

**NOTES FROM THE
CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE**
1684 POST STREET
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT:

Rosalyn Tonai, Judy Hamaguchi

STAFF PRESENT:

Jeremy Chan, Greg Marutani

OTHERS PRESENT:

Patty Wada, Shiz Mihara, Merry Nishimura, Allison Cummings-SF Arts Commission (SFAC), Jennifer Correia-SF Arts Commission (SFAC), Diana Ponce De Leon (Mayor's Office of Workforce and Economic Development (MOWED)).

The meeting began at 12:10 p.m.

RUTH ASAWA FOUNTAINS IN BUCHANAN MALL

Diana Ponce De Leon (MOWED) provided an overview of the consultant's report being funded from "add back" funds through the Mayor's Office. In this case, funds were set aside for a project but not acted upon during the fiscal year.

Allison Cummings (SFAC) reviewed the background to the consultant report prepared by Page & Turnbull & ARG Conservation Services, Inc., which began in late 2013. Some of the delays in completing the report were due to staff turnover and retirements at the SF Arts Commission (SFAC), not being able to locate "existing" drawings requiring the creation of auto-CAD drawings, also not being able to locate the finished drawings (as-built).

Jennifer Correia SFAC consultant stated that because the cobblestones and mortar were so thick and deeply entrenched, the consultant was not able to view the sub-surface to determine the exact location of the existing pipes resulting in ARG proposing to install new pipes at angles and sizes that would allow cameras to be used to find any problems. They recommended replacement with plastic (PVC) pipe that would not corrode with chlorine in the circulating water. They also determined that the drains needed to be replaced as debris and mud were clogging up the system.

The scope of the report was limited to determining only what was required to get the fountains operational. Drain, pipe replacement and patchwork of new less hazardous cobblestones.. Unfortunately, it did not include the replacement of the "cobblestone river" to make it less hazardous to pedestrians while retaining the "river" aesthetic.

According to SFAC, their understanding is that the fountains alone are designated as "public art."

Because Jim Yonashiro was unable to attend this meeting due to a prior commitment, Diana said she is planning to meet with him to review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Nihonmachi Parking Corporation (NPC) and the City and County of San Francisco to determine which entity would be responsible for the repair work.

The estimate for repairing the fountains is \$437,177.34 that includes a contingency of 20%. Consultant's contingency is high due to what work may have to be done upon actual excavation and discovery. SFAC said they can pick up the conservation costs of about \$24,700 for the bronze fountains themselves. The costs to maintain the fountains were not in the report. But when asked, city staff said estimates could run from \$300-\$500 per month by private firms. City maintenance fees would be much higher.

It was also discussed that in a drought the fountains could go dry, but there is regular maintenance needed to maintain the structural integrity of the fountains (graffiti, drainage).

Additional comments were raised and submitted by Karen Kai via email and some historical facts needed updating in the Page and Turnball historical research. CHC will continue to address these issues and the findings will be reported back at the next meeting.

LANDMARKING THE PAGODA

Rosalyn reported that oral statements about the Peace Plaza and/or the Pagoda are due Monday, February 29, 2016. She asked those present to reach out to those who were around during the construction phase as to their thoughts or feelings about either of the two areas. She recommended that the statement be sent via e-mail to her with the acknowledgement of the person being quoted is aware of the fact that their statement may be used in a public document.

NEW BUSINESS:

Judy announced that the location of the 110th Anniversary of Japantown in the Western Addition community picnic scheduled for September 24, 2016 has been moved to Speedway Meadows.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Films of Remembrance @ New People CinemaFebruary 20, 2016
Day of Remembrance @ Sundance Kabuki Cinemas.....February 21, 2016

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

The next meeting will be at Noon, Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at the NJAHS.
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