

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the National Endowment for the Humanities' Section 106 Review of Mechanics' Institute Securing the Future Project

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has offered the Mechanics' Institute, a grant to repair, preserve and restore the exterior of the Mechanics' Institute's nine-story building. NEH is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities. This public notice is issued as part of NEH's responsibilities under 36 C.F.R. Part 800, the regulations which implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, 16 U.S.C. § 470. NEH, a funding agency, is required by regulation to identify and assess the effects of any proposed actions on historic properties. If any proposed action will have an adverse effect on historic resources, NEH works with the appropriate parties to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects. Additionally, the Section 106 regulations require NEH to consider the views of the public on preservation issues when making final decisions that affect historic properties.

In the Mechanics' Institute grant application, the proposed work consists of repairs to the nine-story building at located at 57 Post St., San Francisco, CA 94104-5003. The cement parge coating from the brick will be removed and all corroded dowels and tiebacks will also be removed and non-engaged steel plates will be reinstalled flush against the brick. Where moisture has reached into the building, the bricks will be temporarily removed to access the underlying steel framing. Any existing lead paint will be abated by a licensed lead paint removal service. All corrosion will be removed down to the undamaged steel and the affected steel will be repainted with rust-inhibiting paint. The original brick will be reinstalled in the opened areas and re-laid in the existing common bond pattern, and the mortar will be matched as close as possible. Tiebacks, dowels, and plates will be re-engaged with the steel framing, and the parge coating will be reinstalled and painted to match the existing. New sheet metal copings will be installed at the parapets and tops of the pilasters. Work includes no ground disturbance and is restricted to the exterior of the building

The Mechanics' Institute is one of the oldest cultural institutions in San Francisco and home to the oldest library, and is associated with the reconstruction of the City after the 1906 earthquake and fire. The building is also an excellent example of French Classical revival style architecture, designed by master architect Albert Pissis, with a period of significance of 1910-1930 with requisite integrity. The many intact character-defining features are represented on the exterior and interior.

On September 15, 2020, Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer for the State of California, made a finding of no adverse effect upon historic properties, as defined by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

As required by Section 106, NEH is providing the public with information about this project, as well as an opportunity to comment on any knowledge of, or concerns with, historic properties in the proposed project area, and issues relating to the project's potential effects on historic properties. Comments may be submitted to the NEH by e-mail to FPO@neh.gov. The deadline for submitting comments is September 25, 2020.