

12/3/2025

To Members of the Streamlining Hearing Committee

Hello, I'm Kimberlee Stryker, former SFAC Commissioner and former Chair of the Civic Design Review Committee (CDR).

My points are:

The CDR committee of the Arts Commission was placed in the City Charter to ensure excellence in the city's public arts which include architecture and landscape architecture. It belongs at the Arts Commission, not Planning, and to make it advisory would remove its authority and its unique value to the city.

This committee reviews design aesthetic, context and quality of materials for public projects such as Parks and new Ferry Terminal at Treasure Island, architecture and open space plan for the PUC's sewage treatment campus in the Bayview, and new terminals at SFO. We always asked about budgets and timelines and made every effort to accommodate project manager's concerns.

Without a CDR review, design aesthetics for City structures that need to meet an approximate 50 year life span will fall largely to project managers who are often concerned primarily about costs and time frames. Since CDR is often the only review of public projects the loss of such a review can be quite costly to the city, not only for aesthetic value, for which this city is world famous, but for a general high quality standard of excellence overall that will no longer be set.

The theory that CDR causes extra costs and delays of city projects is untrue:

- CDR initiated an expedited review process that combines phases of approval to help speed approvals
- Final approval is generally pro forma unless there is significant design change
- CDR offers off the record informal meetings to design teams having difficulty.

In rare circumstances projects do have problems in the approval process. Those are the very projects that require more attention and time to help project teams reach a higher standard of performance and should not be approved without an appropriate review. CDR

does not pass projects that are chaotic in mission, design form, or inappropriate to their context. That's a major value to San Francisco.

There is more to civic design and value to this city than financial accounting. I hope you will consider value added by this important committee.

It would be more costly and time consuming for project managers to work through planning. The required art component is discussed at CDR and when I was Chair a CDR commissioner was also a liaison to the Visual Arts Committee to help ensure the art component would be integrated into the project early. That would be quite cumbersome if the CDR were part of Planning and cause extra staff time and hurdles between Planning and the Arts Commission. It would certainly compromise quality of public arts within projects by delaying their integration.

Thank you for your consideration of this important committee.

Kimberlee Stryker

Former SFAC Commissioner

Former Chair, CDR Committee