

FORM B

NEPA SECTION 106 REVIEW FORM

Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco

Reviewed per 2007 Programmatic Agreement among the City and County of San Francisco, the ACHP and the SHPO.

Subject Address: **1610 Geary Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94115**

Assessor's Block: 700 Lot: 22 & 23

Case Number 2023-004766FED

Date Review Completed _____

- ☐ District
☐ Site
☒ Building
☒ Structure
☒ Object

1. National Register Status

Note on Source of Determination: If the State Office of Historic Preservation has made no previous determination of eligibility for the resource, the Planning Department should make a determination of eligibility for the purposes of this Section 106 review. In this case, the planner should put his or her initials under source for the status code chosen. If there is a determination made by the State Office Historic Preservation Office (OHP), please put OHP under source for the status code. Use item 3 on page 2 of this review form to show the Planning Department's application of the National Register Criteria for eligibility.

a. Source Determination (indicates the status generally):

- | | | | |
|------------|----------|---|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1 | Listed in the National Register |
| _____ | _____ | 2 | Determined eligible for the Register in a formal process involving federal agencies |
| <u>JAG</u> | <u>X</u> | 3 | Appears eligible for listing in the National Register in the judgment of the person(s) completing or reviewing the form. (In this case the form is either an attached survey or nomination form, not the Section 106 review form.) |
| _____ | _____ | 4 | Might become eligible for listing |
| _____ | _____ | 5 | Ineligible for the Register but still of local interest |
| _____ | _____ | 6 | Determined ineligible for National Register listing |
| _____ | _____ | 7 | Not evaluated |

b. The subject status (indicates why the registration status was given to the property):

- | | | |
|----------|---|---------------------|
| _____ | D | Part of District |
| <u>X</u> | I | Individual Property |
| _____ | B | Both of the above |

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2. Record of Planning Department's Application of National Register Criteria for Eligibility
**The Planning Department should make a determination of eligibility only when no other determination of eligibility has been made.*

The subject resource being evaluated is a:

- ☐ district
☐ site
☒ building
☒ structure
☒ object

The subject resource possesses integrity of:

- ☒* location
☒ design
☐ setting
☒ materials
☒ workmanship
☒ feeling and
☐ association

OR

- ☐ does not possess integrity of any of the above

The subject resource has significance by virtue of its being:

- ☒ A associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
☐ B associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
☒ C embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction which:

- ☐ represents the work of a master
☐ possesses high artistic values
☐ represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

- ☐ D has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

OR

- ☐ does not have significance for any reason above

* Planning Department finds the Peace Plaza and Pagoda are both individually eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and C. The Pagoda retains integrity but has seen some alterations that have affected its setting and feeling. Although the plaza has been modified it retains several general features that allow it to be understood as an open space and setting for the Peace Pagoda.

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3. Record of Proposed Projects and Required Approvals (check and complete items that apply):

☒ The proposed project is shown in plans labeled: *Japantown Plaza Civic Design Review* that are included in the project file.

☐ There is no active Building Permit Application (BPA) at the time of Section 106 review.

☒ Associated active BPA's at time of Section 106 review include:

BPA no. 20221229207 Assigned planner Monica Giacomucci

☐ A notation was placed in Parcel Tracking to notify planners of the need to review future BPAs with the associated section 106 review. This is required if a project was reviewed and approved under Section 106 but had no active BPA.

☐ A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for the proposal. Case No. and Date reviewed by Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board:

4. Findings

Finding of no adverse effect

☒ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown ☐ not applicable

Comments: As mentioned above, the planning department finds the Japantown Peace Plaza and Pagoda to be both individually eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and C (the department disagrees with the findings of the attached DPR form regarding eligibility of the plaza). The department previously determined the plaza as eligible for listing as a local article 10 landmark and is eligible for listing in the California Register.

Additionally, the department has reviewed the undertaking and found it to be in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and will therefore not have an adverse effect on a historic property.

Finding of no adverse effect with mitigations

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown ☐ not applicable

Comments:

Proposed activity causes an adverse effect:

☐ yes ☐ no

Comments:

Justin Greving
Planner
San Francisco Planning Department
49 South Van Ness, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

8/8/2023
Date

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____
Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

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*Resource Name or #: Peace Pagoda

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad San Francisco North

Date: 2021

Township: 2S; Range: 5W

c. Address: 1610 Geary Boulevard

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94115

d. UTM: Zone 10 S, 550202 mE / 4182125 mN

e. Other Locational Data: APN 0700/023

***P3a. Description:**

This DPR form set documents a description, development history, and National Register of Historic Places evaluation of the Peace Pagoda in San Francisco's Japantown neighborhood. The pagoda structure was designed and constructed as a component of the Peace Plaza, a public open space planned as part of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center redevelopment project during the 1960s. This form set evaluates the pagoda structure individually, in consideration of its distinct Modernist design and construction qualities that have been altered relatively minimally since it was built in 1968. However, the original landscape design of the Peace Plaza has been changed substantially since its construction, such that an assessment of the Peace Plaza's significance and integrity requires additional considerations that do not apply to the Peace Pagoda's individual merit. Therefore, a separate DPR form set evaluates the NRHP eligibility of the Peace Plaza as a whole, which includes the Peace Pagoda as one of its original features.

(See continuation sheet.)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: HP26. Monument/mural/gravestone; HP36. Ethnic minority property (Japanese-American)

*P4. Resources Present: ☐ Building ☒ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other



P5b. Description of Photo:

View southwest.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:**

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1968 (SF Planning, *Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report*, 2015)

***P7. Owner and Address:**

San Francisco Recreation and Park Department
McLaren Lodge, Golden Gate Park
501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

***P8. Recorded by:**

Architectural Resources Group
Pier 9, The Embarcadero, Suite 107
San Francisco, CA, 94111

*P9. Date Recorded: July 2023

*P10. Survey Type: Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: Japantown Peace Plaza
Renovation and Pagoda Seismic Retrofitting Section
106 compliance.

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☒ Other (List): Sketch Map

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder): Peace Pagoda
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*NRHP Status Code: 3S

B1. Historic Name: Peace Pagoda

B2. Common Name: Peace Pagoda

B3. Original Use: Monument

***B5. Architectural Style:** Japanese/Modern

***B6. Construction History:** Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza constructed 1968; Peace Plaza modified to current configuration 2000-2001. See section *B10. Significance (continuation sheet, page 5) for additional detail.

***B7. Moved?** ☒No ☐Yes ☐Unknown **Date:** N/A **Original Location:** N/A

***B8. Related Features:** Peace Plaza

B9a. Architect: Yoshiro Taniguchi **b. Builder:** Martinelli Construction Co., Inc. (General Contractor)

***B10. Significance:** **Theme:** Redevelopment, Architecture/Design **Area:** San Francisco/Japantown
Period of Significance: 1968 **Property Type:** Monument **Applicable Criteria:** NRHP (A/C)

The following contextual information is excerpted and slightly adapted from the San Francisco Planning Department's Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report (April 14, 2015), 11-55.

THE FORMATION OF JAPANTOWN

The following narrative is largely excerpted from the 2011 *Japantown Historic Context Statement* prepared by Donna Graves in association with a historic survey by Page & Turnbull. As noted in the document:

The historic Japanese community of San Francisco, centered for the past century in Japantown, is the first and oldest urban community of its kind in the continental United States. Japanese began to arrive in California in 1869, when a handful of men and women migrated to San Francisco After Japan liberalized emigration restrictions in the mid-1880s, the number of Japanese coming to the United States climbed more rapidly as young men sought to leave sparse economic opportunities in their home country.

.... Early Japanese immigrants to San Francisco had settled in Chinatown. This co-location of Asian immigrants fit a pattern that was replicated across the Western United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Areas of town already inhabited by Chinese immigrants, who began arriving in the California during the Gold Rush, were often the only neighborhoods that permitted the first waves of Japanese immigrant men to find residences and set up small businesses.

The primary catalyst for the formation of San Francisco's Japantown was the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, which destroyed the northeastern portion of the city and displaced hundreds of thousands of residents. Many took refuge in the Western Addition, a large area in north-central San Francisco that had largely been spared by the disaster. Laid out in a grid pattern, the Western Addition was created in the 1850s and expanded the city's original boundaries westward from Larkin to Divisadero streets.

With direct connections to downtown and the financial district, the Western Addition emerged as a "streetcar suburb," with much of the new construction geared to meet the demands of the city's growing middle class. This included rows of semi-identical row houses developed by firms such as The Real Estate Associates, as well as enclaves of larger, architect-designed homes for the more affluent. Demographically, the area was dominated by persons of European ancestry, with most non-Europeans residents employed as domestics. Notably, the area also included a large Jewish population.

(See continuation sheet.)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: N/A

***B12. References:**

San Francisco Planning Department. *Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report*, April 14, 2015.

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** Sarah Hahn and Jon Rusch, Architectural Resources Group

***Date of Evaluation:** July 14, 2023

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
LOCATION MAP

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____

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Map Name: Peace Pagoda Location Map

*Resource Name or # Peace Pagoda

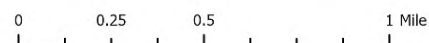
Scale: 1:24,000

Date: July 13, 2023



Peace Pagoda | San Francisco County, California

USGS Topographic Location Map
Quadrangles: San Francisco North
Scale: 1:24,000
Base Map: ESRI USGS The National Map (2022)





Sketch map of Peace Pagoda with the red outline denoting the Peace Plaza boundary.

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*Recorded by: Architectural Resources Group

Resource Name or # Peace Pagoda

*Date: July 14, 2023

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

***P3a. Description (continued):**

The following description is excerpted and slightly adapted from the San Francisco Planning Department's *Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report* (April 14, 2015), 4-6.

The Peace Pagoda (APN 0700/023) is a reinforced concrete structure, approximately five stories in height and one hundred feet tall. It is located in the southwest quadrant of Peace Plaza (APN 0700/022), a 160' x 197' public park at the center of the block bounded by Laguna Street, Webster Street, Post Street and Geary Boulevard. The plaza is flanked by to the east and west by commercial buildings constructed as part of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center development.

Designed in a Modernist interpretation of a traditional Japanese pagoda form, the circular-plan structure consists of a core of twelve, vertical concrete posts supporting a series of five broad, circular, conical roofs clad in copper plates. Exposed concrete beams, resembling rafters, radiate from the central core to support the conical roofs, which decrease in diameter from 46 to 34 feet as they increase in height. The Pagoda is crowned with a nine-ringed bronze spire, or "*kurin*," surmounted by a golden flaming head, or "*hoshu*," topped with a ball finial.

The structure rests on a five-sided concrete podium composed of two inner concrete steps and three concrete outer steps. Further out is another concrete platform with three concrete steps. A copper plaque is located near the north end of the second step of the podium and reads: "THE PEACE PAGODA – Presented in Friendship to the People of the United States by the People of Japan – March 28, 1968." Another copper plaque with Japanese writing is affixed to one of the concrete posts of the central core. Translated it reads: "This Peace Pagoda was given to People of America from People of Japan as a token of friendship between two countries - March 28, 1968."

The northwest and southwest portions of the Peace Pagoda podium are intersected by a waterfall (currently non-functioning), consisting of a raised platform featuring rectangular slate panels interspersed by natural stones. On the back wall is a dimensional letter sign reading "Japantown Peace Plaza." Immediately north of this lettering is an eternal flame of Peace, located behind a glass block inserted within the wall.

A portion of the waterfall also wraps the southwest portion of the Peace Pagoda podium, and features identical cladding materials. This area also features an accessible path of travel marked by a curving concrete wall with a metal railing.

***B10. Significance (continued):**

The Development of Nihonjinmachi

In the wake of the 1906 disaster, portions of the Western Addition underwent a rapid demographic shift as displaced residents sought places to live. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

Many of the neighborhood's stately pre-disaster buildings, which had previously functioned as single-family dwellings, were divided into flats and rooms and let to boarders to satisfy the acute housing shortage. As the neighborhood became more densely occupied, it also grew more racially and ethnically diverse and more working class in character. In addition to the Japanese population formerly of Chinatown and South Park who sought new homes in the Western Addition neighborhood, the Jewish population grew, and Mexican Americans, African Americans, Filipinos and other ethnic groups also gravitated to the Western Addition-Fillmore area.

... San Francisco's Japanese population relocated here [the Western Addition] in significant numbers. This process was recorded and encouraged by editorials in *Shin-Sekai* (The New World newspaper, originally a publication of the Japanese YMCA until it split off in 1897), which predicted that rents in the area would soon be forced down as ruined parts of the city were rebuilt. The publication encouraged Japanese to establish a new and permanent community in the Western Addition.

By the time of the 1910 Census, the core area of Japantown, bounded approximately by Bush Street (north), Geary Street (south), Webster Street (west), and Laguna Street (east), was home to more than 50 Japanese-owned commercial establishments, and to most of the 4,700 Japanese residing in the city. The commercial infrastructure included ethnic mainstays such as Japanese grocery stores, importers, and restaurants. Support for the still largely single male population was visible in several Japanese pool halls, residence hotels, and employment agencies. The growing presence of families was reflected in a Japanese kindergarten, a dressmaker, and several midwives.

Japanese names began to appear as property owners in the area in the 1920s, as the Nisei generation took ownership of their family homes and businesses. By 1930, at least 55 parcels were Japanese owned. Prior to American entry into World War II, this number had more than doubled to 122. While some Japanese purchased property and recorded it in the name

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*Recorded by: Architectural Resources Group

Resource Name or # Peace Pagoda

*Date: July 14, 2023

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

of their American-born children, many continued to use the convention of land trusts with cooperative partners because of the ongoing political agitation against the Japanese, which included efforts to divest American-born children of Japanese descent of their U.S. citizenship.

As with many other immigrant communities, the residents of Japantown did not announce their ethnic identity with architectural monuments or colorful displays, but rather sought to blend in with the fabric of their adopted country. This fact seems to have perplexed Euro-American residents of San Francisco, possibly because they were comparing the Japanese colony to the Chinese and their more readily identifiable enclave in Chinatown. As pointed out by Donna Graves, most of Japantown's businesses were "operated out of buildings that had been constructed and altered by others and often were originally intended for other uses. These structures, like most found in early 20th century urban ethnic enclaves, did not announce the identities of their immigrant residents – they did not "look Japanese."

WORLD WAR II AND ITS AFTERMATH

Two months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which allowed for the establishment of restricted military zones on the West Coast. At the headquarters of the Western Defense Command at the Presidio of San Francisco, General John L. DeWitt issued a military proclamation that "all enemy aliens and all persons of Japanese ancestry" were subject to military regulation. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

By late March 1942, DeWitt began issuing Civilian Exclusion Orders expelling "all persons of Japanese ancestry, including aliens and non-aliens" from the West Coast military zones. In a little over 4 months, more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese Ancestry were forced from their homes and interned by the government under the guise of national security. Forty years later, after extensive research and testimony, the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians would find that Executive Order 9066 and the internment of Japanese Americans was "a grave injustice" arising from "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership."

The entire Japanese community of San Francisco, both citizens and foreign-born, was ordered to register and eventually report for processing to various sites throughout San Francisco including the Kinmon Gakuen building on Bush Street, the YMCA Building on Buchanan Street, and Raphael Weill School (now Rosa Parks Elementary), from which the last busloads of Japanese Americans departed the City. By April, they were sent to various "Assembly" centers, like Tanforan, a hastily and poorly converted racetrack in San Bruno that was used as a temporary detention camp. From there, they were shipped out to permanent internment camps in rural areas throughout the Western U.S., where they lived under armed guard in temporary housing and surrounded by barbed wire. Most San Francisco residents were relocated to a camp known as Topaz, located near Delta, Utah

Following the war, many Japanese Americans returned to Japantown, which had largely become occupied by wartime defense industry workers. Starting over was a particular hardship for most Japanese American families who did not own property, as temporary housing was often full.... The War Relocation Authority coordinated formal resettlement of San Francisco's Japantown after Proclamation 21 of December 18, 1944 rescinded the West Coast ban on persons of Japanese ancestry. From its San Francisco base, the Northern California WRA office oversaw resettlement of evacuees from San Jose to Santa Rosa up until May of 1946, when the WRA regional office in San Francisco closed ... Approximately 2,500 Japanese resettled in San Francisco in the first months of 1946, nearly half of the pre-war population, and almost two-thirds had arrived by October of that year to begin the complex task of rebuilding individual lives, businesses and community organizations

By 1949, Japantown had regained a lively, if reduced, commercial sector centered at Post and Buchanan streets. A 1948 Evacuation-Resettlement Directory published by the Nichi Bei Times listed over 150 Nikkei businesses and services, down from pre-war listings of more than 400 businesses Nikkei were rebuilding the Japantown community within a neighborhood that had witnessed a dramatic transformation during the war years. The area was still multi-racial, but was now widely known for its African American population, and especially a thriving nightlife supported by Black jazz and blues clubs.

REDEVELOPMENT

The multi-racial, multi-ethnic nature of the Western Addition stood apart from many other San Francisco neighborhoods. The aging and crowded building stock was frequently neglected by absentee landlords, and racial animus hampered efforts by would-be buyers to obtain loans. In just a few years, the influx of war workers had more than quintupled the number of African Americans residing in the city, from approximately 5,000 in 1940 to 32,000 in 1945, with most living in the Western Addition.

As early as 1942, while many of its residents were being interned, Japantown was being targeted for "slum clearance." In April of that year, the *San Francisco News* announced that civic and business leaders "went all out to find a suitable plan that will prevent the Japanese district from turning into the worst slum in the history of the city." ... In 1948, a portion of San

San Francisco's Western Addition including much of Japantown was selected as one of the first large-scale urban renewal projects in the nation. The National Housing Act of 1949 set forth federal policies designed to address areas of "urban blight," which were defined as neighborhoods with major influxes of new residents, overcrowding, cases of tuberculosis, and populations other than those of European descent—all characteristics of the Japantown-Fillmore area. San Francisco's Planning Department had already begun establishing a case for rebuilding older neighborhoods with maps of blighted areas and a pilot study of redevelopment possibilities for the Western Addition...

The Western Addition fit the needs of city planners and downtown developers, who saw the neighborhood as the best site for new commercial and housing developments that would increase tax revenues and provide new vehicle access through the city, connecting downtown with the middle-class neighborhoods of the Richmond and Sunset districts. By cataloguing the Western Addition's "substandard and slum housing conditions, overcrowding, lack of recreational space and intermixture of deleterious influences," eligibility for federal redevelopment funds was established, and economic and social arguments were made for removing the businesses, residences and residents of the neighborhood.

From its inception, leaders of the ethnic communities that now called the neighborhood home were alarmed and worked to rally opposition to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's plans.

Despite these prophetic voices, and years of delay caused by lawsuits and the complications of developing a plan for relocating residents, the SFRA began acquiring properties in the late 1950s and mass clearance of much of the neighborhood through the use of eminent domain was accomplished within ten years. This undertaking was conducted in two project areas: A-1 and A-2.

The A-1 redevelopment area encompassed an irregular area of 27 blocks, including much of Japantown south of Post Street. The SFRA's Western Addition Project Office was established in the Buchanan YMCA building in 1958 Eight thousand residents were evicted by the A-1 phase of redevelopment, displacing the neighborhood's multi-ethnic populace without a comprehensive plan for finding new homes. Nearly all of the area's residents rented or leased their homes and commercial establishments before urban renewal and thus received no relocation assistance or compensation. Additionally, only 686 units of the 2,014 new housing units constructed under the SFRA plan were offered at low to moderate rental prices, making it almost impossible for most previous tenants to return to the neighborhood.

Funds from the federal highway program created the new Geary Expressway, which sliced through what had historically been the Japantown-Fillmore neighborhood with its southern border along O'Farrell Street. Hence, the Geary Expressway became a physical and psychological dividing line between the African American community to the south, where public housing projects intended for low-income populations were built, and the more affluent communities of European ancestry to the north, with Japanese Americans located at what Doris Matsumoto described as the "grey area in the middle."

The area where Peace Plaza stands today was, in the early 1950s, a thriving commercial district characterized by shops, restaurants, dwellings, and lodging houses. According to the 1953 city directory, some of the businesses located along the 1600 block of Buchanan Street included Ken's Barber Shop (1603), Lucky Bait Shop (1605), Man Far Low Restaurant (1615), Fuji Hotel (1622), Tosbie's Barber Shop (1629), Mikado Hotel (1645) and the Five Stars Luncheonette (1649). Nearby businesses on the 1600 and 1700 blocks of Post Street included the Tokyo Parlor Restaurant (1669), Spiritual Record Shop (1673), Mt. Trinity Baptist Church (1681), Soko Hardware (1698), Nakagawa Shohinkan Co dry goods (1701), Gosha-Do Books & Stationary (1705), the Nakashima Theatrical Agency (1711) and Minato Japanese Dishes (1715).

THE JAPANESE CULTURAL AND TRADE CENTER

Construction of the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza was a product of the redevelopment of the Western Addition by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA) during the 1960s. As Japanese Americans sought to reestablish themselves in the area during the post-war period, they were again subject to removal by powerful economic interests which viewed the Western Addition as ripe for redevelopment. This included the demolition of hundreds of homes and independent businesses at the heart of Japantown, to be replaced with a new commercial center constructed with corporate financing. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

A prominent feature of SFRA's redevelopment plan for the area was the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center. The first major project undertaken by SFRA director, Justin Herman, the Center was designed to solicit investment from Japan and to create a retail destination that would appeal to San Francisco's tourists. National-Braemar, a firm backed by investors from San Francisco and Hawaii, was selected by SFRA to be the master developer for the large mall complex, with the Center's structures to be operated by four different entities upon completion. In 1962, National-Braemar brought Kintetsu Enterprises Company of America, a new investment arm formed by Japan's Kinki Nippon Railway, into the project. The Center's design, like its funding, was a bi-national project.

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*Recorded by: Architectural Resources Group

Resource Name or # Peace Pagoda

*Date: July 14, 2023

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

In keeping with the SFRA's vision for the neighborhood, the Japan Center would showcase Modern design and materials. Conspicuously, though, its design was also overtly Japanese, which stood in contrast to earlier eras of development when very few buildings in the neighborhood featured any architectural flourishes that announced the ethnic identity of the residents.

The decision to include a pagoda as part of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center's design is credited to Masayuki Tokioka, a Hawaiian financier and President of National-Braemar, developers of the Japan Center. In 1961, seven years before the Peace Pagoda was constructed, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on discussions between San Francisco mayor, George Christopher, and members of the Japanese government about installing a pagoda at the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center. The article mentions Tokioka's involvement, and also shows that even at this early date, the architect Yoshiro Taniguchi was identified as the proposed designer of the Peace Pagoda.

Mayor George Christopher made overtures to the Japanese government this week for the gift of a "Pagoda for Peace," to be put in the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center in the Western Addition. The Mayor said he had learned that Premier Hayato Ikeda and other Tokyo officials had suggested that if San Francisco invited such a gift, the Japanese government would favor it.

The idea of importing a pagoda originated with Masayuki Tokioka, a Japanese born Honolulu banker. He envisioned it as a symbol of Japanese-American friendship in the way that the gift of the Statue of Liberty enhanced Franco-American amity. Mayor Christopher made his approach through a letter to Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

M. Justin Herman, the City's redevelopment director, said the design of the pagoda would be under the direction of Professor Yoshiro Taniguchi, architect for the Japanese Crown Prince's palace. The pagoda would exhibit Japan's historic and contemporary fine art, he said.

Masayuki Tokioka was born in Japan and educated in the United States. According to one source, Tokioka chose the location for the Japan Center because of its historic connection to the Japanese American community. In 1969, the *Nichi Bei Times* reprinted an interview with Masayuki Tokioka that had originally been published in the Honolulu *Star Bulletin*. In it, Tokioka describes the origins of the Japan Center and his inspiration for the Peace Pagoda:

It was in 1960, he recalled, when three influential members of San Francisco's Japanese community came to his office "out of the clear blue sky" and dropped the challenge into his lap. Tokioka said that the center site was the heart of the business district for the Japanese who had settled in the area, known as "Nihon-machi" (Japan town).... According to Tokioka, city officials there wanted to give the Japanese community in San Francisco a chance to develop the site because the scar of the tragic war evacuation remained on the conscience of the city and a center of exchange, they felt, would symbolize that the past was indeed the past. Tokioka said that Japanese groups in San Francisco wanted to undertake the project, but couldn't quite swing it financially. It was at that juncture that Tokioka was approached

Under the terms of the agreement, the city sold the land for a nominal \$1.6 million. A bond was floated and largely underwritten by the Bank of America for a \$3 million underground parking garage for 800 cars. The title to the garage, which runs the length and breadth of the center, is held by the city, but the developers retained the air-rights.

The idea of the pagoda, he [Tokioka] said, grew out of the blistery student uprising in Tokyo in June, 1960, that forced former President Eisenhower to cancel his visit to Japan. As he recalled "how hurt and embarrassed I felt ... The incident made me want to do something to show that the majority—a big majority—of the Japanese people are friends of the Americans." And so it was that "my dream" for a Peace Pagoda was born.

He felt that the symbol could be meaningful only if the Japanese people themselves made the contribution. So keenly did he feel this that he made several trips to Japan to discuss the matter with business and government leaders, including the late Prime Minister Ikeda, who encouraged the project. Donations have come in from various quarters, particularly from the business community. Among the first contributors was industrialist Taizo Ishizaka, general chairman of Osaka's Expo '70 (Osaka and San Francisco are sister cities.)

The design of the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza was completed no later than April 1963. A *San Francisco Chronicle* article published that month included a rendering of the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza, which appears to be very similar to what was eventually built. The article also confirms that many Japanese officials initially supported a more traditional pagoda for the Center. As discussed in the *Chronicle* article:

The plaza, at Post and Buchanan streets, will include a stylish, five ring concrete pagoda designed by a progressive architect, Yoshiro Taniguchi. The plans were announced yesterday by M. Justin Herman, the city's redevelopment director,

who has just returned from negotiations in Tokyo on details of the \$14 million cultural center. That ultramodern pagoda was his pet idea. He confided yesterday that when he arrived in Tokyo he was greeted as something of a cultural villain for his campaign to scrap construction of a pagoda with a 1000-year old tradition. He had felt that homely wooden replica of the Daigo-ji Temple in Kyoto would look odd amid the ultramodern décor of the center.

But nobody told him that across the sea the sensitive Japanese were brooding about this affront to their proud history. And, anyway, a Peace Pagoda Construction Committee headed by Kazune Kato, of the Daiwa Bank, had even organized a "pennies-for-pagoda" drive based on the traditional Buddhist shrine.

The Tokyo committee included such big names as Tarzo Ishizaka, president of the Federation of Economic Organizations of Japan, a utilities magnate. During a week of peace talks, Herman said, he persuaded the committee to listen to the creator of the avant-garde pagoda plan: Professor Taniguchi, whose architectural designs include the new palace for the Crown Prince and the Okura Hotel.

"He was able to show them by photographs that the modern pagoda design was derived from a pagoda much older than the Daigo-ji model they were using," Herman said. Taniguchi demonstrated a lineage traceable to the Horyu-ji Temple, which was built at Nara in 607 A.D.—350 years before the Daigo-ji Temple was completed, Herman said. Then came the clincher. Not only was the Horyu-ji concept more ancient, it was also more peace-loving. The committee was so pleased with Taniguchi that they asked him to design the entire "peace plaza" here, Herman said. The plaza will also include a reflection pool, gardens and display areas for Japanese works of art.

In May 1963, architect Yoshiro Taniguchi prepared a several page narrative describing his design intent for the Peace Pagoda—later reproduced in a 1965 booklet prepared by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. In it he describes what he feels are the key elements of its design: its cylindrical shape, the *Kurin*, or spire, and the shape of its reflecting pool. Some elements described by Taniguchi, however, were never realized, such as his plans to cover the interior walls of the first story with mother-of-pearl, as well install a sculpture covered with cultured pearls. As described by the architect:

The Peace Pagoda to be placed in the inner court of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center in San Francisco has been designed as a proper symbol of Japanese interpretation of the time-honored beauty and, at the same time, as a monumental expression of the real heart of the Japanese people, who sincerely aspire to the firm friendship and good understanding of the people of the United States [I] hope sincerely that the structure will have a congenial appeal to the mind of the American people, inasmuch as the essential spirit of this Pagoda consists in the inmost "Prayer" of human beings to the infinite. The Supreme Existence above us is sure to perform the sacred mission of creating integral peace and harmony by giving her final touch to the top of the Pagoda pointing to Heaven.

The Peace Pagoda lifts up its hundred-feet-high spire to the skies of California. It presents a magnificent view to all esthetically minded people who raise their eyes up to the horizon on the perimeters of San Francisco. The five roofs of the Pagoda are of the round type instead of the usual square shape; and in proportion to the increased height of each storey, the roofs are designed to become smaller in their size. The cylindrical construction of the tower-body will contribute to the sense of stable equilibrium.

The most important part of a pagoda is the *Kurin*, or nine ringed spire placed on the topmost roof, which is intended to designate the highest virtue; and every part of the pagoda below *Kurin* is to serve as a base of this spire. These rings are made of bronze gilded with gold on the surface. And the *Kurin* is given the proper balance by an ornamental ball with a flaming head named "*Hoshu*" as weight for pressing and arranging the rings in good order.

The color of the nine-ringed spire and the decorative weight over it on the topmost roof is gold. Each roof is covered with copper plates on its surface, which is tinged with antique looking green-rust. The body of the Pagoda is of the tuned harmony of black and white.

The interior walls on the first story are set with resplendent shells, the mother-of-pearl. And in the center of this story is placed a symbolic image of Peace which is studded with Japanese cultured pearls. A glance must be cast to the clear pool on the foot of this Pagoda. The pool is of the singular form which is named "Zen-po Ko-en" in Japan. The literal translation of this word is "Square-front and Circular-rear shape" ... The idea of this geometrical figure was given from the typical shape of the old burial mounds dedicated to the deceased nobles in the fifth or sixth century The Pagoda will be beautifully reflected in the clear water of the pool; and as night draws on, the whole structure will look extremely picturesque with the illumination shedding its soft light on the Pagoda. It looks as if the Pagoda is carved in relief against the nocturnal sky and floating on water in a fairy land. I should be very happy if I could successfully transplant the authentic "Shibui" flavor [intrinsic aesthetic qualities] of the Japanese historical monument on the soil of San Francisco.

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Serious consideration is to be given to the desirable harmony and match of the Pagoda with the surrounding construction in the same area, where Mr. Minoru Yamasaki, one of the most illustrious architects of the United States The cylindrical form of the Pagoda will have its place in the midst of linear straight erections of Mr. Minoru Yamasaki, shimming in with each other by creating an agreeable contrast between rectilinear and circular figures....

The Peace Pagoda is a reinforced concrete structure. The body of it is to be cast by the sliding-form system in the site in San Francisco. The pieces of framework of precast concrete are to be attached to each layer as the corresponding roof. The whole surface of the Pagoda is equipped with various sorts of finishing and decorative materials which will be shipped from Japan. These materials include metal and wooden works and fabrics refined up for more than a thousand years in our history of fine arts and also the advanced estheticism and handicrafts of the contemporary times. The stones and rock to be arranged in the pool and the inner court are to be sent from Japan. The Peace Pagoda is, thus, the very product of technical cooperation between the United States of America and Japan concerning the constructive formula, building materials and decorative patterns of both countries.

Long before construction even began, the Peace Pagoda was being promoted as the defining feature of the Japantown redevelopment. In 1965 the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency published an illustrated pamphlet solely about the Peace Pagoda, extolling the key role it would play in the overall design of the Japan Center.

The Pagoda will form the hub of the new Japanese trade and service area which will include shops, a contemporary theater, a hotel, restaurants, travel services, banking facilities, etc. Contemporary Japanese décor will be used throughout. A sizeable portion of this area will be dedicated to formal presentations of the arts, crafts and services of Japan. Hopefully the Pagoda will mark the axis of a neighboring four-block area to be renewed by Japanese-American residences, businessmen and institutions to be known as Nihon-Machi, or "Japanese Town."

The Peace Pagoda was still under construction when the Japan Center was formally dedicated on March 28, 1968. The new \$20 million development included the 172-room Miyako Hotel, a Japanese consulate building and the Kintetsu Shopping Center. The opening included a procession of Shinto priests and the lighting of an eternal flame in Peace Plaza, and was attended by Japanese Ambassador, Takeso Shimoda, and the deputy mayor of Osaka, Yasushi Oshima. The eternal flame was lit from a torch that had been brought by Japan Airlines from the Sumiyoshi taisha, or "Sumiyoshi Grand Shrine," founded in the 3rd century in Osaka. This is the main shrine of all the Sumiyoshi shrines in Japan. The Japan Center dedication was followed by three-days of festivities for the annual Cherry Blossom Festival.

By July of 1968 the tiered roofs were being installed on the Peace Pagoda, while the *kurin*, or spire, was in the process of being cast. The general contractor overseeing the Pagoda's construction was Martinelli Construction Company of San Francisco. The fabrication and installation of the various component pieces required a number of subcontractors. According to an advertisement appearing in the a commemorative edition of the *Nichi Bei Times*, published in conjunction with the dedication of the Peace Pagoda, these subcontractors included the Berkeley Brass Foundry Company, which cast the bronze *kurin*; C. E. Toland & Son of Oakland, which assembled the *kurin*; Hortie-Van Manufacturing Company of Pasadena, which built the center core of the *kurin*; and Terracon Corporation of Hayward, which supplied the pre-cast concrete for the piers and pagoda roofs.

A partner at Terracon, George Lew, managed the concrete casting. Each of the twelve concrete piers forming the central core of the Pagoda were 65 feet tall, weighed 12 tons, and were made with pre-stressed steel reinforcing rods to enhance their seismic resistance. The circular roofs were pre-cast in forms and covered with copper plating designed to weather into a green patina.

The Peace Pagoda was dedicated and the *kurin* ritually blessed during a ceremony held at Peace Plaza on September 15, 1968. The event was attended by a 70-member delegation from Japan, including members of the Japanese Diet and several ministers. According to an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, more than 1000 persons witnessed the dedication:

The 100-foot-tall pagoda, designed by Dr. Yoshiro Taniguchi, is a \$185,000 gift from Japan to the people of the United States. The Rev. Nicholas M. Iyoya called it a "magnificent testimony to man's fervent hope for peace on earth."

Incense was offered, gongs sounded and rose petals tossed in the air by the nine Buddhist priests as "homage to the buddhas of the universe" San Francisco Mayor, Joseph Alioto, was quoted as calling the ceremony "a day that will live in glory," and characterized the Pagoda as a "magnificent shrine."

THE PEACE PAGODA AND PEACE PLAZA AS CONSTRUCTED

The Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza were constructed above a parking garage accessed from the southeast end of the Kintetsu Center, or West Mall, of the Japan Center. The current configuration of Peace Plaza is substantially different from its original design. The entirety of the design was distinctly Modernist, while simultaneously rooted in traditional Japanese forms. A large pavilion with

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an adjacent reflecting pool was installed along the northern portion of the Plaza. The pavilion featured a metal roof with flared eaves and was supported on rounded concrete posts. A paved walkway bisected the reflecting pool and included bench seating at the sides. Immediately north of the reflecting pool was a linear strip of landscaping and at least 12 flagpoles arranged in groups on either side of the entry gate.

The central portion of Peace Plaza was paved with slate and entered via a series of steps descending from the center of the pavilion. The Peace Pagoda stood at the southern end of a shallow, keyhole-shaped reflecting pool, reflecting the "Zen-po Ko-en" shape described by Yoshiro Taniguchi. Within the pool, directly north of the Peace Pagoda, was a square concrete pedestal veneered with granite housing an eternal flame of peace. Access to the Pagoda was provided by a granite bridge and steps which crossed the pool from the east to meet stairs leading up to the central core of the Pagoda. Small pedestals or stones appear to have been placed at the base of the piers within the central core of the Pagoda. South of this bridge and within the pool were two large stones brought from Japan. At least one of these appears to have included one of the dedication plaques for the Peace Pagoda. The western and southern edges of the reflecting pool's retaining wall were landscaped with trees and shrubbery.

The south end of Peace Plaza adjacent to Geary Boulevard was marked by a large concrete wall with twin concrete stairs rising toward the eastern end. Within the Plaza, the area adjacent to the stairs included a raised planter landscaped with shrubbery and a few trees.

SUBSEQUENT REDEVELOPMENT IN JAPANTOWN

The A-1 Redevelopment was followed by the A-2 phase, approved in 1965. The A-2 project area encompassed a larger portion of Fillmore Street and the surrounding blocks, and led to the displacement of approximately 13,000 persons. While much of the A-1 Redevelopment was completed relatively quickly, the A-2 Redevelopment was even more divisive and would take nearly 25 years to fully complete. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

Planning for the A-2 phase of redevelopment began even before ground was broken on Japan Center, and encompassed an even larger area of seventy blocks and 277 acres surrounding the A-1 area and extending from Bush to Grove streets and from Broderick Street to Van Ness Avenue. As the SFRA announced plans for the launching of the A-2 phase, community members who had witnessed the ongoing mass evictions and clearance of the neighboring A-1 area became concerned and alarmed at the possibility of the same occurring in the remainder of Japantown. SFRA director, Justin Herman, stated his commitment to preserving existing buildings in the project area "as much as possible." In part at the urging of the SFRA, the United Committee for the Japantown Community (UCJC) was formed in 1962 with over 200 members. The group's "Statement of Policy" included retention of Japanese American residents and businesses as the highest priority. After negotiations with the SFRA, the UCJC formed the Nihonmachi Community Development Corporation (NCDC) in 1964, which became responsible for "allocating development sites to its members, undertaking the financing and development of shared facilities, [and] coordinating community interests" with the Agency. "Nihonmachi" became the formal designation for the four-block area bounded by Webster, Sutter, Bush and Laguna streets.

The architectural team of Rai Y. Okamoto and Van Bourg/Nakamura was selected by the SFRA from a list of consultants drafted by the UCJC to prepare concept plans envisioning a new "village-scale" development and a community center for Nihonmachi. Okamoto and Van Bourg/Nakamura's urban design study for Nihonmachi describes "the wishes of the local citizens" for an environment characterized by an "intimate scale of buildings and spaces."

These objectives were clearly a response to the massive scale of Japan Center and its erasure of historic Japantown. The report devoted several pages to discussing the implications of the SFRA and UCJC's expressed desire that "ethnic character" be encouraged wherever possible. Rather than propose that particular eras or styles of Japanese design be the model for a new Nihonmachi, the authors listed aspects of traditional and contemporary design in Japan as "critical areas where sensitivity and good judgment should be applied." Attention to Japanese use of materials, structure, space, modularity, roofs and gardens by "gifted architects and landscape architects" would "serve the special needs of a Nihonmachi."

Not surprisingly, Buchanan Mall, the central component of the A-2 phase, designed by Okamoto's firm in the 1970s and completed in 1976, reflected these qualities. The central plaza was framed by two-story commercial structures that referred to traditional Japanese villages through scale, massing and decorative patterns on the facades. Okamoto invited sculptor Ruth Asawa to create two fountains that punctuated Okamoto's "cobblestone river" as it meandered from a decorative gate at Sutter Street through the center of the Buchanan Mall and into the Peace Plaza of Japan Center across Post Street. Asawa's Origami Fountains, like the architecture surrounding them, echoed Japanese cultural traditions in modernist form. Asawa also added bas-reliefs to cast concrete benches along the mall – the panels, created with local children, depicted figures and scenes from Japanese folk tales.

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Van Bourg/Nakamura and Okamoto advised that “the retention of existing commercial enterprises together with selected new activities” would create the optimum mix for achieving neighborhood and SFRA goals. Ultimately, redevelopment dramatically raised property values, and increased rents prevented many small businesses that previously served the neighborhood from returning to Japantown after being displaced for construction. Newspapers at that time reported property taxes tripling in areas adjacent to the new Japan Cultural and Trade Center. As more and more affordable housing and small family businesses were removed to make way for hotels and larger businesses, the tightly woven historic fabric of the neighborhood was further unraveled.

ALTERATIONS TO PEACE PLAZA

Not long after Peace Plaza was constructed, problems became evident with water leaking from the reflecting pools. Historic photographs indicate that even as early as 1971 the reflecting pools were often kept dry. A memo prepared by SFRA Executive Director, Edward Helfeld, noted that:

“due to poor construction, the plaza area had poor drainage, when the pools were filled or gardens were watered, the water would leak into the garage below.”

During the mid-1980s ownership of the Japan Center changed hands, leading to speculation that portions of Peace Plaza—which was not publicly owned at the time—might be developed for commercial purposes. This eventually led to the City acquiring the Plaza. As discussed in the memo prepared by Edward Helfeld:

In the mid-1980’s National-Braemar, Inc. sold its interest in the Japan Center to others in connection with the bankruptcy proceedings of its parent company – Hawaii-based Manoa Finance Co. This included the sale of the non-city owned portion of Peace Plaza.

The subsequent owners stated that they had no current plans for the Plaza but felt that it was a “buildable piece of property.” However, a community newspaper revealed that in discussions with the new owners they had indicated that they wanted to construct a 8,500 square foot commercial facility on a portion of the Plaza including the stage area used for community performances. Although any change in use required the approval of the Agency Commission, no such plans were ever presented to the Agency

Nevertheless, the statement by the new owner galvanized the Nihonmachi [Japantown] community into action to preserve the Plaza as permanent open space. At the urging of the Nihonmachi community, on June 3, 1985, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution urging the Agency to preserve the Plaza as a permanent open space and that resolution was subsequently signed by Mayor Dianne Feinstein. In the light of this resolution and also at the urging of the community, on June 25, 1985, the Agency Commission adopted a resolution reaffirming its position that the Plaza remain permanent open space. Because of concerns that a subsequent Redevelopment Commission could change this policy, the community sought public ownership of the Plaza.

In 1987, the City’s Recreation and Park Commission voted unanimously to undertake eminent domain proceedings against the owner of Japan Center Peace Plaza. As noted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*: “The Peace Pagoda, which towers over the plaza in Japan Town, was given to the city many years ago. The city has been negotiating to buy the surrounding plaza from owner Sinclair Louie, but Louie reportedly wants to keep a portion of the plaza to develop.”

The Japantown community rallied in support of public ownership, and “after a long struggle, in 1989, the Nihonmachi Community was able to persuade the City Recreation and Park Department to buy the Plaza as permanent open space.” Though publicly owned, ongoing problems with water leaking from the Plaza into the garage below led to the permanent drainage of the reflecting pools and the removal of all landscaping in 1990.

In 1991, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published an article that noted a nonprofit group, Friends of Japan Town Peace Plaza, was in the process of raising funds to restore portions of the Plaza:

The [restoration] scheme would bring back a Japanese-style garden, designed by architect Kimio Kimura, of bonsai trees and native California plants amid a landscape of boulders and gravel. The keyhole-shaped pagoda pool would be converted to a garden and walkway, which could require removing the Peace Flame inside the pool. An 18-foot high wall enclosing the greenery would double as seating for visitors, and new drainage for the garden would be hooked up by the city.

At the request of the Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza, the Redevelopment Agency Commission’s 1994-1995 budget included \$600,000 from the tax increment funds for renovations to Peace Plaza. The funding was to be coordinated through a resolution by

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the San Francisco Board of Supervisors stating that redevelopment funds will “eliminate blight upon the surrounding area.” In other words, redevelopment funds were now being allocated to rehabilitate a blighted redevelopment, then only sixteen years old.

By March 1995, Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza had retained HOK Architects (Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum) to rehabilitate the Plaza. Later that same year, it became evident that the leakage of water from the Plaza into the garage beneath it remained a serious concern. This included leaking at drainage pipes and other penetrations into the garage area, as well as evidence of widespread leaking through cracks in the garage ceiling. Various memos, such as that prepared by Hirsch, Wright & Associates, Roofing & Waterproofing Consultants in September 1995, detail some of the issues. In describing the previous attempts to alleviate the leaking, they noted the new waterproofing membrane had been placed over old, and that new concrete had been encapsulated between layers of membrane—neither of which were considered best practices.

It was decided later in the year that The Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza would continue to proceed with the rehabilitation project, but would include the costs for repairing the leakage in the overall project costs. HOK was directed to value engineer the project to accommodate leakage repair.

The rehabilitation project continued to languish until June 1998, when members of the Japantown community requested assistance from San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown. Allen Okamoto, Chair of the Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza, noted that \$800,000 was then available, and asked the mayor to push the renovation project forward. A memo from the meeting states that Mayor Brown related that Peace Plaza was “one of his favorite places to go in the neighborhood,” and that he had announced his candidacy “from this very spot.”

In May 2000, the San Francisco Examiner reported that the SFRA was on the verge of officially closing Western Addition A-1 as a designated redevelopment area. A photo accompanying the article shows a new wall and stairs located along Geary Boulevard, described as “one of the final projects of redevelopment that has received mixed reviews.”

Construction of the new wall along Geary Boulevard appears to have coincided with the commencement of the rehabilitation of Peace Plaza. According to Allen Okamoto, the rehabilitation project was carried out by the Department of Public Works (DPW), with the architect, design and materials chosen by DPW. It was this project that resulted in the current appearance of Peace Plaza.

During the 2000-2001 renovation, two large stones, or boulders, which previously stood in the Peace Pagoda's reflecting pool were relocated. One is located near the northeast corner of the Plaza adjacent to Post Street. This stone originally held the English language dedication plaque for the Peace Pagoda. Another boulder is located in the southeast quadrant of Peace Plaza in a planting bed adjacent to the red-colored tiled wall near the stairs entering Peace Plaza from Geary Boulevard.

Since that time, the most prominent addition to Peace Plaza is the obelisk fronting the Post Street entrance to Peace Plaza. It was installed in 2005 as part of a project to honor the historic heritage of California's three remaining Japantowns. Three monuments were built following the passage of SB307, the California Japantown Preservation Pilot Project, and with funds provided by the California State Library's Civil Liberties Public Education Program and funds from Proposition 40. Each landmark stands nine feet high and its faces depict the Issei pioneers, World War II incarceration, and current community life. The San Francisco landmark varies slightly from the others in that its depiction of community life includes an image of the Peace Pagoda. San Francisco's landmark was dedicated in June 2005, while the landmark for San Jose was installed in the fall of 2005 in front of the Issei Memorial. The Los Angeles landmark was unveiled at the Union Center for the Arts in Little Tokyo in August 2006.

ARCHITECTURAL INFLUENCES

As originally designed and constructed, the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza were overtly Modernist, yet simultaneously rooted in traditional Japanese architecture and aesthetics. To provide context for this blending of influences, the following explores the development of the pagoda form, as well as the advent of Modern architecture in Japan as an influence on Yoshiro Taniguchi.

The Origins of the Pagoda Form

The pagoda form originated in India as the stupa, a dome or bell-shaped monument used for the storage of sacred relics. The form was adopted by the Buddhist tradition and came to symbolize the tomb of the Buddha, as well as the spread of Buddhism throughout East Asia. One of the central features of these stupas was the use of a yasti, or mast, which rose from the top of the stupa. This symbolized the axis mundi—the point at the center of the universe that connects heaven and earth.

Along with Buddhism, the stupa form reached China by the 3rd century, where its architecture was blended with that of Chinese watchtowers and pavilions, eventually resulting in a more familiar image of a multi-tiered structure with projecting roofs and a crowning finial. Chinese pagodas were also sometimes built to enhance the feng-shui of a given locality. Thus, the pagoda could be used to secure the “geomantic influences for the good of the surrounding district.” Most early Chinese pagodas employed masonry construction and served as important public monuments, as well as the most prominent vertical markers within the landscape.

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In Japan, the pagoda form arrived with Buddhism in the 6th century and may have been adapted as an extension of the concept of the sacred column. In the central Japanese creation myth, the god Izanagi and goddess Izanami encircle a giant column linking heaven and earth. The concept of a sacred column was frequently applied to Shinto shrines, where tree trunks were installed at the center of the sacred space. Thus, some have described the pagoda—as it applies to Japanese architecture—as being “essentially a ‘splendidly ornamented pillar’ in the same tradition as the sacred Shinto column.” Some have also opined that the structures have a spiritual mystique because of “their considerable height and metal spires, pagodas are regularly struck by lightning.”

The use of a central pillar in Japanese pagoda design also provided seismic stability. As related by William H. Coaldrake in *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, “In order to stabilize pagodas against earthquake shock they were equipped with a tall, mast-like pillar at the centre known as the shinbashira, or ‘heart pillar,’ which runs from the foundation podium through each story and culminates in the bronze finial.” Some architectural historians have even suggested that Frank Lloyd Wright, following his exposure to Japanese pagodas while building Tokyo’s Imperial Hotel, used this concept of a central mast in his designs for rigid-core high-rise structures.

Japan’s monumental pagodas are constructed from wood with interlocking posts and beams spreading from the central column. Typically, pagodas have either three or five stories with squared roofs featuring flared eaves. Among the earliest and most famed Japanese pagodas is the one at Hōryū-ji (Temple of the Flourishing Law) in Nara prefecture. The pagoda’s central pillar has been dated to 594 A.D., and it is considered one of the oldest wooden buildings in the world. The architectural historian Udo Kultermann has said that Hōryū-ji pagoda “must be the most remarkable work in timber of the world,” characterized by “strength and a vigorous handling of materials.” The pagoda at the Daigo-ji temple in Kyoto, constructed in 951 A.D., is also considered a National Treasure of Japan. As discussed earlier, a replica of this latter pagoda was originally envisioned for the Japan Center.

The Advent of Modern Architecture in Japan

In ascribing influences to the design of the Peace Pagoda, it is also useful to understand the origins of Modern architecture in Japan, which represented a break from traditional methods in use for more than a millennium. As noted by Udo Kultermann in *New Japanese Architecture*, “all traditional Japanese architecture is fundamentally an architecture of wood.” This was both a factor of the country’s forestry resources and frequent earthquakes—but just as importantly of the Japanese affinity for nature. In addition to timber framing, wood products were employed in a variety of ways: as roof shingles, paper screens, plank flooring, etc. The overall aesthetic emphasized simplicity, fluid function, and a desire to showcase the inherent beauty of natural materials.

The traditional construction methods used in Japan remained relatively unchanged until the mid-19th century, when Japan was forced to trade with foreign powers—most notably following the 1853 expedition into Tokyo harbor led by Commodore Matthew Perry of the U.S. Navy. Japan’s trade and interchange with foreign powers increased dramatically during the Meiji period (1868-1912), as the country embarked on a rapid course of industrialization. This necessitated the need for new architectural methods and engineering expertise. As related by Kultermann, “The light, traditional, Japanese building methods with wood could not be applied to the construction of railway stations, city office blocks and factories. Architects were, therefore, commissioned from Europe, who used their own materials and methods.” At the same time, the traditional arts and architecture of Japan made a strong impression in the West, particularly on the Arts and Crafts movement and its emphasis on natural materials and ‘honest’ construction.

Initially, the prominent buildings designed by westerners in Japan largely copied neoclassical European models and frequently employed masonry construction. Such designs were typical of the British architect, Josiah Conder, who for many years also taught a new generation of Japanese architects at the Imperial College of Engineering. As one critic has noted, “most of these architects, and official Japan as well, were caught in the vicious circle of 19th-century architectural pomposity, deluded by ... a false and meaningless version of what Europe had originated and experienced centuries ago.”

If the initial influence of Western architects was tuned to Neoclassical European models, the Japanese would also absorb the influences of the European avant-garde. The late 1910s and early 1920s in Japan were a particularly formative period. Some of the major forces at play were debates between the *Kozoha*, or “structure advocates,” who felt that good architecture should flow from scientific principles, and those who felt that architecture was an expression that encompassed both structure and beauty.

In 1920, a group of architecture students at Tokyo Imperial University founded *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai*, or the Secessionist Architectural Society, a name inspired by the influential Vienna Secessionist movement of the turn of the century. As described by Rosa and Lepik, “The organization came to be perceived as a neo-Secessionist group that rose against the teaching of traditional, historical European building style. Its real inspiration was German Expressionism that in the years after World War I was the most powerful force in German architectural life.”

One of the *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai*’s founders, Ishimoto Kikuji, travelled to Germany in 1922 and became the first Japanese architect to work with Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school.⁴⁸ During this same period, Frank Lloyd Wright was working in Tokyo on the Imperial Hotel where he associated with a number of Japanese architects and draftsmen. A pupil of Wright’s, Antonin

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Raymond, arrived in Tokyo in 1919 to assist with construction of the hotel and would soon establish an influential and longstanding practice in Japan.

Perhaps no other event was more important to the development of modern Japanese architecture than the great Kanto earthquake of 1923 which set off devastating fires in Tokyo and the port city of Yokohama. The earthquake clearly demonstrated the seismic and fire resistant qualities of reinforced concrete construction, including the survival of Wright's Imperial Hotel. As such, the ideas of the *Kozoha* "structure advocates" resonated with many Japanese. In 1923, Japanese Consul General Oyama stated, "The nations of the world will go on progressing. We shall rebuild Tokio more as a modern city. Our architecture is not as safe in a big city. We must have reinforced concrete and the stable designs of the modern engineer." Nevertheless, during the rebuilding, some of the major buildings constructed in Tokyo were designed by members of the *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai*, including the Shirokiya Department Store, by Ishimoto Kikuji, and the Central Telegraph Office by Yamada Mamoru, both completed in 1925.

The members of the *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai* continued to hold exhibitions through 1928, though increasingly Japanese architectural ideas focused on rational architecture, as espoused by the *Nihon Kokusai Kenchiku Kai* (Japan International Architectural Association), founded in 1929. During this period a number of Japanese architects traveled to Europe to train with leading figures in Modernist architecture. These included Iwao Yamawaki and Bunzo Yamaguchi, both of whom worked with Walter Gropius between 1928 and 1932, and Junzo Sakakura who worked with Le Corbusier between 1928 and 1936. These architects all returned to practice in Japan, bringing with them new ideas, as well as books and journals.

European Modernists also visited Japan, including Richard Neutra in 1930, and the German Expressionist, Bruno Taut in 1933. Ironically, both Neutra and Taut gravitated to traditional Japanese design, with Neutra mourning that it "will quickly disappear without trace, when the new construction methods and materials are enlisted, like concrete, steel, glass windows."

Yoshiro Taniguchi, Architect

It is during this period of architectural ferment that the architect of the Peace Pagoda, Yoshiro Taniguchi (1904-1979), received his degree in architecture and began practicing. Mr. Taniguchi was born into a family of prominent ceramics makers in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan. He entered the architectural department of Tokyo University in 1925 and graduated in 1928. Among his classmates were city planner Kunio Maekawa, structural technician Fugaku Yokoyama, and architect Junzo Sakakura. In time, their various careers would prove so productive that they earned the nickname "the golden generation."

In 1931, Taniguchi became an assistant professor at Tokyo University. The following year he received considerable acclaim for his design of a Hydraulics Laboratory for the Tokyo Institute of Technology. Devoid of any ornamentation, the design of the Laboratory was decidedly Modernist and exhibited many hallmarks of what would come to be known as the "International Style," a name coined for a seminal exhibition on Modern Architecture held at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932.

In 1938 Taniguchi traveled to Germany to work on the Japanese Embassy in Berlin where, according to Hiroki Onobayashi, he was greatly impressed with both the architecture of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Classical architecture. In 1942, Taniguchi received the Japan Institute of Architects' Arts and Science Prize, and the following year received his doctoral degree in engineering and became a professor at Tokyo Industrial University. During this early period of his career, Taniguchi was frequently associated with the designs for International Style institutional buildings. These included several buildings for Keio University in Tokyo, including the Yochisha Main Building (1937), and later the Student Hall and Third School Building for Keio University's Mita campus (1949). The latter two were awarded the Architectural Institute of Japan's Prize in 1949.

In 1947, Taniguchi designed a memorial hall for the author Toson Shimazaki in the town of Magome, Gifu Prefecture. The design of this building blended the form of a traditional Japanese house with contemporary architecture, a feature that would become a hallmark of Taniguchi's subsequent career—especially in the design of memorials and cultural monuments. Indeed, Taniguchi's work during the 1950s, though varied, was marked by a string of important memorial commissions that earned him widespread acclaim.

In 1952, Taniguchi joined Japan's Cultural Properties Specialists Council. That same year, sculptor Isamu Noguchi teamed with Taniguchi on the design of a faculty room and sculpture garden at Tokyo University's Mita campus called *Shin Banraisha*, or "New Building of Welcome." Described as a "landmark of postwar modernism in Japanese art and architecture," and a "milestone in 20th-century Japanese cultural life," *Shin Banraisha* was designed to honor Noguchi's father, Yone Noguchi, a Japanese poet and instructor at the university. Of interest, Yone Noguchi had lived in San Francisco between 1893 and 1897, where he published two books of poetry.

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Resource Name or # Peace Pagoda

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☒ Continuation ☐ Update

Following his work on *Shin Banraisha*, Taniguchi designed a number of additional monuments, including a memorial for poet Kyukin Susukida (1956); a memorial for pianist Nobu Koda (1958); a memorial for author Mokutaro Kinoshita (1958); a memorial for Japanese Prime Minister Kei Hara (1959); and the Chidorigafuchi War Memorial (1959). The latter was based on the shape of a Buddhist temple in Kyoto known as the Rokkaku-dō for its hexagonal shape.

By this time, Taniguchi had earned a reputation as “a link between the newer school of modern architects and the more conservative school that based its work more directly on Japanese vernacular traditions.” It is abundantly clear that Taniguchi was interested in traditional Japanese architecture during this period. In 1955 he authored “Today’s Focus on the History of Japanese Art” for an exhibit at the National Museum of Art. The following year he wrote an article for Japan Quarterly entitled “The Traditional Japanese House and its Contemporary Significance.” He also published a book about his impressions of the Shugakuin Imperial Villa in Kyoto, of which he said: “These ideas continue to impress people for many years to come. Such a power may be attributed to the life of beautiful designs expressed in the formative art of the past.”

Whereas with one hand Taniguchi was interested in designing memorials that captured deep, historic cultural tones, he was also able to make monuments of raw industry. In 1956 he designed the Chichibu Cement Factory No. 2, described “a masterly example of the use of iron and concrete.” Writing in *Architectural Review*, Hiroki Onobayashi states that Taniguchi’s “use of simple clear forms and rows of columns in some parts of the buildings, and the buildings’ proportions suggest they are actually a part of a background of Renaissance spirit and principle. It is true that Le Corbusier and the modern architecture influenced Taniguchi, but he is also in sympathy with Classical, particularly Renaissance, architecture.”

At the close of the 1950s, Taniguchi designed one of his most famed works, the *Tōgū-gosho*, or palace for the Japanese Crown Prince, Akihito, at the Imperial Akasaka Estate in Tokyo (1959). As described by Hiroki Onobayashi, “Rows of columns and a placement centering on a pond like those in the mansions of medieval aristocracy characterize this palace ... On the interior the structural members are clearly exposed in a rational architectural expression.” In his work on the Togu Palace, Taniguchi used devices that would be repeated in his designs for the Peace Pagoda, including the use of a reflecting pool with islands of stone, as well as a flat bridge and steps.

Fresh from the acclaim for his work on the Palace, and with his reputation for building memorials and monuments, it is not difficult to understand why Taniguchi was a natural choice as architect for the Peace Pagoda. Writing in 1960, Udo Kultermann stated:

Yoshiro Taniguchi must be regarded as one of the most widely known, and, in the best sense, popular architects in Japan, whose work can by no means be described as avant-gardiste. Conservative would be a better term.... Taniguchi is also well known for his writings and has made a name for himself as a designer of tombs, monuments and memorials which are all exquisite in themselves and suited to their surroundings.

In 1961 Taniguchi was awarded by the Japan Academy of Arts and the following year was asked to join the organization. His work during this decade included a number of prominent institutional and commercial projects, including the Hotel Okura in Tokyo (1962), the Yamatane Art Museum (1965), and the lobby of the Imperial Theatre in 1966. He was also promoted to Professor Emeritus of Tokyo Industrial University in 1965. Taniguchi would close out the decade with the design of the Toyokan wing of the Tokyo National Museum (1968), and a redesign for the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (1969). A contemporary article in *The Japan Architect* offered Taniguchi high praise: “Not only is he today one of the leading architects of the nation, he also occupies a unique position as a representative artist-architect of highly literary ideas. He is also known as a writer, and several of his many essays have won awards.”

During the final decade of the architect’s life, architectural bibliographies indicate he remained active. This included collaborative work on the Kanazawa Sky Building and the Hotel Okura in Amsterdam, as well as a guest house annex for the Togu Palace and a Cemetery for the Temple Josen-ji. In 1973 he was awarded the Order of Cultural Merits for “his work in preserving the Japanese style in construction.” Taniguchi died of cancer at a Tokyo hospital in February 1979, and it appears his only commission built in the United States was the Peace Pagoda. His son, Yoshio Taniguchi (1937-) is also a prominent architect, best known for his redesign of the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 2004.

In some respects, Taniguchi’s career during this period was symbolic of a larger trend in Japanese post-war architecture—that of the need to find meaningful cultural expression while still using contemporary materials. As described by Udo Kultermann in 1960:

A new recognition is emerging in structural techniques of the particular “Japaneseness” of Japan, and this has led to a critical attitude toward Western developments. In concrete frame construction—although often reflecting recent works by Le Corbusier—forms have been devised essentially suited to the Japanese climate, which correspond better to their traditions than the functionalist designs of the twenties. It is characteristic that today not only one side of Japanese tradition, that of the tea house and of the palace of Katsura is considered important, but also the other, recorded in the majestic temples and towers of the Nara period. The one-

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sided approach to building, which was a product of a European attitude of mind, has been overcome in Japan, and a complete expression of the innate character and spirit of the peoples is now sought.

EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following section evaluates the Peace Pagoda to determine whether it meets the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The evaluation language below is excerpted and slightly adapted from the 2015 *Peace Pagoda Draft Designation Report* (pages 58-61), which evaluated the resource against local criteria that are closely based upon National Register criteria. ARG agrees with the finding of that report relative to the Peace Pagoda.

National Register of Historical Resources Evaluation

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must demonstrate significance under one or more of the following criteria:

- Criterion A (Events): Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Criterion B (Persons): Properties that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Criterion C (Design/Construction): Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Criterion D (Information Potential): Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

National Register Criterion A

[The] Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza are located in what was historically the heart of San Francisco's *Nihonjinmachi*, or "Japanese people's town." Founded in the aftermath of the 1906 Earthquake, the community prospered despite restrictive policies and racist sentiment. Forcibly removed from their homes during World War II, the residents of Japantown nevertheless returned to the neighborhood and within a few years had made great strides to reestablish their community.

Almost immediately, though, the neighborhood-- which was then the most ethnically and racially diverse in San Francisco-- was targeted for redevelopment. As acknowledged by the Redevelopment Agency itself, "the removal of Japanese American residents and commercial establishments from this area so soon after returning from World War II concentration camps is known by some in the Community as the "Second Evacuation."

The heart of Japantown was demolished and divided by Redevelopment Project A-1. The widening of Geary Boulevard sliced the neighborhood in two, creating what the SFRA called a "barren corridor between massive concrete walls." In place of the neighborhood's shops, hotels, restaurants, and homes rose the new blocks-long Japanese Cultural and Trade Center which, despite its overt associations with Japanese identity, was not an organic product of neighborhood. More upheaval would follow with Redevelopment Project A-2, leading to years of bitterness and resentment.

Although the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza stood at the very center of the redevelopment, they also stood apart. Unlike other elements of the project, their construction was funded through donations. They were devoted not to the commercial, but the contemplative. The open space at Peace Plaza became a natural gathering place for community events and cultural celebrations—as well as community protest. Thus, despite its connection to redevelopment, Peace Plaza was reclaimed as a focal point for the community, with the Peace Pagoda its visual landmark. As with its historical antecedents, the Peace Pagoda marks the axis mundi, serving as a sacred shaft, or even a lightning rod, that fixes sacred ground in Japantown's history. On it can be projected the stories of the neighborhood's birth, the horrors of World War II—both at home and abroad, the perseverance of a community, and friendship between nations.

For these reasons, the Peace Pagoda is significant [under National Register Criterion A] for its association with the redevelopment of Japantown. Though it ranks among the most bitter episodes in the neighborhood's history, redevelopment is clearly a significant historic event. It entirely reshaped the architectural fabric of the neighborhood, while simultaneously creating a significant disruption of its social fabric.

National Register Criterion B

Research did not identify persons directly associated with the subject property who would be considered historically significant at the local, state, or national levels. As such, the property does not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

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National Register Criterion C

Beyond its symbolism as a marker for the Japantown community, both past and present, the Peace Pagoda is also an architecturally significant work of master architect, Yoshiro Taniguchi. Taniguchi's career was informed by a deep appreciation for traditional Japanese architecture, though his works were realized using modern engineering techniques and materials. As Taniguchi stated: "the new Pagoda is far from the mere replica of the ancestral device of many centuries ago; it is intended to make full use of the advanced architectural technique so that it would be enjoyed by contemporary people equipped with a modern sense to appreciate the architecture in its true light."

The Peace Pagoda is significant [under National Register Criterion C] as an extraordinary example of Taniguchi's ability to fuse the ancient and contemporary. Although the genesis of its design was born in the 8th century, the Peace Pagoda is nevertheless a greatly refined work of Modernism. As a property type, it is virtually unique to the city. While wooden pagodas exist in Golden Gate Park and elsewhere in the Bay Area, none but the Peace Pagoda are monumental works in steel and reinforced concrete. As such, it significantly embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period and method of construction.

Significantly, Taniguchi was associated with the design of numerous memorials—particularly during the decade leading up to his work at Peace Plaza. These memorials were greatly admired by the Japanese people as places of reflection and renewal. With this the Peace Pagoda originated with Masayuki Tokioka, who was sincerely devoted to the idea of peace and friendship between Japan and the United States. But he was also acutely aware of the bitter experience of the Japantown community during World War II. And it is almost certain that Yoshiro Taniguchi likewise understood where the Pagoda would be constructed. Thus, although there is nothing in Taniguchi's writings about the Peace Pagoda that suggest it is anything other than a symbol of peace, his desire to create a space that performs "the sacred mission of creating integral peace and harmony" is one that has deep resonance for the neighborhood.

National Register Criterion D

Criterion 4 pertains to the potential for a resource to provide information on pre- and/or post-contact history and is generally applied to archaeological resources. No component of the Peace Pagoda appears to fill a known data gap related to the history of redevelopment in Japantown that is not otherwise documented in available historical sources. Therefore, the property does not appear to meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the Peace Pagoda is defined here as 1968, marking the year the Plaza and Pagoda were completed.

Integrity Assessment

Considered as an independent structure, the Peace Pagoda clearly retains five of the seven aspects of integrity, including location, design, materials, workmanship, and association. Its integrity of setting, however, has been degraded owing to a redesign of Peace Plaza undertaken in 2000-2001. The project removed the keyhole-shaped reflecting pool and its eternal flame at the base of the Peace Pagoda, and introduced new features and materials in their place. As a result, integrity of feeling was also affected to some extent. Nevertheless, as a work unto itself the Pagoda retains more than sufficient integrity to convey its architectural significance as a work of master architect, Yoshiro Taniguchi, as well its associations with the redevelopment of Japantown.

For these reasons, this evaluation finds that the Peace Pagoda retains sufficient overall integrity to convey its significance under Criteria A and C for its period of significance of 1968. Therefore, the property is eligible for listing in the National Register as an individual resource.

Character-Defining Features

A character-defining feature is an aspect of a built resource's design, construction, or details that is representative of its function, type, or architectural style. Generally, character-defining features include specific building systems, architectural ornament, construction details, massing, materials, craftsmanship, site characteristics, and landscaping built or installed within the period of significance. In order for an important historical resource to retain its significance, its character-defining features must be retained to the greatest extent possible.

The entirety of the Peace Pagoda is character-defining, including the following:

- A central core of reinforced concrete piers
- Rounded roofs clad with copper plates
- Nine-ringed bronze spire, or "*kurin*," surmounted by a golden flaming head, or "*hoshu*," topped with a ball finial.
- Bronze dedication plaques in English and Japanese (but not their current location)
- The podium platform, including only a single perimeter step, as shown in historic photographs.

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☒ Continuation ☐ Update

Conclusion

ARG recommends that the Peace Pagoda is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C. As such, it qualifies as a historic property for the purposes of Section 106 review.

***P5. Photographs (continued):**



Figure 1. Peace Pagoda in the context of the Peace Plaza, view southwest
Source: ARG, June 2023



Figure 2. Base and lowest roof of the Peace Pagoda, view southwest
Source: ARG, June 2023

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Figure 3. Concrete columns and roof forms comprising the Peace Pagoda structure
Source: ARG, June 2023



Figure 4. Center of the pagoda, viewed facing up
Source: ARG, June 2023

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Figure 5. View of the Peace Pagoda showing the standing-seam copper roof plates and *kurin* spire crowned by the *hoshu*
Source: ARG, June 2023

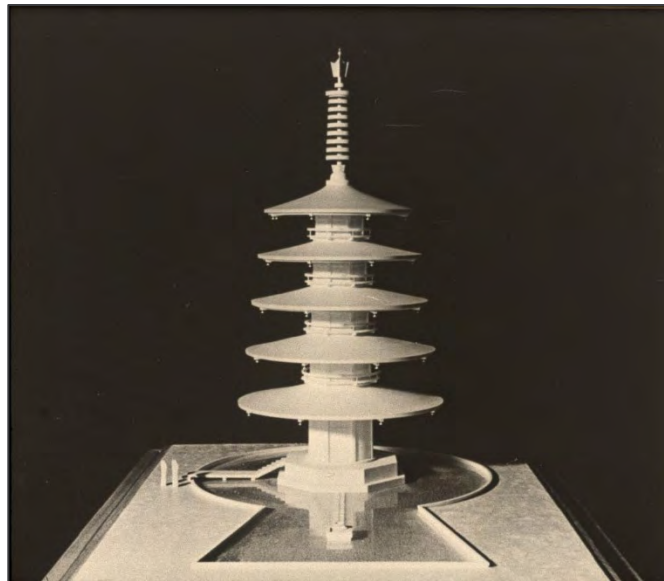


Figure 6. Model of the Peace Pagoda and original reflecting pool photographed by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

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Figure 7. Peace Pagoda, photographed in 1969 from Geary Street, view northwest
Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library



Figure 8. Bird's eye view of the base of the Peace Pagoda and original reflection pool, photographed c.1968-1969
Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____
Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

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*Resource Name or #: Peace Plaza

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad San Francisco North

Date: 2021

Township: 2S; Range: 5W

c. Address: 1610 Geary Boulevard

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94115

d. UTM: Zone 10 S, 550211 mE / 4182140 mN

e. Other Locational Data: APN 0700/022, 0700/023

***P3a. Description:**

This DPR form set documents a description, development history, and National Register of Historic Places evaluation of the Peace Plaza in San Francisco's Japantown neighborhood. The Peace Plaza was designed and constructed as a public open space, planned as part of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center redevelopment project during the 1960s. This form set evaluates the plaza separately from its most prominent feature, the Peace Pagoda, because the original landscape design of the Peace Plaza has been changed substantially since its construction and the Peace Pagoda remains largely unmodified. A separate DPR form set evaluates the NRHP eligibility of the Peace Pagoda as an individual resource.

(See continuation sheet.)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: HP29. Landscape architecture; HP31. Urban open space

*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☒ Structure ☒ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other



P5b. Description of Photo:

View southeast from across Post Street

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:**

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1968 (SF Planning, *Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report*, 2015)

***P7. Owner and Address:**

San Francisco Recreation and Park Department
McLaren Lodge, Golden Gate Park
501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

***P8. Recorded by:**

Architectural Resources Group
Pier 9, The Embarcadero, Suite 107
San Francisco, CA, 94111

*P9. Date Recorded: July 2023

*P10. Survey Type: Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: Japantown Peace Plaza
Renovation and Pagoda Seismic Retrofitting Section
106 compliance.

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☒ Other (List): Sketch Map

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder): Peace Plaza
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*NRHP Status Code: 6Z; 5S1

B1. Historic Name: Peace Plaza

B2. Common Name: Peace Plaza

B3. Original Use: Public open space

***B5. Architectural Style:** N/A

***B6. Construction History:** Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza constructed 1968; Peace Plaza modified to current configuration 2000-2001. See section *B10. Significance (continuation sheet, page 6) for additional detail.

***B7. Moved?** ☒No ☐Yes ☐Unknown **Date:** N/A **Original Location:** N/A

***B8. Related Features:** Peace Pagoda

B9a. Architect: Yoshiro Taniguchi **b. Builder:** Martinelli Construction Co., Inc. (General Contractor)

***B10. Significance:** **Theme:** N/A

Area: N/A

Period of Significance: N/A

Property Type: N/A

Applicable Criteria: N/A

The following contextual information is excerpted and slightly adapted from the San Francisco Planning Department's Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report (April 14, 2015), 11-55.

THE FORMATION OF JAPANTOWN

The following narrative is largely reprised from the 2011 *Japantown Historic Context Statement* prepared by Donna Graves in association with a historic survey by Page & Turnbull. This document traces the evolution of Nihonjinmachi, or "Japanese people's town," from the Japanese settlement of the Western Addition through World War II, followed by the redevelopment of the Japantown area. As noted in the document:

The historic Japanese community of San Francisco, centered for the past century in Japantown, is the first and oldest urban community of its kind in the continental United States. Japanese began to arrive in California in 1869, when a handful of men and women migrated to San Francisco After Japan liberalized emigration restrictions in the mid-1880s, the number of Japanese coming to the United States climbed more rapidly as young men sought to leave sparse economic opportunities in their home country.

.... Early Japanese immigrants to San Francisco had settled in Chinatown. This co-location of Asian immigrants fit a pattern that was replicated across the Western United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Communities of Japanese and Chinese immigrants have distinctive but related histories shaped by immigration policies, changing demands for cheap labor, restrictions on land ownership, and racial animus Areas of town already inhabited by Chinese immigrants, who began arriving in the California during the Gold Rush, were often the only neighborhoods that permitted the first waves of Japanese immigrant men to find residences and set up small businesses.

The primary catalyst for the formation of San Francisco's Japantown was the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, which destroyed the northeastern portion of the city and displaced hundreds of thousands of residents. Many took refuge in the Western Addition, a large area in north-central San Francisco that had largely been spared by the disaster. Laid out in a grid pattern, the Western Addition was created in the 1850s and expanded the city's original boundaries westward from Larkin to Divisadero streets.

With direct connections to downtown and the financial district, the Western Addition emerged as a "streetcar suburb," with much of the new construction geared to meet the demands of the city's growing middle class. This included rows of semi-identical row houses developed by firms such as The Real Estate Associates, as well as enclaves of larger, architect-designed homes for the more affluent. Demographically, the area was dominated by persons of European ancestry, with most non-Europeans residents employed as domestics. Notably, the area also included a large Jewish population.

(See continuation sheet.)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: HP36. Ethnic minority property (Japanese-American)

***B12. References:** See continuation sheet.

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** Sarah Hahn and Jon Rusch
Architectural Resources Group

***Date of Evaluation:** July 17, 2023

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
LOCATION MAP

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____

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Map Name: Peace Plaza Location Map

*Resource Name or # Peace Plaza

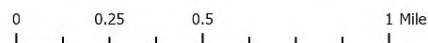
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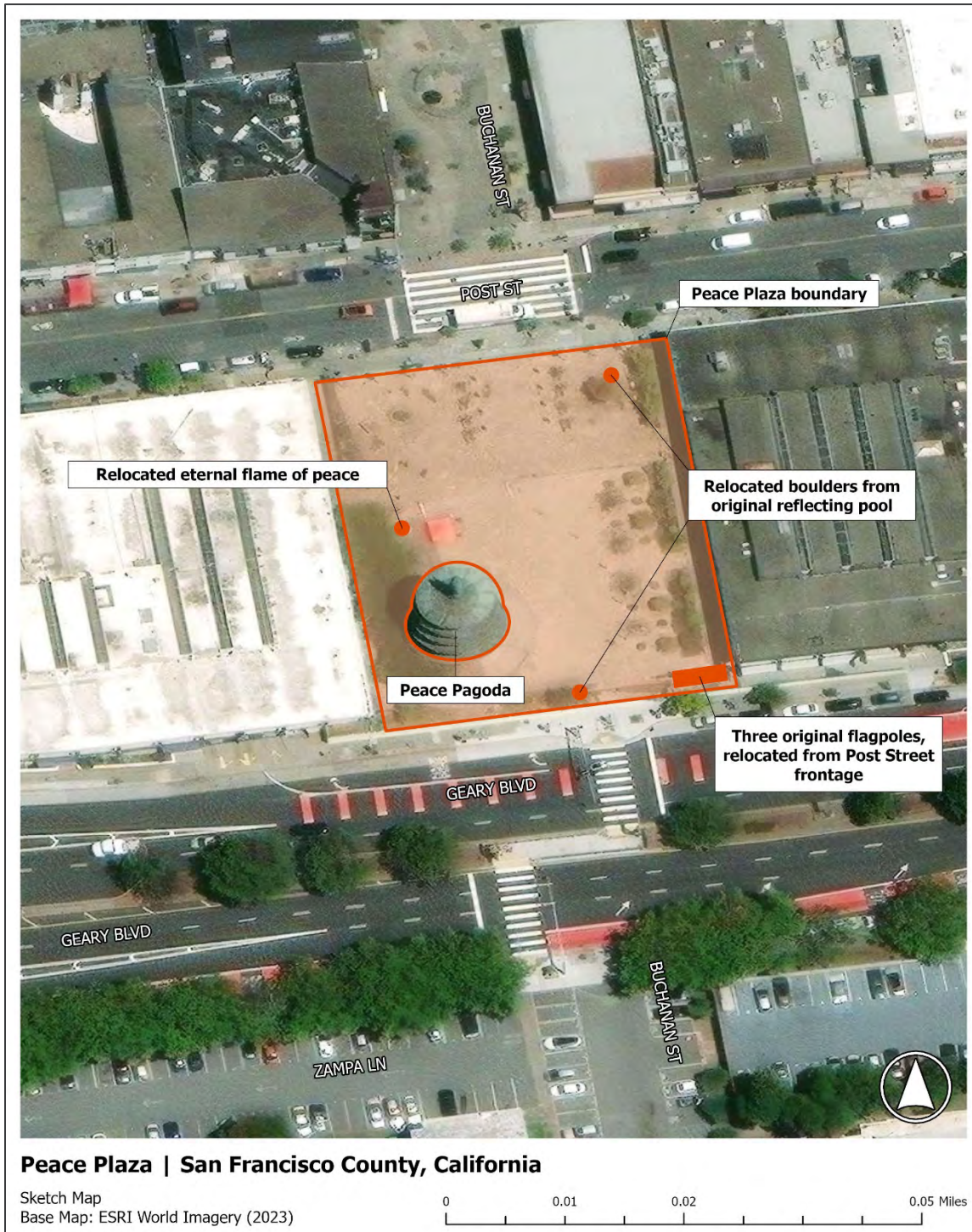
Date: July 13, 2023



Peace Plaza | San Francisco County, California

USGS Topographic Location Map
Quadrangles: San Francisco North
Scale: 1:24,000
Base Map: ESRI USGS The National Map (2022)





Sketch map of the Peace Plaza showing remaining/relocated original features and boundary.

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*Recorded by: Architectural Resources Group

Resource Name or # Peace Plaza

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☒ Continuation ☐ Update

***P3a. Description (continued):**

The following description is excerpted and slightly adapted from the San Francisco Planning Department's *Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report* (April 14, 2015), 7-10.

The Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza stand atop a partially subterranean parking garage. As originally designed, the Peace Pagoda stood within a keyhole-shaped reflecting pool decorated with large stones which held the English and Japanese language dedication plaques for the Peace Pagoda. An eternal flame of peace was also located within the reflecting pool. The current form of Peace Plaza is the result of a 2000-2001 renovation project which removed most of the Plaza's original features. Today the Plaza is characterized by a large, open area featuring pastel, polychrome stone pavers and a variety of landscaping elements, light standards and sculptural elements. Generally speaking, the Plaza is divided into northern and southern halves by a guardrail and concrete steps leading to a sunken plaza located at the south end. Both of these halves feature linear arrangements of planters and light standards.

The eastern edge of Peace Plaza is lined with low concrete planters backed by a wall clad with slate veneer. The landscaping consists primarily of pine trees, bamboo and shrubbery. The west end of the Plaza also features linear concrete planters, although these are arranged on a slight northwest to southeast diagonal. They are planted primarily with cherry trees.

The center of Peace Plaza is aligned with the north-south axis of Buchanan Street. At its northern end along Post Street, this central axis is flanked on either side by three light poles crowned with circular disks. Marking the center of the Plaza's entrance is an obelisk installed in 2005 featuring various bronze bas reliefs which represent the Issei, Nisei and Sansei generational history of Japantown. The monument was built following the passage of SB307, the California Japantown Preservation Pilot Project, and with funds provided by the California State Library's Civil Liberties Public Education Program. Text on the obelisk notes that it is one of three semi-identical landmarks placed in the three remaining Japantowns in San Francisco, San Jose and Los Angeles. The reliefs were created by artists Louis Quaintance and Eugene Daub. A poem entitled "Footsteps lead to destiny" by Janice Mirikitani is also included inscribed on one of the obelisk faces.

Behind this obelisk is a plaque inset on a stone face. It describes the origins and challenges that have confronted San Francisco's Japantown, and was sponsored by the California Japanese American Community Leadership Council and the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California.

Semi-circles of mosaic paving radiate outward from these memorials into the Plaza. To the south of the memorials are two parallel rows of metal light standards inspired by Japanese *tōrō*, or lanterns. These light standards are in turn flanked by parallel rows of raised planters clad with a tiled stone veneer and landscaped with Japanese plum trees.

The entire east end of the Plaza is lined with a concrete wall clad with slate veneer. The northeast quadrant of the plaza includes a square concrete planter with wood bench seating, and two rectangular seating benches clad with a tile veneer. Located nearby is a large boulder that originally stood in the Peace Pagoda's reflecting pool. The southeast quadrant features two parallel lines with an alternating sequence of circular concrete planters, and circular planters ringed by bench seating. A third planting bed at the east end features a serpentine concrete retaining wall. Between the circular seating areas and the Peace Pagoda are four tubular light standards. The northeast and southeast quadrants are separated by a wall with metal guardrail aligned with the walkway and entrance to the East Mall of the Japan Center. At the west end of this guardrail are several boulders, one of which includes a plaque stating: "Japantown Peace Plaza Renovated and Dedicated on this 21st Day of April, 2001 Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. City and County of San Francisco"

The northwest quadrant of Peace Plaza includes circular planters, concrete bench seating and large, sculptural stones. The planter wall at the west end is clad with a stone veneer. The southwest quadrant is accessed via a series of concrete steps. At the west end is the raised platform of the waterfall described above. Behind the rear wall of the waterfall is a linear planting bed landscaped with cherry trees. Concrete bench seating is located adjacent. To the west of this wall is the Kinetsu Center, or West Mall of the Japan Center. To the south of the mall's entry are three circular plaques painted with images related to Japanese history and culture.

The southern edge of Peace Plaza abuts Geary Boulevard. A tall concrete wall and *Tōrō* light standards line the sidewalk. Behind the wall is a planting bed. Located in the southwest quadrant of Peace Plaza, the Peace Pagoda is a reinforced concrete structure, approximately five stories in height and one hundred feet tall. Designed in a Modernist interpretation of a traditional Japanese pagoda form, the circular-plan structure consists of a core of twelve, vertical concrete posts supporting a series of five broad, circular, conical roofs clad in copper plates. Exposed concrete beams, resembling rafters, radiate from the central core to support the conical roofs, which decrease in diameter from 46 to 34 feet as they increase in height. The Pagoda is crowned with a nine-ringed bronze spire, or "*kurin*," surmounted by a golden flaming head, or "*hoshu*," topped with a ball finial. Adjacent to the Peace Pagoda is a rounded concrete wall with a ribbed concrete finish. A dimensional letter sign is affixed to this wall facing Geary Boulevard and reads "Japantown Peace Plaza." The east end of this wall is accessed from Peace Plaza by a metal door.

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Resource Name or # Peace Plaza

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At the southeast corner are concrete entry stairs which rise to meet a wall clad with red-colored tile veneer with an entry portal. Dimensional metal signs with stylized Japanese calligraphy are affixed to both sides of this wall and read: *Hei Wa*, or "Peace." Three flagpoles are located immediately east of the entry stairs. These flagpoles are original to the Plaza, although they have been relocated from their original location fronting Post Street. Immediately west of the portal, within a planting bed, is a boulder that originally stood in a reflecting pool for the Peace Pagoda and was subsequently relocated here.

***B10. Significance** (continued):

In the wake of the 1906 disaster, portions of the Western Addition underwent a rapid demographic shift as displaced residents sought places to live. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

Many of the neighborhood's stately pre-disaster buildings, which had previously functioned as single-family dwellings, were divided into flats and rooms and let to boarders to satisfy the acute housing shortage. As the neighborhood became more densely occupied, it also grew more racially and ethnically diverse and more working class in character. In addition to the Japanese population formerly of Chinatown and South Park who sought new homes in the Western Addition neighborhood, the Jewish population grew, and Mexican Americans, African Americans, Filipinos and other ethnic groups also gravitated to the Western Addition-Fillmore area.

... San Francisco's Japanese population relocated here [the Western Addition] in significant numbers. This process was recorded and encouraged by editorials in *Shin-Sekai* (The New World newspaper, originally a publication of the Japanese YMCA until it split off in 1897), which predicted that rents in the area would soon be forced down as ruined parts of the city were rebuilt. The publication encouraged Japanese to establish a new and permanent community in the Western Addition.

By the time of the 1910 Census, the core area of Japantown, bounded approximately by Bush Street (north), Geary Street (south), Webster Street (west), and Laguna Street (east), was home to more than 50 Japanese-owned commercial establishments, and to most of the 4,700 Japanese residing in the city. The commercial infrastructure included ethnic mainstays such as Japanese grocery stores, importers, and restaurants. Support for the still largely single male population was visible in several Japanese pool halls, residence hotels, and employment agencies. The growing presence of families was reflected in a Japanese kindergarten, a dressmaker, and several midwives.

Japanese names began to appear as property owners in the area in the 1920s, as the Nisei generation took ownership of their family homes and businesses. By 1930, at least 55 parcels were Japanese owned. Prior to American entry into World War II, this number had more than doubled to 122. While some Japanese purchased property and recorded it in the name of their American-born children, many continued to use the convention of land trusts with cooperative partners because of the ongoing political agitation against the Japanese, which included efforts to divest American-born children of Japanese descent of their U.S. citizenship.

As with many other immigrant communities, the residents of Japantown did not announce their ethnic identity with architectural monuments or colorful displays, but rather sought to blend in with the fabric of their adopted country. This fact seems to have perplexed Euro-American residents of San Francisco, possibly because they were comparing the Japanese colony to the Chinese and their more readily identifiable enclave in Chinatown. As pointed out by Donna Graves, most of Japantown's businesses were "operated out of buildings that had been constructed and altered by others and often were originally intended for other uses. These structures, like most found in early 20th century urban ethnic enclaves, did not announce the identities of their immigrant residents – they did not "look Japanese."

WORLD WAR II AND ITS AFTERMATH

Two months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which allowed for the establishment of restricted military zones on the West Coast. At the headquarters of the Western Defense Command at the Presidio of San Francisco, General John L. DeWitt issued a military proclamation that "all enemy aliens and all persons of Japanese ancestry" were subject to military regulation. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

By late March 1942, DeWitt began issuing Civilian Exclusion Orders expelling "all persons of Japanese ancestry, including aliens and non-aliens" from the West Coast military zones. In a little over 4 months, more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese Ancestry were forced from their homes and interned by the government under the guise of national security. Forty years later, after extensive research and testimony, the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians would find that Executive Order 9066 and the internment of Japanese Americans was "a grave injustice" arising from "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership."

The entire Japanese community of San Francisco, both citizens and foreign-born, was ordered to register and eventually report for processing to various sites throughout San Francisco including the Kinmon Gakuen building on Bush Street, the YMCA Building on Buchanan Street, and Raphael Weill School (now Rosa Parks Elementary), from which the last busloads of Japanese Americans departed the City. By April, they were sent to various "Assembly" centers, like Tanforan, a hastily and poorly converted racetrack in San Bruno that was used as a temporary detention camp. From there, they were shipped out to permanent internment camps in rural areas throughout the Western U.S., where they lived under armed guard in temporary housing and surrounded by barbed wire. Most San Francisco residents were relocated to a camp known as Topaz, located near Delta, Utah

Following the war, many Japanese Americans returned to Japantown, which had largely become occupied by wartime defense industry workers. Starting over was a particular hardship for most Japanese American families who did not own property, as temporary housing was often full.... The War Relocation Authority coordinated formal resettlement of San Francisco's Japantown after Proclamation 21 of December 18, 1944 rescinded the West Coast ban on persons of Japanese ancestry. From its San Francisco base, the Northern California WRA office oversaw resettlement of evacuees from San Jose to Santa Rosa up until May of 1946, when the WRA regional office in San Francisco closed ... Approximately 2,500 Japanese resettled in San Francisco in the first months of 1946, nearly half of the pre-war population, and almost two-thirds had arrived by October of that year to begin the complex task of rebuilding individual lives, businesses and community organizations

By 1949, Japantown had regained a lively, if reduced, commercial sector centered at Post and Buchanan streets. A 1948 Evacuation-Resettlement Directory published by the Nichi Bei Times listed over 150 Nikkei businesses and services, down from pre-war listings of more than 400 businesses Nikkei were rebuilding the Japantown community within a neighborhood that had witnessed a dramatic transformation during the war years. The area was still multi-racial, but was now widely known for its African American population, and especially a thriving nightlife supported by Black jazz and blues clubs.

REDEVELOPMENT

The multi-racial, multi-ethnic nature of the Western Addition stood apart from many other San Francisco neighborhoods. The aging and crowded building stock was frequently neglected by absentee landlords, and racial animus hampered efforts by would-be buyers to obtain loans. In just a few years, the influx of war workers had more than quintupled the number of African Americans residing in the city, from approximately 5,000 in 1940 to 32,000 in 1945, with most living in the Western Addition.

As early as 1942, while many of its residents were being interned, Japantown was being targeted for "slum clearance." In April of that year, the *San Francisco News* announced that civic and business leaders "went all out to find a suitable plan that will prevent the Japanese district from turning into the worst slum in the history of the city." ... In 1948, a portion of San Francisco's Western Addition including much of Japantown was selected as one of the first large-scale urban renewal projects in the nation. The National Housing Act of 1949 set forth federal policies designed to address areas of "urban blight," which were defined as neighborhoods with major influxes of new residents, overcrowding, cases of tuberculosis, and populations other than those of European descent—all characteristics of the Japantown-Fillmore area. San Francisco's Planning Department had already begun establishing a case for rebuilding older neighborhoods with maps of blighted areas and a pilot study of redevelopment possibilities for the Western Addition...

The Western Addition fit the needs of city planners and downtown developers, who saw the neighborhood as the best site for new commercial and housing developments that would increase tax revenues and provide new vehicle access through the city, connecting downtown with the middle-class neighborhoods of the Richmond and Sunset districts. By cataloguing the Western Addition's "substandard and slum housing conditions, overcrowding, lack of recreational space and intermixture of deleterious influences," eligibility for federal redevelopment funds was established, and economic and social arguments were made for removing the businesses, residences and residents of the neighborhood.

From its inception, leaders of the ethnic communities that now called the neighborhood home were alarmed and worked to rally opposition to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's plans.

Despite these prophetic voices, and years of delay caused by lawsuits and the complications of developing a plan for relocating residents, the SFRA began acquiring properties in the late 1950s and mass clearance of much of the neighborhood through the use of eminent domain was accomplished within ten years. This undertaking was conducted in two project areas: A-1 and A-2.

The A-1 redevelopment area encompassed an irregular area of 27 blocks, including much of Japantown south of Post Street. The SFRA's Western Addition Project Office was established in the Buchanan YMCA building in 1958 Eight

thousand residents were evicted by the A-1 phase of redevelopment, displacing the neighborhood's multi-ethnic populace without a comprehensive plan for finding new homes. Nearly all of the area's residents rented or leased their homes and commercial establishments before urban renewal and thus received no relocation assistance or compensation. Additionally, only 686 units of the 2,014 new housing units constructed under the SFRA plan were offered at low to moderate rental prices, making it almost impossible for most previous tenants to return to the neighborhood.

Funds from the federal highway program created the new Geary Expressway, which sliced through what had historically been the Japantown-Fillmore neighborhood with its southern border along O'Farrell Street. Hence, the Geary Expressway became a physical and psychological dividing line between the African American community to the south, where public housing projects intended for low-income populations were built, and the more affluent communities of European ancestry to the north, with Japanese Americans located at what Doris Matsumoto described as the "grey area in the middle."

The area where Peace Plaza stands today was, in the early 1950s, a thriving commercial district characterized by shops, restaurants, dwellings, and lodging houses. According to the 1953 city directory, some of the businesses located along the 1600 block of Buchanan Street included Ken's Barber Shop (1603), Lucky Bait Shop (1605), Man Far Low Restaurant (1615), Fuji Hotel (1622), Tosbie's Barber Shop (1629), Mikado Hotel (1645) and the Five Stars Luncheonette (1649). Nearby businesses on the 1600 and 1700 blocks of Post Street included the Tokyo Parlor Restaurant (1669), Spiritual Record Shop (1673), Mt. Trinity Baptist Church (1681), Soko Hardware (1698), Nakagawa Shohinkan Co dry goods (1701), Gosha-Do Books & Stationary (1705), the Nakashima Theatrical Agency (1711) and Minato Japanese Dishes (1715).

THE JAPANESE CULTURAL AND TRADE CENTER

Construction of the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza was a product of the redevelopment of the Western Addition by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA) during the 1960s. As Japanese Americans sought to reestablish themselves in the area during the post-war period, they were again subject to removal by powerful economic interests which viewed the Western Addition as ripe for redevelopment. This included the demolition of hundreds of homes and independent businesses at the heart of Japantown, to be replaced with a new commercial center constructed with corporate financing. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

A prominent feature of SFRA's redevelopment plan for the area was the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center. The first major project undertaken by SFRA director, Justin Herman, the Center was designed to solicit investment from Japan and to create a retail destination that would appeal to San Francisco's tourists. National-Braemar, a firm backed by investors from San Francisco and Hawaii, was selected by SFRA to be the master developer for the large mall complex, with the Center's structures to be operated by four different entities upon completion. In 1962, National-Braemar brought Kintetsu Enterprises Company of America, a new investment arm formed by Japan's Kinki Nippon Railway, into the project. The Center's design, like its funding, was a bi-national project.

In keeping with the SFRAs vision for the neighborhood, the Japan Center would showcase Modern design and materials. Conspicuously, though, its design was also overtly Japanese, which stood in contrast to earlier eras of development when very few buildings in the neighborhood featured any architectural flourishes that announced the ethnic identity of the residents.

The decision to include a pagoda as part of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center's design is credited to Masayuki Tokioka, a Hawaiian financier and President of National-Braemar, developers of the Japan Center. In 1961, seven years before the Peace Pagoda was constructed, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on discussions between San Francisco mayor, George Christopher, and members of the Japanese government about installing a pagoda at the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center. The article mentions Tokioka's involvement, and also shows that even at this early date, the architect Yoshiro Taniguchi was identified as the proposed designer of the Peace Pagoda.

Mayor George Christopher made overtures to the Japanese government this week for the gift of a "Pagoda for Peace," to be put in the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center in the Western Addition. The Mayor said he had learned that Premier Hayato Ikeda and other Tokyo officials had suggested that if San Francisco invited such a gift, the Japanese government would favor it.

The idea of importing a pagoda originated with Masayuki Tokioka, a Japanese born Honolulu banker. He envisioned it as a symbol of Japanese-American friendship in the way that the gift of the Statue of Liberty enhanced Franco-American amity. Mayor Christopher made his approach through a letter to Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

M. Justin Herman, the City's redevelopment director, said the design of the pagoda would be under the direction of Professor Yoshiro Taniguchi, architect for the Japanese Crown Prince's palace. The pagoda would exhibit Japan's historic and contemporary fine art, he said.

Masayuki Tokioka was born in Japan and educated in the United States. According to one source, Tokioka chose the location for the Japan Center because of its historic connection to the Japanese American community. In 1969, the *Nichi Bei Times* reprinted an interview with Masayuki Tokioka that had originally been published in the Honolulu *Star Bulletin*. In it, Tokioka describes the origins of the Japan Center and his inspiration for the Peace Pagoda:

It was in 1960, he recalled, when three influential members of San Francisco's Japanese community came to his office "out of the clear blue sky" and dropped the challenge into his lap. Tokioka said that the center site was the heart of the business district for the Japanese who had settled in the area, known as "Nihon-machi" (Japan town).... According to Tokioka, city officials there wanted to give the Japanese community in San Francisco a chance to develop the site because the scar of the tragic war evacuation remained on the conscience of the city and a center of exchange, they felt, would symbolize that the past was indeed the past. Tokioka said that Japanese groups in San Francisco wanted to undertake the project, but couldn't quite swing it financially. It was at that juncture that Tokioka was approached

Under the terms of the agreement, the city sold the land for a nominal \$1.6 million. A bond was floated and largely underwritten by the Bank of America for a \$3 million underground parking garage for 800 cars. The title to the garage, which runs the length and breadth of the center, is held by the city, but the developers retained the air-rights.

The idea of the pagoda, he [Tokioka] said, grew out of the blistery student uprising in Tokyo in June, 1960, that forced former President Eisenhower to cancel his visit to Japan. As he recalled "how hurt and embarrassed I felt ... The incident made me want to do something to show that the majority—a big majority—of the Japanese people are friends of the Americans." And so it was that "my dream" for a Peace Pagoda was born.

He felt that the symbol could be meaningful only if the Japanese people themselves made the contribution. So keenly did he feel this that he made several trips to Japan to discuss the matter with business and government leaders, including the late Prime Minister Ikeda, who encouraged the project. Donations have come in from various quarters, particularly from the business community. Among the first contributors was industrialist Taizo Ishizaka, general chairman of Osaka's Expo '70 (Osaka and San Francisco are sister cities.)

The design of the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza was completed no later than April 1963. A *San Francisco Chronicle* article published that month included a rendering of the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza, which appears to be very similar to what was eventually built. The article also confirms that many Japanese officials initially supported a more traditional pagoda for the Center. As discussed in the *Chronicle* article:

The plaza, at Post and Buchanan streets, will include a stylish, five ring concrete pagoda designed by a progressive architect, Yoshiro Taniguchi. The plans were announced yesterday by M. Justin Herman, the city's redevelopment director, who has just returned from negotiations in Tokyo on details of the \$14 million cultural center. That ultramodern pagoda was his pet idea. He confided yesterday that when he arrived in Tokyo he was greeted as something of a cultural villain for his campaign to scrap construction of a pagoda with a 1000-year old tradition. He had felt that homely wooden replica of the Daigo-ji Temple in Kyoto would look odd amid the ultramodern décor of the center.

But nobody told him that across the sea the sensitive Japanese were brooding about this affront to their proud history. And, anyway, a Peace Pagoda Construction Committee headed by Kazune Kato, of the Daiwa Bank, had even organized a "pennies-for-pagoda" drive based on the traditional Buddhist shrine.

The Tokyo committee included such big names as Tarzo Ishizaka, president of the Federation of Economic Organizations of Japan, a utilities magnate. During a week of peace talks, Herman said, he persuaded the committee to listen to the creator of the avant-garde pagoda plan: Professor Taniguchi, whose architectural designs include the new palace for the Crown Prince and the Okura Hotel.

"He was able to show them by photographs that the modern pagoda design was derived from a pagoda much older than the Daigo-ji model they were using," Herman said. Taniguchi demonstrated a lineage traceable to the Horyu-ji Temple, which was built at Nara in 607 A.D.—350 years before the Daigo-ji Temple was completed, Herman said. Then came the clincher. Not only was the Horyu-ji concept more ancient, it was also more peace-loving. The committee was so pleased with Taniguchi that they asked him to design the entire "peace plaza" here, Herman said. The plaza will also include a reflection pool, gardens and display areas for Japanese works of art.

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In May 1963, architect Yoshiro Taniguchi prepared a several page narrative describing his design intent for the Peace Pagoda—later reproduced in a 1965 booklet prepared by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. In it he describes what he feels are the key elements of its design: its cylindrical shape, the *kurin*, or spire, and the shape of its reflecting pool. Some elements described by Taniguchi, however, were never realized, such as his plans to cover the interior walls of the first story with mother-of-pearl, as well install a sculpture covered with cultured pearls. As described by the architect:

The Peace Pagoda to be placed in the inner court of the Japanese Cultural and Trade Center in San Francisco has been designed as a proper symbol of Japanese interpretation of the time-honored beauty and, at the same time, as a monumental expression of the real heart of the Japanese people, who sincerely aspire to the firm friendship and good understanding of the people of the United States [I] hope sincerely that the structure will have a congenial appeal to the mind of the American people, inasmuch as the essential spirit of this Pagoda consists in the inmost "Prayer" of human beings to the infinite. The Supreme Existence above us is sure to perform the sacred mission of creating integral peace and harmony by giving her final touch to the top of the Pagoda pointing to Heaven.

The Peace Pagoda lifts up its hundred-feet-high spire to the skies of California. It presents a magnificent view to all esthetically minded people who raise their eyes up to the horizon on the perimeters of San Francisco. The five roofs of the Pagoda are of the round type instead of the usual square shape; and in proportion to the increased height of each storey, the roofs are designed to become smaller in their size. The cylindrical construction of the tower-body will contribute to the sense of stable equilibrium.

The most important part of a pagoda is the *kurin*, or nine ringed spire placed on the topmost roof, which is intended to designate the highest virtue; and every part of the pagoda below *kurin* is to serve as a base of this spire. These rings are made of bronze gilded with gold on the surface. And the *kurin* is given the proper balance by an ornamental ball with a flaming head named *hoshu* as weight for pressing and arranging the rings in good order.

The color of the nine-ringed spire and the decorative weight over it on the topmost roof is gold. Each roof is covered with copper plates on its surface, which is tinged with antique looking green rust. The body of the Pagoda is of the tuned harmony of black and white.

The interior walls on the first story are set with resplendent shells, the mother-of-pearl. And in the center of this story is placed a symbolic image of Peace which is studded with Japanese cultured pearls. A glance must be cast to the clear pool on the foot of this Pagoda. The pool is of the singular form which is named "Zen-po Ko-en" in Japan. The literal translation of this word is "Square-front and Circular-rear shape" ... The idea of this geometrical figure was given from the typical shape of the old burial mounds dedicated to the deceased nobles in the fifth or sixth century The Pagoda will be beautifully reflected in the clear water of the pool; and as night draws on, the whole structure will look extremely picturesque with the illumination shedding its soft light on the Pagoda. It looks as if the Pagoda is carved in relief against the nocturnal sky and floating on water in a fairy land. I should be very happy if I could successfully transplant the authentic "Shibui" flavor [intrinsic aesthetic qualities] of the Japanese historical monument on the soil of San Francisco.

Serious consideration is to be given to the desirable harmony and match of the Pagoda with the surrounding construction in the same area, where Mr. Minoru Yamasaki, one of the most illustrious architects of the United States The cylindrical form of the Pagoda will have its place in the midst of linear straight erections of Mr. Minoru Yamasaki, shimming in with each other by creating an agreeable contrast between rectilinear and circular figures....

The Peace Pagoda is a reinforced concrete structure. The body of it is to be cast by the sliding-form system in the site in San Francisco. The pieces of framework of precast concrete are to be attached to each layer as the corresponding roof. The whole surface of the Pagoda is equipped with various sorts of finishing and decorative materials which will be shipped from Japan. These materials include metal and wooden works and fabrics refined up for more than a thousand years in our history of fine arts and also the advanced estheticism and handicrafts of the contemporary times. The stones and rock to be arranged in the pool and the inner court are to be sent from Japan. The Peace Pagoda is, thus, the very product of technical cooperation between the United States of America and Japan concerning the constructive formula, building materials and decorative patterns of both countries.

Long before construction even began, the Peace Pagoda was being promoted as the defining feature of the Japantown redevelopment. In 1965 the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency published an illustrated pamphlet solely about the Peace Pagoda, extolling the key role it would play in the overall design of the Japan Center.

The Pagoda will form the hub of the new Japanese trade and service area which will include shops, a contemporary theater, a hotel, restaurants, travel services, banking facilities, etc. Contemporary Japanese décor will be used throughout.

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A sizeable portion of this area will be dedicated to formal presentations of the arts, crafts and services of Japan. Hopefully the Pagoda will mark the axis of a neighboring four-block area to be renewed by Japanese-American residences, businessmen and institutions to be known as Nihon-Machi, or "Japanese Town."

The Peace Pagoda was still under construction when the Japan Center was formally dedicated on March 28, 1968. The new \$20 million development included the 172-room Miyako Hotel, a Japanese consulate building and the Kintetsu Shopping Center. The opening included a procession of Shinto priests and the lighting of an eternal flame in Peace Plaza, and was attended by Japanese Ambassador, Takeso Shimoda, and the deputy mayor of Osaka, Yasushi Oshima. The eternal flame was lit from a torch that had been brought by Japan Airlines from the Sumiyoshi taisha, or "Sumiyoshi Grand Shrine," founded in the 3rd century in Osaka. This is the main shrine of all the Sumiyoshi shrines in Japan. The Japan Center dedication was followed by three-days of festivities for the annual Cherry Blossom Festival.

By July of 1968 the tiered roofs were being installed on the Peace Pagoda, while the *kurin*, or spire, was in the process of being cast. The general contractor overseeing the Pagoda's construction was Martinelli Construction Company of San Francisco. The fabrication and installation of the various component pieces required a number of subcontractors. According to an advertisement appearing in the a commemorative edition of the Nichi Bei Times, published in conjunction with the dedication of the Peace Pagoda, these subcontractors included the Berkeley Brass Foundry Company, which cast the bronze *kurin*; C. E. Toland & Son of Oakland, which assembled the *kurin*; Hortie-Van Manufacturing Company of Pasadena, which built the center core of the *kurin*; and Terracon Corporation of Hayward, which supplied the pre-cast concrete for the piers and pagoda roofs.

A partner at Terracon, George Lew, managed the concrete casting. Each of the twelve concrete piers forming the central core of the Pagoda were 65 feet tall, weighed 12 tons, and were made with pre-stressed steel reinforcing rods to enhance their seismic resistance. The circular roofs were pre-cast in forms and covered with copper plating designed to weather into a green patina.

The Peace Pagoda was dedicated and the *kurin* ritually blessed during a ceremony held at Peace Plaza on September 15, 1968. The event was attended by a 70-member delegation from Japan, including members of the Japanese Diet and several ministers. According to an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, more than 1000 persons witnessed the dedication:

The 100-foot-tall pagoda, designed by Dr. Yoshiro Taniguchi, is a \$185,000 gift from Japan to the people of the United States. The Rev. Nicholas M. Iyoya called it a "magnificent testimony to man's fervent hope for peace on earth."

Incense was offered, gongs sounded and rose petals tossed in the air by the nine Buddhist priests as "homage to the buddhas of the universe" San Francisco Mayor, Joseph Alioto, was quoted as calling the ceremony "a day that will live in glory," and characterized the Pagoda as a "magnificent shrine."

THE PEACE PAGODA AND PEACE PLAZA AS CONSTRUCTED

The Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza were constructed above a parking garage accessed from the southeast end of the Kinetsu Center, or West Mall, of the Japan Center. The current configuration of Peace Plaza is substantially different from its original design. The entirety of the design was distinctly Modernist, while simultaneously rooted in traditional Japanese forms. A large pavilion with an adjacent reflecting pool was installed along the northern portion of the Plaza. The pavilion featured a metal roof with flared eaves and was supported on rounded concrete posts. A paved walkway bisected the reflecting pool and included bench seating at the sides. Immediately north of the reflecting pool was a linear strip of landscaping and at least 12 flagpoles arranged in groups on either side of the entry gate.

The central portion of Peace Plaza was paved with slate and entered via a series of steps descending from the center of the pavilion. The Peace Pagoda stood at the southern end of a shallow, keyhole-shaped reflecting pool, reflecting the "Zen-po Ko-en" shape described by Yoshiro Taniguchi. Within the pool, directly north of the Peace Pagoda, was a square concrete pedestal veneered with granite housing an eternal flame of peace. Access to the Pagoda was provided by a granite bridge and steps which crossed the pool from the east to meet stairs leading up to the central core of the Pagoda. Small pedestals or stones appear to have been placed at the base of the piers within the central core of the Pagoda. South of this bridge and within the pool were two large stones brought from Japan. At least one of these appears to have included one of the dedication plaques for the Peace Pagoda. The western and southern edges of the reflecting pool's retaining wall were landscaped with trees and shrubbery.

The south end of Peace Plaza adjacent to Geary Boulevard was marked by a large concrete wall with twin concrete stairs rising toward the eastern end. Within the Plaza, the area adjacent to the stairs included a raised planter landscaped with shrubbery and a few trees.

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SUBSEQUENT REDEVELOPMENT IN JAPANTOWN

The A-1 Redevelopment was followed by the A-2 phase, approved in 1965. The A-2 project area encompassed a larger portion of Fillmore Street and the surrounding blocks, and led to the displacement of approximately 13,000 persons. While much of the A-1 Redevelopment was completed relatively quickly, the A-2 Redevelopment was even more divisive and would take nearly 25 years to fully complete. As related in the *Japantown Historic Context Statement*:

Planning for the A-2 phase of redevelopment began even before ground was broken on Japan Center, and encompassed an even larger area of seventy blocks and 277 acres surrounding the A-1 area and extending from Bush to Grove streets and from Broderick Street to Van Ness Avenue. As the SFRA announced plans for the launching of the A-2 phase, community members who had witnessed the ongoing mass evictions and clearance of the neighboring A-1 area became concerned and alarmed at the possibility of the same occurring in the remainder of Japantown. SFRA director, Justin Herman, stated his commitment to preserving existing buildings in the project area “as much as possible.” In part at the urging of the SFRA, the United Committee for the Japantown Community (UCJC) was formed in 1962 with over 200 members. The group’s “Statement of Policy” included retention of Japanese American residents and businesses as the highest priority. After negotiations with the SFRA, the UCJC formed the Nihonmachi Community Development Corporation (NCDC) in 1964, which became responsible for “allocating development sites to its members, undertaking the financing and development of shared facilities, [and] coordinating community interests” with the Agency. “Nihonmachi” became the formal designation for the four-block area bounded by Webster, Sutter, Bush and Laguna streets.

The architectural team of Rai Y. Okamoto and Van Bourg/Nakamura was selected by the SFRA from a list of consultants drafted by the UCJC to prepare concept plans envisioning a new “village-scale” development and a community center for Nihonmachi. Okamoto and Van Bourg/Nakamura’s urban design study for Nihonmachi describes “the wishes of the local citizens” for an environment characterized by an “intimate scale of buildings and spaces.”

These objectives were clearly a response to the massive scale of Japan Center and its erasure of historic Japantown. The report devoted several pages to discussing the implications of the SFRA and UCJC’s expressed desire that “ethnic character” be encouraged wherever possible. Rather than propose that particular eras or styles of Japanese design be the model for a new Nihonmachi, the authors listed aspects of traditional and contemporary design in Japan as “critical areas where sensitivity and good judgment should be applied.” Attention to Japanese use of materials, structure, space, modularity, roofs and gardens by “gifted architects and landscape architects” would “serve the special needs of a Nihonmachi.”

Not surprisingly, Buchanan Mall, the central component of the A-2 phase, designed by Okamoto’s firm in the 1970s and completed in 1976, reflected these qualities. The central plaza was framed by two-story commercial structures that referred to traditional Japanese villages through scale, massing and decorative patterns on the facades. Okamoto invited sculptor Ruth Asawa to create two fountains that punctuated Okamoto’s “cobblestone river” as it meandered from a decorative gate at Sutter Street through the center of the Buchanan Mall and into the Peace Plaza of Japan Center across Post Street. Asawa’s Origami Fountains, like the architecture surrounding them, echoed Japanese cultural traditions in modernist form. Asawa also added bas-reliefs to cast concrete benches along the mall – the panels, created with local children, depicted figures and scenes from Japanese folk tales.

Van Bourg/Nakamura and Okamoto advised that “the retention of existing commercial enterprises together with selected new activities” would create the optimum mix for achieving neighborhood and SFRA goals. Ultimately, redevelopment dramatically raised property values, and increased rents prevented many small businesses that previously served the neighborhood from returning to Japantown after being displaced for construction. Newspapers at that time reported property taxes tripling in areas adjacent to the new Japan Cultural and Trade Center. As more and more affordable housing and small family businesses were removed to make way for hotels and larger businesses, the tightly woven historic fabric of the neighborhood was further unraveled.

ALTERATIONS TO PEACE PLAZA

Not long after Peace Plaza was constructed, problems became evident with water leaking from the reflecting pools. Historic photographs indicate that even as early as 1971 the reflecting pools were often kept dry. A memo prepared by SFRA Executive Director, Edward Helfeld, noted that:

“due to poor construction, the plaza area had poor drainage, when the pools were filled or gardens were watered, the water would leak into the garden below.”

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During the mid-1980s ownership of the Japan Center changed hands, leading to speculation that portions of Peace Plaza—which was not publicly owned at the time—might be developed for commercial purposes. This eventually led to the City acquiring the Plaza. As discussed in the memo prepared by Edward Helfeld:

In the mid-1980's National-Braemar, Inc. sold its interest in the Japan Center to others in connection with the bankruptcy proceedings of its parent company – Hawaii-based Manoa Finance Co. This included the sale of the non-city owned portion of Peace Plaza.

The subsequent owners stated that they had no current plans for the Plaza but felt that it was a “buildable piece of property.” However, a community newspaper revealed that in discussions with the new owners they had indicated that they wanted to construct a 8,500 square foot commercial facility on a portion of the Plaza including the stage area used for community performances. Although any change in use required the approval of the Agency Commission, no such plans were ever presented to the Agency

Nevertheless, the statement by the new owner galvanized the Nihonmachi [Japantown] community into action to preserve the Plaza as permanent open space. At the urging of the Nihonmachi community, on June 3, 1985, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution urging the Agency to preserve the Plaza as a permanent open space and that resolution was subsequently signed by Mayor Dianne Feinstein. In the light of this resolution and also at the urging of the community, on June 25, 1985, the Agency Commission adopted a resolution reaffirming its position that the Plaza remain permanent open space. Because of concerns that a subsequent Redevelopment Commission could change this policy, the community sought public ownership of the Plaza.

In 1987, the City's Recreation and Park Commission voted unanimously to undertake eminent domain proceedings against the owner of Japan Center Peace Plaza. As noted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*: “The Peace Pagoda, which towers over the plaza in Japan Town, was given to the city many years ago. The city has been negotiating to buy the surrounding plaza from owner Sinclair Louie, but Louie reportedly wants to keep a portion of the plaza to develop.”

The Japantown community rallied in support of public ownership, and “after a long struggle, in 1989, the Nihonmachi Community was able to persuade the City Recreation and Park Department to buy the Plaza as permanent open space.” Though publicly owned, ongoing problems with water leaking from the Plaza into the garage below led to the permanent drainage of the reflecting pools and the removal of all landscaping in 1990.

In 1991, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published an article that noted a nonprofit group, Friends of Japan Town Peace Plaza, was in the process of raising funds to restore portions of the Plaza:

The [restoration] scheme would bring back a Japanese-style garden, designed by architect Kimio Kimura, of bonsai trees and native California plants amid a landscape of boulders and gravel. The keyhole-shaped pagoda pool would be converted to a garden and walkway, which could require removing the Peace Flame inside the pool. An 18-foot high wall enclosing the greenery would double as seating for visitors, and new drainage for the garden would be hooked up by the city.

At the request of the Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza, the Redevelopment Agency Commission's 1994-1995 budget included \$600,000 from the tax increment funds for renovations to Peace Plaza. The funding was to be coordinated through a resolution by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors stating that redevelopment funds will “eliminate blight upon the surrounding area.” In other words, redevelopment funds were now being allocated to rehabilitate a blighted redevelopment, then only sixteen years old.

By March 1995, Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza had retained HOK Architects (Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum) to rehabilitate the Plaza. Later that same year, it became evident that the leakage of water from the Plaza into the garage beneath it remained a serious concern. This included leaking at drainage pipes and other penetrations into the garage area, as well as evidence of widespread leaking through cracks in the garage ceiling. Various memos, such as that prepared by Hirsch, Wright & Associates, Roofing & Waterproofing Consultants in September 1995, detail some of the issues. In describing the previous attempts to alleviate the leaking, they noted the new waterproofing membrane had been placed over old, and that new concrete had been encapsulated between layers of membrane—neither of which were considered best practices.

It was decided later in the year that The Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza would continue to proceed with the rehabilitation project, but would include the costs for repairing the leakage in the overall project costs. HOK was directed to value engineer the project to accommodate leakage repair.

The rehabilitation project continued to languish until June 1998, when members of the Japantown community requested assistance from San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown. Allen Okamoto, Chair of the Friends of Japantown Peace Plaza, noted that \$800,000 was

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then available, and asked the mayor to push the renovation project forward. A memo from the meeting states that Mayor Brown related that Peace Plaza was “one of his favorite places to go in the neighborhood,” and that he had announced his candidacy “from this very spot.”

In May 2000, the San Francisco Examiner reported that the SFRA was on the verge of officially closing Western Addition A-1 as a designated redevelopment area. A photo accompanying the article shows a new wall and stairs located along Geary Boulevard, described as “one of the final projects of redevelopment that has received mixed reviews.”

Construction of the new wall along Geary Boulevard appears to have coincided with the commencement of the rehabilitation of Peace Plaza. According to Allen Okamoto, the rehabilitation project was carried out by the Department of Public Works (DPW), with the architect, design and materials chosen by DPW. It was this project that resulted in the current appearance of Peace Plaza.

During the 2000-2001 renovation, two large stones, or boulders, which previously stood in the Peace Pagoda’s reflecting pool were relocated. One is located near the northeast corner of the Plaza adjacent to Post Street. This stone originally held the English language dedication plaque for the Peace Pagoda. Another boulder is located in the southeast quadrant of Peace Plaza in a planting bed adjacent to the red-colored tiled wall near the stairs entering Peace Plaza from Geary Boulevard.

Since that time, the most prominent addition to Peace Plaza is the obelisk fronting the Post Street entrance to Peace Plaza. It was installed in 2005 as part of a project to honor the historic heritage of California’s three remaining Japantowns. Three monuments were built following the passage of SB307, the California Japantown Preservation Pilot Project, and with funds provided by the California State Library’s Civil Liberties Public Education Program and funds from Proposition 40. Each landmark stands nine feet high and its faces depict the Issei pioneers, World War II incarceration, and current community life. The San Francisco landmark varies slightly from the others in that its depiction of community life includes an image of the Peace Pagoda. San Francisco’s landmark was dedicated in June 2005, while the landmark for San Jose was installed in the fall of 2005 in front of the Issei Memorial. The Los Angeles landmark was unveiled at the Union Center for the Arts in Little Tokyo in August 2006.

ARCHITECTURAL INFLUENCES

As originally designed and constructed, the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza were overtly Modernist, yet simultaneously rooted in traditional Japanese architecture and aesthetics. To provide context for this blending of influences, the following explores the advent of Modern architecture in Japan as an influence on Yoshiro Taniguchi.

The Advent of Modern Architecture in Japan

In ascribing influences to the design of the Peace Pagoda, it is also useful to understand the origins of Modern architecture in Japan, which represented a break from traditional methods in use for more than a millennium. As noted by Udo Kultermann in *New Japanese Architecture*, “all traditional Japanese architecture is fundamentally an architecture of wood.” This was both a factor of the country’s forestry resources and frequent earthquakes—but just as importantly of the Japanese affinity for nature. In addition to timber framing, wood products were employed in a variety of ways: as roof shingles, paper screens, plank flooring, etc. The overall aesthetic emphasized simplicity, fluid function, and a desire to showcase the inherent beauty of natural materials.

The traditional construction methods used in Japan remained relatively unchanged until the mid-19th century, when Japan was forced to trade with foreign powers—most notably following the 1853 expedition into Tokyo harbor led by Commodore Matthew Perry of the U.S. Navy. Japan’s trade and interchange with foreign powers increased dramatically during the Meiji period (1868-1912), as the country embarked on a rapid course of industrialization. This necessitated the need for new architectural methods and engineering expertise. As related by Kultermann, “The light, traditional, Japanese building methods with wood could not be applied to the construction of railway stations, city office blocks and factories. Architects were, therefore, commissioned from Europe, who used their own materials and methods.” At the same time, the traditional arts and architecture of Japan made a strong impression in the West, particularly on the Arts and Crafts movement and its emphasis on natural materials and ‘honest’ construction.

Initially, the prominent buildings designed by westerners in Japan largely copied neoclassical European models and frequently employed masonry construction. Such designs were typical of the British architect, Josiah Conder, who for many years also taught a new generation of Japanese architects at the Imperial College of Engineering. As one critic has noted, “most of these architects, and official Japan as well, were caught in the vicious circle of 19th-century architectural pomposity, deluded by ... a false and meaningless version of what Europe had originated and experienced centuries ago.”

If the initial influence of Western architects was tuned to Neoclassical European models, the Japanese would also absorb the influences of the European avant-garde. The late 1910s and early 1920s in Japan were a particularly formative period. Some of the major forces at play were debates between the *Kozoha*, or “structure advocates,” who felt that good architecture should flow from scientific principles, and those who felt that architecture was an expression that encompassed both structure and beauty.

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In 1920, a group of architecture students at Tokyo Imperial University founded *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai*, or the Secessionist Architectural Society, a name inspired by the influential Vienna Secessionist movement of the turn of the century. As described by Rosa and Lepik, "The organization came to be perceived as a neo-Secessionist group that rose against the teaching of traditional, historical European building style. Its real inspiration was German Expressionism that in the years after World War I was the most powerful force in German architectural life."

One of the *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai*'s founders, Ishimoto Kikuji, travelled to Germany in 1922 and became the first Japanese architect to work with Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school.⁴⁸ During this same period, Frank Lloyd Wright was working in Tokyo on the Imperial Hotel where he associated with a number of Japanese architects and draftsmen. A pupil of Wright's, Antonin Raymond, arrived in Tokyo in 1919 to assist with construction of the hotel and would soon establish an influential and longstanding practice in Japan.

Perhaps no other event was more important to the development of modern Japanese architecture than the great Kanto earthquake of 1923 which set off devastating fires in Tokyo and the port city of Yokohama. The earthquake clearly demonstrated the seismic and fire resistant qualities of reinforced concrete construction, including the survival of Wright's Imperial Hotel. As such, the ideas of the *Kozoha* "structure advocates" resonated with many Japanese. In 1923, Japanese Consul General Oyama stated, "The nations of the world will go on progressing. We shall rebuild Tokio more as a modern city. Our architecture is not as safe in a big city. We must have reinforced concrete and the stable designs of the modern engineer." Nevertheless, during the rebuilding, some of the major buildings constructed in Tokyo were designed by members of the *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai*, including the Shirokiya Department Store, by Ishimoto Kikuji, and the Central Telegraph Office by Yamada Mamoru, both completed in 1925.

The members of the *Bunriha Kenchiku Kai* continued to hold exhibitions through 1928, though increasingly Japanese architectural ideas focused on rational architecture, as espoused by the *Nihon Kokusai Kenchiku Kai* (Japan International Architectural Association), founded in 1929. During this period a number of Japanese architects traveled to Europe to train with leading figures in Modernist architecture. These included Iwao Yamawaki and Bunzo Yamaguchi, both of whom worked with Walter Gropius between 1928 and 1932, and Junzo Sakakura who worked with Le Corbusier between 1928 and 1936. These architects all returned to practice in Japan, bringing with them new ideas, as well as books and journals.

European Modernists also visited Japan, including Richard Neutra in 1930, and the German Expressionist, Bruno Taut in 1933. Ironically, both Neutra and Taut gravitated to traditional Japanese design, with Neutra mourning that it "will quickly disappear without trace, when the new construction methods and materials are enlisted, like concrete, steel, glass windows."

Yoshiro Taniguchi, Architect

It is during this period of architectural ferment that the architect of the Peace Pagoda, Yoshiro Taniguchi (1904-1979), received his degree in architecture and began practicing. Mr. Taniguchi was born into a family of prominent ceramics makers in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan. He entered the architectural department of Tokyo University in 1925 and graduated in 1928. Among his classmates were city planner Kunio Maekawa, structural technician Fugaku Yokoyama, and architect Junzo Sakakura. In time, their various careers would prove so productive that they earned the nickname "the golden generation."

In 1931, Taniguchi became an assistant professor at Tokyo University. The following year he received considerable acclaim for his design of a Hydraulics Laboratory for the Tokyo Institute of Technology. Devoid of any ornamentation, the design of the Laboratory was decidedly Modernist and exhibited many hallmarks of what would come to be known as the "International Style," a name coined for a seminal exhibition on Modern Architecture held at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932.

In 1938 Taniguchi traveled to Germany to work on the Japanese Embassy in Berlin where, according to Hiroki Onobayashi, he was greatly impressed with both the architecture of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Classical architecture. In 1942, Taniguchi received the Japan Institute of Architects' Arts and Science Prize, and the following year received his doctoral degree in engineering and became a professor at Tokyo Industrial University. During this early period of his career, Taniguchi was frequently associated with the designs for International Style institutional buildings. These included several buildings for Keio University in Tokyo, including the Yochisha Main Building (1937), and later the Student Hall and Third School Building for Keio University's Mita campus (1949). The latter two were awarded the Architectural Institute of Japan's Prize in 1949.

In 1947, Taniguchi designed a memorial hall for the author Toson Shimazaki in the town of Magome, Gifu Prefecture. The design of this building blended the form of a traditional Japanese house with contemporary architecture, a feature that would become a hallmark of Taniguchi's subsequent career—especially in the design of memorials and cultural monuments. Indeed, Taniguchi's work during the 1950s, though varied, was marked by a string of important memorial commissions that earned him widespread acclaim.

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In 1952, Taniguchi joined Japan's Cultural Properties Specialists Council. That same year, sculptor Isamu Noguchi teamed with Taniguchi on the design of a faculty room and sculpture garden at Tokyo University's Mita campus called *Shin Banraisha*, or "New Building of Welcome." Described as a "landmark of postwar modernism in Japanese art and architecture," and a "milestone in 20th-century Japanese cultural life," *Shin Banraisha* was designed to honor Noguchi's father, Yone Noguchi, a Japanese poet and instructor at the university. Of interest, Yone Noguchi had lived in San Francisco between 1893 and 1897, where he published two books of poetry.

Following his work on *Shin Banraisha*, Taniguchi designed a number of additional monuments, including a memorial for poet Kyukin Susukida (1956); a memorial for pianist Nobu Koda (1958); a memorial for author Mokutaro Kinoshita (1958); a memorial for Japanese Prime Minister Kei Hara (1959); and the Chidorigafuchi War Memorial (1959). The latter was based on the shape of a Buddhist temple in Kyoto known as the Rokkaku-dō for its hexagonal shape.

By this time, Taniguchi had earned a reputation as "a link between the newer school of modern architects and the more conservative school that based its work more directly on Japanese vernacular traditions." It is abundantly clear that Taniguchi was interested in traditional Japanese architecture during this period. In 1955 he authored "Today's Focus on the History of Japanese Art" for an exhibit at the National Museum of Art. The following year he wrote an article for Japan Quarterly entitled "The Traditional Japanese House and its Contemporary Significance." He also published a book about his impressions of the Shugakuin Imperial Villa in Kyoto, of which he said: "These ideas continue to impress people for many years to come. Such a power may be attributed to the life of beautiful designs expressed in the formative art of the past."

Whereas with one hand Taniguchi was interested in designing memorials that captured deep, historic cultural tones, he was also able to make monuments of raw industry. In 1956 he designed the Chichibu Cement Factory No. 2, described "a masterly example of the use of iron and concrete." Writing in Architectural Review, Hiroki Onobayashi states that Taniguchi's "use of simple clear forms and rows of columns in some parts of the buildings, and the buildings' proportions suggest they are actually a part of a background of Renaissance spirit and principle. It is true that Le Corbusier and the modern architecture influenced Taniguchi, but he is also in sympathy with Classical, particularly Renaissance, architecture."

At the close of the 1950s, Taniguchi designed one of his most famed works, the *Tōgū-gosho*, or palace for the Japanese Crown Prince, Akihito, at the Imperial Akasaka Estate in Tokyo (1959). As described by Hiroki Onobayashi, "Rows of columns and a placement centering on a pond like those in the mansions of medieval aristocracy characterize this palace ... On the interior the structural members are clearly exposed in a rational architectural expression." In his work on the Togu Palace, Taniguchi used devices that would be repeated in his designs for the Peace Pagoda, including the use of a reflecting pool with islands of stone, as well as a flat bridge and steps.

Fresh from the acclaim for his work on the Palace, and with his reputation for building memorials and monuments, it is not difficult to understand why Taniguchi was a natural choice as architect for the Peace Pagoda. Writing in 1960, Udo Kultermann stated:

Yoshiro Taniguchi must be regarded as one of the most widely known, and, in the best sense, popular architects in Japan, whose work can by no means be described as avant-gardiste. Conservative would be a better term.... Taniguchi is also well known for his writings and has made a name for himself as a designer of tombs, monuments and memorials which are all exquisite in themselves and suited to their surroundings.

In 1961 Taniguchi was awarded by the Japan Academy of Arts and the following year was asked to join the organization. His work during this decade included a number of prominent institutional and commercial projects, including the Hotel Okura in Tokyo (1962), the Yamatane Art Museum (1965), and the lobby of the Imperial Theatre in 1966. He was also promoted to Professor Emeritus of Tokyo Industrial University in 1965. Taniguchi would close out the decade with the design of the Toyokan wing of the Tokyo National Museum (1968), and a redesign for the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (1969). A contemporary article in *The Japan Architect* offered Taniguchi high praise: "Not only is he today one of the leading architects of the nation, he also occupies a unique position as a representative artist-architect of highly literary ideas. He is also known as a writer, and several of his many essays have won awards."

During the final decade of the architect's life, architectural bibliographies indicate he remained active. This included collaborative work on the Kanazawa Sky Building and the Hotel Okura in Amsterdam, as well as a guest house annex for the Togu Palace and a Cemetery for the Temple Josen-ji. In 1973 he was awarded the Order of Cultural Merits for "his work in preserving the Japanese style in construction." Taniguchi died of cancer at a Tokyo hospital in February 1979, and it appears his only commission built in the United States was the Peace Pagoda. His son, Yoshio Taniguchi (1937-) is also a prominent architect, best known for his redesign of the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 2004.

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In some respects, Taniguchi's career during this period was symbolic of a larger trend in Japanese post-war architecture—that of the need to find meaningful cultural expression while still using contemporary materials. As described by Udo Kultermann in 1960:

A new recognition is emerging in structural techniques of the particular "Japaneseness" of Japan, and this has led to a critical attitude toward Western developments. In concrete frame construction—although often reflecting recent works by Le Corbusier—forms have been devised essentially suited to the Japanese climate, which correspond better to their traditions than the functionalist designs of the twenties. It is characteristic that today not only one side of Japanese tradition, that of the tea house and of the palace of Katsura is considered important, but also the other, recorded in the majestic temples and towers of the Nara period. The one-sided approach to building, which was a product of a European attitude of mind, has been overcome in Japan, and a complete expression of the innate character and spirit of the peoples is now sought.

EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following section evaluates the Peace Plaza to determine whether it meets the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The evaluation language below is excerpted and slightly adapted from the 2015 *Peace Pagoda Draft Designation Report* (pages 58-61), which evaluated the resource against local criteria that are closely based upon National Register criteria. ARG agrees with the finding of that report relative to the Peace Plaza.

National Register of Historical Resources Evaluation

The following section evaluates the subject property to determine whether it meets the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must demonstrate significance under one or more of the following criteria:

- Criterion A (Events): Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Criterion B (Persons): Properties that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Criterion C (Design/Construction): Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Criterion D (Information Potential): Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

National Register Criterion A

[The] Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza are located in what was historically the heart of San Francisco's *Nihonjinmachi*, or "Japanese people's town." Founded in the aftermath of the 1906 Earthquake, the community prospered despite restrictive policies and racist sentiment. Forcibly removed from their homes during World War II, the residents of Japantown nevertheless returned to the neighborhood and within a few years had made great strides to reestablish their community.

Almost immediately, though, the neighborhood—which was then the most ethnically and racially diverse in San Francisco—was targeted for redevelopment. As acknowledged by the Redevelopment Agency itself, "the removal of Japanese American residents and commercial establishments from this area so soon after returning from World War II concentration camps is known by some in the Community as the "Second Evacuation."

The heart of Japantown was demolished and divided by Redevelopment Project A-1. The widening of Geary Boulevard sliced the neighborhood in two, creating what the SFRA called a "barren corridor between massive concrete walls." In place of the neighborhood's shops, hotels, restaurants, and homes rose the new blocks-long Japanese Cultural and Trade Center which, despite its overt associations with Japanese identity, was not an organic product of neighborhood. More upheaval would follow with Redevelopment Project A-2, leading to years of bitterness and resentment.

Although the Peace Pagoda and Peace Plaza stood at the very center of the redevelopment, they also stood apart. Unlike other elements of the project, their construction was funded through donations. They were devoted not to the commercial, but the contemplative. The open space at Peace Plaza became a natural gathering place for community events and cultural celebrations—as well as community protest. Thus, despite its connection to redevelopment, Peace Plaza was reclaimed as a focal point for the community, with the Peace Pagoda its visual landmark. As with its historical antecedents, the Peace Pagoda marks the axis mundi, serving as a sacred shaft, or even a lightning rod, that fixes sacred ground in Japantown's history. On it can be projected the stories of the neighborhood's birth, the horrors of World War II—both at home and abroad, the perseverance of a community, and friendship between nations.

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For these reasons, Peace Plaza appears significant [under National Register Criterion A] for its association with the redevelopment of Japantown; the period of significance is 1968, the year the plaza was completed.

National Register Criterion B

Research did not identify persons directly associated with the subject property who would be considered historically significant at the local, state, or national levels. As such, the property does not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

National Register Criterion C

After significant modifications to Peace Plaza in the early 2000s, the open space retains only a few features from Taniguchi's original design: two boulders (relocated within the plaza from their original location in the reflecting pool), the eternal flame of peace (also relocated from its original location within the reflecting pool), and the Peace Pagoda. Thus, Peace Plaza no longer embodies the distinctive characteristics of its original Modern design, and is not representative of the work of master architect Yoshiro Taniguchi. As such, Peace Plaza does not meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

National Register Criterion D

Criterion 4 pertains to the potential for a resource to provide information on pre- and/or post-contact history and is generally applied to archaeological resources. No component of Peace Plaza appears to fill a known data gap related to the history of redevelopment in Japantown that is not otherwise documented in available historical sources. Therefore, the property does not appear to meet the threshold for significance under this criterion.

Integrity Assessment

An assessment of Peace Plaza's integrity is presented below, relative to its Criterion A significance and 1968 period of significance.

Peace Plaza has been substantially modified since its original design and construction. Several key elements of the plaza's original design were removed, including the reflecting pool and pavilion adjacent to Post Street. The site wall along Geary Street was also modified and a new wall constructed. The eternal flame of peace was moved from the reflection pool and enclosed behind a glass block in a wall along the west side of the plaza. Though the plaza retains integrity of Location and Setting, the modifications completed in the early 2000s have resulted in a lack of integrity of Design, Workmanship, and Materials and diminished integrity of Feeling and Association. While features remain within the plaza that forge a close connection to the cultural heritage of Japantown, it does not appear that enough of the 1960s-era design remains to specifically convey the significant historic context of Japantown's post-World War II redevelopment by the SFRA working in tandem with developer National-Braemar. For these reasons, this evaluation finds that Peace Plaza retains insufficient sufficient integrity to convey its significance under Criterion A for its 1968 period of significance. Therefore, the property is ineligible for listing in the National Register as an individual resource.

Conclusion

As described above, though Peace Plaza is significant for its association with redevelopment in Japantown, it does not retain the level of integrity necessary for inclusion in the National Register. Consequently, ARG recommends that the subject property is not eligible for listing in the National Register and does not qualify as a historic property for the purposes of Section 106 review.

***D7. References** (continued):

San Francisco Planning Department. *Peace Pagoda & Peace Plaza Draft Article 10 Designation Report*, April 14, 2015.

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*P5. Photographs (continued):



Figure 1. View southeast from Post Street frontage.
Source: ARG, June 2023



Figure 2. View east from Post Street frontage.
Source: ARG, June 2023

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Figure 3. View southwest from northeast corner of plaza, original (relocated) boulder in foreground.
Source: ARG, June 2023



Figure 4. View toward southeast corner of plaza from center walkway, relocated flagpoles in background.
Source: ARG, June 2023

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Figure 5. Wall and stairs along south boundary of plaza, taken from Geary Boulevard.
Source: ARG, June 2023



Figure 6. Wall and stairs along south boundary of plaza, along Geary Boulevard, taken from southeast corner of plaza. Source:
ARG, June 2023

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Figure 7. View toward Peace Pagoda and southwest corner of plaza, view from central walkway.
Source: ARG, June 2023



Figure 8. Fountain at right and Peace Pagoda, view south.
Source: ARG, June 2023

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Figure 9. Signage along east wall of fountain and glass block enclosing eternal flame of peace.
Source: ARG, June 2023

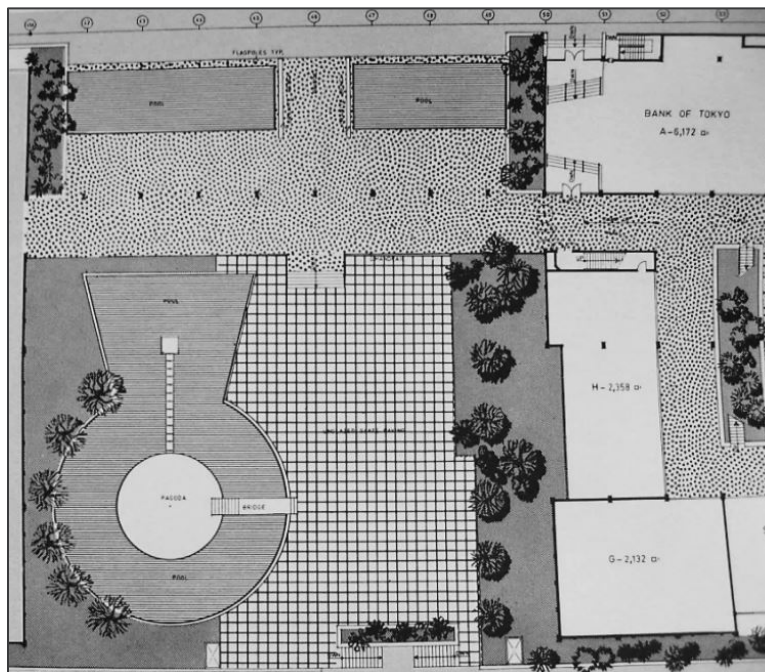


Figure 8. Plan of Peace Plaza, as shown in a ca. 1970 brochure, "Nihonmachi," published by National-Braemar, Inc.
Source: Collections of the San Francisco Office of Investment & Infrastructure

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Figure 9. Circa 1970s postcard view looking south across Post Street toward Peace Plaza and the Peace Pagoda.
The ornamental wooden gate is a yagura, or wooden tower
Source: Sanfranciscodays.com



Figure 10. Circa 1970s view looking east of the reflecting pool and Pavilion fronting Peace Plaza at Post Street
Source: San Francisco Public Library Historical Photo Collection, AAB-9232



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

CEQA Categorical Exemption Determination

PROPERTY INFORMATION/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Address		Block/Lot(s)
REC & PARK: JAPANTOWN PEACE PLAZA - 1610 GEARY BLVD.		0700022, 0700035, 0700037
Case No.		Permit No.
2019-000895ENV		
<input type="checkbox"/> Addition/ Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition (requires HRE for Category B Building)	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Project description for Planning Department approval. Renovation will fully remedy the leaking water to an MTA- owned garage below. The renovation will fully remedy this issue and provide a re-invigorated public space for the community. The renovation will include waterproofing, new planting, shade structures, paving, seating, lighting, and potential structural reinforcement of the plaza and/or Peace pagoda (if deemed necessary). The new design seeks to provide the community with more functional access to the plaza, both for everyday and special event use, while harnessing the symbolism that the plaza holds within the neighborhood, city and region.		

STEP 1: EXEMPTION CLASS

Note: If neither class applies, an <i>Environmental Evaluation Application</i> is required.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Class 1 - Existing Facilities. Interior and exterior alterations; additions under 10,000 sq. ft.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Class 3 - New Construction. Up to three new single-family residences or six dwelling units in one building; commercial/office structures; utility extensions; change of use under 10,000 sq. ft. if principally permitted or with a CU.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Class 32 - In-Fill Development. New Construction of seven or more units or additions greater than 10,000 sq. ft. and meets the conditions described below: (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations. (b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than 5 acres substantially surrounded by urban uses. (c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered rare or threatened species. (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING USE ONLY
<input type="checkbox"/>	Class ____

STEP 2: CEQA IMPACTS

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER

If any box is checked below, an *Environmental Evaluation Application* is required.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality: Would the project add new sensitive receptors (specifically, schools, day care facilities, hospitals, residential dwellings, and senior-care facilities within an Air Pollution Exposure Zone? Does the project have the potential to emit substantial pollutant concentrations (e.g., backup diesel generators, heavy industry, diesel trucks, etc.)? (refer to EP_ArcMap > CEQA Catex Determination Layers > Air Pollution Exposure Zone)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazardous Materials: If the project site is located on the Maher map or is suspected of containing hazardous materials (based on a previous use such as gas station, auto repair, dry cleaners, or heavy manufacturing, or a site with underground storage tanks): Would the project involve 50 cubic yards or more of soil disturbance - or a change of use from industrial to residential? If yes, this box must be checked and the project applicant must submit an Environmental Application with a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. <i>Exceptions: do not check box if the applicant presents documentation of enrollment in the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) Maher program, a DPH waiver from the Maher program, or other documentation from Environmental Planning staff that hazardous material effects would be less than significant (refer to EP_ArcMap > Maher layer).</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation: Does the project create six (6) or more net new parking spaces or residential units? Does the project have the potential to adversely affect transit, pedestrian and/or bicycle safety (hazards) or the adequacy of nearby transit, pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Archeological Resources: Would the project result in soil disturbance/modification greater than two (2) feet below grade in an archeological sensitive area or eight (8) feet in a non -archeological sensitive area? (refer to EP_ArcMap > CEQA Catex Determination Layers > Archeological Sensitive Area)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subdivision/Lot Line Adjustment: Does the project site involve a subdivision or lot line adjustment on a lot with a slope average of 20% or more? (refer to EP_ArcMap > CEQA Catex Determination Layers > Topography)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Slope = or > 20%: Does the project involve any of the following: (1) square footage expansion greater than 1,000 sq. ft. outside of the existing building footprint, (2) excavation of 50 cubic yards or more of soil, (3) new construction? (refer to EP_ArcMap > CEQA Catex Determination Layers > Topography) If box is checked, a geotechnical report is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seismic: Landslide Zone: Does the project involve any of the following: (1) square footage expansion greater than 1,000 sq. ft. outside of the existing building footprint, (2) excavation of 50 cubic yards or more of soil, (3) new construction? (refer to EP_ArcMap > CEQA Catex Determination Layers > Seismic Hazard Zones) If box is checked, a geotechnical report is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seismic: Liquefaction Zone: Does the project involve any of the following: (1) square footage expansion greater than 1,000 sq. ft. outside of the existing building footprint, (2) excavation of 50 cubic yards or more of soil, (3) new construction? (refer to EP_ArcMap > CEQA Catex Determination Layers > Seismic Hazard Zones) If box is checked, a geotechnical report will likely be required.

If no boxes are checked above, GO TO STEP 3. If one or more boxes are checked above, an *Environmental Evaluation Application* is required, unless reviewed by an Environmental Planner.

Comments and Planner Signature (optional): Laura Lynch

STEP 3: PROPERTY STATUS - HISTORIC RESOURCE
TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER

PROPERTY IS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: (refer to Parcel Information Map)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Category A: Known Historical Resource. GO TO STEP 5.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Category B: Potential Historical Resource (over 45 years of age). GO TO STEP 4.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Category C: Not a Historical Resource or Not Age Eligible (under 45 years of age). GO TO STEP 6.

STEP 4: PROPOSED WORK CHECKLIST
TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER

Check all that apply to the project.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Change of use and new construction. Tenant improvements not included.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Regular maintenance or repair to correct or repair deterioration, decay, or damage to building.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Window replacement that meets the Department's <i>Window Replacement Standards</i> . Does not include storefront window alterations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Garage work. A new opening that meets the <i>Guidelines for Adding Garages and Curb Cuts</i> , and/or replacement of a garage door in an existing opening that meets the Residential Design Guidelines.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Deck, terrace construction, or fences not visible from any immediately adjacent public right-of-way.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Mechanical equipment installation that is not visible from any immediately adjacent public right-of-way.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Dormer installation that meets the requirements for exemption from public notification under <i>Zoning Administrator Bulletin No. 3: Dormer Windows</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Addition(s) that are not visible from any immediately adjacent public right-of-way for 150 feet in each direction; does not extend vertically beyond the floor level of the top story of the structure or is only a single story in height; does not have a footprint that is more than 50% larger than that of the original building; and does not cause the removal of architectural significant roofing features.
Note: Project Planner must check box below before proceeding.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project is not listed. GO TO STEP 5.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project does not conform to the scopes of work. GO TO STEP 5.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project involves four or more work descriptions. GO TO STEP 5.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project involves less than four work descriptions. GO TO STEP 6.

STEP 5: CEQA IMPACTS - ADVANCED HISTORICAL REVIEW
TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER

Check all that apply to the project.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Project involves a known historical resource (CEQA Category A) as determined by Step 3 and conforms entirely to proposed work checklist in Step 4.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Interior alterations to publicly accessible spaces.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Window replacement of original/historic windows that are not "in-kind" but are consistent with existing historic character.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Façade/storefront alterations that do not remove, alter, or obscure character-defining features.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Raising the building in a manner that does not remove, alter, or obscure character-defining features.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Restoration based upon documented evidence of a building's historic condition, such as historic photographs, plans, physical evidence, or similar buildings.

<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Addition(s) , including mechanical equipment that are minimally visible from a public right-of-way and meet the <i>Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation</i> .
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8. Other work consistent with the <i>Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties</i> (specify or add comments): Rehabilitation of Peace Plaza conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. See Part II PTR form for more information. (dated 4/29/19)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Other work that would not materially impair a historic district (specify or add comments): (Requires approval by Senior Preservation Planner/Preservation Coordinator)
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Reclassification of property status. (Requires approval by Senior Preservation Planner/Preservation <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassify to Category A a. Per HRER dated </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassify to Category C (attach HRER) b. Other (specify): Property listed on the Landmark Designation Work Program and considered an eligible historic property for the purposes of CEQA. (See Part II dated </div> </div>
Note: If ANY box in STEP 5 above is checked, a Preservation Planner MUST check one box below.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Further environmental review required. Based on the information provided, the project requires an <i>Environmental Evaluation Application</i> to be submitted. GO TO STEP 6.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project can proceed with categorical exemption review. The project has been reviewed by the Preservation Planner and can proceed with categorical exemption review. GO TO STEP 6.
Comments (optional):	
Preservation Planner Signature: Michelle A Taylor	

STEP 6: CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER

<input type="checkbox"/>	Further environmental review required. Proposed project does not meet scopes of work in either (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Step 2 - CEQA Impacts <input type="checkbox"/> Step 5 - Advanced Historical Review STOP! Must file an <i>Environmental Evaluation Application</i>.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No further environmental review is required. The project is categorically exempt under CEQA. There are no unusual circumstances that would result in a reasonable possibility of a significant effect.	
	Project Approval Action: Rec Park Commission If Discretionary Review before the Planning Commission is requested, the Discretionary Review hearing is the Approval Action for the project.	Signature: Laura Lynch 04/29/2019
	Once signed or stamped and dated, this document constitutes a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines and Chapter 31 of the Administrative Code. In accordance with Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, an appeal of an exemption determination can only be filed within 30 days of the project receiving the first approval action. Please note that other approval actions may be required for the project. Please contact the assigned planner for these approvals.	

STEP 7: MODIFICATION OF A CEQA EXEMPT PROJECT

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER

In accordance with Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, when a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exempt project changes after the Approval Action and requires a subsequent approval, the Environmental Review Officer (or his or her designee) must determine whether the proposed change constitutes a substantial modification of that project. This checklist shall be used to determine whether the proposed changes to the approved project would constitute a "substantial modification" and, therefore, be subject to additional environmental review pursuant to CEQA.

PROPERTY INFORMATION/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Address (If different than front page)		Block/Lot(s) (If different than front page)
REC & PARK: JAPANTOWN PEACE PLAZA - 1610 GEARY BLVD.		0700/022
Case No.	Previous Building Permit No.	New Building Permit No.
2019-000895PRJ		
Plans Dated	Previous Approval Action	New Approval Action
	Other (please specify)	
Modified Project Description:		

DETERMINATION IF PROJECT CONSTITUTES SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION

Compared to the approved project, would the modified project:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Result in expansion of the building envelope, as defined in the Planning Code;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Result in the change of use that would require public notice under Planning Code Sections 311 or 312;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Result in demolition as defined under Planning Code Section 317 or 19005(f)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is any information being presented that was not known and could not have been known at the time of the original determination, that shows the originally approved project may no longer qualify for the exemption?
If at least one of the above boxes is checked, further environmental review is required.	

DETERMINATION OF NO SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION

<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed modification would not result in any of the above changes.
If this box is checked, the proposed modifications are categorically exempt under CEQA, in accordance with prior project approval and no additional environmental review is required. This determination shall be posted on the Planning Department website and office and mailed to the applicant, City approving entities, and anyone requesting written notice.	
Planner Name:	Date:



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PRESERVATION TEAM REVIEW FORM

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

Preservation Team Meeting Date:		Date of Form Completion	4/23/2019
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PROJECT INFORMATION:		
Planner:	Address:	
Michelle Taylor	1610 Geary Boulevard	
Block/Lot:	Cross Streets:	
0700/022 and 023	Webster and Laguna Streets	
CEQA Category:	Art. 10/11:	BPA/Case No.:
B	Pending	2019-000895ENV

PURPOSE OF REVIEW:			PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> CEQA	<input type="radio"/> Article 10/11	<input type="radio"/> Preliminary/PIC	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Alteration	<input type="radio"/> Demo/New Construction

DATE OF PLANS UNDER REVIEW:	April 17, 2019
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PROJECT ISSUES:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is the subject Property an eligible historic resource?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If so, are the proposed changes a significant impact?
Additional Notes:	
Landmark Designation Report (Draft) prepared by San Francisco Planning Department (dated April 14, 2015). Project proposes the rehabilitation of Peace Plaza including waterproofing, new planting, shade structures, paving, seating, lighting, and potential structural reinforcement of the plaza. The project scope does not include any modifications to the Peace Pagoda.	

PRESERVATION TEAM REVIEW:				
Category:		<input checked="" type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
Individual		Historic District/Context		
Property is individually eligible for inclusion in a California Register under one or more of the following Criteria:		Property is in an eligible California Register Historic District/Context under one or more of the following Criteria:		
Criterion 1 - Event:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Criterion 1 - Event:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
Criterion 2 -Persons:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	Criterion 2 -Persons:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
Criterion 3 - Architecture:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Criterion 3 - Architecture:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
Criterion 4 - Info. Potential:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	Criterion 4 - Info. Potential:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
Period of Significance:	1968	Period of Significance:		
		<input type="radio"/> Contributor <input type="radio"/> Non-Contributor		

Complies with the Secretary's Standards/Art 10/Art 11:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A
CEQA Material Impairment to the individual historic resource:	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
CEQA Material Impairment to the historic district:	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
Requires Design Revisions:	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
Defer to Residential Design Team:	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	

PRESERVATION TEAM COMMENTS:

1610 Geary Boulevard is located between Post Street and Geary Boulevard, Assessor's Block 0700, Lots 022, 023, in the Japantown area of the Western Addition neighborhood. The subject properties, known as the Peace Plaza (lot 22) and Peace Pagoda (lot 23), are on the Historic Preservation Commission's Landmark Designation Work Program. As a property listed on the Landmark Designation Work Program, the subject site is considered an eligible historic resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Peace Plaza and Peace Pagoda was designed by Master Architect Yoshiro Taniguchi in the Modern style. First constructed in 1968, several key elements of the Peace Plaza's original design are not intact including original finishes, site organization, furniture, a water element, and entrance gate. Nevertheless, the Peace Plaza retains several general features that allow it to be understood as a community open space. The entirety of the Peace Pagoda is intact and character defining.

As a California Register-eligible site, Staff has identified the following general character defining features of the Peace Plaza:

- An open space characterized by a combination of hardscape paving and planters, combined with landscaping elements including shrubbery and trees, specifically cherry trees
- A main entrance aligned with Buchanan Street
- A sunken plaza in the southern half of the Plaza which provides the setting for the Peace Pagoda
- The presence of an eternal flame in proximity to the Peace Pagoda
- The use of large stones as a landscaping element
- The presence of perimeter flag poles (originally along Post Street, now along Geary Boulevard)
- A presence of a raised wall along the Geary Boulevard elevation, as well as stair access to the Plaza from the Geary Boulevard sidewalk

Planning Department Preservation staff has determined that the proposed rehabilitation of the previously altered Peace Plaza is in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's

(continued)

Signature of a Senior Preservation Planner / Preservation Coordinator:	Date:
Allison K. Vanderslice Digitally signed by Allison K. Vanderslice Date: 2019.04.29 12:42:24 -07'00'	

1610 Geary Boulevard, San Francisco
Peace Plaza and Peace Pagoda
Preservation Team Review Form, Comments

(continued)

Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Resources. The design of the proposed project would be of its own time and utilize materials compatible with the surrounding development. Furthermore, the design retains the general defining features of the site including cherry blossom trees and flag poles near the Geary Boulevard entrance. Additionally, the design incorporates or re-uses site features that connect the rehabilitated space to the historic use and intent of the Plaza. These features include a lower plaza area at the base of the Peace Pagoda, an interpretive representation of the eternal flame at the lower plaza, a new water feature, and incorporation of large stone elements in the landscape. The proposed project will not materially impact or alter the Peace Pagoda; work is generally cosmetic and will not generate construction impacts to the Peace Pagoda or defining elements. In conclusion, staff finds the proposed project is a compatible design and bears a harmonious relationship to the surrounding setting.

The Peace Plaza and Peace Pagoda are not adjacent to any known historic resources (Category A properties); however, the property is located adjacent to buildings mentioned in the Planning Department's *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970: Historic Context Statement* (dated January 2011). Additionally, although not yet formally surveyed, the subject site and neighboring properties are located within the Japantown Cultural Heritage District, which will likely be assessed at a future date. Therefore, for the purposes of CEQA, Staff has reviewed the proposed design in anticipation of a formal survey associated within the Cultural District. Staff has determined that the sensitive rehabilitation of the previously altered Plaza not materially or visually impact the neighboring post-war development of the Japantown neighborhood. Furthermore, the design of the proposed Peace Plaza and retention of the Peace Pagoda will allow the site to continue to convey its importance as a public open community space within the planned urban setting of the adjacent buildings.

POST STREET TERRACE - TODAY



SF PLANNING HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
JAPANTOWN PEACE PLAZA VISION PLAN

APRIL 17, 2019
SAN FRANCISCO RECREATION & PARKS/PUBLIC WORKS