SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

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October 20, 2008

Jeff Burris
Studio 12 Architecture
51 Gilbert Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: 1406 Montgomery Street
Building Permit Application No. 2008.07.03.5940
Filed: July 3, 2007; Disapproved: October 1, 2008
Block/Lot: 0085/021
Zoning District: RH-3 (Residential, Multi-Family)

Dear Mr. Burris,

Please be advised that the Planning Department has disapproved the above-referenced building permit application to expand the existing 12'-6" garage door to 14'-2". The expansion of the garage door does not comply with the Planning Code, or the Standards set forth in the Planning Department's Residential Design Guidelines in Section V: Architectural Features. The Residential Design Guidelines as well as the San Francisco General Plan promote building design that actively engages the pedestrian as the site is viewed from the public right-of-way. Of note, pages 35 and 36 of the Guidelines states,

> "Garage doors occupy a major portion of the building's ground floor and can therefore have a major impact on the pedestrian's perception of the building. In most of the City's residential neighborhoods, the width of the garage doors is between eight and twelve feet. In some cases, nearby buildings may have over-sized garage doors with inappropriate designs that detract from the street character of the neighborhood. Over-sized garage doors must not be emulated; rather the new garage door must improve the visual quality of the area."

Section 144 of the Planning Code states that within an RH-3 District *no more* than 30% of the width of the ground story among a front lot line...shall be devoted to entrances to off-street parking. Subsection (c) continues by stating that every dwelling in an RH-3 District shall devote *no less* than 30% of the ground story along the front lot line to windows, entrances to dwelling units, landscaping, and other architectural features that provide visual relief and interest for the street frontage. A departure from this Section of the Planning Code requires a variance from the Zoning Administrator, which the Planning Department does not support.

The project site is within a densely developed zoning district and a high-traffic area that is significant to San Francisco residents and visitors alike. It is in close proximity a number of important destinations including, the Telegraph Hill Historic District and Coit Tower. The general location also benefits from numerous transit options. In this case, the single-family

residence currently has one independently accessible parking space with a garage door that fully extends one-half the width of the lot. The garage door appears as the dominant architectural element at the ground level of this building. Widening the door further to allow another parking space does not comply with the Planning Code, the General Plan policies, or the Residential Design Guidelines, and would further impair the design of the building as viewed from the public right-of-way and would degrade the overall pedestrian realm. For these reasons, the Department cannot approve the expansion of the garage at this location.

If you have any questions, please contact Tim Frye at 415-575-6822 or tim.frye@sfgov.org.

If you believe this determination represents an error in interpretation of the Planning Code or abuse in discretion by the Zoning Administrator, an appeal may be filed with the Board of Appeals within 15 days of the date of this letter. For more information regarding the appeals process, please contact the Board of Appeals located at 1650 Mission Street, 3rd Floor, San Francisco CA. 94103, or call 415-575-6880.

Sincerely,

Lawrence B. Badiner
Zoning Administrator

cc: Kelly Amdur, NE Quadrant Team Leader
Tim Frye, Planner

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