SAN FRANCISCO
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Draft – Meeting Minutes

Commission Chambers, Room 400
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Wednesday, September 21, 2016
1:30 p.m.
Architectural Review Committee Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: **Wolfram, Pearlman, Hyland**
COMMISSIONER ABSENT: **Hasz**

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY COMMISSIONER PEARLMAN AT 1:33 PM

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Jeff Joslin – Director of Current Planning, Eiliesh Tuffy, Tim Frye – Historic Preservation Officer, Jonas Ionin – Commission Secretary

SPEAKER KEY:

+ indicates a speaker in support of an item;
- indicates a speaker in opposition to an item; and
= indicates a neutral speaker or a speaker who did not indicate support or opposition

1. 2016-007806COA (E. TUFFY: (415) 575-9191)
THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE LIGHT STANDARDS – located curbside on various public right-of-ways generally bounded by Mason, Sutter and Market streets (District 3) - **Request for Review and Comment** by the Architectural Review Committee regarding the proposal to replace the existing cast iron cladding and light globes on approximately 189 historic light fixtures with cast fiberglass replacement fixtures, created from molds of the original design. The light standards are leased by the city to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, who operate and maintain the fixtures as public utilities. Originally installed in 1918, the ornamental metal fixtures lined the streets of the historic downtown shopping district surrounding Union Square. The Golden Triangle Light Standards are designated as city

Landmark #233 under Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code. The sites are located in the downtown commercial C-3-G (Downtown - General) and C-3-R (Downtown-Retail) Zoning Districts and an 80-130-F Height and Bulk District.
(Continued from ARC Meeting of August 17, 2016)
Preliminary Recommendation: Review and Comment

SPEAKERS: = Eiliesh Tuffy – Staff report
= Mike Buhler – Concern for fiberglass
+ Candace Vrhillo – Quality of fiberglass
+ Randy Kassad – Repair process

ACTION: Reviewed and Commented

Recommendation:

- *The proposed project would result in a 100% loss the existing cast iron cladding, which is the predominant character-defining feature of the designated landmark. A project resulting in the complete loss of original historic fabric would call into question the validity of the Article 10 Landmark Designation.*

  The Committee agreed with the department's recommendation that approving wholesale replacement would remove all historic fabric protected under the language of the ordinance.

Recommendation:

- *While fiberglass has the advantage of good molding ability to replicate decorative ornament and takes paint well, the visibility of the expansion joints if they would introduce visual breaks in the cladding material is a detail of concern. The bases of the fixtures appear to be most prone to damage from collision, which raises concerns about fiberglass as a substitute material that is fragile to impact. The existing cast iron cladding appears to be in sound condition, with rust occurring primarily at unpainted surfaces where cladding sections adjoin with one another.*

  The Committee agreed with the department, commenting that the cast iron has held up considerably well over the past century that the fixtures have been installed and exposed to wear from both natural and man-made causes. Initially, members of the Committee commented that since the bases appear to be subject to the most direct impact from vehicle strikes, perhaps selective replacement in that location could be considered. However, in the month that the fiberglass mock-up had been installed, the fiberglass base had already been struck resulting in a visible gouge in the material and the base displaced requiring a work crew to do patch repair and base realignment. This requirement for repair 30-days after installation called into question the durability and maintenance requirements for fiberglass as opposed to the high durability of the 100-year old cast iron.

Recommendation:

- *Because cast iron and glass are materials still readily available and that manufacturers are capable of replicating the historic light standard from molds of the original, the Department recommends that historic fabric be retained and repaired. Cast iron cladding that is beyond repair should first be replaced using historic cast iron pieces currently available at the sponsor's storage yard. Once historic pieces have been exhausted, new cast iron should be installed to match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Should cast iron, or the craftsmen to create replacements, no longer exist then a substitute materials should be considered.*

  The Committee agreed with the department that it did not appear to be the case that cast iron was unavailable to make repairs in-kind, as specified in the *Secretary of the Interiors Standards*.

  Recommendation:

- *As part of PG&E's ongoing maintenance plans for the light standards, regularly scheduled inspections of the interior steel support poles and water infiltration should be conducted. Fixtures found to be in danger of structural failure should be repaired through the installation of new, sound interior steel that is protected from corrosion without altering the appearance of the historic cast iron cladding.*

  The Committee agreed with the department that the root causes of the structural failure, based on photos provided by the sponsor showing advanced deterioration of the fixtures' internal steel poles, appear to be rust and corrosion unaddressed due to deferred maintenance. The Committee noted that, by adding weep holes at the base of the fixture, pooled water could be directed away from the base of the internal support pole.

  Recommendation:

- *As examples of existing historic fabric from the period of significance of the surrounding Art. 11 Conservation District, it is recommended that the historic cast iron cladding be retained to maintain as much of the historic character of the district as is feasible.*

  While the Committee agreed that 100% replacement of all existing historic cast iron with new fiberglass was not a proposal they could support as meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, they suggested that the sponsor might wish to create a partial-fiberglass mock-up fixture for the Committee's review. The bulk of the weight supported by the internal steel pole is focused on the upper lanterns and connecting horizontal cross-bar. Because of this, the topmost elements of the light fixtures may be eligible for selective replacement using a substitute material, if found to be beyond repair. The Committee noted that at nearly 20-feet above grade, replacement materials at the highest points on the light fixture was comparable to past Historic Preservation Commission approvals of substitute materials on building cornices at higher elevations.

The Committee raised several points of concern regarding the fiberglass substitute materials, such as deterioration, difficulty of repair, and long-term weathering. The Committee discussed advancements in the material technology with the contractors. While the Committee acknowledged and welcomed these advancements as a positive trend in the field, its members still expressed concerns over how the material might perform over time. Two examples that were discussed included the base of the full-fiberglass mock-up fixture that had been struck and displaced, and showed a visible scar and discoloration of the material, with frayed fibers exposed as a result of the impact, and the cornices where substitute materials had been approved but had experienced a distinct color-shift after long-term UV sunlight exposure.

Because of the relative newness of substitute materials, as opposed to cast iron which has performed well for over 100 years, the general consensus was to have the sponsor explore a more limited use of the material in a subsequent single-fixture mock-up that could be installed as a pilot program to monitor its performance, along with the 100% fiberglass fixture already installed. The Committee recommended at this time that all other fixtures should be repaired rather than replaced.

LETTER: 0068

2. 2015-016326COA (E. TUFFY: (415) 575-9191)

TEATRO ZINZANNI – located on the east side of Davis Street, between Broadway and the Embarcadero (District 3) - **Request for Review and Comment** by the Architectural Review Committee regarding the proposal to construct a new 4-story hotel with an attached theater venue and adjacent publically-accessible open space on vacant land current used for surface parking. New construction on the site is subject to the requirements of Article 10, to ensure compatibility with the Northeast Waterfront Landmark District. The subject property is located in the C-2 (Community Business) Zoning Districts, a 40-X Height and Bulk District, and is part of the Waterfront Special Use District No. 3. The site consists of two Seawall lots also under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Port.
Preliminary Recommendation: Review and Comment

SPEAKERS: = Eiliesh Tuffy – Staff report
+ Jay Wallace – Project presentation
+ Mark Horbuger – Design presentation
+ Nancy Goldenberg – Support
+ Lee Radner – Support
+ Bill Hannon – Support
+ Norm Langill – Support
+ Flicka McGerren – Support
+ Stan Hayes – THD Concerns
+ Ricky Tedanni – Port Manager

ACTION: Reviewed and Commented

1. Overall Form & Continuity, Scale & Proportion

Hotel Building

Recommendation:

The continuity of the façade and overall sense of large bulk is disrupted by the introduction of full-height glazed setbacks. As proposed, the glazed vertical breaks in the façade do not reference character-defining fenestration in the district such as industrial steel sash windows. Also, the only instance of a contemporary glass bridge connector is over Icehouse Alley, where one was approved in 1992 as a cross-alley link between two separate buildings. Therefore full-height, glazed portions of the façade would be most compatible in applications such as a possible connector between the hotel and theater building, or here it would aid in the creation of pedestrian-level visual connections to the Embarcadero.

ARC Comments:
The Committee was not opposed to the proposed use of setbacks to break up the building massing. The use of full-height setbacks that introduce window glazing to break up the brick building's horizontal massing was discussed. The Committee commented that, while the breaks were viewed as quite nice, the materiality of those breaks could also be explored in different materials – with the brickwork of the project architect's UCLA campus building provided as an example.

Overall the scale and proportion of the hotel was favorably received by the Committee. The curved form of the Broadway elevation was discussed, with Committee members questioning whether this condition exists on buildings situated on similar lots along the Embarcadero. The project team said a similar curved lot line occurs on Green Street, but to a lesser extent. If the street itself curves it seemed appropriate for a building wall to follow that line.

Theater Building

Recommendation:
The sponsor's submittal includes an alternate design for a glass roof on the theater building (see the "Alternate Studies" section, pages 43-49). A glass roof would further differentiate the theater as new construction, however it could result in greater levels of rooftop illumination than that of the copper-shingle roof proposal.

ARC Comments:
The Committee members spoke in favor of the sponsor's Alternate Study for a glass tent enclosure, rather than the option using a brick cladding. Stating that there are no existing theater buildings in the district to draw precedent from, introducing a round glass structure for the tent enclosure was thought to be a very exciting new architectural form along the Embarcadero, particularly as viewed at night.

Overall the scale and proportion of the sponsor's preferred design for the round theater form was favorably received. The location of the theater footprint was generally accepted however the theater's back-of-house areas located adjacent to the northern park space were felt to be problematic in their placement and overall solid form. It was noted that, while the renderings suggest a high level of transparency at the Davis-

Broadway intersection which was desirable, the floor plans did not seem to reflect the same intent and should be corrected. The design option that encompassed all back-of-house areas in a larger, oval-shaped outer building envelope was thought to increase the overall scale of the theater structure too greatly, such that it was no longer perceived as wholly compatible. A comment was made that the circular form felt more unique and more formal.

2. Fenestration.

Recommendation:

While large openings are common on the ground floor of historic warehouses and industrial buildings, they typically have lintels that are either flat or slightly arched. Arches that spring from grade level, and recessed arcades are not characteristic of the district. The design of the ground floor fenestration should eliminate the full-height arches, incorporate a compatible lower bulkhead design and remove any exterior arcades from the floor plan to adhere to Section 7(b)1 of the designating ordinance. Window sashes, if drawing from the industrial-style fenestration in the district, should have muntin patterns and operating mechanisms compatible with historic industrial doors and windows found in the district.

ARC Comments:

The Committee agreed with the department's recommendation that the uncharacteristic arch forms be removed from the design. The full-height arches with a spring point at grade along Broadway were thought to be unsuccessful in their compatibility with typical arched openings in the landmark district, which have flatted or truncated arches approximately 5-6 feet up on the building wall. The idea of extending the arch form vertically to create a double-height arch was proposed as a potential design option to create a similarly grand effect, as seen across the Embarcadero on the Pier 9 bulkhead building.

Recommendation:

The design of the ground floor exterior cladding and fenestration, except at areas where building entrances occur, should allow for a continuous lower bulkhead next to the curb. In select ground floor bays, operable ground floor windows may be considered if designed in a manner compatible with historic loading and shipping bays characteristic of the district.

ARC Comments:

The Committee did not feel an integral brick or stucco bulkhead was necessary along the entirety of the ground floor. In lieu of a solid lower storefront bulkhead, the incorporation of concrete or masonry planters where operable storefronts are proposed was discussed as a way to maintain a visual base at the ground floor without building a high bulkhead impenetrable in appearance along the Embarcadero elevation.

Overall the use of a metal window system referencing the industrial sash of historic warehouses in the district was viewed as a compatible approach in the new construction proposal. Emphasis was placed on

compatibility of the fenestration versus exact replication. The use of operable steel windows along the Embarcadero elevation, to create a connection between the building's active ground floor restaurant and lounge spaces with the adjacent public realm was seen as a positive urban design feature to draw foot traffic to the west side of the Embarcadero. On the northern, park-facing elevation the use of glazing at the two opposing back-of-house staircases was noted to have the potential to create through-views at those corners of the park-facing public stage doors. The proportion of those bookended glazed sections could also be increased in width without losing the ability to have park-facing stage doors.

3. Materials, Color & Texture

Recommendation:

While brick was favorably received for its compatibility as a material, the proposed blonde brick has only one precedent in the district, on a smaller mid-block building at 55 Union Street. Because of its rarity in the district, blonde brick was not viewed as the most compatible choice for a large new construction project. In keeping with the character-defining features outlined in the designation ordinance, the Department determined that red brick is a more compatible material color for the exterior cladding. Additional texture should be incorporated into the design, drawing from character-defining features such as pilasters, quoins, belt coursing and masonry cornice details to bring the new construction into further compatibility with historic brick buildings in the district.

ARC Comments:

Materials

The Committee agreed with the department that, based on the proposed project design and the overall character of the landmark district, the predominant building material needed to be brick. The northern section of the project however, where the theater will be housed, was preferred to be predominantly glass to set it apart as a contemporary design element and maintain a high level of transparency.

Color

Red brick was stated as the most compatible color choice for the hotel cladding material, as it is the predominant tone of character-defining historic brick warehouse buildings found throughout the district. A buff brick was felt to invoke a later, mid-20th century architectural style, which is outside the district's period of significance. Also, the use of a more traditional red brick was thought to act as a good balance for some of the more contemporary details of the design.

Texture

The Committee members appreciated the introduction of texture through recesses in the brick coursing and suggested this could be increased in the use of this technique or select introduction of contrasting material in the façade detailing.

4. Details.

Rooftop

Recommendation:

Rooftop appurtenances on historic buildings in the district are characterized by regularly spaced industrial skylights. Section 7(b)3 states, "In renovation or new construction, these particular design features should be retained or incorporated." The project should not introduce new visible rooftop features into the district, but rather should minimize rooftop structures to what is required for safe roof deck egress. Setbacks from street-facing building walls, the relationship of the finished roof height to the parapet, and massing forms in keeping with industrial skylight shapes should also be studied to ensure minimal visibility and design compatibility of any required rooftop structures.

ARC Review and Comments:

The Committee commented that the design appeared to do a good job at minimizing the rooftop appurtenances. The need to mimic industrial rooftop forms, such as sawtooth skylights, was not stressed as being necessary for compatibility. Green roof surfaces were highly encouraged.

Cornice

Recommendation:

The highly visible metal safety railing was determined to be an incompatible design treatment and material for a rooftop parapet in the district. Brick and stucco, the two major building materials identified in the ordinance, were used for parapet walls and cornices, as a continuation of the exterior building cladding. The proposed rooftop parapet should be either brick or stucco, consistent with the final exterior wall cladding material, and should be finished in a form and profile that relates to historic cornices in the district such as an outward-projecting profile with corbel or dentil detailing.

ARC Review and Comments:

The metal cornice, as proposed, was viewed as a successful contemporary interpretation for the termination of the façade. It was felt to differentiate the new building while also being compatible with simple cornices found in the district.

Ground Floor Arches & Arcade Entrance

Recommendation:

Particular attention should be paid to the detailing of the façade where building entrances are located. The incorporation of ornament and texture may be used to help identify the entrance portals in the overall building design, and draw from character-defining features of the district.

Recommendation:

The design proposes a recessed, 3-bay arcade on the Broadway elevation and a recessed ground floor corner at Broadway & The Embarcadero, in conflict with Section 7(b)1 of the designating ordinance. The Department recommends removal of the nonconforming Broadway arcade in favor of a primary building entrance more in keeping with those found on contributing buildings in the district. Often primary building entrances are identified through more ornate treatment of the cladding material at the entrance

surround. The building corner at Broadway and The Embarcadero has a high level of public visibility due to its proximity to a wide intersection. Historic buildings in the district have strong building corners that solidly meet the ground. The proposed recess at the base of the building corner should be removed, as it creates an arcade condition in conflict with Section 7(b)(1) of the ordinance and is out of character with the district.

ARC Review and Comment:
The Committee agreed with the department's recommendation that the recessed, 3-bay arcade designed for the Broadway hotel entrance was in conflict with Section 7(b)1 of the designating ordinance and should be removed.

The full-height arches with a spring point at grade along Broadway were thought to be unsuccessful in their compatibility with typical arched openings in the landmark district, which have flatted or truncated arches approximately 5-6 feet up on the building wall. The idea of extending the arch form vertically to create a double-height arch was proposed as a potential design option to create a similarly grand effect, as seen across the Embarcadero on the Pier 9 bulkhead building.

1010 Battery Street was noted as an existing non-conformity that should not be used as a precedent for new construction. The ticket window area, to the right of the central hotel entrance doors, was discussed as an area needing further design consideration. A comment was made that a solid wall would likely be needed in that location, as opposed to the recess created by the proposed arcade. Rather than a three-arch ground floor design, exploration of a more generous central entrance bay – in width and/or height – that perhaps recesses further into the building was proposed as a possible alternate design study.

The Committee did not feel that the use of operable storefront windows along the Embarcadero created a non-conforming arcade condition. Also, the ratio of solid-to-void at the southeast corner of the hotel's ground floor was felt to be a compatible corner treatment.

Connections: Hotel to Theater

The connection between the hotel and theater was said to feel "unresolved", and a general desire to pull the two structures apart somehow was voiced by Committee members. The use of glass as a primary cladding material for the northern theater building and supporting back-of-house areas was strongly preferred.

Awnings

Recommendation:
In order to provide some level of protection from sun and weather, an awning of compatible material and design located at the primary hotel entrance bay and not extending beyond the width of the rough opening could be considered. In addition to meeting the design standards for historic resources, awnings must adhere to the limitations set forth in the Northeast Waterfront

Special Sign District (Planning Code Section 608.15), which regulates attachment to the building and the depth of projection.

ARC Review and Comments:
The Committee agreed with the department's recommendation that any proposed exterior cover provided at the hotel and theater entrances shall be restrained in size and shall meet the design standards for new awnings in historic districts. A continuous marquee spanning the length of three bays along Broadway was determined not to have precedent in the Northeast Waterfront Landmark District and the introduction of such a feature viewed as incompatible.

Signage
Recommendation:
Staff recommends the development of a sign program that will be submitted and reviewed separately.

The Committee did not address signage as part of their initial design review.

LETTER: 0069

ADJOURNMENT – 3:49 PM