Motion affirming the determination by the Planning Department that a proposed project at 655 Fourth Street is exempt from further environmental review under a Community Plan Evaluation.

WHEREAS, On June 11, 2019, the Planning Department issued a Community Plan Evaluation and an Initial Study ("environmental determination"), pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, 14 Cal. Code of Reg., Sections 15000 et seq., and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, finding that the proposed project at 655 Fourth Street, 280-290 Townsend Street, and 292-296 Townsend Street ("Project") is consistent with the development density established by zoning, community plan, and general plan policies in the Central South of Market (SoMa) Area Plan (the "Area Plan") for the project site, for which a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (the "PEIR") was certified; and

WHEREAS, The project site is composed of seven lots (Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3787, Lot Nos. 26, 28, 50, and 161-164); currently containing three buildings, an approximately 4,000-square-foot surface parking lot, and a 2,300-square-foot loading area; the project site is completely developed, has minimal landscaping, and has served largely commercial land uses; and

WHEREAS, Lot No. 26, in the northwest portion of the site, fronts onto Fourth Street and consists of one building built in 1947; the one-story portion of the building on the southern end of the lot is currently occupied by The Creamery—a café and restaurant; and
WHEREAS, A restaurant, gym, and several commercial office tenants occupy the rest of the building on the remainder of Lot No. 26; the building is 12 to 33 feet high and is not set back from the property line at the street front; and

WHEREAS, Lot No. 161 is a privately-owned driveway accessed via a 31-foot-wide curb cut along Townsend Street, which diagonally splits the project site between Lot No. 26 and Lot No. 28; this driveway is approximately 275 feet long by 30 feet wide and is lined with approximately 30 trees; and there is one larger tree on the project site located on Lot No. 161; and

WHEREAS, Excluding the loading zone, there are 14 off-street parking spaces along Lot No. 161 on the southern portion of the project site; there are also 11 off-street parking spaces within Lot No. 50, a surface parking lot; Lot No. 50 is accessed via a 12-foot-wide curb cut along Townsend Street; and

WHEREAS, One building, built in 1948, occupies Lot No. 28 in the southeastern portion of the site; the two-story portion fronting Townsend Street is occupied by HD Buttercup, a retail business; and the one-story portion behind HD Buttercup is occupied by Bulthaup, a remodeling business, and is accessed from the surface parking lot that is Lot No. 50 and the loading area that is part of Lot No. 161; and

WHEREAS, Lot Nos. 162-164 consist of one three-story building, built in 1996; the first floor is a commercial unit and the upper two floors are two separate residential units; off-street parking for Lot Nos. 162, 163, and 164, is accessed via the 31-foot-wide curb cut on Townsend Street, and each lot has an easement for one parking space within Lot No. 161 and an easement for ingress and egress through Lot No. 161 to access the reserved parking spaces; and

WHEREAS, The northwest property line of the project site faces the vehicular access driveway for 601 Fourth Street; and
WHEREAS, The Project would demolish the three existing buildings, associated surface parking lots, and vegetation on the project site, including street trees and other plantings; and

WHEREAS, The project would merge the seven existing lots and construct two new buildings containing approximately 1,004,000 square feet of residential area, 24,500 square feet of hotel area (38 hotel rooms), 21,900 square feet of office area, and approximately 18,500 square feet of ground-floor retail use; and

WHEREAS, The residential portion of the proposed project would include approximately 960 dwelling units in a mix of 242 studios, 330 one-bedroom units, 351 two-bedroom units, and 37 three-bedroom condominiums; and

WHEREAS, Each building would have two towers: one of which would rise to a height of 425 feet aboveground (including rooftop appurtenances 25 feet above the highest occupied floor), and the second which would rise to a height of 370 feet aboveground (including 10 feet for rooftop appurtenances); and

WHEREAS, The proposed project would also include a 94,500-square-foot below-grade, four-level garage containing building amenities, a vehicle drop-off area, a loading dock, back of the house retail operations, refuse handling area, 276 car parking spaces, and other back-of-house features such as mechanical equipment required for operation and maintenance of the building; a 35-foot-wide curb cut on Townsend Street would provide two vehicle lanes and one two-way truck lane to access the vehicular ramp to the basement level; and

WHEREAS, The project proposes 540 class 1 bicycle parking stalls to be located in the basement and 81 class 2 bicycle parking stalls at grade; the project would include a number of wind reduction features: a porous façade on one of the towers; canopies installed on all four towers; a wind screen installed on the south side of Townsend Street near the
intersection of Townsend and Lusk streets; and onsite landscaping consisting of shrubs and
deciduous trees; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project would require excavation to a maximum depth of
approximately 55 feet below the ground surface for construction of the below-grade parking
garage and building foundations, which would require the removal and disposal of
approximately 142,000 cubic yards of soil; the proposed project would use concrete-framed
buildings supported on a 12-foot-thick, steel-reinforced concrete mat foundation. No pile
driving would be used for the project; and

WHEREAS, On, June 20, 2019, the Planning Commission adopted the environmental
determination and approved the large project authorization for the project (Planning
Commission Motion M-20470), which constituted the approval action under Chapter 31 of the
Administrative Code; and

WHEREAS, By letter to the Clerk of the Board, dated July 22, 2019, Michael Cruz and
Kevin Rudich on behalf of the 401 Fourth Street Coalition ("Appellant"), appealed the
environmental determination; and

WHEREAS, The Planning Department’s Environmental Review Officer, by
memorandum to the Clerk of the Board dated July 25, 2019, determined that the appeal had
been timely filed; and

WHEREAS, On September 3, 2019, this Board held a duly noticed public hearing to
consider the appeal of the environmental determination filed by Appellant and, following the
public hearing, affirmed the environmental determination; and

WHEREAS, In reviewing the appeal of the environmental determination, this Board
reviewed and considered the environmental determination, the appeal letter, the responses to
the appeal documents that the Planning Department prepared, the other written records
before the Board of Supervisors and all of the public testimony made in support of and opposed to the environmental determination appeal; and

WHEREAS, Following the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board of Supervisors affirmed the determination that the Project does not require further environmental review based on the written record before the Board of Supervisors as well as all of the testimony at the public hearing in support of and opposed to the appeal; and

WHEREAS, The written record and oral testimony in support of and opposed to the appeal and deliberation of the oral and written testimony at the public hearing before the Board of Supervisors by all parties and the public in support of and opposed to the appeal of the environmental determination is in the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors File No. 190826 and is incorporated in this motion as though set forth in its entirety; now, therefore, be it

MOVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby adopts as its own and incorporates by reference in this Motion, as though fully set forth, the environmental determination; and, be it

FURTHER MOVED, That the Board of Supervisors finds that based on the whole record before it there are no substantial project changes, no substantial changes in project circumstances, and no new information of substantial importance that would change the conclusions set forth in the environmental determination by the Planning Department that the Project does not require further environmental review; and, be it

FURTHER MOVED, That after carefully considering the appeal of the environmental determination, including the written information submitted to the Board of Supervisors and the public testimony presented to the Board of Supervisors at the hearing on the environmental determination, this Board concludes that the Project is consistent with the development density established by the zoning, community plan, and general plan policies in the Central SoMa Area Plan project area, for which the PEIR was certified; would not result in new
significant environmental effects, or effects of greater severity than were already analyzed and
disclosed in the PEIR; and therefore does not require further environmental review in
accordance with CEQA, Section 21083.3, and CEQA Guidelines, Section 15183.
Motion affirning the determination by the Planning Department that a proposed project at 655 Fourth Street is exempt from further environmental review under a Community Plan Evaluation.

September 03, 2019 Board of Supervisors - APPROVED
   Ayes: 11 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

I hereby certify that the foregoing Motion was APPROVED on 9/3/2019 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board