

TO: City Arts Commission

FROM: The Fine Arts Ad Hoc Subcommittee

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TITLE: Placement of the Okazaki Gift Statue

ABSTRACT:

Sister City Okazaki Japan has offered a statue as a gift to the City of Newport Beach. The Arts Commission has recommended the gift for acceptance by City Council. Both Central Library and Irvine Terrace Park have been recommended by the Arts Commission as a potential sites for the statue, and both the Board of Library Trustees and the Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission have agreed to allow the statue to be placed at these sites. The Newport Beach Sisters City Association has requested that the statue be temporarily sited at Central Library in the Bamboo Courtyard, before it is permanently relocated to Irvine Terrace Park.

DISCUSSION:

At the August 14th meeting, the City Arts Commission recommended that the City Council accept the statue of Shogun Ieyasu Tokugawa as a gift from our Sister City in Okazaki, Japan. The Bamboo Courtyard at Central Library was initially suggested as a potential site, but after an inspection of that area and Irvine Terrace Park, Commissioners Smith and Ware determined that Irvine Terrace Park is a more suitable site for the following reasons:

1. The statue would be an aesthetically pleasing complement to the existing lantern sculptures and Japanese black pine trees in the park, which were also gifts from the City of Okazaki. The work is made of granite quarried in Okazaki and stands 150cm tall which includes a base of 55cm, so it is comparable to the existing sculpture in Irvine Terrace Park in regard to scale and material;
2. An effective symmetry can be created by placing the statue in the planter on the left side of the garden facing Seadrift Drive. The statue would be positioned and centered in relation to the other pieces in the area;
3. Irvine Terrace Park has a long history of Sister City involvement and seems to be a logical and apt site for the statue. The late Wendell Fish, one of the founders of the Newport Beach Sister City Association, resided in the Irvine Terrace neighborhood, and a commemorative bench in the area of the garden bears his name.

Since Council Policy I-9 requires the Arts Commission to confer with other Boards and Commissions that may be impacted by the acceptance of the gift, the Arts Commission sought the approval of the Board of Library Trustees at their August 18th meeting and Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission meeting on September 2nd. Both the Library Trustees and Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission approved placing the statue at their respective locations.

Mrs. Connie Skibba of the Sister Cities Association has requested that the statue be temporarily located in the Bamboo Courtyard at Central Library. The Sister Cities Association will be hosting 32 dignitaries from the City of Okazaki on Tuesday, October 14th. The Okazaki contingent will formally donate the statue to the City of Newport Beach, and a ceremony will be held at the Central Library, honoring the 30th anniversary of Newport Beach's relationship with Okazaki. Temporarily placing the statue in the Bamboo Courtyard enables the Sister Cities Association to make use of the Friends Room and Bamboo Courtyard, the parking at Central Library, and the close proximity to the Civic Center and Library, which will feature prominently in the day's activities. The statue will ultimately be relocated to Irvine Terrace Park at a time to be determined.

NOTICING:

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Arts Commission considers the item).