

**Points to Consider in Drafting a Letter in Support of
St. Brigid Church (San Francisco, CA)**

September 16, 2006

We need your help convincing the State Landmarks Board to retain St. Brigid Church's formal eligibility on the National Registry of Historic Places—a noble distinction attained in 1995.

You can help by writing a letter to the State Historic Preservation Officer, Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, at the following address:

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-001

You can also help by writing a letter to the San Francisco Planning Department (or simply sending them a copy of your letter to the State Landmarks Commissioner) at the following address:

Mark Luellen, S.F. Planning Department
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Your letter does not have to be long. It can be very short. It can even be handwritten.

Letters from individuals carry a lot of weight with public officials. Please take a few moments and write a letter of support for St. Brigid Church.

The Planning Department needs your letter by Sep. 28, 2006 (for the Oct. 4 Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board {"LPAB"} meeting). The State Landmarks Commissioner needs your letter by Oct. 12, 2006 (for the Oct. 27 State Landmarks hearing).

Here are some points you might want to include in your letter:

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- St. Brigid Church is an architectural masterpiece and is of historical significance. The building is home to many treasures including:
 1. an exceptional pipe organ constructed specifically for the church by the Italian firm of Fratelli Ruffatti,
 2. stained glass windows from Harry Clarke Studios in Dublin, Ireland,
 3. fine terra cotta detailing specially made for the building by Gladding McBean,
 4. statuary by the noted Irish sculptor Seamus Murphy. Legend has it that the faces of the 12 Apostles, on Murphy's statues on the front of the church, are the leaders of the 1916 Irish Easter rising.

- St. Brigid Church is only one of two churches in San Francisco built from granite curbstones and crossing stones from S.F.'s pioneer days. (The other is St. Paul Church in Noe Valley.)
- St. Brigid Church is an important building in Irish-American history, no less than the California Missions are in Spanish- and Mexican-American history.
- This perfectly preserved example of Richardson Romanesque architecture has stood at the corner of Van Ness and Broadway since 1900, surviving two earthquakes, the Great Depression and two world wars.
- So well built was St. Brigid Church that it was one of the first (if not the first) Catholic church returned to service after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. It was ready in time for Christmas Mass, 1906.
- Help preserve the heritage of California.
- This building is irreplaceable and couldn't be built again.
- Architectural, cultural, and historical sites are one of the most significant reasons tourists and others visit any great city. San Francisco should keep St. Brigid Church because it is such a gem—a delight to behold, and to learn about.
- St. Brigid Church is the most monumental edifice in its particular enclave of San Francisco. Saving it though landmark designation will help preserve the special character of the neighborhood—a phenomenon well known in other cities in the U.S. and abroad.
- St. Brigid Church is already on the “owner object's” classification of the National Register, i.e. the determined eligible for the National Registry listing.
- The Academy of Art University loses no rights that they already had when they bought St. Brigid's, since at the time they knew full well that it was formally determined eligible for the National Registry of Historic Places.
