

1 (Landmarks) •
2 DESIGNATING THE BAKER AND HAMILTON BUILDING AT 700-768 SEVENTH STREET AS A
3 LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY PLANNING CODE.

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

5 Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the Baker and
6 Hamilton Building located at 700-768 Seventh Street, being Lot 1 in Assessor's
7 Bluck 3799, has a special character and special historical, architectural and
8 aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a landmark will
9 further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10
10 of the City Planning Code.

11 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code,
12 Chapter 11, Part 11 of the San Francisco Municipal Code, the Baker and
13 Hamilton Building is hereby designated as a Landmark, this designation having
14 been fully approved by Resolution No. 11630 of the City Planning Commission,
15 which Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under
16 File No. 90-89-2.

17 (b) Required Data: The description of the location and boundaries of the
18 Landmark site, of the characteristics of the Landmark which justify its
19 designation, and of the particular features that should be preserved are
20 included in the said Resolution, and incorporated in this designating
21 ordinance as though fully set forth.
22

23
24 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
25 RECOMMENDED:
26 LOUISE H. RENNE
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY ATTORNEY

27 By [Signature]
28 Deputy City Attorney

27 By [Signature]
28 Dean L. MAURIS
Director of Planning

Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

Passed for Second Reading

September 5, 1989

Ayes: Supervisors Alioto Britt
Gonzalez Hallinan Hongisto Hsieh
Kennedy Maher Walker Ward

Absent: Supervisors Nelder

§ Finally Passed

§ September 11, 1989

§ Ayes: Supervisors Alioto Britt
§ Gonzalez Hallinan Hsieh Kennedy
§ Maher Walker

§ Absent: Supervisors Hongisto Nelder
§ Ward

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

SEP 18 1989
SEP 1 1989

File No.
90-89-2

Date Approved

[Signature]
Clerk
[Signature]
Mayor

REC-1164 IMAGE 1162

SAN FRANCISCO
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 11630

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate the Baker & Hamilton Building at 700-768 Seventh 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 February 1, 1989 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 April 6, 1989 to consider the proposed designation and the report of said Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, This 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 performance with the purposes and standards of said Article 10;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That this Commission does hereby recommend APPROVAL of the designation of the Baker & Hamilton Building at 700-768 Seventh Street

Second, That the special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value of said Landmark justifying its designation, and the precise location and boundaries of the Landmark site, are set forth in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Resolution 409 as adopted on February 1, 1989 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. 88.753L.

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 foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the City Planning Commission at its regular meeting of April 6, 1989.

Lori Yamauchi
Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Bierman, Boldridge, Dick, Engmann, Hu, Karasick and Morales

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: April 6, 1989

VFM:atm/485

BUILDING NAME:

Present: Baker & Hamilton Building
 Historic: Pacific Hardware and Steel
 Company

OWNER: Ronaldo J. Cianciarulo

BUILDING ADDRESS:

700-768 Seventh Street

BLOCK & LOT:

3799/1

ZONING:

M-2

ORIGINAL USE:

Warehouse with Offices

NO. OF STORIES:

Three with basement.

LPAB VOTE: 6-0

CURRENT USE:

Retail Business

EXTERIOR MATERIALS:

Brick, granite, and
sandstoneSTATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The three-story brick warehouse/office building occupies the western side of the 700 block of Seventh Street bounded by Townsend and King Streets. Originally designed for the Pacific Hardware and Steel Co. (which merged with Baker and Hamilton in 1918) by the San Francisco architectural firm Sutton & Weeks (1904-05), the present structure (301,600 gross square feet) is (cont.)

EVALUATION CRITERIA/FINDINGS

A. ARCHITECTURE

1. Style: Typical of American industrial building design of the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, the exterior treatment of the Baker & Hamilton Building amalgamates a classical tripartite (cont.)
2. Construction Type: The exterior load-bearing brick walls contain a heavy timber post and beam structure. Rectangular in plan, the (cont.)
3. Construction Date: 1904-1905
4. Design Quality: Excellent
5. Architects: Albert Sutton and Charles Peter Weeks (cont.)
6. Interior Quality: Privately Held Property

B. HISTORY

7. Persons: Pacific Hardware and Steel Company was founded in Sacramento in the 1850s by Mark Hopkins and Collis P. Huntington. A (cont.)
8. Events: The building was undamaged by the 1906 Earthquake and escaped destruction by the resulting fire. The Fire burned along the (cont.)
9. Patterns of History: As the "pioneer of its kind" in the area, the building initiated the development of its neighborhood in the (cont.)

C. ENVIRONMENT

10. Continuity: The building forms an architecturally and historically important part of what is now the Showplace Square area. When (cont.)
11. Setting: The railroad spur line which runs along the north side of the building and the concrete loading dock for trucks and (cont.)
12. Importance as a Visual Landmark: The three-story structure, occupying nearly 73,000 square feet of the block bounded by Townsend, Seventh, King and Division Streets, is an imposing visual landmark.

RATINGS:

DCP: 3

HERE: Page 295

SPLENDID SURVIVORS: Secondary Survey
Areas, Page 223

1984 HERITAGE SURVEY: A

NATIONAL REGISTER: N/A

NATIONAL LANDMARK: N/A

STATE LANDMARK: N/A

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Date: November 21, December 7,
December 30, 1988,
January 24 and February 1, 1989

VFM:mj/406



(cont.) last element of an industrial complex that survived as late as the 1980s. The original scheme, built on land owned by the Townsend Co., included the extant building and a single story metal-clad frame structure located 44 feet to the west. By 1912, five small false-front metal clad structures had been fitted between the original buildings (638-640 King Street). Contemporary publications projected that the Sutton & Weeks complex would be "pioneer mercantile structures in the new wholesale district." (SF Chronicle, 12/31/04). The building suffered no damage from the Earthquake in 1906, and narrowly escaped the Fire, which traveled down Townsend Street and headed north on Seventh Street.

EVALUATION CRITERIA/FINDINGS (Cont.)

A. ARCHITECTURE (Cont.)

1. Style: (cont.) office block (oriented toward 7th Street) with the remaining simply articulated brick volume. The principal facade (7th Street) is symmetrically composed with a central arched entrance accessed by granite steps, framed by brick voussoirs and a carved sandstone surround, scrolled keystone and lintel with the building's address. A stationery double wooden door (which replaces a revolving door) is illuminated by a transom window. The first floor is characterized by banded brick work punctuated by six multi-paned arched windows terminated by flat-headed windows at the corners. The second and third stories are grouped under segmental arches; recessed herringbone brick pattern spandrels separate the stories. The attic is articulated by a diagonal brick pattern with small diamond-shaped windows above each bay. A consistent wall treatment extends through the eastern six bays of the Townsend and King Street elevations. The roofscape accommodates large scale distinctive signage on the southeast corner identifying the building, and a pair of water towers.
2. Construction Type: (cont.) last fire walls, running on a north/south axis divide the space into three vertical sections. A large square skylight illuminates the central portion of the building. The eastern third of the building accommodates the public entrance to the building and general offices which were located on the third floor; the majority of the interior space contained the storage, shipping and receiving facilities. These functions were facilitated by access to railroad tracks on Townsend Street and a loading dock covered by a corrugated sheet metal awning, on the King Street elevation for vehicular transportation.
5. Architects: (cont.) A native of Portland, Oregon, Sutton received his architectural training at the University of California, Berkeley. He worked for a period in Portland, then returned to the Bay Area in 1902. Weeks was a graduate of Buchtel (now Akron) University in Ohio; he received additional training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. On his return, he worked for a period in Cleveland and by 1898 was a member of the office of John Galen Howard, New York. During this period, Howard was appointed architect of the first buildings for the University of California, Berkeley. Weeks relocated to San Francisco to assist Howard on the campus projects. In 1902 he formed a partnership with Sutton which lasted until 1910 (Weeks)

In addition to the Baker & Hamilton Building, their projects in San Francisco include the O.W. Nordwell Warehouse at 617-43 Battery (1906), the Kenilworth Apartments at 698 Bush (1907), the Browne Hotel (now Alexander Inn) at 415 O'Farrell (1908), and the Columbia Hotel at 411 O'Farrell (1909-10). They also designed alterations to fireproof the State Capitol in Sacramento in 1905.

After Sutton & Weeks disbanded, Weeks became associated with W.P. Day, (1916-27) and together they produced many of the city's better known buildings, e.g., the Mark Hopkins, Brocklebank Apartments, Cathedral Apartments and the Huntington Hotel, all on Nob Hill, as well as the Don Lee Building at 1000 Van Ness Avenue (designated City Landmark #152.) and the Sir Francis Drake Hotel.

B. HISTORY (Cont.)

7. PERSONS: (cont.) continual process of acquisition and expansion resulted in the establishment of a San Francisco branch in 1871 and by 1901 necessitated the construction of a new facility. Having survived the Earthquake and Fire, the firm enjoyed great prosperity through San Francisco's period of rebuilding.

In contrast, Baker & Hamilton, manufacturers of plows and other farm equipment particularly suited to California soil and climate conditions since the late 1860s, suffered heavy losses. Fortunately, 50 loyal employees saved company records as the fire approached the offices at Davis, Pine & Market. Thereafter, the bulk of the business was handled in Sacramento, until the re-establishment of the San Francisco office in 1908 at 433 Brannan.

By 1914, stiff competition from eastern factories affected both Pacific Hardware & Steel Co. and Baker & Hamilton. The latter, sold their unprofitable Benicia factory that year, and Pacific Hardware was reorganized in 1915 to avert bankruptcy. The merger of the two companies in 1918 created Baker, Hamilton & Pacific Company. Seventh and Townsend Street was chosen for the offices and warehouse of the combined firm because it was larger than 433 Brannan.

Late in the Depression, in order to stimulate sales, Baker, Hamilton & Pacific originated a "model store" on the 3rd floor of the 7th Street building. Its purpose was to show retailers the latest ideas in merchandise display. Closed during the War, it reopened thereafter with a staff of experts to advise retailers on modernizing their stores.

In 1942, the firm name reverted to Baker & Hamilton, and in 1944, the Company purchased the 7th Street property from the Townsend Company. The last listing for Baker & Hamilton at 700-768 Seventh Street in the San Francisco Telephone Directory was 1981.

8. Events: (cont.) north side of Townsend to Seventh, turned north, and burned along the east side of Seventh Street, leaving the warehouse untouched. The Pacific Hardware & Steel Company, in contrast to other hardware firms in the city, was ready to conduct business soon after the disaster because its stock and offices remained intact.
9. Patterns of History: (cont.) area, the building initiated the development of its neighborhood as a manufacturing warehouse district in San Francisco. The building at 7th and Townsend, headquarters for a company whose markets encompassed the Pacific Basin, reflects San Francisco's early 20th century preeminence as commercial center of the Pacific Coast. The building is also a reminder of the many blue collar workers of San Francisco who were the backbone of the city's heavy industry. This is readily apparent in the design of the Charles Harley Co. Building located at 650-74 7th Street (attributed to Albert Pissis, 1911). In addition, Baker & Hamilton played a significant role in the development of California's economic preeminence. It joined with other companies to establish organizations that improved its industry's ability to compete successfully with the East, and it developed equipment to help improve California's agricultural production. Baker & Hamilton engaged in the first large-scale production of the wooden wheel plow the "Sweepstake", later replaced with the steel "Eureka" model.

C. ENVIRONMENT: (Cont.)

10. Continuity: (cont.) Baker & Hamilton opened its San Francisco store in 1867, L.L. Baker moved to the city to assume its management. He became prominent in the city's business community. At factories in San Leandro from 1868 to 1880 and in Benicia from 1880 to 1914, the firm manufactured farm equipment. The company also supplied markets from Mexico to British Columbia as well as in Australia and New Zealand, serviced by a large corps of salesmen. In 1870, Baker & Hamilton helped to establish the California Hardware and Metal Board

of Trade, organized to stabilize prices when the recently completed transcontinental railway brought cheap Eastern goods into the California market. In 1891, L.L. Baker was a prime mover, with Miller, Sloss & Scott, Hawley Brothers, and Huntington, Hopkins & Company in the formation of the Merchant Shipping Association, in order to break the stanglehold of the Southern Pacific and Pacific Mail Steamship on freight charges. The Association's plan to transport goods from the east in chartered clipper ships, though short-lived, did help to effect a reduction of rail and steamship freight rates to California. L.L. Baker died in December 1892 and R.M. Hamilton 5 months later. The eldest sons succeeded to management of the firm: Wakefield Baker as president and Alexander Hamilton as vice president. Successive generations of the Baker family managed the company into the last half of the 20th century.

11. Setting: (cont.) wagons on the south side are elements that relate strongly to the building's historic use and are contributory to the neighborhood's identity as a commercial and transportation center.
12. Importance as a Visual Landmark: (cont.) The "Baker & Hamilton, since 1849" sign and the twin red water tower on the roof of the building are highly visible and familiar sights from the freeway. The red and white painted "Baker & Hamilton" sign on the west wall of the building, is visible from the heights two miles west.

D. INTEGRITY

13. The building remains largely intact and in good condition. Glass and metal roll-down doors have been added at some openings to accommodate retail businesses. The revolving doors at the main entrance on Seventh Street have also been replaced recently with swinging glass doors.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

PUBLISHED:

"Building Permits", 707 7th Street, Edward Abstracts, (January 12, 1905)

"Pioneer Business Building in New Wholesale Section" San Francisco Chronicle (December 31, 1904), p.9.

Ryder, David Warren. A Century of Hardware and Steel San Francisco: Historical Publications, 1949.

"Subdivision of Holdings for Building Purposes" San Francisco Chronicle, February 20, 1904, P.13.

The Valley Road San Francisco: The Wheeler Publishing Company, 1896.

"Charles Peter Weeks," The National Cyclopaedia of America Biography, XXI (New York, James T. White, 1931), p. 383. See also entires on Weeks and Albert Sutton, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of Architects (Deceased) (Los Angeles; New Age Publishing Co., 1956), pp. 586, 639-40.

UNPUBLISHED:

Files of the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage:

700 - 768 Seventh Street.
Sutton and Weeks
Weeks and Day

Information File, Bancroft Library: Baker & Hamilton