

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, July 20, 2016

1:30 p.m.

Architectural Review Committee Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Pearlman, Hyland
COMMISSIONER ABSENT: Hasz

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY COMMISSIONER PEARLMAN AT 2:50 PM

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Jeff Joslin – Director of Current Planning, Steven Smith, Eiliesh Tuffy, Tim Frye - Preservation Officer, and Christine L. Silva – Acting 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. [2015-000644ENV](#) (C. MCMORRIS: (530) 757-2521/S. SMITH: (415) 558-6373)
BIOSOLIDS DIGESTER FACILITIES – City and County of San Francisco Central Shops at 1800 Jerrold Avenue, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant at 750 Phelps Street, and decommissioned City and County of San Francisco Asphalt Plant at 1801 Jerrold Avenue; Assessor’s Block 5262, Lot 009 and Assessor’s Block 5281, Lot 001 (District 10) – **Review and Comment** before the Architectural Review Committee on the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission project in advance of publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the project. The project proposes to demolish the Central Shops at 1800 Jerrold Avenue, which includes a two-building historic resource found eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The

project also proposes to demolish Building 870, which is a contributor to a historic district identified within the Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant. The project would replace outdated solids treatment facilities and involves construction of five anaerobic digesters (49,400 square feet, 65 feet tall, 35 feet below grade), a solids pretreatment facility (34,200 square feet, three stories and basement, 65 feet tall), digestion cooling tower (2,300 square feet, 25 feet tall), water pump station (4,500 square feet, 20 feet tall), operations / maintenance shops (1 to 2 stories, maximum 30 feet tall), and other facilities. The project site is within P (Public), M-2 (Heavy Industrial), and M-1 (Light Industrial) Zoning Districts, the Bayview Hunters Point Planning Area, and 80-E and 65-J Height and Bulk Districts. The proposed project is eligible for funding that would require State Historic Preservation Officer concurrence under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and requires San Francisco Port Commission approvals for use of Pier 94 and Pier 96 for construction staging.

Preliminary Recommendation: Review and Comment

SPEAKERS: = Carolyn Chu – Sponsor presentation
+ Chris McMorris – Sponsor presentation

ACTION: Reviewed and Commented

Commissioner Pearlman noted the challenge of assessing the value and preservation of historic buildings in relationship to the value of the city's waste water infrastructure. He expressed the issue that the City needs to remain mindful of spending the public's money relevant to saving historic resources versus improving the sewer system. This is particularly true for buildings that are not open to the public, such as the Central Shops. Pearlman stated that the historic resources potentially affected by BDFP are not like the historical structures seen in other cities' infrastructure, such as Boston's nineteenth century / early twentieth century water structures. He remarked that he did not see a comparable value in preserving the historic resources that may be affected by BDFP in relationship to the City's efforts to improve the waste water infrastructure. As an aside, Pearlman also questioned why the digester tanks are contributors to the historic district. He specified that neither of the proposed preservation alternatives were particularly workable or had much value to the City. Pearlman indicated that he was not sure what specific input he could provide on the Preservation Alternatives, although he understood that there were significant design and engineering issues if the system were to be bifurcated. He also noted the complexity of disassembling the Central Shops for their removal and that such efforts probably do not hold much value for the City. He further noted the relative importance of the project objectives to upgrade the City's sewage infrastructure compared with the profit that a developer could desire in a standard development project.

Commission Hyland found that the SFPUC / Department presentation did not match the information presented in the packet the ARC received. He advised the Department staff to be mindful of this issue when the project comes before the full HPC. Hyland expressed the need for the Preservation Alternatives to be vetted thoroughly and graphically represented. He acknowledged that this project is likely going to lead to the demolition of historic resources and thus significant and unavoidable impacts. He noted

that he, and likely others on the HPC, do not have sufficient technical knowledge of the treatment process to identify other alternatives. Hyland emphasized that the legitimacy of the historic resources process (under the California Environmental Quality Act) is the question at hand, and he noted that there did not appear to be strong community interest in preserving the Central Shops.

The HPC's Department staff liaison, Tim Frye, discussed the process by which this project came before ARC and the exploration of potential Preservation Alternatives that is part of the steps to be taken for preparation of the project's Environmental Impact Report. He also summarized the need for improved graphics to illustrate the preservation alternatives and for the Department / SFPUC to provide layman descriptions that define the impacts.

The Commissioners acknowledged that the project is unlikely to be mitigated to a level that is less than significant for its impact on historic resources, but that the HPC needs more specific information regarding the project and the Preservation Alternatives to understand what the outcome of the impacts will be. While the ARC packet had a lot of information, it was not presented in a manner that made it clear to the Commissioners about the details regarding the Preservation Alternatives. The Commissioners concluded that they did not have any design recommendations that would refine the presented alternatives or would suggest other potential alternatives. The ARC stated that BDFP did not need to return to the ARC, but it would need to go before the full HPC as part of the process for review of the project's Draft Environmental Impact Report.

LETTER: 0064

2. [2016-007523COA](#) (E. TUFFY: (415) 575-9191)
200 LARKIN STREET – located on the east side of Larkin Street between McAllister and Fulton Streets, Assessor's Block 0353, Lot 001 (District 6) - **Request for Review and Comment** by the Architectural Review Committee regarding the proposal to make interior alterations within areas designated as significant, and to construct a new two-story structure (approximately 13,000 sq ft) with a programmed roof deck at the eastern boundary of the lot, fronting onto Hyde Street, as an addition at the rear of the Asian Art Museum. Currently, the project is undergoing environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Asian Art Museum is a contributing resource to the Civic Center Landmark District, which is designated in Appendix J of Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code. The site is located in the P (Public) Zoning District and an 80-X Height and Bulk District.
Preliminary Recommendation: Review and Comment

SPEAKERS: = Eiliesh Tuffy – Staff presentation
 + Carolyn Kiernat – Project sponsor presentation
 + Tim Shay – Project sponsor presentation
 + Joan Chu – Project sponsor presentation

ACTION: Reviewed and Commented

1. **Design approach.** The Commissioners did not feel the proposed design exhibited compatibility with the character defining features of the Civic Center Landmark District or the Urban Design Guidelines, therefore expressed opposition to the preliminary design approach. The consensus was that, while staff's analysis strove to convey the team's vision of the design's compatibility with the district, the team's narrative could not be supported by the Committee. As part of this discussion, there was a comment that the Civic Center District could be argued as perhaps the most historical context in the city. While the Commission voiced an openness to Modernism, the level of abstraction of the metal screen based on a traditional woven basket in the museum's collection was not found to be a strong enough reference to supersede the need for compatibility with the public-facing Beaux Arts architecture of the district. The concept of a substantially designed corner was raised several times throughout the meeting, with Commissioners expressing a desire to see a 3-story building at the McAllister corner. A taller addition in general was thought to be a successful continuation of the existing building form along Hyde Street, however the goal of meeting the immediate gallery space needs was recognized as a limiting factor. The project design, as currently proposed, was determined to be nonconforming with Secretary of the Interior's Standard #9. Greater relationship to the character-defining Beaux Arts architecture of the district was sought in a subsequent redesign of the addition, with the "New Library" raised as a successful infill project for its time – although lacking an active ground floor. The Commissioners requested that the team return to the A.R.C. once a revised design had been further explored.

2. **Scale and Proportion.** The Commissioners acknowledged that the current project was limited in scope and budget to a one-story exhibition hall. However, comments were made that a taller addition to match the height of the existing building, or taking a phased approach to the design in anticipation of future expansion could be a long-term planning tactic for the organization. The possibility of shifting the loading dock to a mid-block location, and even bridging the new structure over the loading dock, in order to reorient new massing towards the McAllister Street corner was touched upon. There was considerable discussion about the need for a designed corner, perhaps 3-stories in height, to harken to the design of other buildings in the district. It was asked whether the elevator could be moved to the opposite side of the loading dock, with a request to have that study completed by the team. The out-curving design of the corner was observed to be the opposite of the in-set curved corners found in the district. In general, the lack of a discernable base-middle-top and greater tie-in with strong horizontal lines of the existing building was noted.

3. **Fenestration.** The use of the perforated screen as an exterior cladding materials, while incorporating apertures in its design, has not found to have enough of a relationship to the treatment of facades throughout the district. The 1987 façade analysis of buildings in the district provides data for the various components of the Beaux Arts style exteriors, including

percentages of fenestration found at the base, middle, and top. The Commissioners commented that those data points should be studied in the redesign of the addition's exterior cladding. The proposed ground floor vitrines were viewed favorably as a potential tool for enhancing the pedestrian experience at the ground floor. The addition of fenestration to the elevator tower was suggested as one potential means of better incorporating that structure into the existing pattern of fenestration at that height on the existing building.

4. **Materials.** The durability and maintenance of an architectural metal screen was raised as a concern. It was clarified that the 15-18" offset from the backing wall would allow a system of that design to be cleaned as needed. The comment was made that, should it be molded and finished in a manner that closely resembles the gray granite found throughout the district, a cement cladding material could be considered based on its visual compatibility. The Commissioners indicated that they would prefer to see a more granite-like material. The materiality of the proposed elevator tower, if it cannot be shifted in its location or minimized in its visibility, was discussed. The desire of the Commissioners was to explore how it could be better incorporated into the overall exterior design.

5. **Color.** There was a sense that the champagne tone of the cladding and roof canopy was not in keeping with the tonality of façade materials and finishes, and would have to be revisited in order to be compatible. The example of the green framing on the Gae Aulenti additions was raised, which the Commissioners felt was perhaps a bit too bright, but could be argued to relate to the copper patina found on the Beaux Arts buildings.

LETTER: 0065

ADJOURNMENT – 4:15 PM