials. In 2001, after the sign fell in a windstorm, the City's Department of Public Works restored the sign and its pole to excellent condition, in which they remain now (2006). Accordingly, the sign possesses integrity of materials.

Workmanship

The workmanship of the sign is outstanding. The sign is in excellent condition since the Department of Public Works restored it in 2001. The coloring of the head appears intact, and quite bright, in keeping with the original design - as apparent from old photographs and a painting. The dog's expression remains vividly whimsical. The sign does not appear to have been altered, only renewed in bright color, through restoration. Accordingly, the sign retains integrity of workmanship.

Setting

The old Doggie Diner restaurant, now operated as the Carousel fast-food restaurant, maintains the commercial nature of the street. Its setback is similar to that of other buildings fronting along Sloat Boulevard. The restaurant and the sign were erected at the same time in 1966. The restaurant, with exception of missing awnings and new green paint, retains an appearance very similar to the day it was built. It is rare that signs of this age survive on or so close to their original site. Usually, commercial signs are altered or replaced through maintenance, turnover of building tenants, or updated business logos. Although the sign continues to stand near its point of origin, and to represent cultural history important to the community, it is no longer sited immediately outside of the restaurant and therefore does not maintain a high level of integrity in terms of setting.

Feeling

The feeling that the Doggie Diner sign continues to remind residents of its once popular chain today has been preserved. It also reminds them of the way of life in which the Doggie Diner began to flourish. The sign is representative of San Francisco's of post-World War II culture. This was an era of prosperity, rock and roll, comic books, large cars with tail fins, drive-in movies and drive-in restaurants. The sign is a reminder of the place San Francisco teenagers used to drive to in the 1950s and 1960s for the popular hot dog, burger, shake and fries. Many visitors still recall the importance of the restaurant and sign in their youth, and tell their children about it. As such, the sign retains integrity of feeling.

Association

The association of the Doggie Diner sign as an important sign on a commercial strip is weakened by the loss of external setting with the restaurant. However, this association is not lost entirely, due to the proximity to the original Doggie Diner site and the presence of other public attractions, San Francisco Zoo and Ocean Beach. The sign, erected in 1966, was created to attract drivers. It was originally positioned to greet drivers at both the immediate intersection of 46th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard and the more distant intersection of the Great Highway and Sloat Boulevard. Its height and bright colors made it visible from the Great Highway. The fantastic image of a grinning dog dressed up as a chef would certainly have been an uncommon enough site to cause comment or a driver to stop. It remains so today. Fortunately, it now stands next to a stoplight, so drivers can stop and look at it during a red light. This marks an improvement over its earlier location. The sign is still able to attract attention and direct the driver toward Ocean Beach from its new position at 45th Avenue. On the whole, the sign does retain integrity of association.

Boundaries of the Landmark Site:

The proposed landmark site includes the footprint of the sign, currently located on the median strip at the corner of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue. However, any future movement of the Doggie Diner Sign shall follow these previously agreed upon conditions set forth by the Board of Supervisors (Resolution No.: 306-01), otherwise a Certificate of Appropriateness is required:

- a. The sign shall be visible from the original location (a.k.a. 2750 Sloat Boulevard);
- b. The sign shall be within a two block radius of the original location; and
- c. The sign shall be along sight lines of the Great Highway, the ocean, and the sign's original location.

Characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation:

The Doggie Diner sign is significant under:

Criterion A (Association with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history). The Doggie Diner sign is associated with events important to the social history of San Francisco. It is the last version of several popular dog signs used for advertising the fast-food chain, born and raised in the Bay Area. In the original 1948 sign, the dog was essentially a hot dog with four short legs, tail and head. An oversized collar covered the ungainly connection of the head to the body. A 1978 article about the Doggie Diner by the Express, The East Bay's Free Weekly reported that: "This version lasted until sometime in the mid-1950s, when one or two Doggies were set upright, teetering preposterously on their tiny back legs and waving a Doggie Diner flag. Finally, a Los Angeles plastics firm was hired to design Doggie busts. The signs were created in different mediums, neon and plastic. Under this criterion, the Period of Significance is 1948 to 1986. The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board), in its previous deliberation has used the 1988 Planning Advisory Service Memo entitled Sign Controls for Historic Signs to suggests that the time frame for classifying signage as significant be shortened than for a building. The PAS Memo suggests that a sign need only be 20 years old for consideration as a Landmark Sign—"A sign at least 20 years old that is visible for one-half mile or more from a major thoroughfare or expressway and which, by reason of unique design, size, configuration, or its product's/company's long association with the city, is of extraordinary local significance." As the Doggie Diner sign is 40 years old, the sign more than qualifies to be a Landmark Sign.

Criterion C (Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction). The Doggie Diner sign is also one of the city's rare examples of mimetic signage and a relic of the period in which the rising significance of the automobile influenced the creation of new and flamboyant roadside commercial signage. As a mid-twentieth century sign, it contrasts with the early-twentieth century neon motel sign located around the corner on 46th Avenue. Neon's popularity reached its height in the 1940s. Additionally, the neon sign reflects the Streamline Modern style prevalent in commercial design during the 1930s and 1940s. Neon signs became less popular after the introduction of plastics to sign making in the late 1940s. The Doggie Diner sign stands in comparison to the motel sign located in the 2800 block of Sloat Boulevard. The motel sign is an example of mid-twentieth century sign design. It uses size and the novelty of the exaggerated architectural element it is painted upon to garner attention.

Description of the particular features that should be preserved:

The size (a five-foot tall dog head on a 17-foot tall metal pole), material (plastic), colors (based upon photo documentations), and novel sculptural form – as well as the orientation (the sign should be oriented toward visibility from an automobile).

DESCRIPTION

The composition of the sign is typical of the fantastic imagery employed by mid-twentieth century merchants to sell their products. It is a popular image - a dog - that is embedded in the public's consciousness and therefore already accepted and recognizable. As it is also dressed to be a chef, the sign successfully delivers the theme of the product at the same time that it sends a message of familiarity. Because of its size and bright primary colors (the red and blue were originally bright), the sign captures the driver's attention and conveys both messages as soon it is viewed.

The detail of the dog's expression is relatively refined and fits in with the concept that Chester Lieb, author of *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, calls the "Lure of the Bizarre." The grinning expression of the dachshund sign was in its first days and is still today an uncommon site in San Francisco. It was and is a quick and easy way to capture the attention of motorists and encourage them to stop to look at it.

Since the sign now stands next to a stoplight, motorists are sometimes required to stop near the sign, if not look at it.

In efforts to have the sign preserved late in the 1990s, and early in the 21st century, the sign became a rallying point for cultural preservationists. Leading elected officials participated in these events, including Board of Supervisors hearings and public rallies in support of the sign's preservation.

A bronze plaque installed at the foot of the sign by San Francisco's Department of Public Works in February, 2006, summarizes the sign's significance as follows: "This sign stood outside the last operating Doggie Diner Restaurant (later, "Carousel") on the N.E. corner of 46th Ave. and Sloat Boulevard. Designed in 1966 by graphic artist Harold Bachman (1921-2005) for the popular unionized Bay Area drive-in chain, the Doggie's whimsical style (shades of swing and early auto age cartoons) has delighted generations of visitors to Ocean Beach. A massive grassroots preservation effort chronicled nationally in the 'Zippy the Pinhead' comic strip, led to its acquisition by the City of San Francisco (Dec. 2000)."

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Doggie Diner sign is an important icon in the Bay Area's and this country's cultural and architectural history. It is associated with being a historic marker of a culture that supported drive-in fast-food chains across the country in the mid-twentieth century. Fast-food restaurants first appeared in the nation during the 1920s and 1930s. Owners of present-day White Castle and McDonalds were some of the first to capitalize on the opportunity to provide fast and cheap roadside food service to the increasing number of automobile owners driving along America's burgeoning roadways. By the 1950s, an assortment of other fast-food chains, like Burger King and Kentucky Fried Chicken, had also gotten their start. Doggie Diner was one of these. Founder Al Ross first began selling hot-dogs from a stand outside of Oakland's Castlemont High School in 1948. By the 1960s, the stand had become a self-serve, eat-in restaurant with parking lot. At its height the chain had 26 locations, with only one located outside the Bay Area in Stockton. Like most other fast-food chains, the Doggie Diner had plans to open restaurants across the country. But the diner was a unionized restaurant, unlike its successor organization. Competition from non-union chains like McDonalds and Burger King caused its plans to change. By the early 1980s the Doggie Diner's business had declined and four of its restaurants had closed. The last Doggie Diner closed its doors in 1986. Its successor, "The Carousel," housed in the same building, continues to operate on Sloat Boulevard.

The sign standing in the median strip at the corner of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue is the last of its kind standing. As a larger-than-life sculptural form, it is one of the city's rare examples of mimetic signage. It is also a relic of the dawning age of automobile dominance. The rising significance of the automobile in mid-twentieth century America influenced the creation of new and flamboyant roadside commercial signage. As such, the sign is a significant visual landmark to the people of San Francisco.

Its size, novel sculptural form, and historical connection to the once-popular fast-food chain and rock and roll and cartoon culture of the 1950s and 1960s, make the sign a popular icon. The Doggie Diner chain served residents of the Bay Area for nearly forty years, and is part of San Francisco's history. It was one of many roadside, self-service food joints established in the Bay Area during the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. Other local establishments that opened during this time include Whiz Burger, Red's Java House, the Smokehouse in Berkeley, and Joe's Cable Car.

Part of the Doggie Diner's lore includes the following stories. Phyllis Diller was known to regularly visit the Doggie Diner in her limousine and send her chauffeur in to buy a Chili Cheese Burger. Diller liked the burger so much she sent the company a letter of support that they used in their advertising. Prominent socialites decided to have a pre-opera dinner party at the Doggie Diner located at Van Ness and Golden Gate. In a 1965 article Hillsborough socialite Mrs. Erickson described the Doggie Diner as "the most *in* place to have a pre-opera dinner" and "high camp." Another story told by former Doggie Diner President Marv Mohn involved the company sending Doggie Diner wrappers to Korea as a morale booster for U.S. soldiers fighting in the Korean War. The men were served their rations in the wrappers. The wrappers were supposed to remind the soldiers of "drive-ins, hamburgers, necking in the back seat, making the world safe for democracy and all the other things they were fighting for."

Graphic designer and visual artist Harold Bachman (1921-2005) designed the Doggie Diner sign for Al Ross, when Ross owned and directed the Doggie Diner chain of restaurants. Bachman was honored toward the end of his life by a "Harold Bachman Day," declared in the City of San Francisco by Mayor Willie Brown. Bachman's drawings of the doghead were turned into three-dimensional fiberglass signage sculpture by the International Fiberglass Company, Division of West Coast Industrials. Engineering assistance to the International Fiberglass company was provided in 1966 by Vincent Kevin Kelley and Associates.

The Doggie Diner sign is also a relic of the era in which signage became the most important feature in the auto-dominated landscape. As Robert Venturi observed in *Learning From Las Vegas*, during the early 1970s, signs, not buildings, had become the dominant feature of the commercial strip. Venturi wrote, "It is the highway signs, through their sculptural forms or pictorial silhouettes, their particular positions in space, their inflected shapes, and their graphic meanings, that identify and unify the mega texture. They make verbal and symbolic connections through space, communicating a complexity of meanings through hundreds of associations in few seconds from far away. Symbol dominates space. Architecture is not enough." It is the sign, not the building or the merchandise, that is able to grab the attention of drivers moving at high speeds. It is therefore, fitting that the Doggie Diner sign has survived the chain that it represented.

The Doggie Diner sign assisted the Carousel Restaurant in defining its original. Since it was moved in 2005, it now gives emphasis and importance to the Ocean Beach approach through its monumental size and distinctive design. Additionally, the sign illustrates the auto emphasis of the landscape. The sign is turned to greet cars driving down Sloat Boulevard, toward Sloat's intersection with the Great Highway. Rather than greeting pedestrians visiting the zoo, the sign focuses its attention on the auto-trade, and grins at visitors moving toward the Pacific Ocean. This cheerful sign, suitable for an amusement park, may also remind visitors that ocean front amusement culture once thrived nearby at Playland.

Significance to Neighborhood: The sign is different in appearance and size from any surrounding signs or structures in view. Because of its unique appearance, the sign is a landmark to the neighborhood. The National Park Service's Preservation Brief #25, *The Preservation of Historic Signs*, describes the visual significance of signs in the following manner: "Signs often become so important to a community that they are valued long after their role as commercial markers has ceased. They become landmarks, loved because they have been visible at certain street corners - or from many vantage points across the city- for a long time. Such signs are valued for their familiarity,

their beauty, their humor, and their size. When signs reach this stage, they accumulate rich layers of meaning. They no longer merely advertise, but are valued in and of themselves. They become icons."

Joel Schechter, co-founder of the Ocean Beach Historical Society, has said that as a cultural historian, and as a Sunset District resident who lives near Ocean Beach and the Doggie Diner sign, he regards the sign as "our Coit Tower; it is as close as the Ocean Beach community comes to having its own distinctive, artistically significant landmark (although the Beach Chalet's WPA mural offers some competition.)"

Significance to Region: The Doggie Diner sign at the corner of Sloat Boulevard at 45th Avenue is the last one of its kind standing. All the others have been removed to make way for new businesses, buildings or remodeling. Additionally, the sign has been regularly referenced in local publications. The *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle* have published stories that reference the Doggie Diner sign as a San Francisco icon. An article about Art Commissioner Stanlee Gatti's effort to protect San Francisco's commercial signage included the Doggie Diner sign ("Retro Refuge" by Louis Trager). A picture of the sign also appeared in a 1998 article on San Francisco's icons. Lastly, the Doggie Diner sign has appeared in Bill Griffith's nationally syndicated comic strip, "Zippy the Pinhead" (dates of publication include January 25, 1998 and October 14-15, 1998, but many more could be cited). The March 9, 2000 strip of "Zippy" included an image of the title character looking at the Doggie Diner sign, thinking about its preservation, and saying: "America! Wake up and smell your cultural heritage!"

ADDENDUM--SIGNS DESIGNATED AS INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

Signs have been individually designated as landmarks in California and a variety of cities across the nation. Signs that have been individually designated:

- San Diego, CACNeon signs
- Dallas, TXCMobil Oil Company sign, a flying red horse known as Pegasus
- Boston, MACKenmore Square's Citgo sign
- Baltimore, MDCDomino Sugar sign
- Minneapolis, MNCGrain Belt Beer sign

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February 2006

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of _____ Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder)

P1. Other Identifier: Doggie Diner sign

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

***a. County** San Francisco

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 2005

***c. Address** Sloat Boulevard at 45th Avenue,

City San Francisco

Zip 94116

***e. Other Locational Data:** Assessor's Parcel Number Block: Lot:

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)

The Doggie Diner sign is a larger than life fiberglass sculpture of a dachshund head, complete with chef's hat and bow tie. It is the last one of its kind standing, from a group of about thirty which all once stood outside Bay Area restaurants in the Doggie Diner chain. (It no longer stands in front of a restaurant, but at the corner of Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue, near Ocean Beach.) The sign continues to represent the unique, popular vernacular style of oceanfront amusement entertainment architecture which once attracted tourists and city residents to San Francisco's Ocean Beach and Playland, the amusement park once nearby. As an earlier landmark designation report (dated June 1999) noted, "the sign is a significant visual landmark to the people of San Francisco. Its size, novel sculptural form, and historical connection to the once-popular fast-food chain and rock and roll culture of the 1950s and 1960s make the sign a popular icon."

The sign is made of molded fiberglass, in a comic, cartoon style. It is mounted on a galvanized steel pole. The pole is roughly 12 feet high, slightly cantilevered at the top; and the sign is about 5 feet tall. The sign fell in a wind storm and was damaged on April 1, 2001, and it was subsequently repaired by the Department of Public Works of the City of San Francisco. It now stands with a beautiful, bright coat of paint and new, sturdy pole. It is owned by the City of San Francisco.

The Doggie Diner sign has been represented in some national publications, including the American Automobile Association journal, *Via*, and the nationally syndicated comic strip, "Zippy." It is also noted as a tourist attraction in newspaper and magazine articles about the City. Its designer, Harold Bachman, has been recognized as a creative artist in a day named in his honor by mayoral proclamation.

This statue appears to be in excellent condition.

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (list attributes and codes) HP

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other



P5b. Photo: (view and date)
View from Sloat Boulevard and 45th Avenue.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and**

Sources: historic
Designed around 1966
Placed in Sunset 1969

***P7. Owner and Address:**

City of San Francisco owns the sign after accepting it as a gift from the former owner, Dave Straus.

***P8. Recorded by:**
Planning Department
City & County of San Francisco
1660 Mission Street Ste 500
San Francisco, CA 94103

***P9. Date Recorded:**

***P10. Survey Type:**

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary # _____

HRI # _____

Trinomial _____

Page 2 of 4

Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)

*Recorded by Planning Department – City and County of San Francisco

*Date

Continuation

Update

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none")

*Attachments: None Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (list)

DPR 523A (1/95)

**Please see attached documents including prior deliberations on
Landmark status for the Doggie Diner sign.**

*Required Information

Note:

The Doggie Diner sign was previously considered for landmark status by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors of the City of San Francisco. The landmark designation process was initiated in 1999. (See Exhibit E, Case No. 1999.365L.)

In his letter to the Planning Commission dated October 5, 1999 (copy attached), Landmarks Board President Daniel Reidy wrote: "Ultimately the Landmarks Board voted to recommend that the Doggie Diner sign be designated as an official San Francisco Landmark.... It has become a cultural icon and a true 'landmark' for its neighborhood and for the many people who enjoy seeing it."

When the Board of Supervisors later voted on the recommendation, the recommendation did not receive a majority of votes. (The vote was a tie.) However, at that time, the sign was not in its present location, and the new location may resolve earlier concern that the sign was located on private property. The sign is no longer located on private property, but on public land, and it is now owned by the City of San Francisco. For these reasons, among others, it merits reconsideration for, and granting of landmark status.

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Page ___ of ___

*NRHP Status Code _____

*Resource Name or # _____

- B1. Historic name: Doggie Diner sign
B2. Common name: same as above
B3. Original Use: Restaurant roadside attraction B4. Present use: Outdoor sculpture

*B5. Architectural Style: not applicable

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

The sign was designed in 1966 by Harold Bachman for use by the Doggie Diner chain of restaurants in the Bay Area. About thirty of the signs once stood outside different restaurants in the chain. This one is the last one standing. It was placed in the Sunset, on Sloat Boulevard near 46th Avenue in 1969. It was moved one block, to 45th Avenue, by the City of San Francisco in 2005. It was fabricated in Southern California by the same firm that cast cartoon characters for Disneyland. Vincent Kevin Kelly and Associates supplied engineering assistance to International Fiberglass Company, Division of West Coast Industrials, in the 1966 construction of the sign.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Feb. 14, 2005 Original Location: Sloat Boulevard at 45th Avenue, San Francisco

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Harold Bachman, designer. See above

b. Builder:

*B10. Significance: Theme Comic statue of dog Area San Francisco's Ocean Beach amusement area
Period of Significance 1966-2005 Property Type _____ Applicable Criteria _____

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association)

In the 1999 Landmark Designation Report prepared for City use in San Francisco, it was noted that the National Park Service's Preservation Brief #25, *The Preservation of Historic Signs* (Appendix B) describes the visual significance of such signs in the following manner: "Signs often become so important to a community that they are valued long after their role as commercial markers has ceased. They become landmarks, loved because they have been visible at certain street corners ... for a long time. Such signs are valued for their familiarity, their beauty, their humor, their size. ... When signs reach this stage, they accumulate rich layers of meaning. They no longer merely advertise, but are valued in and of themselves. They become icons." All of these attributes can be found in the history and community interest in preservation of the Doggie Diner sign now standing on Sloat Boulevard at 45th Avenue.

It is also important to note that although the Doggie Diner sign is not as old as some objects designated landmarks, a Planning Advisory Service (P.A.S.) memo from the American Planning Association defines the category of Landmark Sign in this manner: "Landmark Sign: A sign at least 20 years old that is visible for one-half mile or more from a major thoroughfare or expressway and which, by reason of unique design, size, configuration, or its product's/ company's long association with the city, is of extraordinary local significance." In this regard the Doggie Diner sign can be designated as a "Landmark Sign." (The definition here was quoted in an October 14, 1999 memo to the Planning Commission of San Francisco prepared by Planners Adam Light and Mary Koons.)

Also important in this regard is a letter (attached) written on December 8, 1999, by Roberta B. Deering, Executive Director of the California Preservation Foundation. In her letter addressed to Joel Schechter, Executive Director Deering stated that "the Board of Trustees of the California Preservation Foundation voted to support [Schechter's] organization's [Ocean Beach Historical Society's] efforts to designate the subject Doggie Diner sign ... as a city landmark." Reasons stated for the decision by the Foundation included the fact that the sign "is the last remaining example... of the unique advertising for the Bay Area Dogie Diner fast food chain. Iconographic signs like this were once common features of the urban landscape and are important reminders of the car culture which has come to be associated with the mid-century history of California." The decision was also based on the "widespread local support for the [landmark] designation.... Testament to the familiarity and importance of the site to the local community."

Finally, we wish to quote a comic cartoon figure, Zippy the Pinhead, who spoke in defense of this other (Doggie Diner) cartoon creature. In a nationally syndicated comic strip dated March 9, 2000, Zippy stood in front of the Doggie icon (three of them, actually) and said: "America! Wake up and smell your cultural heritage!"

Page 4 of 4 Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)

*Recorded by Planning Department – City and County of San Francisco *Date Continuation Update

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

*B12. References:

B13. Remarks:

Other documents attached

*B14. Evaluator: Joel Schechter and Diana Scott (using documents prepared by City Planners and other documents)

*Date of Evaluation: May 25, 2005

DPR 523B (1/95)

*Required Information

(This space reserved for official comments.)

Sketch Map