



Memorandum

TO: PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

FROM: MICHAEL OGILVIE

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: July 29, 2020

Council District: 3

SUBJECT: Artwork Concept proposal through Design Development by artist Roger Stoller for public art for the new Japantown-Heinlenville turnkey park in to be built at the Japantown Shea Properties Development.

RECOMMENDATION: Review and take action on the recommendation to approve the concept, schematic and design development proposal by artist Roger Stoller for public art in new Japantown-Heinlenville park.

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.

NOTE: Review and approval of the artist's concept, schematic and design development proposal were delayed due to the City's order to cancel all public meetings effective in March and ongoing into July 2020. In order for timely delivery of this public art project it is necessary that the PAC review and take action on the artist's concept, schematic and design development proposal as one item.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Background

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 SVCcreates 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 Heinlerville site with a population in excess of 2000. Over time, as the social climate in the region evolved, Heinlerville opened up and new generations moved on to new areas even as Japantown began to grow up in the area around it. Heinlerville 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.

In consideration of these points, this public art project is for the creation of a sculpture approx. 18'- 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.

Artist Roger Stoller was selected for this project in an invitational artist call in order to best address the particular challenges of a creating a large scale, iconic sculpture that could be informed by the cultural themes aligned to this project. 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 many significant works across the region and country but to date there is none of his work in the City's collection.

Proposal

Roger Stoller's design for the artwork is an 18' tall cut metal sculpture in the form of a helix. The sculpture is a large swirl upwards towards the sky comprised of detailed, open cut metal-lace. It is rich with imagery of specifically iconic symbols from both Chinese Japanese cultural traditions, intended to achieve a blend of images that best suggests a cohesive story. While its reference point is a specific time and place related to the Heinlerville community and subsequent adjacent development of Japantown, the artwork is intended as a timeless tribute to the elements of positivity in Chinese and Japanese culture. This is particularly in context of the extreme social and racial injustices both groups were subjected to; the sculpture rises from the ashes of intolerance to inspire future generations toward understanding and celebration. These ideas and the imagery came directly from the artist working very closely with key representatives of both communities.

The sculpture is made of heavy gauge marine-grade stainless steel. It will be accented by uplighting around the base to enhance its presence in evening hours.

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 landscape architects KayVictor, in collaboration with the Japantown Community Congress of San Jose (JCCSJ) and the 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 Public Art Core Team (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 members are:

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- Dr. Jerry Hiura* Business owner and key cultural and community leader in Japantown.
(* Deceased in December, 2019)
- Connie Young Yu Noted Chinese historian and descendant of original Heinlenville family.
- Tamiko Rast Artist/community leader, Japantown Business Association Executive Director, Japantown legacy business owner, 3rd 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).

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
3/4/20 to 5/14/20	Online input for key cultural themes	Input from key community members about key, relevant cultural iconography for both the Chinese and Japanese communities	Online	SJPA with artist and PACT
6/16/20	Public Art Core Team meeting	PACT review of artist's concept/schematic design proposal	Online via Zoom	SJPA
6/18/20	Japantown Business Association (JBA)	Presentation about project and artist's approach to work	Online via Zoom	JBA
6/23/20	Japantown Community Congress San Jose (JCCSJ)	Presentation about project and artist's approach to work	Online via Zoom	JCCSJ

/s/
MICHAEL OGILVIE
Public Art Director