Resolution initiating landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code of the
Mother’s Building, situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, Assessor’s
Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006.

WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by
resolution, initiate landmark designation; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building, situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road,
Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006, was built in 1925 by renowned architect
George W. Kelham; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building is part of the premises of the San Francisco Zoo,
which is operated by the San Francisco Zoo Society pursuant to its lease with the Recreation
and Parks Department; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building was donated to the City in 1925 by Herbert and
Mortimer Fleishhacker; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building was built to honor the Fleishhacker’s late mother
and was dedicated to serve as a resting place for mothers and young children, which was also
one of the only structures in the West that focused on the needs of mothers, offering
amenities such as water, milk, and medical advice for guests; and

WHEREAS, During the Works Progress Administration (WPA) era of the 1930’s,
employment options for women were limited; however, the Public Works of Art Project
(PWAP) and Federal Art Project (FAP) offered rare opportunities for women artists, such as
the one at the Mother’s Building; and
WHEREAS, San Francisco female artists Helen Forbes and Dorothy Puccinelli were selected to create artwork for the Mother’s Building; they used egg tempera to paint four murals inside the building that were inspired by the animals they saw at the Zoo and that depicted the story of Noah’s Ark, symbolizing the theme of renewal and recovery post-Depression; and

WHEREAS, During the same era, Margaret, Helen, and Ester Bruton, also known as the Bruton Sisters, were selected to adorn the panels outside the Mother’s Building with two intricate tile mosaics named the Children and Their Friends and St. Francis; their work played a significant role in the “modern mosaic revival”; and

WHEREAS, The artwork of the Mother’s Building is the only large-scale WPA art project created solely by women; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building, which is also known as the Delia Fleishacker Memorial Building, is listed on the National Register of Historical Places; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building has been closed since 2002 to visitors; the building and the murals experienced water damage and needs repair and restoration; and

WHEREAS, With the support of former Supervisor Katy Tang, the San Francisco Historical Preservation Fund helped to assess the building and provide funds for immediate renovation; and

WHEREAS, The Mother’s Building is a historically significant building and an asset that honors the history of local women artists and centers the experience of motherhood; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board hereby initiates landmark designation of the Mother’s Building, situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006; and, be it

Supervisors Melgar; Mar, Chan, Peskin
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Planning Department prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission for its consideration of the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of the property; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation Commission review the Landmark Designation Report and any other information the Planning Department may have related to the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of the Mother's Building; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation Commission consider whether the Mother’s Building warrants landmark designation and submit its recommendation to the Board pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.
Resolution initiating landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code of the Mother's Building, situated within the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 7281, Lot No. 006.

April 04, 2022 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED

April 12, 2022 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 10 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai and Walton

Excused: 1 - Stefani

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 4/12/2022 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

London N. Breed
Mayor

Date Approved 4/22/22