

FILE COPY  
73.1

FILE NO. 90-73-5

ORDINANCE NO. 270-73

1 DESIGNATING THE ROOS HOUSE AS A LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY PLANNING  
2 CODE.

3 Be it ordained by the people of the City and County of San Francisco:

4 Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the Roos House located  
5 at 3500 Jackson Street, being Lot 2 in Assessor's Block 970, has a special character  
6 and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its  
7 designation as a Landmark will be in furtherance of and in conformance with the  
8 purposes of Article 10 of the City Planning Code and the standards set forth therein.

9 (a) Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code,  
10 Chapter II, Part II of the San Francisco Municipal Code, the Roos House is hereby  
11 designated as a Landmark, this designation having been duly approved by Resolution  
12 No. 6587 of the City Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file with the Clerk  
13 of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 90-73-5.

14 (b) Required Data. The location and boundaries of the landmark site, the  
15 characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation, and the particular  
16 features that should be preserved, described and included in the said Resolution,  
17 are hereby incorporated herein and made a part hereof as though fully set forth.  
18

Passed for Second Reading  
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco  
JUN 25 1973

Ayes: Supervisors Barbagelata, Chinn, Feinstein,  
Francis, Gonzales, Kopp, Mendelsohn, Molinari,  
Pelosi, Tamaras, von Beroldingen.

~~No. Supervisors~~

~~Absent Supervisors~~

*Robert J. Dolan*  
Clerk

90-73-5  
File No.

JUL - 6 1973  
Approved

Read Second Time and Finally Passed  
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco  
JUL 2 1973

Ayes: Supervisors Barbagelata, Chinn, Feinstein,  
~~Francis~~, Gonzales, Kopp, Mendelsohn, Molinari,  
Pelosi, Tamaras, von Beroldingen.

~~No. Supervisors~~

Absent: Supervisor FRANCOIS

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

*Robert J. Dolan*  
Clerk  
*Joseph L. Alioto*  
Mayor

File Copy

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 6937

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate the Roos House at 3500 Jackson 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 December 6, 1972, 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 March 8, 1973, 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;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, that the proposal to designate the Roos House at 3500 Jackson Street as a Landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the City Planning Code is hereby APPROVED, the location and boundaries of the landmark site being as follows:

Beginning at the point of intersection of the northerly line of Jackson Street and the westerly line of Locust Street, thence northerly along the westerly line of Locust Street for a distance of 127.688 feet, thence at a right angle westerly for a distance of 60 feet, thence at a right angle southerly for a distance of 127.688 feet, thence at a right angle easterly along the northerly line of Jackson for a distance of 60 feet to the point of beginning. Being Lot 2 in Assessor's Block 970 which property is known as and located at 3500 Jackson Street.

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 No. 76 as adopted on December 6, 1972, which resolution is incorporated herein and made a part hereof 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 as described and depicted in the photographs, case report and other material on file in the Department of City Planning Docket LM 73.1

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 hearing of March 8, 1973.

Lynn Pio  
Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Farrell, Fleishhacker, Mellon, Newman, Porter, Ritchie  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Commissioner Rueda  
PASSED: March 8, 1973

*File Copy*

OWNER: Mrs. Leon L. Roos

LOCATION: 3500 Jackson Street, northwest corner of Jackson and Locust Streets. Lot is rectangular with 60 foot frontage on Jackson Street and 127.683 feet on Locust Street; being Lot 2 in Assessor's Block 970.

HISTORY: In 1909, Leon L. Roos commissioned Bernard Maybeck to build the two-story English stucco and half timber house, while he and his wife were on their honeymoon in Europe. Leon Roos was the son of Adolphe Roos, who came to San Francisco from his home in Alsace, France, in 1861. Adolphe and his brother Hyppolite founded Roos Brothers, Inc., clothiers, in 1886. After graduating from the University of California, Leon Roos became a partner in Roos Brothers. He retired in 1927. A philanthropist, Roos had an especial interest in the blind and was responsible for bringing the first seeing eye dogs to California from Germany.

ARCHITECTURE: Bernard Maybeck (1862-1957) received his formal architectural training at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, during the 1880's. Unlike most of his contemporaries in architecture who held fast to the strong academic traditions then prevalent in the profession, Maybeck, because he was able to grasp the spirit which created an architectural epoch, succeeded both in bestowing renewed life into old forms and creating new forms and concepts appropriate to his own time. Shared with some few others, many of his concepts - the open plan, the use of natural, unfinished materials and the expansive use of glass to fuse inside and outside - were not only radical for their time but were generally rejected outright for decades. Nevertheless, their validity could not be suppressed forever and today they are commonplace (albeit in a frequently undistinguished manner) not only in Bay Area structures but throughout the nation and beyond.

Described as Maybeck's "most urbane residence",<sup>\*</sup> the three-story wood-frame Roos House is an adaptation of old English half-timber style combined with Gothic influences. Located at the northwest corner of Jackson and Locust Streets, its romantic appeal is heightened, when viewed from Locust Street, by the pastoral-like setting provided by The Presidio.

The exterior Gothic qualities are most evident in the southerly portion of the house. Here, carved quatrefoils rest outward from the walls on extended brackets to support a second-story shallow-pitched roof. Above this roof and set back some distance from its eaves to render it invisible from close up, a sharply pitched roof encloses a third floor. The pitch of the second story roof, the horizontal members of the half-timber styling and elongated flower boxes at second story level, impart a somewhat recumbent appearance to this wing which contrasts with the stronger vertical thrust of the northerly portion of the house.

Although the house is composed of many exciting elements, the focus for the exterior is found facing Jackson Street above and to the left of the loggia entrance at the corner. At this point, an elaborate balcony serving the second-floor master bedroom and study is housed between two small windowless bays extending over the front garden. The entire composition rests on three projecting beams, the central one being supported by a 45 degree brace anchored to the facade below. Two carved quatrefoils, raked from their point of intersection over the center beam, comprise the

\* McCoy, Five California Architects, p. 17.

ARCHITECTURE: balcony railing. Overhead, a dormer, whose front wall is aligned with the facade at ground floor level, has its interrupted eaves supported by quatrefoils resting on the sloped roof of the bays flanking the balcony.  
(Continued)

Because of the drop in Locust Street, the basement walls of the north wing are exposed and the main floor, actually at Jackson Street level, here ranges from one to two stories above grade. Above this wing, a slate roof rises steeply, its ridge paralleling Locust Street. A fireplace and chimney centered in the Locust Street exterior wall, begins its rise in the basement and at main floor level a projection supported on corbels indicates the fire-box inside. Through a series of tapers, the horizontal dimensions of the capped chimney are gradually reduced to a size no larger than that necessary to house a single flue.

The loggia, entry to which is clearly indicated by trimmed hedges along Jackson Street, extends under the second floor along Locust Street. From one's entry point, tall, diamond-paned windows comprise the entire left wall; on the right, views of The Presidio are visible between the square columns until the northerly end is reached where the columns are replaced by a solid wall opposite the paired door main entrance. On the doors, Gothic influence is found in the form of a Maybeck designed escutcheon incorporating the owner's monogram. In this connection, the doorbell plate was also executed by the architect.

The interior of the house is divided into three living levels. The public rooms: entry hall, living and dining room, as well as the service rooms: kitchen and pantry, are at street level. The second floor contains family living quarters and the third floor, guest rooms which were finished off by Maybeck in the mid-1920's at the same time alterations and additions were made to the two lower floors.

A wide entry hall extends from the main entrance laterally across the house to the service areas. Here, the sublimity of the public rooms is first revealed in the generous use of redwood paneling (Maybeck's favorite) for walls and ceiling, and flush doors surfaced with amethyst velvet. Having no exterior windows, the entry hall's only source of natural light is from a skylight with translucent glass in six panels flush with the ceiling; at night, artificial light is emitted from the same source. Other artificial illumination here and in the adjacent rooms originates from wall fixtures of Maybeck's own design. Some of these fixtures are open metal work in three dimensions; others are two-dimensional plaques (with recessed sockets for exposed light bulbs) whose open metal work reveals the same velvet as on the doors.

On the south in the entry hall, a wide doorway framed in a deep wall leads to the dining room; opposite is a similar entry to the living room. The depth of these walls allows for storage of hinged panels or screens, also covered in velvet, which slide on an overhead track to close off these rooms from the entry. When recessed into the wall, the last or exposed panel takes on an appearance similar to the flush doors nearby.

Redwood paneling also sheathes the walls and ceilings of the dining and living rooms. In the former, the floor surface is of polished quarry tile; oak flooring being used elsewhere. Lowered ceilings at the perimeter of the dining room suggest the presence of alcoves - that on the west containing a fireplace for its focal point. The tall, diamond-paned windows of the loggia occupy the east wall and on the south similar windows in a bay containing a small fountain from Nuremburg and potted plants visually extend the front garden to the inside of the house.

ARCHITECTURE:  
(Continued)

The living room, baronial in concept and furnishings, exhibits the most lavish and intricate use of redwood. A heavily beamed and paneled ceiling follows the steep exterior pitch of the roof. The height of the ceiling and rhythmic spacing of all paneling, including that on the walls, establish the room's intrinsic Gothic character. In addition to medieval and antique furnishings, this character is further carried out by accoutrements of Maybeck's own design: tall, candle-like sconces of wrought-iron angled inward from the walls; suspended lighting fixtures, near the corners, composed of cast metal open work from which tiers of exposed light bulbs depend several feet below; a wrought-iron fireplace apparatus; and finally, furniture for seating whose end panels incorporate the motif of the main entry doors' escutcheon.

Ancient flags and banners collected by the owners, and whose placement was confirmed by Maybeck, hang from the uppermost parts of the ceiling.

A massive cast stone fireplace rising from floor to ceiling, occupies the center third of the east wall and on either side of which are, again, the diamond paned windows. Opposite the fireplace and of equal width, a tier of several steps leads to a square landing which affords access to the upper floors.

The extreme north wall of the living room (fully 100 feet distant and visible from the southerly wall of the dining room opposite) is located in an alcove with lowered ceiling and, in the truest sense of the words, contains a "picture window" framing an unsurpassed view of The Presidio, the Bay and Marin County. A functional Maybeck innovation allows the window to pivot horizontally in its jambs, thereby allowing its exterior surface to be cleaned from inside the house. To the left, the alcove leads to a small, intimate sitting room at the northwest corner of the house where the same view as above obtains.

## SURROUNDING LAND

USE AND ZONING: The zoning of this house and surroundings is R-1 which reflects most of the existing uses. The Presidio, zoned P, lies one-half block to the north.