

FILE NO 90-23-8

ORDINANCE NO. 12-74

1 DESIGNATING MERRYVALE ANTIQUES AS A LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY
2 PLANNING 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 Merryvale Antiques at
5 3640 Buchanan Street, being Lot 3 in Assessor's Block 459, 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, Merryvale Antiques is
11 hereby designated as a Landmark, this designation having been duly approved by
12 Resolution No. 1076 of the City Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file
13 with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No.

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.

Passed for Second Reading
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco
DEC 26 1973

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

Noes: Supervisors

Absent: Supervisors FRANCOIS

 ACTING Clerk

90-73-8
File No.

JAN 4 1974
Approved

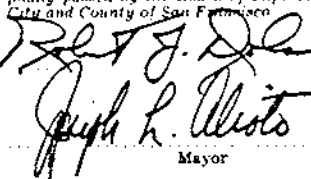
Read Second Time and Finally Passed
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco
JAN 2 1974

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

Noes: Supervisors

Absent: Supervisors FRANCOIS KOPP

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

 Clerk
Mayor

SAN FRANCISCO

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 7076

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate Merryvale at 3640 Buchanan 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 22, 1973, 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 20, 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 Merryvale at 3640 Buchanan 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 southerly line of North Point Street and the easterly line of Buchanan Street; thence easterly along the southerly line of North Point Street for a distance of 118 feet; thence at a right angle southerly for a distance of 69.917 feet; thence at a right angle westerly for a distance of 68.803 feet; thence at a right angle southerly for a distance of 104.75 feet; thence at a right angle westerly for a distance of 49.917 feet; thence at a right angle northerly along the easterly line of Buchanan Street for a distance of 174.667 feet to the point of beginning. Being Lot 3 in Assessor's Block 459, which property is known as 3640 Buchanan 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. 88 as adopted on August 22, 1973, 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 73.3;

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.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 7076
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I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the City Planning Commission at its regular meeting of September 20, 1973.

Lynn E. Pio
Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Farrell, Fleishhacker, Porter, Ritchie, Rueda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Mellon, Newman

PASSED: September 20, 1973

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
Case 120-0000 Approved December 11, 1977

MERRYVALE ANTIQUES
(Formerly San Francisco
Gas Light Company)

OWNER: Merryvale, Incorporated. (Mr. & Mrs. Dent W. Macdonough)

LOCATION: 3640 Buchanan, the southeast corner of Buchanan and North Point Streets, being Lot 3 in Assessor's Block 459.

HISTORY: Established in 1873, the San Francisco Gas Light Company was the result of a series of mergers of various companies, the earliest of which was the San Francisco Gas Company, founded in 1852 by Forty-niners Peter Donahue and his brother James. The brothers, with other family members, had previously established the first iron works in California in 1849. Peter Donahue, to whose memory the Mechanics Monument at Market, Bush and Sansome Streets is erected, also headed the successful completion of the second railroad in California which ran between San Francisco and San Jose.

Within the merged gas companies, Peter Donahue held various offices, the last being that of President of San Francisco Gas Light Company from which he resigned in 1883, one year before his death. Upon his resignation, the Presidency of the San Francisco Gas Light Company was passed on to Eugene P. Murphy who was succeeded in 1885 by Joseph B. Crockett. Although still extremely young, Mr. Crockett had been with the company since its founding twelve years earlier during which time he conceived the idea of a new gas works which would not only be modern but would also be more than adequate for the growing City's immediate needs. In 1884, under his direction, the company purchased three blocks between Webster, Laguna and Bay Streets with the northerly boundary being the Bay itself. In 1891 construction began on the predominately brick buildings which would comprise the new gas works. Also included was an oiler dock - oil was to replace more expensive coal in operating the boilers - a gasometer, and two storage tanks, one with a capacity of two million cubic feet making it the largest of its kind west of Chicago.

Upon its completion in 1893, the complex was hailed as the most modern and best designed in the United States, a tribute to Joseph B. Crockett to whom its design and architecture are attributed. The headquarters building, now occupied by Merryvale, Inc., antiques, and which is the only building of the original complex still standing, housed the company's business offices in the front, upstairs living quarters for the plant manager, and in the main room to the rear, two large gas compression cylinders whose operation was dependent on water pumped from the Bay. The warmed water, returned to the Bay through large pipes, made swimming in what has ever since been known as Gas House Cove, popular indeed.

On December 11, 1896, the firm merged with Edison Light and Power, the whole becoming the San Francisco Gas & Electric Company which was absorbed by Pacific Gas & Electric Company in 1905. By 1906, and after, this building was being used solely for storing company records, a use it continued to serve until it was sold to the present owners in the mid-1950's.

The handsomely-landscaped and spacious areas between the buildings in the original complex were ideal for refugees following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire as photographs of the period show. Also shown is the damage to a gas storage tank and an arched brick building.

HISTORY:
(Continued)

The present owners' restoration by William Wurster of Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons, and re-use of the former headquarters building to display primarily eighteenth century antiques has been masterful. The most impressive interior feature is the main room which formerly housed the turbines. This two-story room is 28 feet high and approximately 50 feet square; large arched windows of hand-rolled glass contrast with walls of exposed brick, the whole being surmounted by a particularly handsome coffered ceiling, each large redwood square of which is set off by great beams. The former front offices are distinguished by paneled dados, high ceilings and tall, narrow doors with transoms above.

A year after Merryvale's formal opening in 1958, the owners added an equally impressive garden shop to the south which is directly accessible from the main building.

Also of interest is the iron fence which encloses the front lawn; it is similar to the original and was placed as part of the restoration.

ARCHITECTURE:

Richardsonian-Romanesque in its styling, this red brick rectangular building is, except for a corner tower, of uniform height. It is capped by a hipped roof, without projecting eaves, resting on a corbelled cornice. On its narrower facade facing Buchanan Street, a centered arched main entrance is asymetrically balanced by the Queen Anne tower to the left whose conical roof rises to its apex at an elevation slightly higher than that of the roof ridge behind. From the exterior, the fenestration reflects the interior division of the building into two elements: the front, or westerly, one-third possessing windows indicating two floors with a heavy string course of brickwork at the upper floor level; the remaining two-thirds of the building, equal in height to the front, contains tall windows divided into panes with fanlights above, whose sill line is uniform with those on the lower floor at the front, but whose tops extend upward about three-quarters of the total wall height. On its south elevation, two-story pilasters divide the building into six evenly spaced bays. However, on the north, along North Point Street, this same division is only partially carried out, the pilasters here defining only the four bays containing the taller windows. The rear of the building is divided, also by two-story pilasters, into three bays slightly wider than those on the north and south sides. The center bay houses a double doorway extending its full width and equal in height to the windows in the adjacent bays. The doorway is topped by a flattened arch similar in its arc to that above the second story windows on the front portion of the building; all other windows and the main entry have semi-circular arched tops. All wall openings are surmounted and protected by slightly projecting cast stone moldings and, except for that over the main entrance, are divided into sections containing a patera. The main entrance arch, resting on short brick pilasters, frames a recessed doorway; here a deeper molding than that over the windows retains the name of the original occupant of the structure:

S.F. G A S L I G H T C O.

SURROUNDING LAND
USE AND ZONING:

Zoning of the subject property is C-2 for a depth of 100 feet along Buchanan Street; the rear 18 feet of the parcel along North Point is zoned R-4. A PG&E substation is located to the east, a service station to the south. An apartment complex occupies most of the remainder of the block. Residential and commercial uses are located across Buchanan Street and a supermarket and parking lot across North Point Street faces into Gas House Cove. Fort Mason lies one block to the east.