



City of Kyoto

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October09, 2012

JAPAN ICOMOS National Committee
Mr. Yuga Kariya
Chief Examiner, Fourteenth Subcommittee

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(Department Responsible: Culture and Citizens Affairs Bureau, City
of Culture and Art Promotion Office, Culture and Art Planning
Section)

Kyoto City is deeply grateful for your ongoing support and cooperation. The views of Kyoto City in regards to your questions regarding the reconstruction and renovation of Kyoto Kaikan in your letter dated September 26, 2012 are as follows.

1. "Please rationally, logically and concretely demonstrate how Kyoto City has sorted out the functional issues related to Kyoto Kaikan No. 1 Hall, and the manner in which the new functional requirements were established."

Since its construction in 1960, Kyoto Kaikan has always been a familiar, popular, and frequently used public facility. Kyoto Kaikan enjoys a prestigious reputation as an example of post-war modernist architecture, but in 2002, at the stage in which reconstruction and renovation plans were being laid down over a ten year period since the seismic survey had been conducted, it had not been fifty years since construction, and Kyoto City was not considering designating or registering Kyoto Kaikan as a national cultural treasure, much less any considerations from the currently academically debated standpoint of "integrity" as living heritage. First, we ask for your understanding in regards to the circumstances and process in which reconstruction was examined.

Nonetheless, Kyoto City recognizes that Kyoto Kaikan is highly regarded as a work of modern architecture in Japan, and examinations of reconstruction and renovation have basically

proceeded along the lines of cherishing these values. Statements by the Architectural Institute of Japan and DOCOMOMO Japan served as a reference point for these values.

On February 15, 2007, preservation requests were submitted by DOCOMOMO Japan and the Architectural Institute of Japan regarding plans for the reconstruction and renovation of Kyoto Kaikan requesting that Kyoto Kaikan be preserved for future generations. The request primarily states that the Kyoto Kaikan is “representative of Kunio Mayekawa’s design, and is one of the preeminent examples of post-war modernist architecture,” and that “possesses noteworthy value: it is in harmony with the scenery of the Okazaki district, it is a building that contributes to Kyoto’s historical scenery, in particular, has a unique spatial structure where the piloti in the front leads to the center garden, and the manner in which it creates a high-quality public space that one expects from urban public architecture.”

Plans to reconstruct and renovate the Kyoto Kaikan have been judiciously undertaken since the seismic-resistance evaluation performed in 2002.

In 2004, a survey was conducted on Kyoto Kaikan visitors and promoters, and between 2005 and 2006, a “Kyoto Kaikan Reconstruction and Renovation Planning Committee” was established, and in addition to sorting out the issues pertaining to the present condition of the Kyoto Kaikan, the direction that reconstruction and renovation would take was also considered. Since then, a survey targeting 2,000 residents was conducted in 2007, and a Kyoto Kaikan Reconstruction and Renovation Basic Plan Draft Concept was created in 2009 as a City internal plan proposal. After the Draft Concept was formulated, in the period leading up to the formulation of the Reconstruction and Renovation Basic Plan in June 2011, we also separately listened to the opinions of people involved in theatre and stage technology, and continued internal planning.

The functional defects of Kyoto Kaikan No. 1 Hall which became evident through these endeavors can be summarized as follows:

1. Degradation and obsolescence of the facilities
2. Insufficient seismic resistance and incompatibility with barrier-free access

3. Acoustic problems

4. The stage is 4.6m above the ground, there is only one small lift on the north side, requiring excessive effort and labor for carrying stage equipment in and out.

5. Narrowness of the stage space (The stage horizontal depth of 12m and internal stage height of 12-14.5m is absolutely insufficient).

Among the aforementioned points, the greatest issues regarding Kyoto Kaikan No. 1 Hall are the fundamental and fatal problems of it being hexagonal in shape, the width of the stage narrowing as it goes inward, the height inside the stage dropping, and that the amount of space originally needed for ongoing use in the future cannot be secured.

Regarding the present condition of Kyoto Kaikan, many have made earnest appeals to have the facilities improved. Ballet performers who use the facility have requested for many years that Kyoto Kaikan be completely rebuilt and improved since satisfactory performances cannot be held due to the insufficient stage facilities and narrow stage space. Promoters of popular music have requested that the stage space be improved, as it is too narrow, and have also requested increased backstage facilities.

The Kyoto Kaikan Reconstruction and Renovation Basic Plan was formulated in 2010, in consideration of the efforts undertaken thus far. In formulating the Basic Plan, the following three policies were worked out:

1. First, as the first policy:

To pass on the value of the existing building which is known as a famous example of postwar architecture designed by leading Japanese architect Kunio Mayekawa, and to recreate it as a public hall.

2. Next, as the second point:

To improve functionality which responds to the various use needs as a “cultural edifice” which represents Kyoto.

3. Finally, as the third policy:

To introduce functions and environmental systems which drive revitalization of the Okazaki district and protects and creates its appeal.

Based on the above, various plans were considered which will be discussed in “2” below.

As a result, large-scale construction work requiring large-scale reinforcement work inside the building in order to improve the seismic resistance so that No. 1 Hall can continue to be safely used is necessary, which in turn requires major changes and restrictions to the use and design of the building space, and it became clear that No. 1 Hall cannot be preserved in its current condition. Therefore, the Kyoto Kaikan Reconstruction and Renovation Basic Plan was formulated in June 2011, and as its policy deems that the outer walls must be rebuilt while keeping their present position, and while perpetuating the present spatial composition with the center garden in the center, parts of No. 2 Hall and the Conference Hall shall have total repair work done to improve its seismic resistance and barrier-free access.

Furthermore, in formulating the Draft Basic Plan, Kyoto City sought public comments between January and February 2011, and listened to a wide range of resident opinions.

Also, after the Renovation and Restoration Basic Plan was formulated, Kyoto City has progressed with the reconstruction and renovation while listening to the opinions of facility users. For example, explanations were provided on the details of the plan to facility users in a variety of fields, such as the All-Kyoto Western Dance Council, the Kyoto Wind Instrument Association, and the Kyoto Choral Association, etc., on January 15, 2012, a “Meeting to Explain the Reconstruction and Renovation Project to Groups who Use the Kyoto Kaikan Hall” was held, and opportunities were created to hear facility user opinions regarding the stage mechanisms after the reconstruction and renovation work is completed.

In 2011, the basic design work was undertaken with the Basic Reconstruction and Renovation Plan as a premise, and the basic design work was entrusted to a leading modern Japanese architect, Mr. Hisao Koyama, winner of the Architectural Institute of Japan Award. Also, alongside drafting the Basic Design Proposal, from October 2011 to March 2012, a total of five meetings of the “Planning Committee on Perpetuating the Value of Kyoto Kaikan” were held,

and the person commissioned to create the basic design presented his design proposal, and the design plan was examined with the assumption that it would be changed to reflect the opinions presented by the committee members. Specifically, the final basic design came together after changes to the window frame width and shortening the north to south width of the fly tower.

The reconstruction and renovation endeavors underway reflect the endeavors thus far over many years, and promotes the functional recreation of Kyoto Kaikan as a public facility, inherits the building's value to the greatest extent possible, and is the most appropriate reconstruction plan that Kyoto City can conceive at the present time. Kyoto City believes that many people understand and have high hopes for this project.

2. "Please show how the examination of the new performance requirements for No. 1 Hall were verified to be within the scope of continuing and guaranteeing the integrity of Kyoto Kaikan's architectural and cultural value, as well as how the appropriateness of those performance requirements, etc. were examined."

The reconstruction and renovation of Kyoto Kaikan is on the premise that it will serve as a multipurpose public facility in the future as well. Originally, it was the only hall in Kyoto Prefecture which could seat over 2,000 people, and securing 2,000 seats is merely maintaining the status quo and continuing its function thus far. Also, visitors expressed strong opinions that the current level of 2,000 seats should be maintained. Furthermore, regarding the width of the stage, in recent years it has been kept at the same level of a public hall with around 1,500 seats.

This point is also made clear by the deliberation materials from the "Planning Committee on Perpetuating the Value of Kyoto Kaikan."

Also, in the reconstruction and renovation process, details of the reconstruction and renovation, such as the preservation of the large eaves and the preservation of the spatial configuration from the piloti leading to the center garden, etc. have been examined taking the viewpoints expressed by DOCOMOMO Japan and the Architecture Institute of Japan listed in (1), making perpetuation of the building's value possible.

In this way, Kyoto Kaikan maintains the functions accepted by the residents and visitors to Okazaki area, while giving it a new life and future as a public hall. Precisely for that reason, Kyoto Kaikan will continue to be Kyoto Kaikan, and this is considered to be the integrity for Kyoto Kaikan as understood by Kyoto City and many Kyoto residents.

Also, in order for Kyoto Kaikan to continue as Kyoto Kaikan, No. 1 Hall requires fundamental functional improvements.

Functionally speaking, in the present Kyoto Kaikan acoustic problems have been pointed out since the facility first opened. Although it was designed to be a concert hall, the addition of functions of a multipurpose hall during the construction process resulted in the hanging mechanism being forced into the iron frame of the roof of No. 1 Hall, and the stage having a horizontal depth of only 12 meters, etc., which led many visitors and performers, etc. to request improvements shortly after the facility opened. However, basic improvements could not be made and the facility continued to be used anyway.

Also regarding the proposal to add a fly which preserves the skeleton of No. 1 Hall, as already stated in “1,” this has been considered on an ongoing basis at various opportunities.

However, problems have appeared one after another, such as the basic problem that the stage is on the second floor, the functional problems arising from the building being shaped like a hexagon, problems regarding structural reinforcement during repairs, design problems should a fly be added to the existing skeleton (a partial reduction of the large eaves are required as the skeleton juts out approximately 3 meters facing the canal on the west side, etc.) and overall problems related to design, not just function.

Therefore, in order for No. 1 Hall to fulfill its performance requirements and for Kyoto Kaikan to continue on as Kyoto Kaikan, ultimately the only option is to rebuild it.

Furthermore, at meetings of the Planning Committee on Perpetuating the Value of Kyoto Kaikan, after a serious exchange of opinions with designer Hisao Koyama (currently a leader in Japanese hall

architecture and the recipient of the Architectural Institute of Japan Award, The Japan Art Academy Award, and the Togo Murano Award), No. 1 Hall will be reconstructed, but for the deep eaves to the bottom, while basically perpetuating the building value of the existing parts, care will be taken to work out the texture of the materials and the design so that the fly tower blends with the sky and does not to have an excessive impact on the scenery.

As stated above, regarding the reconstruction and renovation of Kyoto Kaikan numerous examinations, both “hard” and “soft” involving residents, visitors, and specialists, etc. have been held over the past ten or so years. The performance requirements are considered to be within a range which allows for the perpetuation and guarantee of Kyoto Kaikan’s overall architectural and cultural value integrity, and future implementation design and construction processes will strive to perpetuate integrity.

3. “Please demonstrate how the architectural and cultural value of the entire Kyoto Kaikan will actually be perpetuated, and its integrity can be guaranteed even after No. 1 Hall is completely dismantled and removed.”

Kyoto Kaikan’s cultural and scenic value is not just limited to the No. 1 Hall, there are also the spatial components in the overall buildings, including No. 2 Hall with the center garden and the conference hall buildings.

In particular, the architecture of the Conference Center Building and No.2 Hall, which is flanked by zelkova trees along Nijo Street, the main street of the Okazaki cultural zone, will be preserved in its original state, and the passageway up to Reizei Street, which passes through the piloti that leads to the center garden will be utilized in the spatial components of the overall structure.

Also, No. 1 Hall will be rebuilt at that location, and perpetuating the overall spatial components will make it possible to continue and guarantee the integrity of the architectural and cultural value of Kyoto Kaikan.

Visitors have long wanted the common lobby in the court to be a waiting area during times of rain, but due to its construction within

the large eaves, it has been made as narrow as possible as not to reduce space in the center garden, and handrails have been designed to be internalized to create a feeling of unity with the outdoors with a glass curtain wall, and along with efforts to preserve and perpetuate it, the curtain wall itself will be a separate structure made of a steel-frame construction, and will be built so that it can be restored in the future.

No. 1 Hall basically inherits the design of the large eaves, handrails, and brick tiles, etc., which are considered to be characteristic of the buildings overall external appearance, and aside from some minimal functional additions, it has been determined that the value of the overall building will be perpetuated and that there are no integrity problems.

Regarding the integrity of the preservation and revitalization of modern architecture, Hisao Koyama, a leading modern Japanese architect, has stated, “The essence of architectural art is the continued existence of buildings as they are being preserved and revitalized. Also, outstanding preservation and revitalization does not just simply reinforce the deteriorated areas, with each generation it must add new value to old value.”

Therefore, Kyoto City believes that the integrity of Kyoto Kaikan overall will continue to be guaranteed after the dismantling and removal of No. 1 Hall, and continue its efforts in the future.

4. “Please demonstrate how the building’s value will be perpetuated, including the preservation of the architecture’s original components and materials, assuming that No. 1 Hall will be completely dismantled and removed”

Regarding the perpetuation of the materials, the committees working on continuing the building value of Kyoto Kaikan, careful deliberations were held on each component and incorporated into the Basic Plan.

For No. 1 Hall, reconstruction is unavoidable for the reasons stated in “1” and “2,” but efforts will be made to rebuild it at that location while protecting the spatial composition which is characteristic to Kyoto Kaikan as a whole, respecting the design and materials used for the

large eaves and handrails, etc. which utilize the building's overall characteristic parallel lines, and the reviving the texture of brick tiles in the outer wall to suit modern tastes.

During dismantling, the construction methods, etc. of the time will be utilized in the restoration work by partially adopting the details (tiles and eaves) which are characteristic of No. 1 Hall, and PC-constructed handrails will be reutilized to no limit, etc., and measures shall be taken so this can be reflected in future implementation design and restoration work.

However, regarding the interior space, No. 1 Hall has fundamental functional problems, and from creating a new design, including that of the stage and seats, the building value of the exterior will be perpetuated.

5. "Considering the points above, please present specific measures on how integrity will be guaranteed after the reconstruction of No. 1 Hall, from the standpoint of perpetuating the architectural and cultural value of Kyoto Kaikan. Also, please present the surveys and work, etc. performed before dismantling and during dismantling, including the schedule."

Regarding securing integrity after the reconstruction of No. 1 Hall, the efforts by the "Planning Committee on Perpetuating the Value of Kyoto Kaikan" in parallel with the Basic Plan have already been stated, and the details of the compiled Basic Plan aim to secure the functional revitalization and safety of Kyoto Kaikan as a public facility while perpetuating its value as a building, and at the present time, it is the optimal plan that can be conceived which responds to the expectations of many residents and visitors.

Furthermore, Mr. Hisao Koyama, who has been commissioned to create the basic design, will continue to be involved in the reconstruction and renovation work on as overseer of the implementation design work, and shall work to secure the perpetuation of Kyoto Kaikan's value as a building.

At present, preparations leading to the dismantling of the actual skeleton have been underway at Kyoto Kaikan from mid-October. On the other hand, in consideration of the written opinion submitted by

ISC20C, the following actual dismantling work will be carried out while seeking the advice of the Fourteenth Subcommittee JAPAN ICOMOS National Committee:

1. Performing surveys to examine expanded reuse of materials and components (specifically, for the handrails in the northern section of No. 1 Hall, examine reuse of the existing outer handrails)
2. Create records and reports of the dismantling work

At present, specific adjustments are being made to the schedule, etc.

Preparation of the aforementioned surveys and reports were not originally anticipated by Kyoto City, but it gives serious consideration to the comments received from ISC20C and the JAPAN ICOMOS National Committee, and from the viewpoint of perpetuating the architectural and cultural value of Kyoto Kaikan, will make new efforts in addition to the ones taken thus far.

Accordingly, Kyoto City shall respect and realize these results to the greatest extent possible.