



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMO

DATE: March 8, 2017
TO: Architectural Review Committee of the Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Shelley Caltagirone, Preservation Staff, (415) 558-6625
REVIEWED BY: Tim Frye, Preservation Coordinator, (415) 575-6822
RE: Review and Comment at March 15th Hearing
Van Ness BRT Public Art Installation
Case No. 2014-001204CWP

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PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The proposed art installation site is located within the Civic Center Landmark District. The McAllister Street intersection of Van Ness Avenue is the future site of a Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station. This station location was approved by the Historic Preservation Commission in November 2015 and the bus shelter design for this station was approved by the Commission in January 2017.

The Civic Center Landmark District comprises a roughly 58-acre and 15-block part of San Francisco that has multiple historic designations. It was designated locally as a San Francisco Landmark District in December 1994 (1994 SFLD), which followed a listing in the National Register of Historic Places on October 10, 1978 (1978 NR) for state and national levels of significance and a designation as a National Historic Landmark on February 27, 1987 (1987 NHL), which is the highest designation for a historic property in the United States.

The historic district is located just north of Market Street between Franklin Street and 7th Street. It extends north to McAllister Street and Golden Gate Avenue. It is surrounded by several neighborhoods including South of Market, Western Addition, Tenderloin, Nob Hill and the Financial District. Properties in the Civic Center are primarily public in nature, but owned and managed by several different city, state and federal agencies.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Arts Commission's Public Art Program staff is currently working with artist Jorge Pardo on the conceptual design for a public art installation for the Van Ness BRT. Because the installation site is located with the Civic Center Landmark District, the work would require approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Arts Commission staff describes the project as follows:

The San Francisco Arts Commission has commissioned Jorge Pardo to create an iconic public landmark for the Van Ness BRT. Pardo is an artist whose practice explores the intersection of contemporary design, sculpture, and architecture. Employing a broad palette of vibrant colors, eclectic forms, and industrial materials, Pardo's works range from murals to home furnishings to collages to larger-than-life fabrications. He often transforms familiar objects reinventing them

with multiple meanings and purposes. Pardo says of his conceptual design for the Van Ness BRT "It is unexpected and playful yet sophisticated; it is a celebration of San Francisco's arts precinct."

Pardo's design is composed of 26 light sculptures, 13 fixtures at both the North and South McAlister rapid transit stops. There are 2 different color palettes (warm and cool) for each of the groupings. The materials are painted steel, graffiti coating, polycarbonate, and light fixtures.

Please review the attached renderings for more information on the scale and form of the art installation.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

On December 20, 2013, the Federal Transit Administration issued a Record of Decision (ROD) for the Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project, determining that the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) have been met through the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) document and process. Mitigation measures identified to reduce cultural resource impacts include:

M-AE-2: Design and install a replacement OCS support pole/streetlight network that (1) retains the aesthetic function of the existing network as a consistent infrastructural element along Van Ness Avenue, (2) assures a uniform architectural style, character and color throughout the corridor that is compatible with the existing visual setting and (3) retains the architectural style of the original OCS support pole/streetlight network.

Within the Civic Center Historic District, design the OCS support pole/streetlight network to comply with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and be compatible with the character of the historic district as described in the Civic Center Historic District designating ordinance as called for by the San Francisco Planning Code.

M-AE-3: To the extent that the Project alters sidewalk and median landscaping, design and implement a Project landscape design plan, including tree type and planting scheme for median BRT stations and sidewalk plantings that replaces removed landscaping and re-establishes high-quality landscaped medians and a tree-lined corridor. To the extent feasible, use single species street trees and overall design that provides a sense of identity and cohesiveness for the corridor. Place new trees close to corners, if feasible, for visibility.

M-AE-5: Design and install a Project BRT station and transit-way design plan (including station canopies, wind turbines, and other features) that is consistent with applicable City design policies in the San Francisco General Plan and San Francisco Better Streets Plan; and for Project features located in the Civic Center Historic District, apply the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, Planning Code Article 10, Appendix J pertaining to the Civic Center Historic District, and other applicable guidelines, local interpretations and bulletins concerning historic resources.

M-AE-6: Context-sensitive design of BRT station features will be balanced with the Project objective to provide a branded, cohesive identity for the proposed BRT service. The following design objectives that support planning policies described in Section 4.4.1 will be incorporated in the BRT station design and landscaping plans:

- Architectural integration of BRT stations with adjacent Significant and Contributory Buildings through station canopy placement, materials, color, lighting, and texture, as well as the presence of modern solar paneling and wind turbine features to harmonize Project features with adjacent Significant and Contributory Buildings.
- Integration of BRT stations and landscaping with existing and proposed streetscape design themes within the Civic Center Historic District, in conformance with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and compatible with the character of the historic district as described in the Civic Center Historic District designating ordinance as called for by the San Francisco Planning Code.
- Marking the intersection of Van Ness Avenue and Market Street as a visual landmark and gateway to the city in design of the Market Street BRT station.

REQUESTED ACTION

Specifically, the Department seeks comments on the following aspects of the proposed art installation concept with regard to its compatibility with the Civic Center Landmark District:

- The appropriateness of the proposed art installation site within the landmark district.
- The appropriateness of the design of the art installation in terms of form, scale, massing, materials, and color palette.
- Any additional information that should be provided in advance of the Certificate of Appropriateness hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

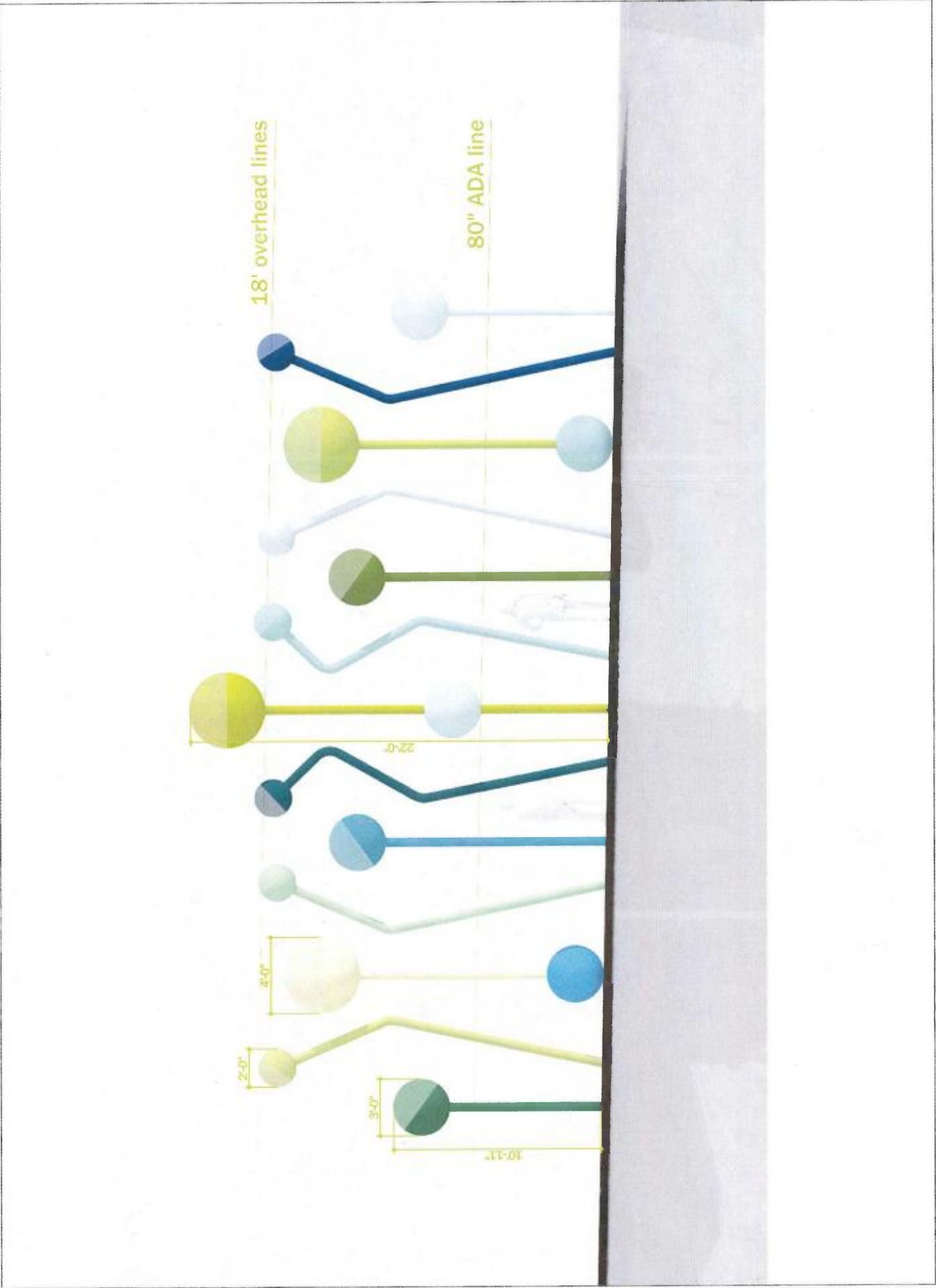
- Plans and renderings

jorgepardosculpture

Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit

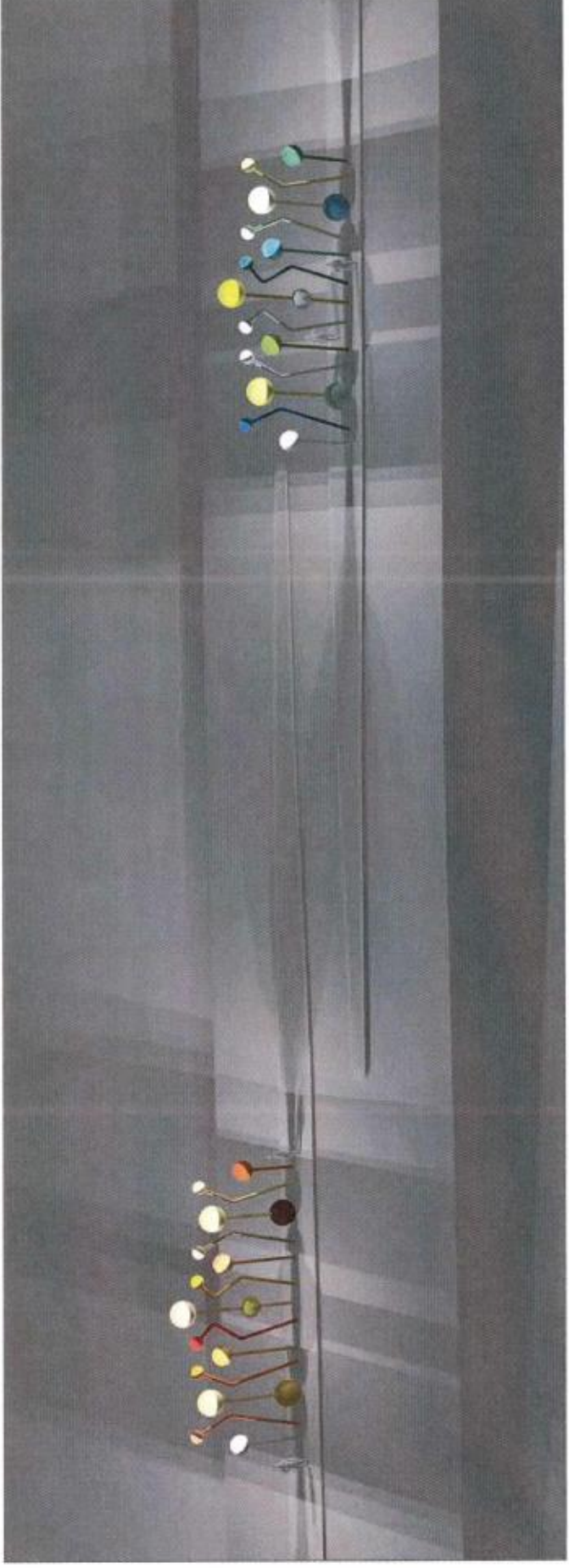
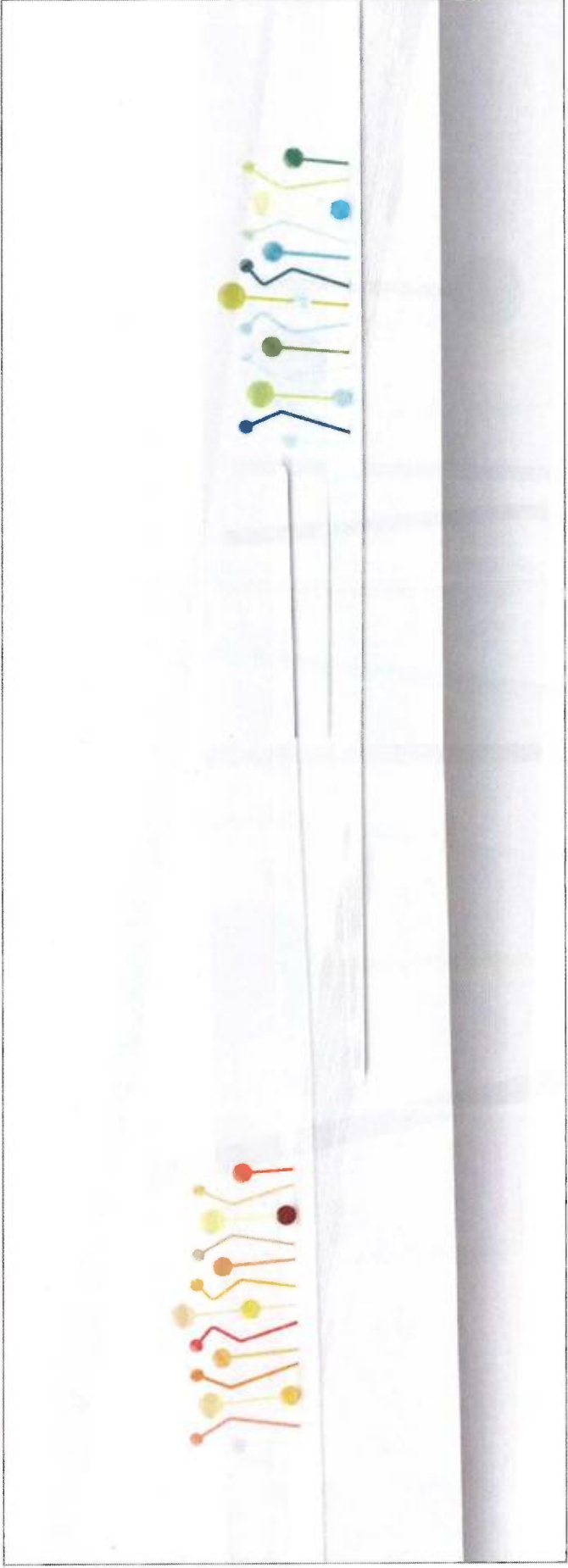






McAllister Northbound: West Elevation





McAllister Bird's Eye View: East