

EXTRACT

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Administration)

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 6th meeting
held in the Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 21 January 2009, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP (Chairman)
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po, MH, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

Member attending:

Hon WONG Sing-chi

Members absent:

Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Mr Joe C C WONG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Miss Sandra LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Ms Mable CHAN	Deputy Secretary for Education (2), Education Bureau
Mr Raymond SY Kim-cheung	Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure and Research Support), Education Bureau
Mr CHAN Wing-tak	Chief Technical Adviser (Subvented Projects) Architectural Services Department
Mr Philip YUNG Wai-hung, JP	Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) ¹
Mr Alan CHU King-man	Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) ³ Transport and Housing Bureau
Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP	Director of Highways Highways Department
Mr Albert CHENG Ting-ning, JP	Project Manager (Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong) Highways Department
Mr Kevin LAI Ming-fai	Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) ⁵ Transport and Housing Bureau
Mr WAN Man-leung	Deputy Project Manager (Major Works) ¹ Highways Department
Ms YING Fun-fong	Chief Engineer (Transport Planning) Transport Department
Mr MA Lee-tak, JP	Director of Water Supplies Water Supplies Department
Mr NG Chi-ho	Assistant Director (New Works) Water Supplies Department
Mr SO Kam-shing, JP	Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)

Ms Polly KWOK Wai-ling	Home Affairs Bureau Principal Assistant Secretary (Culture)2 Home Affairs Bureau
Mr YUE Chi-hang, JP	Director of Architectural Services Architectural Services Department
Mr CHUNG Ling-hoi, JP	Deputy Director (Culture) Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms Cynthia LIU Chiu-fun	Assistant Director (Performing Arts) Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Tom MING Kay-chuen	Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments) Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Professor Gabriel M LEUNG, JP	Under Secretary for Food and Health Food and Health Bureau
Mr Francis HO Siu-hong	Principal Assistant Secretary (Food)2 Food and Health Bureau
Ms Rhonda LO Yuet-ye, JP	Assistant Director (Operations)2 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr YIP Sai-chor, JP	Head of Civil Engineering Office Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr Joseph CHAN Chun-shing	Chief Engineer (Fill Management) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Debbie YAU	Chief Council Secretary (1)6
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Staff in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Ms Angel SHEK	Senior Council Secretary (1)1
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant (1)2

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Head 703 - Buildings**PWSC(2008-09)60 57RE Conversion of Yau Ma Tei Theatre and Red Brick Building into a Xiqu Activity Centre**

50. The Chairman advised that the Administration had consulted the Panel on Home Affairs on the proposal at its meeting on 12 December 2008. Mr IP Kwok-him, Chairman of the Panel, reported that Panel members supported the proposal to convert Yau Ma Tei Theatre (YMTT) and Red Brick Building (RBB) into a Xiqu Activity Centre (XAC) and urged its early implementation. Some members considered that in addition to Cantonese opera, the proposed XAC should also be open to other xiqu and cultural performing arts and for the use of primary and secondary schools in conducting xiqu activities. Panel members also urged the Administration to re-provision the public toilet and refuse collection point beside YMTT, and turn the area into a tourist attraction. Some other members expressed concern about the limited seating capacity, the changing room facility and the future management of the proposed XAC.

Re-location of public toilet, refuse collection point and street sleepers' shelter

51. Prof Patrick LAU said that he was then a member of the Antiquities Advisor Board (AAB) when the Administration consulted AAB on the proposal on 26 November 2008. He recalled that members of AAB had strongly requested the Administration to re-locate the three public facilities i.e. the public toilet, refuse collection point and street sleepers' shelter with a view to creating a better cultural atmosphere in the area of the proposed XAC.

52. Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (DSHA) said that members of the Yau Tsim Mong District Council (YTMDCC) had expressed similar view. However, it would take time to identify suitable sites for re-provisioning the three public facilities. To avoid causing delay to the proposed project, the Administration would proceed with the project while finding sites for re-locating the public facilities in question.

53. Ms Miriam LAU considered it more desirable to include the site to be vacated by the three public facilities in the overall planning of the proposed XAC. She said that the three existing public facilities were incompatible with the proposed XAC, and reduce the appeal of the two historic buildings to tourists.

54. Agreeing that the three public facilities did not blend well with the converted YMTT and RBB, DSHA said that the Administration would consider incorporating the vacated area into the proposed XAC upon the re-provisioning of the public facilities.

55. Mr LEE Wing-tat urged the Administration to consider proactively the re-location of the three public facilities in order to enhance the overall setting of

Admin the area. He requested the Administration to report to the Panel on Home Affairs on a quarterly basis the progress of the re-provisioning arrangements. The Administration agreed.

56. Mr KAM Nai-wai requested the Administration to undertake in writing that it would include the vacated site in the Stage II development of the proposed XAC, and provide the timetable for Stage II development.

57. Miss Tanya CHAN also urged the early re-location of the three public facilities to facilitate the conversion of YMTT which had ceased operation since 1998. Ms Starry LEE asked which department would be responsible for undertaking the re-provisioning arrangements.

58. DSHA responded that it was the Administration's intention to use the vacated site for the Stage II development of the proposed XAC. The Yau Tsim Mong District Office (YTMDO) of the Home Affairs Department was coordinating the efforts of relevant departments proactively to pursue the re-location proposal. However, there was no concrete timetable at the moment as suitable sites for the re-provisioning were still being identified. Planning of the vacated site would start after the re-location was completed, and would take into account compatibility with the adjacent buildings such as YMTT and RBB.

59. Mr KAM Nai-wai considered that the planning of Stage II development should be undertaken right away to lend support to the re-provisioning arrangements.

60. Mr Albert CHAN considered the proposed XAC worth pursuing but the presence of the three public facilities would spoil the cultural characteristics of the proposed XAC. He expressed concern about the co-ordination among different bureaux/departments for the reprovisioning of these public facilities.

61. DSHA advised that the Home Affairs Bureau, Home Affairs Department and YMTDO supported re-locating the three public facilities. He assured members that the Administration would spare no effort in co-ordinating efforts of different departments in identifying suitable sites for re-provisioning the facilities, although some proposed sites had met with local objection.

Admin 62. Mr Albert CHAN requested the Administration to provide a written response on the way forward for the three public facilities, together with a work schedule for members' consideration, before the relevant meeting of FC.

(post-meeting note: The information provided by the Administration was circulated on 10 February 2009 vide LC Paper No. PWSC45/08-09.)

63. Mr IP Kwok-him said that the Panel on Home Affairs would follow up on the re-provisioning arrangements.

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64. The Chairman said that he was disappointed that the lack of coordination among various bureaux/departments had resulted in the delay of projects, including the one under discussion. He requested the Administration to take note of members' concerns and make necessary improvements in future projects.

Seating capacity of the converted Yau Ma Tei Theatre

65. Ms Miriam LAU considered that there was insufficient seating capacity (only 300 seats) in the converted YMTT and this would not bring about any notable effect in the promotion of Cantonese opera. She suggested extending the proposed Centre to the site currently occupied by the three public facilities and also re-locating some of the existing facilities in the backstage and foyer to the extended area, in order to provide for a larger audience.

66. DSHA advised that YMTT was a Grade II historic building and its building structure could not be altered. The proposed design with some 300 seats was already the maximum that could be achieved under the current building constraints.

67. Referring to Enclosure 4 to PWSC(2008-09)60, the Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) said that the requirements for the stage and the orchestral pit had posed constraints on the number of seats in the auditorium. In addition, there was a basement holding the fire services facilities. It would be very difficult to provide space for more seats by relocating some of the proposed rooms and facilities in YMTT to the adjacent site after completion of the construction works.

Traffic management and crowd control

68. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern that the activities at the Yaumatei Wholesale Fruit Market (YWFM) which usually started in dusk would have adverse impact on the traffic and pedestrian flow near the proposed XAC. Miss Tanya CHAN pointed out that the operation of YWFM in the afternoons was already very active. She was worried that this might pose safety risk to the patrons of the proposed XAC and the tourists.

69. Ms Cyd HO expressed similar concerns. She said that the lack of waiting area at the entrance of YMTT would be very inconvenient to the audience, in particular elderly fans of Cantonese opera. She considered that the Administration should work together with the operators of YWFM to improve the street management measures to ensure the safety of pedestrians and patrons to XAC.

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70. DSHA advised that the operators at YWFM had been consulted on the proposed XAC and they were supportive of the project. The Administration would continue to discuss with the operators and the enforcement agencies the traffic management in the area. Mr LEE Wing-tat requested the Administration to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, information on the street management measures to be taken at the proposed XAC, in particular after the end of each show.

(*post-meeting note*: The information provided by the Administration was circulated on 10 February 2009 vide LC Paper No. PWSC45/08-09.)

71. The Deputy Director (Culture), LCSD (DD(C), LCSD) advised that unlike concerts or other performances, admission arrangements for Cantonese opera shows were more flexible in that audience could enter the auditorium early and any time even after the shows started and they did not have to wait outside for long. After the shows, the audience could leave the auditorium via the entrance lobby or the exits on the two sides of the auditorium.

72. Ms Cyd HO remained concerned that the small area of the entrance lobby would not be adequate to house all the audience before they entered the auditorium.

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73. DD(C), LCSD advised that audience of Cantonese opera shows would usually enter the performance venue at different times and they needed not gather at the entrance. Due to the inherent limitation of the historic building, the entrance lobby would not be able to accommodate all 300 viewers. He further advised that the Administration had made reference to overseas practice and the present design of the proposed XAC was the best that could be achieved under the current building constraints. At the request of Ms Cyd HO, the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, information on the street management measures and the maximum number of persons that could be accommodated at the entrance lobby of the proposed XAC.

74. Miss Tanya CHAN asked about the impact of backstage logistics and operation on the traffic at Shek Lung Street and Reclamation Street. DD(C), LCSD advised that the loading area of the Reclamation Street led directly to the backstage of YTTM and would provide much convenience for the transportation of relevant props and costume.

Other issues

75. In reply to Mr KAM Nai-wai, DSHA said that repair and maintenance of the two historic buildings would be undertaken by the Architectural Services Department.

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76. Ms Cyd HO enquired about the nature and financial implication of the employment of a Theatre consultant. D Arch S responded that a Theatre consultant was engaged at a cost of about \$0.3 million to carry out the consultancy services for the stage lighting, stage engineering, stage sound system and audio-visual installation, etc. The theatre consultancy would be conducted throughout the design development, construction and maintenance period. At the request of Ms Cyd HO, the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, information on the qualifications of the Theatre consultant engaged for the proposed project.

(*post-meeting note*: The information provided by the Administration was circulated on 10 February 2009 vide LC Paper No. PWSC45/08-09.)

Admin 77. Ms Starry LEE expressed concern about the revitalization of the local culture of Yaumatei, particularly Temple Street and Yung Shu Tau. She requested the Administration to report regularly to the Panel on Home Affairs its efforts made in this regard. The Administration took note of the request.

78. The item was voted on and endorsed. Prof Patrick LAU requested this item be separately voted on at the relevant FC meeting.

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Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
11 February 2009