

April 3, 2012

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SUBJECT: World Heritage Nomination Process Update and Memorandum of Agreement for inclusion of the Civic Center as part of a thematic application process for nomination to the World Heritage List

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Accept staff report.
2. Authorize the President to sign a *Communication Plan and Memorandum of Agreement* to participate in the Frank Lloyd Wright thematic application to the U.S. National Park Service to be considered along with ten other sites for the United Nations' World Heritage List, and authorize related actions as detailed in this staff report.
3. Direct staff to return to your Board with a progress report upon completion of the application process in summer or late fall of 2012.

DISCUSSION

On February 20, 2007, your Board approved the County's participation in the Frank Lloyd Wright thematic application to the National Park Service to be considered, along with ten other Frank Lloyd Wright designed sites, for the United States Tentative List. On July 13, 2011, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced he would propose that the grouping of the eleven Frank Lloyd Wright designed properties be recommended for nomination to the World Heritage List. The list, maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), recognizes the most significant cultural and natural treasures worldwide and includes only 21 sites in the United States. The recommendation was published in the Federal Register on July 14, 2011. The eleven sites are listed as follows in the order printed in the Federal Register:

- Unity Temple (1905-1908) Oak Park, Illinois
- Frederick C. Robie House (1908-1910) Chicago, Illinois
- Taliesin (begun 1911) Hillside, Wisconsin
- Hollyhock (Barnsdall) House (1919-1921) Los Angeles, California
- Fallingwater (1934-1939) Mill Run, Pennsylvania
- S.C. Johnson and Son, Inc., Administration Building and Research Tower (1936-1939, 1943-1950) Racine, Wisconsin
- Herbert and Katherine Jacobs First House (1936-1937) Madison, Wisconsin

- Taliesin West (begun 1938) Scottsdale, Arizona
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1943-1959) New York, New York
- Price Tower (1952-1956) Bartlesville, Oklahoma
- Marin County Civic Center (1957-1970) San Rafael, California

If authorized by your Board to proceed, then over the next two years staff will work with the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy (FLWBC), an international preservation organization based in Chicago, which took the lead in the process with the National Park Service. The Chicago-based Conservancy will develop extensive documentation in consultation with the Office of International Affairs of the National Park Service (NPS), the principal government agency responsible for implementing U.S. participation in the World Heritage Convention, in cooperation with the Department of the Interior and the State Department. The Department of the Interior will consult with the Federal Interagency Panel for World Heritage when the application is ready to proceed to the stage of formal submission to the international body between September 2012 and February 2013. There will be site visits in the summer and fall of 2013. The U.S. nominations will likely be formally nominated to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2013 for possible inclusion on the World Heritage List in 2014.

The attached *Communication Plan and Memorandum of Agreement* has been agreed to at the staff level by site representatives of all eleven sites and will be administered through the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy (FLWBC), which will continue to coordinate the sites' agreement with the U.S. Department of the Interior. All sites included in the nomination list for World Heritage status will have to sign the Agreement. The Agreement provides specifically for the following commitments:

- 1) Active involvement in the FLWBC World Heritage Council;
- 2) Participation at an annual meeting of the Council and submission of a simple, standardized annual report;
- 3) Willingness to aspire to best practices as defined by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*;
- 4) Sharing of preservation practices and reporting on intended alterations, additions, or major repairs within the designated World Heritage boundary;
- 5) Exhibiting a commitment to ongoing documentation of the site and appropriate archival storage of those records;
- 6) Communication regarding activity in buffer zones, or areas adjacent to the designated World Heritage boundary, that the site feels may impact the preservation of its outstanding universal value. This is undertaken with an understanding that the site may or may not have control over its buffer zone.
- 7) Maintaining confidentiality of information identified as sensitive.

Staff has communicated to the FLWBC that Marin County is already meeting the preservation practices and archival storage of records through the work of your Board's Civic Center Conservancy Commission, through your Board's dedication to funding the maintenance of the Civic Center, through your Board's adoption in 2005 of the *Marin County Civic Center Master Design Guidelines*, and through the Marin County Free Library's Anne T. Kent California Room. Upon approval of your Board's action, staff will develop and provide the required documentation outlining these practices to meet the National Park Service's requirements and regulations for public properties, and provide other documentation as needed to complete the application.

Annual reporting to the FLWBC will be rolled into the standard Capital Improvement Program planning and budgeting process in order to minimize any duplication of staff efforts. The annual meeting of the World Heritage Council is planned to rotate among the eleven sites.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Civic Center Conservancy has reviewed drafts of the *Communication Plan and Memorandum of Agreement* document and information at both its September 28 and October 26, 2011 meetings, and the final version at its January 25, 2012 meeting, and unanimously recommended the County participate in the World Heritage Council.

The World Heritage Council is only an advisory body, and any recommendations will not supersede individual site management plans or any local, state, or federal preservation laws. Neither UNESCO nor the World Heritage Committee has any judicial authority to compel the United States, or any properties included on the list, to take any specific actions. They have no bearing on how U.S. National Parks or any other designated World Heritage Sites are managed. Any of the eleven sites may withdraw from the Agreement at any time upon 30 days prior notice. World Heritage status would not alter the existing conditions for preservation and maintenance of the Civic Center, which is both on the National Register of Historic Places and a State Historic Landmark.

Besides the publicity of being listed as a World Heritage Site, there are other benefits as well:

- For many sites, it is a demonstration of the owner's social responsibility to the community that values the property;
- Often this kind of recognition brings with it new opportunities for funding;
- There is also the advantage of a network of contacts and partners;
- Improving the County's reputation vis-à-vis stakeholders and partners;
- The benefit of positive media coverage;
- And, the satisfaction and morale boosting effect among those who care for these places - our volunteers, employees and supporters - of being part of something global.


Staff from the County Administrator's Office participates in monthly conference calls, which include representatives from each site about the application progress and needed materials to support the nomination process. As the staff report from February 20, 2007 noted, each site would be asked to provide a \$4,000 contribution toward the expenses involved in the nomination process. Now that the Tentative List has been accepted by the NPS, the contribution is being requested. This is estimated to cover all of the nomination's direct expenses, up through the application to the NPS, which is due in July, 2012.


Staff is asking your Board to appoint the County Administrator or his designee to the FLWBC World Heritage Council, as described in the Appendix of the *Communication Plan and Memorandum of Agreement* document, who will represent the County. Each site on the World Heritage list will have one voting representative who must be directly involved with the site's stewardship. There can be more than one representative who attends the meetings and participates in discussions, but only the designated representative will be able to vote on any matter.

FISCAL IMPACT: The one-time requested contribution from each site in the Wright nomination is \$4,000 for the work required to meet the National Park Service's (NPS) application process. The FLWBC will coordinate all eleven sites into the application to the NPS. Annual costs to participate in the World Heritage Council are estimated to be approximately \$500 from each site to reimburse the FLWBC for its costs in reporting to the NPS, not including any County staff time or World Heritage Council representative travel to the annual meeting. Funding is available in this year's budget.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

REVIEWED BY: Auditor Controller N/A
 County Counsel N/A
 Human Resources N/A

SUBMITTED BY:

David Speer
Facilities Planning and Development
Manager

REVIEWED BY:

Matthew H. Hymel
County Administrator

Attachment: Memorandum of Understanding

cc: Tom Lyons, Deputy County Counsel
 Annette Rose, Chair, Civic Center Conservancy