



City of Long Beach


Working Together to Serve

Office of the City Attorney

Memorandum

DATE: October 20, 2016

To: Christopher Koontz, Development Services

FROM: Linda T. Vu, Deputy City Attorney, Ext. 82294 

SUBJECT: Cultural Heritage Commission and the Queen Mary

You have requested clarification on the role of the Cultural Heritage Commission ("Commission") in the review process over proposed renovations to the Queen Mary.

The Queen Mary is owned by the City of Long Beach ("City") and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City and/or third party lessees or any subsequent ship operators work as a team for the long term preservation of the Queen Mary and the ship's historic assets and art, decorative arts and artifacts. Restoration and preservation planning, interpretation, exhibit development, collections management, and accessioning of artifacts work are performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstruction Historic Buildings* and the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects with Guidelines for Applying the Standards* as well as the California Environmental Quality Act, and are consistent with the provisions of the Tidelands Trust. Furthermore, that team also works cooperatively with the Queen Mary Task Force in connection with outreach, entitlement and development of the leasehold area.

With regard to local landmark designation, the Queen Mary is not a local Landmark nor is it located in a Landmark District within the meaning of Long Beach Municipal Code Chapter 2.63. Although the Commission is not legally required under local ordinance to review and approve renovations or any other improvements to the Queen Mary, the Commission does periodically receive reports and updates concerning the Queen Mary and rehabilitation work on the ship.

Since a collaborative and longstanding relationship already exists between the City and the ship's operators to secure all necessary review and approvals to carry out projects in accordance with historic preservation, restoration, reconstruction and rehabilitation standards, there may or may not be a need to augment the process to require further review and approval at the Commission level. If it is decided that there is indeed such a need, then a recommendation could be made to the City Council for local landmark

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designation of the Queen Mary under the City's ordinance. Upon such designation, substantial alterations made to the ship would require the issuance of certificates of appropriateness from the Commission.

It should be noted that the City is currently in the process of negotiating a new lease agreement with a successor lessee, Urban Commons LLC, for the continued operation of the ship. The pending negotiations are expected to be completed in the very near future. If there is a desire to formally designate the Queen Mary as a local landmark, then it would be advisable for the City to first notify Urban Commons LLC of such intended course of action to allow them to take that into consideration during the ongoing lease negotiations.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me.

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cc: Charles Parkin, City Attorney
Linda Tatum, Planning Bureau Manager