



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

**MEMO**

**DATE:** November 27, 2013

**TO:** Mary Hobson, Project Manager, Recreation & Parks Department

**CC:** Historic Preservation Commission  
Jill Manton, Director of Policy & Planning, Arts Commission

**FROM:** Shelley Caltagirone, Preservation Planner, (415) 558-6625

**REVIEWED BY:** Architectural Review Committee of the Historic Preservation Commission

**RE:** Review and Comment Meeting Notes from the November 20, 2013 ARC Hearing for the Alamo Square Renovation Project Case No. 2013.1334U

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The Planning Department is working with the Recreation and Parks Department (RPD) to refine a renovation plan for the park at Alamo Square that involves rehabilitating an existing restroom building, constructing an ADA-accessible restroom, and installing a new irrigation system. The proposed project was brought before the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) for review and comment on November 20, 2013. At the ARC meeting, the Planning Department requested review and comment regarding compatibility of the proposed design with the Alamo Square Landmark District. Planning Department Preservation Staff has prepared a summary of the ARC comments from that meeting. Commissioners Hasz, Hyland, and Pearlman were in attendance.

## ARC COMMENTS

1. **Height and massing.** The Commissioners agreed that the proposed height and massing of the restroom building are appropriate.
2. **Materials.**
  - a. **Walls.** The Commissioners agreed that the proposed concrete material with integrated color is appropriate, but Commissioner Hasz warned that a sandblasted or textured finish may be difficult to protect from graffiti.
  - b. **Gates and screens.** The Commissioners agreed that metal is an appropriate material for these elements and recommended a powder-coated finish in order to achieve a darker-toned, non-reflective appearance closer to the historic metalwork finishes found in the district.
3. **Scale.** The Commissioners agreed that the building should exhibit a classical hierarchy of base and cap and that this should be achieved in a contemporary and subtle manner. Commissioner Pearlman initially disagreed, but at the conclusion of the meeting concurred with the other

Commissioners. One design solution suggested by the ARC is to use a change in surface texture to achieve this hierarchy, with a more rusticated texture at the base and differing textures in the middle and top of the structure. Another design solution suggested by the ARC is to vary the depth, height, and spacing of the proposed horizontal reveals in the concrete wall so that the banding creates a three-part hierarchy with base and cap.

4. **Color.** The Commissioners agreed that the overall color and tone of the proposed concrete is appropriate. They were mixed in their opinion concerning whether or not the wall panel and door of the janitor's closet should be a darker tone than the main body of the building. Commissioner Pearlman suggested setting the door further back from the plane of the wall to achieve the effect of receding from view. Commissioner Hyland suggested that the wall may be a slightly darker tone to suggest that the panel is in shadow to achieve the same affect. Commissioner Hasz also recommended finishing the wall with a darker tone as it would strengthen the sense of the spiral form of the building.
5. **Ornamentation.**
  - a. **Wall.** The Commissioners recommended removing or altering the regularly spaced horizontal wall banding as they result in an Art Moderne look that is not historically appropriate and because they may interfere with the desired effect of creating a hierarchy in the scale of the wall.
  - b. **Gate.** Commissioner Pearlman preferred the simpler gate design. The other Commissioners did not comment.