



Memorandum

TO: PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

FROM: MICHAEL OGILVIE

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: December 3, 2019

Council District: 6

SUBJECT: Selection of artist Roger Stoller for design and fabrication of public art for the new turnkey park in Japantown to be built at the Shea Properties Development.

DATE OF ARTIST SELECTION: November 19, 2019

ARTWORK BUDGET: \$ 206,625 (Project funding provided by Shea Properties.)

LOCATION: The project site is the turnkey park that will be built within the new Shea Properties development; the park will open onto N. 6th Street, midway on the block between Jackson and Taylor Streets.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Shea Properties is developing block in Japantown that is bordered by Taylor Street, N. 7th Street, Jackson Street and N. 6th Street. The development will include multi-story, high density housing with some retail at street level and a park which, when completed, will be turned over to the City and managed by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS). Also on this site, at the rear of the park, will be the Creative Center for the Arts (CCA) which is not part of the Shea Properties development project; the CCA is spearheaded by SVCreates which, when completed, will provide services and facilities for a range of cultural organizations.

The site, which sits on the edge of Japantown's retail district, has tremendous historic and cultural significance as, prior to the City acquiring it in the 1930's, it was the location of Heinlenville, an important Chinese settlement that was built by John Heinlen around 1887 after other nearby Chinese settlements were destroyed in what has been considered the acts of a hostile mob who burned their settlements down and ran them out of town. Heinlen created what came to be called Heinlenville as a gated, walled community so that the Chinese could return and live in safety. This community grew and thrived for many decades at the Heinlenville site with a population in excess of 2000. Over time, as the social climate in the region evolved, Heinlenville opened up and new generations moved on to new areas even as Japantown began to grow up in the area around it. Heinlenville is a rich part of San José's cultural history and development; there has long been the intention to create a park there with features to help tell that story. The park will include a "history walk" and "history wall" to help share that history. In addition to those elements, there is also a shared interest in an iconic sculpture that will bring together a range of cultural elements that can celebrate growth and change.

Therefore, this public art project is for the creation of an iconic sculpture approx. 20' tall, set in the middle of a 30' diameter plaza in a prominent location in the park. The goal is for the artwork to be viewable from the street as well as to have an engaging presence in the park and serve as a welcoming feature to visitors to the CCA.

In order to address the particular challenges of a creating a large scale, iconic sculpture that could be informed by the cultural themes aligned to this project, it was determined the best method of artist selection was an invitational artist call. There was strong interest in focusing the call on locally-based artists. Staff researched more than 230 artists, seeking recommendations from public art professionals in the region and reviewing artist submittals from comparable projects. It was determined that it was in the best interest of the project to extend the geographic scope of the artist call to encompass the west coast from Washington through Southern California. Input from the project's Public Art Core Team (PACT) stakeholder group's visioning session was taken into consideration in the artist review process. After thorough review, ten artists were invited to participate, representing a very diverse range of accomplished sculptors whose work aligned well to the scale of this project and the vision; two locally-based emerging artists who showed great creative capacity were also included. The PACT had the option of selecting up to three artists as finalists who would then be interviewed and a final choice would be made.

Artist Roger Stoller was selected for this project. The panel carefully considered the project's important historic and cultural context in their thorough review of all 10 artists. They unanimously agreed that Stoller could create work that would best align to their vision for the project. A significantly accomplished sculptor, Stoller works in large scale cut stainless steel (and sometimes bronze) with a signature approach to sweeping form and imagery which he has evolved over time to be rich in representational content.

Stoller has had his studio in San José for 20 years; for the 13 years prior to that, from 1987-2000, he was on the San José State University (SJSU) faculty and worked out of the SJSU Foundry. Roger Stoller has a stream of significant works across the region and country but to date there is none of his work in the City's collection.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Prior to activation of the public art component of this project, there were several years of community meetings hosted by PRNS, Shea Properties and the park design team of Kay Victor landscape Architects, in collaboration with the Japantown Community Congress and Japantown Neighborhood Association. These set the vision for the overall park and related elements and subsequently informed the approach to this public art project.

A PACT comprised of key stakeholders and noted community members was formed to focus specifically on the creation of the sculpture element. Its role is to shape the vision for the sculpture relative to the larger context for the project, function as the Artist Selection panel, help inform the artist about the community, cultural and historic context for the project, and review the artist's concept and design proposal for the artwork. The PACT includes:

Dr. Jerry Hiura	Business owner and key cultural and community leader in Japantown.
Connie Young Yu	Noted Chinese historian and descendant of original Heintlerville family.
Tamiko Rast	Artist/community leader, Japantown Business Association Executive Director, Japantown legacy business owner, 3 rd generation Japantown resident.
PJ Hirabayashi	San Jose Taiko co-founder; representative of Creative Center for the Arts.
Sean McEachern	Project Manager for Shea Properties Development
Jason Victor	Kay Victor Landscape Architects/the park designer.
Ron Muriera	Public Art Committee liaison (non-voting participant).

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Meetings held in conjunction with this project:

Date	What	Purpose	Location	Convener
9/5/19	Public Art Core Team meeting	Visioning for the project and discussion about approaches.	Japantown Business Assn. Office	SJPA
11/19/19	Artist Selection meeting	Select an artist for the project.	City Hall	SJPA

/s/

MICHAEL OGILVIE
Public Art Director