

FILE NO. 90-83-8

ORDINANCE NO. 11144

(Landmarks)

DESIGNATING THE METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY BUILDING AS A
LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY PLANNING CODE.

Be It Ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Building located at 600 Stockton
Street, being Lot 12 in Assessor's Block 257, has a special character
and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and
value, and that its designation as a Landmark will be in furtherance
of, and in conformance with the purposes of Article 10 of the City
Planning Code and the standards set forth therein.

(a) Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning
Code, Chapter 11, Part 11 of the San Francisco Municipal Code, the
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Building is hereby designated as
a Landmark, this designation having been duly approved by Resolution
No. 9812 of the City Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file
with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 90-83-8.

(b) Required Data. The description of the location and bounda-
ries of the Landmark site; of the characteristics of the Landmark
which justify its designation; and of the particular features that
should be preserved; as included in the said Resolution, are hereby
incorporated herein and made a part hereof as though fully set forth.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

George Agnost
CITY ATTORNEY

BY Thomas A. Chen
Deputy City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

BY Dean Macris
Dean L. Macris
Director of Planning

Passed for Second Reading
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

APR 23 1984

Ayes: Supervisors Britt, Hongisto, Kennedy,
Kopp, Maher, Molinari, Nelder, Renne, Silver,
Walker, Ward.

Noes: Supervisors

Absent: Supervisors WALKER

John L. Taylor
90-83-8

File No.

MAY 4 1984

Approved

Read Second Time and Finally Passed
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

APR 30 1984

Ayes: Supervisors Britt, Hongisto, Kennedy,
Kopp, Maher, Molinari, Nelder, Renne, Silver,
Walker, Ward.

Noes: Supervisors

Absent: Supervisor WALKER

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was
finally passed by the Board of Supervisors of the
City and County of San Francisco.

John L. Taylor
Mayor

Clerk

SAN FRANCISCO
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 9812

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Building at 600 Stockton Street as a Landmark pursuant to the provisions of Article 10 of the City Planning Code was initiated by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on August 17, 1983, and said Advisory Board, after due consideration, has recommended approval of this proposal; and

WHEREAS, The City Planning Commission, after due notice given, held a public hearing on September 15 and September 22, 1983 to consider the proposed designation and the report of said Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, The Commission believes that the proposed Landmark has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value; and that the proposed designation would be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes and standards of the said Article 10;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, the proposal to designate the aforementioned structure, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Building at 600 Stockton Street, as a Landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the City Planning Code is hereby APPROVED, the precise location and boundaries of the Landmark site being those of Lot 12 in Assessor's Block 257;

Second, That the special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value of the said Landmark justifying its designation are set forth in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Resolution 270 as adopted on August 17, 1983 which Resolution is incorporated herein and made a part thereof as though fully set forth;

Third, That the said Landmark should be preserved generally in all of its particular exterior features as existing on the date hereof and described and depicted in the photographs, case report and other material on file in the Department of City Planning Docket No. 83.359L;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the proposal for designation, with a copy of this Resolution, to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was ADOPTED by the City Planning Commission.

Lee Woods, Jr.
Secretary

AYES: Bierman, Karasick, Nakashima, Rosenblatt, Wright

NOES: None

ABSENT: Klein, and Salazar

DATED: September 22, 1983

JHM:vr

5607A/202A

LANDMARK #167

BUILDING NAME: Pacific Coast Head Office
of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
BUILDING ADDRESS: 600 Stockton

OWNER: Board of Trustees of Cogswell
College
BLOCK & LOT: 257/12 ZONING: C-3-G

ORIGINAL USE: Office Building

NO. OF STORIES: 4-7 LPAB VOTE: 6-3
(sloping site)

CURRENT USE: Educational facility
and office space

EXTERIOR MATERIALS: white terra cotta

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

(Describe special CHARACTER, or special HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL or AESTHETIC interest or value:) The Pacific Coast Head Office of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company is a significant visual landmark important architecturally as a prime example of the use of classically derived imagery in the form of a temple used by San Francisco financial institutions in the early twentieth century. (over)

(may be continued on back)

EVALUATION CRITERIAA. ARCHITECTURE

1. Style: Classical Revival
2. Construction Type: Steel frame with reinforced concrete
3. Construction Date:
 - a. 1909 Original building, small classical temple in the Ionic order with great interior space, Napoleon LeBrun and Sons (New York) (over)
4. Design Quality: (LPAB ONLY)
5. Architect: See #3 above
6. Interior Quality: (LPAB ONLY) Lobby and fifth floor coffered ceiling of 600 Stockton Street notable; some ornamental cast iron staircases in Stockton Street wing.

B. HISTORY

(as building is significantly associated with specific)

7. Persons:

Haley Fiske, Vice President and later President of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, founder of the Pacific Coast Head Office and significant individual in the history of the insurance industry in the United States. (over)
8. Events: The original portion of the building is associated with the rapid reconstruction of San Francisco after the Earthquake and Fire of 1906 (over)
9. Patterns of History:

This building shows the increasing importance of life insurance in modern society and, through the innovative Health and Welfare Division with its (over)

C. ENVIRONMENT (relation to surroundings, specifically in terms of:)

10. Continuity: 600 Stockton Street continues the image of classical temples favored by financial institutions in San Francisco in the first half of the twentieth century.
11. Setting: 600 Stockton Street is also important in its immediate neighborhood, Nob Hill, and continues the theme of monumental mansions, clubs, and hotels which are characteristic of the hill.
12. Importance as a Visual Landmark: By its size, monumental scale, and rich classical ornamentation (including its sculptural pediment) the building is an important visual landmark in San Francisco.

D. INTEGRITY (cite alterations and physical conditions)

600 Stockton Street has had a complex history of expansion, alteration, (over)

RATINGS

DCP: 4
HERE TODAY: not included
SPLENDID SURV.: A (expanded survey)
NAT'L REGISTER: probably eligible
NAT'L LANDMARK: -
STATE LANDMARK: -

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(list sources on back)

PREPARED BY: J. Malone
ADDRESS: 450 McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
PHONE: 558-2816
DATE: July 15, 1983
August 10, 1983

From material submitted by Randolph Delehanty

See appendices attached.

5232A

JHM:vr



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE Cont'd.

Begun in 1909 and expanded in 1914, 1920-22, 1930 and 1954, 600 Stockton is an important example of the influence of the City Beautiful movement in the reconstruction of San Francisco after 1906. The historical significance of 600 Stockton is primarily associated with its role as the West Coast headquarters of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company whose territory included California, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Montana, and Idaho. This institution was an important factor in life insurance, public health, and capital investment in San Francisco and the West. The Stockton Street frontage features an Ionic portico and heroically-scaled statuary group by noted sculptor Haig Patigian.

3. Construction Date Cont'd.

- b. 1914 Two symmetrical wings about twenty-eight feet wide probably by LeBrun and Sons
- c. 1920-22 Stockton Street blockfront filled out, central portico with pediment sculptural group added, Miller and Colmesnil (San Francisco)
- d. 1930 Pine Street Wing, Miller and Pfleuger (San Francisco)
- e. 1954 California Street Wing and Garden Court added, Thomsen and Wilson (San Francisco)

7. Persons Cont'd.

William H. Crocker, San Francisco banker and philanthropist and the first westerner to sit on the Metropolitan Board of Directors.
H. D. Cogswell, philanthropic dentist and prohibitionist and founder of Cogswell College in 1887. The college purchased the building and renamed it in 1974.
Benjamin H. Swig, Chairman of the Board of the Fairmont Hotel and Trustee and benefactor of Cogswell College; 600 Stockton Street was renamed Swig Hall when the college occupied the property.
Thomas Church, noted landscape architect and Timothy Pfleuger, noted architect.

8. Events Cont'd.

and with the important influence of the City Beautiful movement in the postfire city. The compatible expansion of the building charts the growth of the insurance industry in San Francisco, and the long life of Neo-Classical design among the city's financial institutions.

9. Patterns of History Cont'd.

Visiting Nurse service begun in 1924, the expansion of the public awareness of the need for public health departments in the western region.

The building is associated with the economic and industrial development of both San Francisco and the western states. It housed one of the principal institutions that made San Francisco the major financial center in the West. Capital from this company was invested in many municipal and regional utilities. In the 1940s, the Metropolitan made one of its most important investments in San Francisco with the development of Parkmerced.

Since 1974, 600 Stockton Street has been the campus of Cogswell College, an important institution in technical education in San Francisco.

INTEGRITY Cont'd

and additions. Throughout its history, the monumental quality of the design has been preserved.

The physical condition of the building appears to be good; its parapet was recently reinforced.