

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Subcommittee on
West Kowloon Cultural District Development**

**Minutes of forty-eighth meeting held on
Saturday, 24 May 2008, at 9:30 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building
(Item I)**

- Members present** : Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, SBS, JP
Hon Margaret NG
Hon Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Hon CHIM Pui-chung

Public officers attending : Ms Esther LEUNG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs
(West Kowloon Cultural District)

Mr Danny LAU
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
(West Kowloon Cultural District)

Mr Howard LAM
Chief Treasury Accountant/
West Kowloon Cultural District
Home Affairs Bureau

Ms Susanna SIU
Chief Curator (Heritage)
Home Affairs Bureau

Attendance by Invitation : **Agenda item I**

Museums Advisory Group

Hon Victor LO
Convenor

Mr Oscar HO
Member

Ms Jane DEBEVOISE
Member

Ms LO Kai-yin
Member

Clerk in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

Staff in attendance : Ms Pauline NG
Assistant Secretary General (Special Duties)

Mrs Constance LI
Assistant Secretary General 1

Miss Winnie LO

Assistant Legal Adviser 7

Mr WONG Siu-yee
Senior Council Secretary (1)7

Mr Simon CHEUNG
Council Secretary (1)1

Ms Christina SHIU
Legislative Assistant (1)7

**I Meeting with the Administration and members of the Museums
Advisory Group**

The Subcommittee deliberated. (Index of proceedings attached at the **Appendix**)

2. At the end of discussion, the Chairman requested the Administration to:
 - (a) respond to members' concerns and worries about the viability of **M+**; and
 - (b) provide more concrete introduction on **M+** so that members could visualize what it would be like in future.
3. The open session of the meeting ended at 10:45 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
22 September 2008

**Proceedings of the forty-eighth meeting (open session) of the
Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development
on Saturday, 24 May 2008, at 9:30 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
000000 - 000525	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000526 - 003804	Administration Museums Advisory Group (MAG)	<p>PowerPoint presentation by the Administration on the M+ proposal (WKCD-544)</p> <p>Briefing by MAG that:</p> <p>(a) M+ was expected to be a major cultural institution promoting and leading arts and cultural development in Hong Kong.</p> <p>(b) It was hoped that M+ would extend the knowledge of Hong Kong people especially the younger generation towards arts and culture and promote Hong Kong's creativity industries.</p> <p>(c) M+ would attach great importance to arts education and its interactions with the community.</p> <p>(d) The Government's current annual expenditure on museums in the amount of \$0.5 billion was not adequate. The proposed funding arrangement for M+ was prudent, having regard to experiences of leading museums in other countries.</p> <p>(e) In order to build up fame and a brand name, M+ would undergo a difficult period in the initial first 10 to 15 years. Once M+ had built up its status, it would be able to attract donation of exhibits/collections.</p> <p>(f) It would not be less costly to engage an international operator</p>	

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		<p>such as Guggenheim to manage and operate M+.</p> <p>(g) At its early stage, M+ would have to borrow most of its exhibits from collectors and other museums. Collectors in Hong Kong were keeping a large quantity of world-class collections. However, willingness for these collectors to lend out their collections would depend largely on whether M+ was able to establish its world status.</p>	
003805 - 004420	Dr LUI Ming-wah MAG	<p>Dr LUI's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) He felt encouraged with the Administration's plan to implement M+.</p> <p>(b) In order to build up an international standing, the size of M+ should not be too small.</p> <p>(c) M+ should have a good Chinese name.</p> <p>Response of MAG that:</p> <p>(a) It agreed that the Administration was a bit conservative on the size of M+. Nearly all museums in the world required substantial subsidies.</p> <p>(b) M+ was merely a provisional / working name. It was so named because MAG wanted something more than a conventional museum. The future management body of M+ might decide on the name.</p>	
004421 - 005119	Ms Emily LAU Administration MAG	<p>Ms LAU's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) She looked forward to the opening of a world-class M+ in Hong Kong.</p>	

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		<p>(b) Having to build up its fame, it would be most difficult for M+ to operate in the first 10 to 15 years. She asked how much the Administration had set aside for acquisition of exhibits for M+ in its initial years.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <p>(a) For Phase I of M+, the total capital costs for design, planning and construction were estimated to be HK\$2,215 million (at 2008 Net Present Value).</p> <p>(b) To build up a sizable and impressive collection commensurate with M+'s status, a budget of HK\$1 billion (at 2006 prices) had been set aside for initial acquisition of exhibits. For subsequent years, an annual allocation of HK\$20 million (at 2006 prices) had been earmarked. M+ would also borrow exhibits from different sources and commission selected artists to work on its exhibits.</p> <p>(c) M+ would require recurrent funding of around HK\$0.3 billion (at 2006 prices) to cover its operating deficits.</p> <p>Response of MAG that:</p> <p>(a) The funding proposal of the Administration on M+ was feasible.</p> <p>(b) These were a large quantity of collections in the existing museums which M+ could make use of. Whenever necessary, M+ might borrow collections from local collectors and cooperate with other museums.</p>	

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005120 - 005852	Miss CHAN Yuen-han MAG Administration	<p>Miss CHAN's expression of views that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Administration might have over-estimated income from the retail, dining and entertainment facilities in the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). (b) The Administration should think of feasible measures/strategies to develop M+ into a world-class museum. (c) How MAG would assess the success of the M+ project. (d) Competition from other museums in the Mainland would be keen. (e) M+ should be an iconic institution based upon world-class designs to impress its visitors from all over the world. <p>Response of MAG that in order to succeed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) M+ should be unique and avoid doing what other leading museums were doing. M+ should focus on the arts and cultural items unique to Hong Kong. (b) As a major city in the world Hong Kong had its strengths. For instance, Hong Kong had a large pool of local collectors for M+ to approach for borrowing exhibit items. (c) M+ had to engage highly competent curatorial staff to maintain the momentum for fame building and development. <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) There would be wide public 	

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		<p>consultation at different stages of the M+ project.</p> <p>(b) There would be an architectural design competition for M+.</p>	
005853 - 010350	Mr Abraham SHEK	Mr SHEK's expression of view that the Administration should make efforts in explaining clearly in concrete and easily-understood language to the general public on what M+ actually was.	
010351 - 011653	Mr LEE Wing-tat Administration MAG Chairman	<p>Mr LEE's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) The Administration should be prudent with the implementation of a huge project such as M+. It would be worthwhile to consider implementing the project by phases.</p> <p>(b) How would the Administration deal with the situation where M+, in order to boost up its patronage, developed along a route different from the original one?</p> <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <p>(a) The proposed Gross Floor Area (GFA) of Phase I of M+ (on-site area) was 43 365 square metres which represented around 6% of the total GFA of the WKCD project.</p> <p>(b) Acting prudently, the Administration would set up an Interim M+ to train up a competent team of curatorial staff to prepare for the opening of the permanent M+ and its ongoing operation in a highly effective manner. The Interim M+ would enable Hong Kong people to understand M+ better.</p> <p>Response of MAG that:</p>	

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		<p>(a) As in the cases of Korea and London, M+ should be looked at as a means for promoting the arts and cultural sophistication as well as the creativity of the community.</p> <p>(b) M+ would promote Hong Kong as a renowned hub for talents and cultures.</p> <p>Remarks of the Chairman that members of the Subcommittee were worried that M+, currently a conceptual proposal, was aiming at an unachievable goal that could end up as a bad failure.</p> <p>Further remarks of MAG that:</p> <p>(a) M+ was established on a broad vision which might evolve and change over time.</p> <p>(b) The success of M+ was dependent on the availability of competent curatorial staff who would be able to steer M+ towards desired goals and make desirable adjustments from time to time.</p> <p>(c) Hong Kong had a good supply of competent curators lining up to join M+. Besides, due to its uniqueness and Hong Kong's unique geographic location, M+ would be able to attract the best people from all over the world to work in it.</p> <p>(d) To succeed, M+ should focus on Hong Kong, Mainland of China and Asia and the 21st Century Asian culture. At present, there was no such museum in the region.</p> <p>(e) M+ had to be operated by</p>	

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		<p>passionate people in a highly independent manner free from any kind of intervention.</p>	
011654 - 012528	<p>Ms Margaret NG Administration MAG</p>	<p>Ms NG's expression of views that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Chinese translation of M+ could be "博+". (b) Discussion should focus on how to take the M+ proposal forward successfully. (c) Had the Administration approached local collectors to assess their willingness to lend their collections to M+ for exhibition? If so, what would be the costs involved? Had the Administration gauged views of the general public towards M+? <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Administration had conducted wide consultation involving local bodies as well as overseas experts before deciding on the M+ proposal. (b) In future, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) would have the freedom to obtain loans and make financial arrangements where and when necessary. <p>Response of MAG that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) It had considered "博+" as the Chinese name of M+. Anyhow, WKCDA would decide on the English and Chinese names of M+. (b) It had met informally with many local collectors and their response towards M+ had been positive. 	

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		<p>(c) Whether the collectors were willing to lend their collections to M+ would depend on the appeal, passions and personal networks of the WKCD Board members and curators. M+ would have a challenging time in the initial years, having to build up itself and to seek public identification and support.</p> <p>(d) Citing the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology as a successful example, it pointed out that high-standard programmes in the initial two to three years would be of great importance in gaining the support of collectors and the general public.</p>	
012529 - 013331	Mrs Selina CHOW Administration MAG	<p>Mrs CHOW's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) The Administration should consider engaging an international operator to manage M+ if such an arrangement required only a one-off licence fee.</p> <p>(b) In comparison with leading museums such as Pompidou and Guggenheim, the admission fee set for M+ i.e. HK\$27.5-\$30 was too low to help recover part of the running costs of M+.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <p>(a) In setting the proposed admission fee, the Administration had to take into consideration factors such as the level of fees of the existing local museums. Though charging expensive admission fee, leading museums in overseas countries offered concessionary rates for children and seniors.</p>	

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		<p>(b) In future, where appropriate, WKCD A might review and revise the admission fee for M+, or to impose a higher fee for special museum programmes.</p> <p>Response of MAG that engaging Guggenheim to operate M+ would require payment of an initial upfront licence fee. There would be other on-going costs such as collection costs and sundry operational costs etc. which could be quite substantial.</p>	
013332 - 014119	Prof Patrick LAU Administration	<p>Prof LAU's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) In drawing museums for comparison with M+, the Administration should seek reference from similar museums such as those in Germany, Japan and Korea.</p> <p>(b) M+ should focus on the unique cultural traits and heritage of Hong Kong, different from any other parts of the world. A clear, precise and impressive name would be important to the success of M+.</p> <p>(c) He agreed that M+ was not a business and hence its success should not be assessed only in monetary terms.</p> <p>(d) In introducing M+ to the general public, the Administration should use easily-understood wording in its promotional materials. For the four specific groupings, i.e. Moving Image, Popular Culture, Design and Visual Art, it would be helpful if the Administration could put on display some distinguished items for the public to visualize the future M+.</p> <p>(e) The Administration should step up public education on visual</p>	

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		<p>arts.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that it would endeavour to introduce M+ to the public in very clear and easy-to-understand terms.</p>	
014120 - 015255	Mr James TO Administration MAG	<p>Mr TO's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) He was concerned whether public funds would be put into good use in developing M+.</p> <p>(b) Given that the existing museums had already got 62 400 visual art items, the Administration should stage a "mock-up" exhibition in existing Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) museums to help the Hong Kong people understand what M+ was about.</p> <p>(c) He would like to know more about "cultural critique" in the future M+ as mentioned by a member of MAG.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <p>(a) Based on the existing collections at Hong Kong's museums, Interim M+ would serve an important function educating the general public on the future M+.</p> <p>(b) Respecting the M+ management and the professional curatorial team, the Administration would not interfere with the acquisition and handling of exhibits/collections of M+ in future.</p> <p>(c) The exhibition programmes of the existing LCSD museums had been planned years ahead. It would be difficult to interrupt the plans at this stage to make way for the exhibition of the Interim</p>	

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		<p>M+.</p> <p>(d) The curatorship of M+ was different from the curatorship of the existing museums. It would be difficult for the existing museum staff to adopt the M+ curatorship to curate exhibition at this stage.</p> <p>Response of MAG that "cultural critique" could take the form with M+ hiring some visiting curators to review on its curatorial work, thereby stimulating progress and changes.</p> <p>Remarks of Mr TO that he was still of the belief that the Administration should use the existing visual art collections to stage a "mock-up" exhibition to win the support of the general public for M+, and to seek the required funding at a later time, say in November or December 2008.</p>	
015256 - 020007	Miss CHOY So-yuk Administration	<p>Miss CHOY's expression of views that:</p> <p>(a) She would like to know how the Administration would choose between "hiring" and "purchase" of exhibits/collections for M+.</p> <p>(b) She had reservation about the proposal to set up an Interim M+ in a small selected building in North Point, and agreed with Mr TO that the Administration should stage an exhibition showing what M+ would be like at the existing museums.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that:</p> <p>(a) Apart from staging exhibition, the Interim M+ would be a platform for training professional staff and providing arts education to the public.</p>	

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		<p>(b) The future M+ management would have the freedom in deciding whether it would "hire" or "purchase" exhibits/collections.</p> <p>(c) It was not necessary to confine exhibitions on visual art at Interim M+ and existing museums.</p> <p>Further views of Miss CHOY that:</p> <p>(a) In the absence of concrete details and a clear direction, she was not yet convinced of the desirability and viability of the M+ project.</p> <p>(b) She did not think it necessary to have the Interim M+ instead of using the existing museums for training and education purposes.</p>	
020007 - 020729	Chairman Administration MAG	<p>Remarks of the Chairman that the Administration should appreciate the worries of members about M+. Besides, the Administration should explain why it was not possible to use the existing museums to stage a "mock-up" exhibition to demonstrate to the public what M+ would be like.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that it had difficulties in presenting a "mock-up" exhibition because:</p> <p>(a) The modes and themes of operation of the existing museums were different from those of M+.</p> <p>(b) The museums had already lined up exhibitions for the year and could not therefore spare time-slots for other purposes.</p> <p>(c) The museums had to act in accordance with the agreements entered into with different</p>	

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		<p>parties.</p> <p>Response of MAG that it would act on the Chairman's advice to provide for members' reference further information on Centre Pompidou which was similar to M+.</p>	
020730 - 020842	Ms Emily LAU	<p>Ms LAU's remarks that:</p> <p>(a) It was not appropriate for MAG to map out its proposal on M+ without being aware of the financial implications.</p> <p>(b) With no solid details available for members to look at, M+ could be a highly risky project that might end up as a failure.</p>	
020843 - 021033	Miss CHAN Yuen-han	<p>Miss CHAN's remarks that there should be no censorship on cultural items for exhibition at M+ including those reflecting dark or grassroots aspects of our community.</p>	
021034 – 021113	Miss CHOY So-yuk	<p>Miss CHOY's remarks that the Administration should advise members of the deliverables of the HK\$5 billion funding for M+ and the actual financial requirement for building up a world-class M+.</p>	
021114 - 021230	Mr Abraham SHEK	<p>Mr SHEK's expression of view that it would be members' responsibility to guard against misuse of public funds.</p>	
021231 - 021441	Chairman	<p>The Chairman's concluding remarks that the Administration should take note of and respond to members' concerns about the viability and sustainability of M+, and present in easily understood terms what M+ was about in the forthcoming meetings scheduled for 26 and 30 May 2008.</p>	Administration

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
22 September 2008