

FILE NO.

ORDINANCE NO.

1 [Landmark Designation of 3750 18th Street (Mission High School).]

2
3 **Ordinance Designating 3750 18th Street, Mission High School, as a Landmark under**
4 **Planning Code Article 10; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b)**
5 **and environmental findings**

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

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

10 Section 1. Findings.

11 (a) On October 19, 2006, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning Commission
12 in Resolution No. 17327 found that the proposed landmark designation of 3750 18th
13 Street (Mission High School) was consistent with the City's General Plan and with Planning
14 Code Section 101.1(b). In addition, the Planning Commission recommended that the Board
15 of Supervisors adopt the landmark designation. A copy of said Resolution is on file with the
16 Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. _____ and is incorporated herein by
17 reference. The Board finds that the proposed landmark designation is consistent with the
18 City's General Plan and with Planning Code Section 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in said
19 Resolution.

20 (b) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board finds that the proposed
21 landmark designation will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons
22 set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 17327, which reasons are
23 incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth. A copy of said Resolution is on file
24 with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. _____.

1 (c) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this
2 Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public
3 Resources Code section 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the
4 Board of Supervisors in File No. _____ and is incorporated herein by reference.

5 (d) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 3750 18th Street (Mission High
6 School), Lot No 006 in Assessor's Block No. 3579, has a special character and special
7 historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a
8 Landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of
9 the San Francisco Planning Code.

10 Section 2: Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 3780 18th
11 Street (Mission High School), Lot No. 006 in Assessor's Block No. 3579, is hereby designated
12 as Landmark No. 255. This designation was initiated by Resolution No. 604 of the Landmarks
13 Preservation Advisory Board on June 7, 2006 and by Resolution No. 17327 of the
14 Planning Commission, which Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of
15 Supervisors in File No. _____ and which Resolutions are incorporated herein by
16 reference as though fully set forth.

17 Section 3. Required Data.

18 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the Landmark site consists of the City
19 parcel located at the northwest corner of 18th and Dolores Streets (Lot No. 006 in Assessor's
20 Block No. 3579) (Mission High School).

21 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and
22 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory
23 Board on October 2006 and other supporting materials contained in Planning Department
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25

1 Docket No. 2006.0571L. In brief, the National Register of Historic Places characteristics that
2 justify the Landmark's designation are as follows:

3 (1) Founded in 1890, Mission High School was the first comprehensive high school
4 established west of the Rocky Mountains and currently is the second oldest high school in
5 San Francisco. The projecting 127-foot bell tower, red roof tiles, and decorative façade are a
6 dominating visual landmark in the Mission District. The current Mission High School complex
7 was constructed during San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction, 1920-1930,
8 during which time the city constructed fifty public schools. Shifting demographics, increased
9 population growth, and the extension of public transit service to the outlying areas caused the
10 need for so many new schools. The newly constructed Mission High School embodied
11 progressive changes in school design that gained momentum in the 1920s in San Francisco
12 and throughout the nation. These philosophical changes mandated that educational facilities
13 be designed to broaden intellect and that they develop a comprehensive vocational
14 curriculum. Mission High School was built in direct response to these social imperatives, and
15 achieves significance for its association to these events that contributed to the broad patterns
16 of our history. (National Register Criterion A); and

17 (2) Mission High School displays a high level of craftsmanship, architectural
18 expression, and integrity. It is a handsome example of the Spanish Baroque architecture
19 commonly known as Churrigueresque. This Spanish Baroque style gained widespread
20 popularity in the United States with Bertrand G. Goodhue's plan for the 1915 Panama-
21 California Exposition, held in San Diego, California, where a picturesque ensemble of
22 structures was designed and built, merging ornamentation from historic examples of North
23 Africa, Spain, Southern California, and Mexico. Fine examples of Churrigueresque are
24 evident nationwide as a result of the San Diego Exposition, but a greater concentration can be
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1 found in the southwest United States. Mission High School is the work of John Reid, Jr., the
2 Beaux-Arts trained San Francisco native who was appointed City Architect, serving from 1919
3 until 1927. (National Register Criterion C).

4 (c) The particular exterior features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as
5 determined necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the
6 Landmark Designation Report, which can be found in Planning Department Docket No.
7 2006.0571L and which is incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully set
8 forth. In brief, the description of the particular exterior features that should be preserved
9 include: all exterior elevations, including rooflines and windows visible from the public rights of
10 way; all architectural finishes, features, and fabric on the exterior of the buildings; the east and
11 west courtyards, including windows, exterior finishes, and architectural elements; and the
12 open space of Drew Field.

13 (d) Interior features remain intact should also be preserved, or replaced in-kind as
14 determined necessary. These interior features are generally shown in photographs and
15 described in the Landmark Designation Report, which can be found in Planning Department
16 Docket NO. 2006.0571L. A map showing the location of the interior features, as well as the
17 east and west courtyards, can also be found in Planning Department Docket No. 2006.0571L.
18 In brief, the description of the particular interior features that should be preserved include: the
19 entry foyer and all its fixtures and finishes including glazed tiles, cast plaster ceiling, historic
20 light fixtures, terrazzo floor, and arched passageways'; the school auditorium and all its
21 fixtures and finishes including cast plasterwork, historic light fixtures, wooden seats,
22 proscenium arch and entrances at all three levels; the Edith Anne Hamlin Work's Progress
23 Administration ("WPA") murals located in the former library (now administrative and
24 counseling offices); and any other features referenced in the Landmark Designation Report.
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1 (e) The present owner of the property, the San Francisco Unified School District
2 ("SFUSD") does not generally obtain permits from the City for work performed on its school
3 facilities; however, the SFUSD is encouraged to consult with the Landmarks Preservation
4 Advisory Board regarding alterations to the property in order to solicit information on how to
5 preserve the significant features that justify its designation as a San Francisco Landmark.

6 Section 4. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures pursuant to
7 the San Francisco Planning Code and Article 10.

8
9 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
10 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

11 By:


12 Marlena G. Byrne
13 Deputy City Attorney
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SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION No. 17327

ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 2750 18th STREET, MISSION HIGH SCHOOL, LOT 006 IN ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 3759, AS LANDMARK NO. 255.

1. **WHEREAS**, Whereas, in early 2006, Ted Scourkes submitted the application and Landmark Designation Report for Mission High School, 3750 18th Street, Assessor's Block 3579, Lot 006, to the Planning Department, and
2. Whereas, in June 2006, the San Francisco Planning Department, updated and edited the draft Landmark Designation Report for the Mission High School using National Register Criteria as its methodology for recommending historic district designation of historic resources.
2. The Landmarks Board, at its regular meeting of June 7, 2006, adopted Resolution No. 604 initiating designation of Mission High School and recommending to the Planning Commission that they approve the designation of Mission High School as Landmark No. 255; and
3. The Landmarks Board found that the Mission High School Landmark Designation Report describes the location and boundaries of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved, and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Sections 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1), which Landmark Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
4. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the description, location, and boundary of the landmark site as 2750 18th Street, Assessor's Block 3759, Lot 006, encompassing the entire lot; and
5. The Planning Commission, in considering the proposed landmark designation, employed the National Register Criteria and found that Mission High School is significant under Criterion A (association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and Criterion C (buildings that embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction) ;and
6. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation:
 - a. Founded in 1890, Mission High School was the first comprehensive high school established west of the Rocky Mountains and currently is the second oldest high school in San Francisco. The projecting 127-foot bell tower, red roof tiles, and decorative façade are a dominating visual landmark in the Mission District. The current Mission High School complex was constructed during San Francisco's

"Golden Age" of school construction, 1920-1930, during which time the city constructed fifty public schools. The need for so many new schools was caused by shifting demographics, increased population growth, and the extension of public transit service to the outlying areas. The newly constructed Mission High School embodied progressive changes in school design that gained momentum in the 1920s in San Francisco and throughout the nation. These philosophical changes mandated that educational facilities be designed to broaden intellect and that they develop a comprehensive vocational curriculum. Mission High School was built in direct response to these social imperatives, and achieves significance for its association to these events that contributed to the broad patterns of our history.

- b. Mission High School displays a high level of craftsmanship, architectural expression, and integrity. It is a handsome example of the Spanish Baroque architecture commonly known as Churrigueresque. This Spanish Baroque style gained widespread popularity in the United States with Bertrand G. Goodhue's plan for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego, California, where a picturesque ensemble of structures was designed and built, merging ornamentation from historic examples of North Africa, Spain, Southern California, and Mexico. Fine examples of Churrigueresque are evident nationwide as a result of the San Diego Exposition, but a greater concentration can be found in the southwest United States. Mission High School is the work of John Reid, Jr., the Beaux-Arts trained San Francisco native who was appointed City Architect, serving from 1919 until 1927.
7. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following particular identified character-defining features:
 - A. All exterior elevations, including rooflines and windows, visible from the public rights-of-way.
 - B. The east and west courtyards, including windows, exterior finishes, and architectural elements as indicated by the map included in the docket.
 - C. The open space of Drew Field.
 - D. Any other features referenced in the Landmark Designation Report.
 8. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following significant interior features that remain intact. The owner(s) may consult with the Landmarks Board regarding alterations to the interior in order to solicit information on how to preserve these significant interior features. These identified character-defining features are identified in the school floor plans as part of the docket
 - A. All interior spaces as defined by a map showing the location of said features, including,
 - a. The entry foyer and all its fixtures and finishes to include glazed tiles, cast plaster ceiling, historic light fixtures, terrazzo floor and arched passageways.
 - b. The school auditorium and all its fixtures and finishes to include cast

- plasterwork, historic light fixtures, wooden seats, proscenium arch and entrances at all three levels.
- c. The Edith Anne Hamlin Work's Progress Administration (WPA) murals located in the former library (now administrative and counseling offices).
- B. Any other features referenced in the Landmark Designation Report.
9. The designation of Mission High School meets the required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:
- The designation will further Priority Policy Nos. 1, 2, and 7. It will help to preserve the seven retail spaces located on the site, thereby preserving and enhancing neighborhood-serving retail uses and providing employment opportunities for local residents. The designation will also help to conserve and protect existing housing and neighborhood character by ensuring that seven historic storefronts and one residence are preserved. Finally, the designation will help to preserve a site associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history in San Francisco and that possesses architectural significance.
 - The designation will not have a significant effect on the remaining five policies. It will not impact the City's supply of affordable housing; adversely impact public transit or place a burden on the existing supply of parking in the neighborhood; involve any commercial office development or displace any industrial or service sector uses; compromise the structural integrity of the existing buildings or trigger any Building Code requirements for a seismic upgrade; or impact any parks or open spaces or their access to sunlight.
10. The designation of Mission High School is consistent with the following objectives and policies of the Urban Design Element of the General Plan:

CONSERVATION

Richness of Past Development

OBJECTIVE 2 CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES WHICH PROVIDE
A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY WITH 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.

Landmark designation will help to preserve two significant buildings for the benefit of future generations and will provide continuity with the past development of the Mission District. Landmark designation will require that any proposed work that might have an impact on the property's character-defining features be reviewed by the Planning Department and the Landmarks Board. Both entities will use the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in their review to ensure that only appropriate alterations are made. The proposed landmark designation will not have a significant impact on the other Elements of the General Plan.

11. The Planning Commission has reviewed documents and correspondence and heard oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation at a duly noticed public hearing held on October 19, 2006, and find that the proposal will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco and the possesses architectural significance.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Board of Supervisors approves the landmark designation of 3750 18th Street, Mission High School, Lot 006 in Assessor's Block 3759, as City Landmark No. 255, pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Resolution No. 17327, 3750 18th Street, Mission High School Landmark Designation Report, and other pertinent materials in the file for Case No. 2006.0571L to the Board of Supervisors.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission on October 19, 2006.

Linda Avery
Recording Secretary

AYES: Alexander, Olague, Antonini, Lee, Moore, Sugaya

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: October 19, 2006

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE: June 7, 2006

CASE NO.: 2006.0571L

PAGE 1 of 13**LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:**

APPROVED:

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 255

HISTORIC NAME	Mission High School
POPULAR NAME	Mission High School
ADDRESS	3750 18 th Street
BLOCK & LOT	3759/006
OWNER	San Francisco Unified School District
ORIGINAL USE	Public High School
CURRENT USE	Public High School
ZONING	(P) Public

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"/> | Embodiment 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), Mission High School, founded in 1890, was the first comprehensive high school established west of the Rocky Mountains and currently is the second oldest high school in San Francisco. The complex was constructed during San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction, 1920-1930, during which time the city constructed fifty public schools. The need for so many new schools was caused by shifting demographics, increased population growth, and the extension of public transit service to the outlying areas.

The period of significance for Mission High School is between 1925 and 1939. The beginning year, 1925, is the year when the first phase of construction of the school was completed; in 1938 the Edith Anne Hamlin WPA murals were completed; and 1939 is the year that the open space of Drew Field was included as part of the school complex.

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, Mission High School retains a high level of integrity in all of these areas.

Location

Mission High School was constructed at its current location and the site of the subject building has not been altered. The present Mission High School complex was constructed in two phases, beginning in 1925 and fully occupied by 1928. Each phase was built around a courtyard containing a tower and a gymnasium. The gymnasium buildings flank the main entrance on 18th Street and can be identified by their double-height arched windows and low-slung roof shingled in mission-style clay tile. The primary façade of the school spans the entire width of 18th Street between Dolores and Church Streets. It backs onto the school parking lot and the Drew Athletic Field, completed in 1939. Dorland Street, which runs at a slight angle behind the school, was vacated when the field was created. The first phase of construction (western component) was completed in 1925 and consists of science and vocational classrooms and the west gym. The main entrance for the first phase was the entrance located on 18th Street, just east of the gymnasium located at the corner of 18th and Church Streets. The second phase (eastern component) was completed in 1927 and included the current main entrance, bell tower, academic classrooms, the auditorium, little theater, and cafeteria.

Design

Mission High School is a handsome example of the Spanish Baroque architecture commonly known as Churrigueresque. The name was derived from the Churriguera family of the mid-18th-century who worked in the style. Common motifs of the style include broken pediments, elaborate cornices, spiral and inverted columns, balustrades, stucco shells, cherubs, and garlands.¹ This style gained widespread popularity in the United States with Bertrand G. Goodhue's plan for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego, California, where a picturesque ensemble of structures was designed and built, merging ornamentation from historic examples of North Africa, Spain, Southern California, and Mexico.² Fine examples of Churrigueresque are evident nationwide as a result of the San Diego Exposition, but a greater concentration can be found in the southwest United States. A few examples of other structures in San Francisco designed in the Spanish Churrigueresque style are the Mission Dolores Basilica (begun in 1913), High School of Commerce, Landmark No. 140 (1926), and Everett Middle School (1927) and the former El Capitan Theater (1928).

Materials

Mission High School is comprised of several connecting reinforced concrete structures adorned with terra cotta, cast stone, and glazed tile ornamentation. The pitched roofs are shingled in mission-style clay tiles. Of the historic windows present on the subject property, all are operable, industrial grade, true divided-lite windows in a variety of configurations.

Workmanship

Mission High School displays a high level of workmanship. It has withstood continuous heavy use as a public school since its construction and it displays an outstanding level of historic and architectural integrity due to its solid construction and continued maintenance.

Setting

Mission High School's position anchoring the base of Dolores Park has made it a place of convergence and refuge since the 1906 conflagration. The previous Mission High School was used to house and serve those in need after the 1906 fire and earthquake. Since the construction of the present building and the 127-foot tower in the late 1920s, the school provides a unique and strong visual presence in the neighborhood.

Feeling

Mission High School has played a vital role in shaping the education of its students and in shaping the community. Its continued operation as a public high school and a place for community involvement has created strong ties with the surrounding neighborhood. Mission High School also evokes the idealism in which it was constructed and the conscious shift in school design that occurred during this time period.

Association

Mission High School is strongly associated with the identity of the Inner Mission and for over eighty years the school has been a prominent and enduring visual landmark at the base of Dolores Park.

ARTICLE 10 REQUIREMENTS SECTION 1004 (b)

Boundaries of the Landmark Site:

The proposed landmark site includes the entire parcel on which the building sits on Lot 006 in Assessor's Block 3579.

Characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation:

Mission High School is significant under:

Criterion A (Association with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history). Founded in 1890, Mission High School was the first comprehensive high school established west of the Rocky Mountains and currently is the second oldest high school in San Francisco. The projecting 127-foot bell tower, red roof tiles, and decorative façade are a dominating visual landmark in the Mission District. The current Mission High School complex was constructed during San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction, 1920-1930, during which time the city constructed fifty public schools. The need for so many new schools was caused by shifting demographics, increased population growth, and the extension of public transit service to the outlying areas. The newly constructed Mission High School embodied progressive changes in school design that gained momentum in the 1920s in San Francisco and throughout the nation. These philosophical changes mandated that educational facilities be designed to broaden intellect and that they develop a comprehensive vocational curriculum. Mission High School was built in direct response to these social imperatives, and achieves significance for its association to these events that contributed to the broad patterns of our history.

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). Mission High School displays a high level of craftsmanship, architectural expression, and integrity. It is a handsome example of the Spanish Baroque architecture commonly known as Churrigueresque. This Spanish Baroque style gained widespread popularity in the United States with Bertrand G. Goodhue's plan for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego, California, where a picturesque ensemble of structures was designed and built, merging ornamentation from historic examples of North Africa, Spain, Southern California, and Mexico. Fine examples of Churrigueresque are evident nationwide as a result of the San Diego Exposition, but a greater concentration can be found in the southwest United States. Mission High School is the work of John Reid, Jr., the Beaux-Arts trained San Francisco native who was appointed City Architect, serving from 1919 until 1927.

Description of the particular features that should be preserved:

- a) All exterior elevations, including rooflines, visible from the public rights-of-way.
- b) The east and west courtyards and their exterior finishes and architectural elements.
- c) The entry foyer and all fixtures and finishes to include glazed tiles, cast plaster ceiling, historic light fixtures, terrazzo floor and arched passageways.
- d) The school auditorium and all fixtures and finishes to include cast plasterwork, historic light fixtures, wooden seats, proscenium arch and entrances at all three levels.
- e) The Edith Anne Hamlin ^{WPA} murals located in the former library (now administrative and counseling offices).
- f) The open space of Drew Field.

DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1890, Mission High School was the first comprehensive high school established west of the Rocky Mountains and currently is the second oldest high school in San

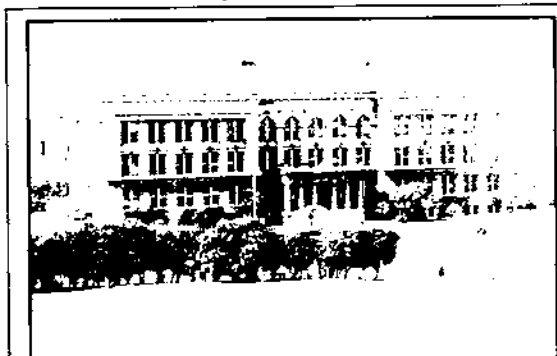
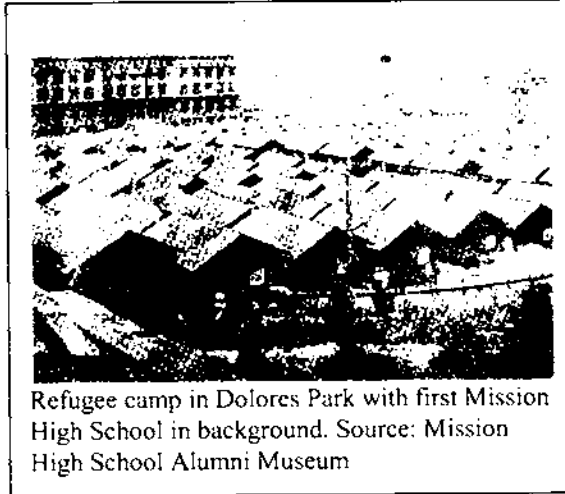


Photo of the first Mission High School, 1898
Source: Mission High School Alumni Museum

Francisco. The first class was established in 1890 and was housed at a variety of temporary locations until 1897 when the Mission High School Club (a citizen support group) secured a large lot on the corner of 18th and Dolores Streets, a short distance from Mission Dolores. The Board of Education authorized the purchase of the land and on August 21, 1897, the school children of the Mission district turned out in numbers to celebrate the laying of the cornerstone by Superintendent Webster and Harry F. Grady, a pupil of Mission High

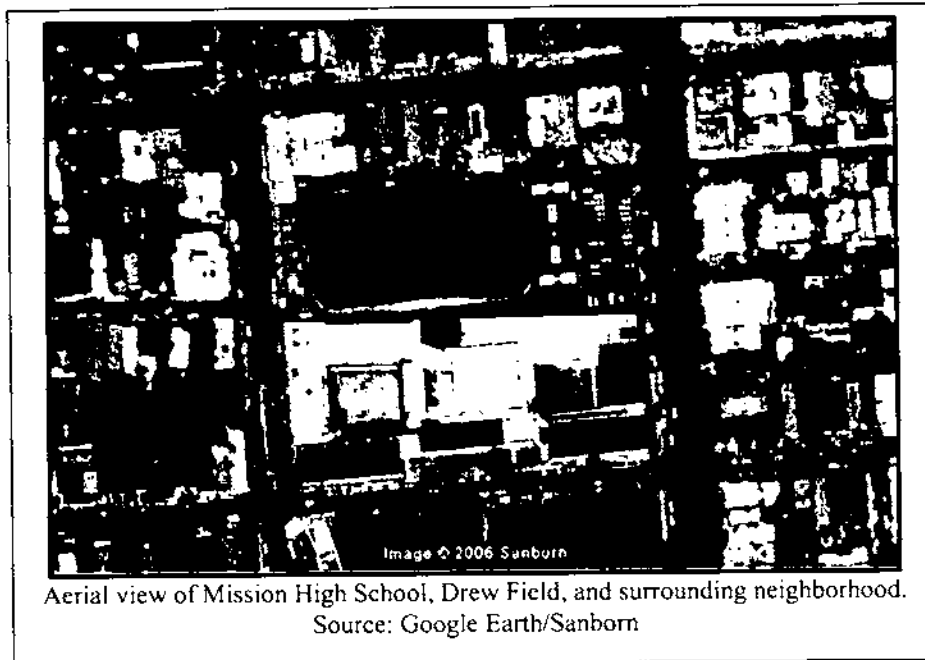


Refugee camp in Dolores Park with first Mission High School in background. Source: Mission High School Alumni Museum

School.³ The structure was occupied before it was finished in May of 1898. It was designed in the Italian Renaissance Beaux-Arts style with its raised rusticated base, symmetrical façade low-pitched roof and historically derived ornament. The building withstood the 1906 conflagration and was a designated city neighborhood shelter during this emergency providing aid and assistance to the homeless stranded in Dolores Park and to the many others in need.

In 1922 the original school was destroyed by fire. The loss, however, provided an opportunity for the San Francisco Board of Education to reshape Mission High School

to reflect the significant changes in academic instruction and school design that evolved during the early part of the 20th-century.



Aerial view of Mission High School, Drew Field, and surrounding neighborhood.
Source: Google Earth/Sanborn

The present Mission High School complex was constructed in two phases, beginning in 1923 and fully occupied by 1928. Each phase was built around a courtyard containing a tower and a gymnasium. The gymnasium buildings flank the main entrance on 18th Street and can be identified by their double-height arched windows and low-slung pitched roof shingled in mission-style clay tile. The primary façade of the school spans the entire width of 18th Street between Dolores and Church Streets. It backs onto the school parking lot and the Drew Athletic Field, completed in 1939 (see aerial photo above). The first phase (western component) was completed in 1925 and consists of science and vocational classrooms and the west gym. The main entrance at the completion of the first phase was the entrance located on 18th Street, just east of the gymnasium located at the corner of 18th

and Church Streets. The second phase (eastern component) was completed in 1927 and includes academic classrooms, the auditorium, little theater, and cafeteria.



View of north elevation of Mission High School from Drew Field. Source: SF Planning Department.

The east and west phases differ significantly. The west phase is relatively sparse with little ornament. In contrast, the finer treatment expressed on the east phase and continuing along the 18th Street elevation was likely reserved due to its visual proximity to Mission Dolores and Basilica. The north elevation is gated from the public yet can be viewed from the public rights-of-way. With its long bands of classroom windows, this elevation is modest in design, aside from the elaborate entrance, decorative scuppers near the parapet, and other ornament.



Main entrance and tower on 18th Street. Source: SF Planning Department

The school is a four-story split-level reinforced concrete building adorned with imported decorative clay tiles, cast stone, and terra cotta. The architect, John Reid, Jr, designed Mission High School with pitched roofs shingled in red clay tiles and concrete walls finished to mimic the painted adobe walls common in Mission style architecture. The plan continues in this vocabulary as it unifies classrooms with airy passageways and open interior plazas. The exterior of the building is adorned with cast stone, brightly colored tiles, and glazed terra cotta ornamentation. Consistent with the Spanish Baroque style, the historic primary entrances on the north and the south are the focus for the majority of the robust ornament. Abutting the main entrance on 18th Street is the 127-foot tower decorated with colorful imported glazed tile and cast ornament. A smaller sixty-two foot tower was constructed adjacent to the west courtyard of the west wing and boasts glazed tiles and wrought-iron balconettes.

The fenestration on the various elevations gives a clear indication of the functions on the interior. The majority of large rectangular multi-paned industrial style windows, commonly seen on the north and the west elevations are reserved for the vocational classrooms, which require the additional natural light. Traditional classrooms and faculty offices make up the majority of the building and are located behind the dual and three-part multi-pane awning windows, and the arched double height multi-paned steel windows are located in areas allocated for more social settings, such as the gymnasium and the cafeteria.

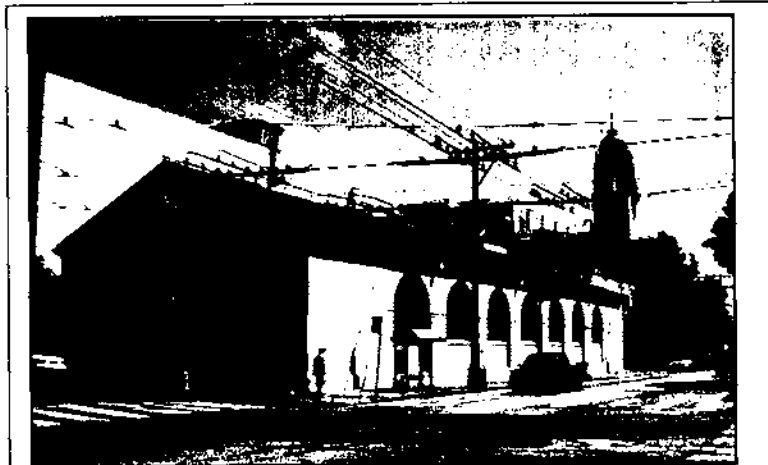


Stacked awning windows
in academic classrooms.
Source: SF Planning
Department.

The main entrance foyer appears as it did when the school first opened its doors. It retains its original light fixtures, is clad in historic glazed wall tiles

and is capped by an ornate cast plaster relief ceiling. The main lobby leads to the auditorium with 1,700 wooden folding seats and entrances on three levels. The auditorium is adorned with a brightly painted plasterwork and elaborate chandeliers. The now faded faux-gold leafed ceiling still reflects the warm light of the historic hanging chandeliers. According to Mission High School alumni, the proscenium arch framing was never carried down to the stage level because the sidewalls were to be given added decorative grilles; they were, however, never installed. The balcony is supported by a cantilevered bridge truss system that transfers the weight load of the balcony to the foundation by large steel columns in the sides and rear of the auditorium walls.⁴

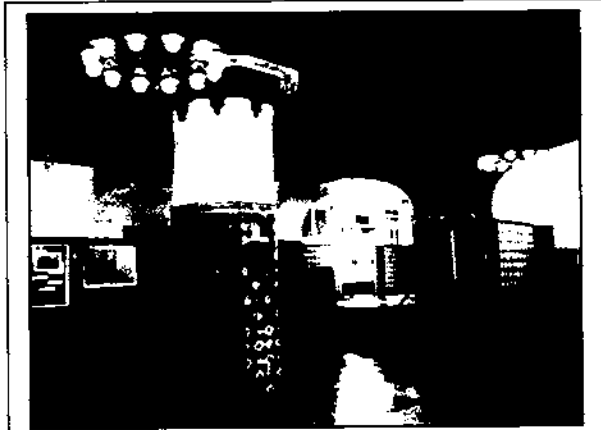
The 18th Street elevation consists of an academic building and entrance, reached by a series of brick stairs flanked on either side by gymnasiums with low-pitched roofs and multi-paned steel windows. The windows on the west gym appear to be original to the structure and the east gym windows were recently replaced with similar, though not historically accurate, multi-pane windows. The only significant difference in the design of the two structures is that the west gym features a highly detailed masonry window surround at the west elevation clerestory window (facing Dolores Street).



View of Mission High School from the corner of Church and 18th
Streets. Source: SF Planning Department

California artist, Edith Anne Hamlin, under the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP), completed three murals in 1938 for the High School. At the time Edith Hamlin was a well-known artist based in San Francisco. The subject matter of her work

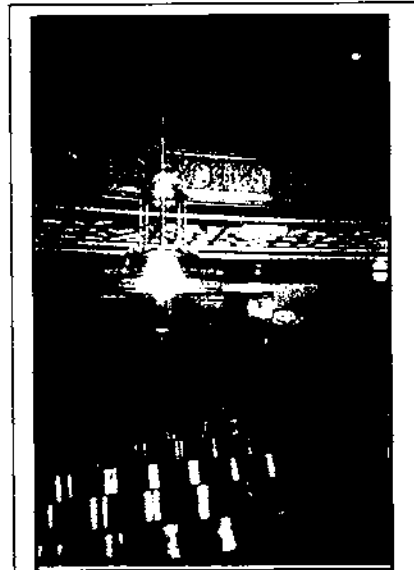
consisted largely of western themes.⁵ Two murals are located in the space that was once occupied by the library (now counseling and administrative offices) and one mural was originally located on the second-floor stair landing. The murals depict the founding of Mission Dolores. The mural located at the second-floor landing was removed during the 1973-77 seismic retrofit and disappeared before it could be reinstalled.



Entry foyer on 18th Street. Source: SF Planning Department



Edith Anne Hamlin WPA Murals, 1938. Source: Mission High School Alumni Museum



Interior view of auditorium.
Source: Mission High School Alumni Museum

It is important to note that during this seismic retrofit Mission High School was closed from 1973 to 1977 in order to meet the safety earthquake requirements of 1967's Assembly Bill 450, commonly referred to as the Field Act. The seismic retrofit was executed sensitively to minimize its impact on the significant architectural characteristics that make this complex unique. The exterior ornamental façade front had several free-standing ornate elements that were removed in order to protect students and passers-by from falling hazards.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The civic buildings that dot the skyline of San Francisco's neighborhoods are often the most outstanding landmarks because their design conveys the idealism of the role they serve. During the 1920s a number of new educational institutions strove to provide visually pleasing environments for the advancement of knowledge. Mission High School is no exception. The projecting 127-foot bell tower, red roof tiles, and elaborate façade dominate the Mission District. Located at 3750 18th Street between Dolores and Church Streets, Mission High School terminates at the intersection of three San Francisco neighborhoods: the Castro, Noe Valley and the Mission. The complex was constructed during San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction, 1920-1930, during which time the city constructed fifty public schools. The need for so many new schools was caused by shifting demographics, increased population growth, and the extension of public transit service to the outlying areas.

Mission High School displays a high level of craftsmanship and architectural expression. It is a handsome example of the Spanish Baroque architecture commonly known as Churrigueresque. This style of architecture was made popular by Bertrand G. Goodhue's plan for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego, California, where a picturesque ensemble of structures was designed and built, merging ornamentation from historical examples of North Africa, Spain, Southern California, and Mexico. Fine examples of Churrigueresque are evident nationwide as a result of the San Diego Exposition, but a greater concentration can be found in the southwest United States.

Mission High School is the work of John Reid, Jr., the Beaux-Arts trained San Francisco native who was appointed City Architect, serving from 1919 until 1927. Early in his career, Reid worked as a designer in Willis Polk's atelier and as a consulting architect with John Galen Howard and Frederick H. Meyer on the San Francisco Civic Center. During his tenure as City Architect Reid was responsible for a number of public buildings and almost half of the public schools designed during San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction, including Balboa High School, Landmark No. 205 (1928) and the High School of Commerce, Landmark No. 140 (1926) which is also designed in the Spanish-Churrigueresque style. The high quality of Reid's work has made a significant impact on the architectural landscape of San Francisco and the identity of the city.

San Francisco's "Golden Age" of School Construction, 1920-30.

During the late nineteenth-century, academic institutions in urban areas were developed at an imposing scale on small lots and were programmed similar to the commercial office block. The structures were often compact. Light and air were maximized through interior atriums and large windows and outdoor space was limited. After the turn of the 20th century, a shift occurred in the way California school buildings were planned and constructed. The changes resulted from progressive developments in the philosophy of education, as well as by the prevailing architectural styles, building standards, and technologies of the times. This shift emphasized physical activities, fresh air, and light-filled environments.⁶ It encouraged the separation of functions of the institution within a larger compound that maximized outdoor space and displayed the best aspects of the vernacular styles of the region using modern materials.⁷

The Board of Education was also transitioning the curricula of city high schools in recognition that a unified academic program did not address the strengths and interests of

all students. Consequently, schools re-organized to offer a more comprehensive curriculum, both academic and vocational. As a result the Board of Education expanded the vocational educational facilities in the newly constructed Mission High School.⁸

This change in educational program was accompanied by a need to serve a greater population and a larger area of San Francisco. From 1910 to 1930 San Francisco grew in population from 416,912 to 634,394. From 1920 to 1930, school enrollment increased by 45 percent. The city also expanded to outlying areas to the south and west, partly due to an exodus of families from the central city area that was destroyed by fire in 1906, and partly due to the extension of public streetcar lines to new, developing neighborhoods in outlying areas.

The factors culminated in San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction, 1920-30. During this decade, the City of San Francisco built 49 new public schools, and approved plans for a fiftieth, to meet the needs of shifting educational programs, increasing population, and expanding geographic area. The new schools became sources of pride to the neighborhoods of the city. San Francisco school buildings became nationally known for their quality. As of 1988, the majority of these 50 "Golden Age" schools were still in use, and many had been seismically upgraded. Mission High School is one of the most notable of San Francisco's Golden Age schools.

San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction ended with the Great Depression. Although several new schools were built in San Francisco in the 1930s, they were relatively few in number. The 1930s schools, built primarily with PWA grants, displayed more modernistic designs and signaled a shift away from the historic styles of the Golden Age schools.

Architect: John Reid Jr.

San Francisco native John Reid, Jr. (1882-1967) attended the University of California, Berkeley before he was encouraged to apply to the prestigious Ecole National des Beaux Arts in Paris France. After completing the five-year curriculum in 1909, he returned to the Bay Area and worked in the firm of D. H. Burnham & Company, and then as a designer for San Francisco architect Willis Polk. Under the administration of Mayor James Rolph, Reid was engaged from 1912 to 1917 with the Board of Consulting Architects to execute a comprehensive Civic Center plan with other prominent San Francisco architects including John Galen Howard and Frederick H. Meyer.⁹

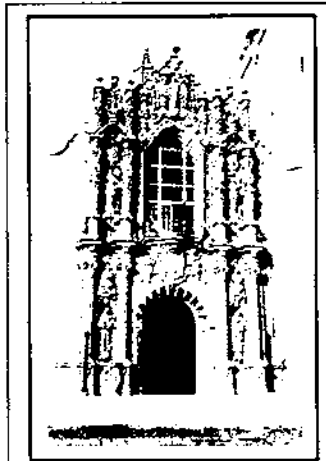
In 1919 Reid began his tenure as City Architect and was responsible for designing about half of the public schools during San Francisco's "Golden Age" of school construction. Two schools designed by Reid are also designated San Francisco Landmarks including Balboa High School, Landmark No. 205 (1928) and the High School of Commerce, Landmark No. 140 (1926) which is also designed in the Spanish-Churrigueresque style. Other schools designed by Reid included, Commodore Sloat School (1920), Pacific Heights Elementary School (1924), Galileo High School (1927), John Muir Elementary School (1926), West Portal Elementary School (1927), Everett Middle School (1927), and Sherman Elementary School (1927).

Some of Reid's other civic buildings included the Exposition Auditorium in the Civic Center, San Francisco General Hospital, the Hind Building, the Firehouse Engine Co. No. 8, Truck

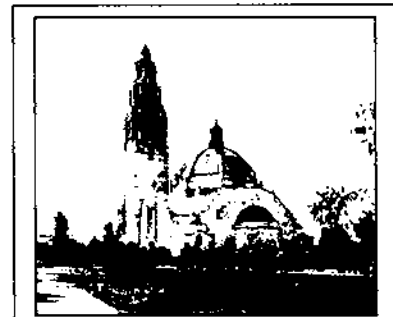
Co. No. 4, (Landmark No. 188), and the Laguna Honda Hospital. The City Architect position was not salaried so as compensation Reid received six percent of the construction costs for each building he designed. As a result Reid was under constant scrutiny, and as Mayor Rolph's brother-in-law, allegations of nepotism clouded his reputation as a competent professional. In 1927, Reid resigned as City Architect and "active advisor" to the San Francisco Board of Education's school building program but not before designing some of San Francisco's most important buildings. He died in 1967 at the age of 85.

The Spanish Revival Style

As City Architect, Reid's school designs were heavily influenced by the Mediterranean Revival styles. Mission High School is a handsome example of the Spanish Baroque architecture commonly known as Churrigueresque. The name was derived from the Churriguera family of the mid-18th-century who worked in the style. Common motifs of the style include broken pediments, elaborate cornices, spiral and inverted columns, balustrades, stucco shells, cherubs, and garlands.¹⁰



Entrance to the California Building from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Source: San Diego Historical Society



California Building from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Source: San Diego Historical Society

The style gained widespread popularity in the United States with Bertrand G. Goodhue's plan for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego, California, where a picturesque ensemble of structures was designed and built, merging ornamentation from historical examples of North Africa, Spain, Southern California, and Mexico.¹¹ Fine examples of Churrigueresque are evident nationwide as a result of the San Diego Exposition, but a greater concentration can be found in the southwest United States. A few examples of other structures in San Francisco designed in the Spanish Churrigueresque style are the Mission Dolores Basilica (begun in 1913), High School of Commerce, Landmark No. 140 (1926), and Everett Middle School (1927) and the former El Capitan Theater (1928).



The former El Capitan Theater on Mission Street (1928). Source: SF Planning Department

Mediterranean Revival Styles were popular in California and the southwest because the styles and materials reflected the historic structures erected during Colonial occupation and the prevailing styles of the Spain. These styles also allowed for the use of color in architecture, which had not been seen for some time with the overwhelming popularity of the monochromatic Classical Revival Styles, especially in civic architecture. A number of articles from this time period express the enthusiasm for the use of color and with the use of brightly glazed tiles adorning exterior walls and prominent domes.¹² Mission High School

embodies an early example of what became part of the regional architectural vocabulary.

Significance to Neighborhood: Anchoring the base of Dolores Park, Mission High School is a place of convergence and a strong visual icon for the Mission District. For over the past eighty years the school has provided a unique element to the architectural landscape of the neighborhood. Mission High School has played a vital role in shaping the education of its students and in shaping the community. Its continued operation as a public high school and place for community involvement has created strong ties with the surrounding neighborhood. Mission High School also evokes the idealism of the time period in which it was constructed and the conscious shift in school design that occurred during the early 20th-Century.

Significance to Region: Mission High School is an outstanding and handsome example of a style that has developed as part of the California vernacular and embodies the progressive changes in school design that gained momentum in the 1920s in San Francisco, and throughout California and the nation. These philosophical changes mandated that educational facilities be designed to broaden intellect and that they develop a comprehensive vocational curriculum. Mission High School was built in direct response to these social imperatives, and achieves significance for its association to these events that contributed to the broad patterns of our history.



Mission Dolores Basilica (begun in 1913). Source: SF Planning Department

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¹ Grove Dictionary of Art, 2000, May 17, 2006,
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² Richard W. Amero, "The Making of the Panama-California Exposition, 1909-1915", Journal of San Diego History, Winter 1990, Volume 36, No. 1: 4-5, 12.

³ Ted Scourkes, Mission High School Alumni Museum, Personal Interview, May 25, 2006.

⁴ Scourkes, May 25, 2006.

⁵ Phil Kovinick and Marian Yoshiki-Kovinick, "Edith Anne Hamlin", Encyclopedia of Women Artists of the American West, 1998 ed.

⁶ John J. Donovan AIA, "Remarks About California School Architecture", The Building Review: San Francisco, Aug 1923 No. 2: 14

⁷ "... (S)ome of California's most favorable contributions to school architecture reflect its climate, historical traditions... Elevating the building and spreading its area over more ground brought forth many interesting developments in plan of single units and groups of units which of course led to delightful exterior compositions of the modified Romanesque, Spanish, Italian, English and modern Renaissance. This is that the school architecture of California has found a place in the sun" Donovan: 14.

⁸ "Civic Architecture: San Francisco's Public Schools", Heritage Newsletter, Volume XVI, No. 3: 6

⁹ "John Reid Jr. 1882-1967", The San Francisco Chronicle, 16 Dec, 1967: obituary page.

¹⁰ Grove Dictionary of Art, 2000, May 17, 2006,
<<http://www.artnet.com/library/01/0176/T017669.asp>>.

¹¹ Richard W. Amero, "The Making of the Panama-California Exposition, 1909-1915", Journal of San Diego History, Winter 1990, Volume 36, No. 1: 4-5, 12.

¹² "Color in architecture! What a field for architectural expression! Terra cotta decorative tile, glazed roof tile, what endless possibilities for the use of color in time-resisting materials." Stanton Willard AIA, "The Ceramics Industry and the Architect", Architect & Engineer, April 1930: 59