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a newsletter of the Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress

Fall
2002

Redress and the Recreation Center

An NCRR Statement

The redress and reparations campaign and the current campaign to build a recreation center in Little Tokyo on First Street North have a lot in common. When the Rafu Shimpō surveyed the community on the question of whether people wanted individual compensation, an overwhelming 89% of the community responded in favor of it. Today the vast majority of the Japanese American community favors a Rec Center in Little Tokyo and supports a plan that can include both the Rec Center and an Art Park on First Street North. Of course there were those who opposed redress and said that it would never happen. There are those who oppose the Rec Center and say it cannot be built on the same space as an art park. The Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress (formerly the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations) fully supports a Recreation Center on First Street North and believes that all concerns about noise, proximity to the veterans' monument and parking can be resolved.

GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

It took a grassroots community-wide movement to finally win redress after an eight year campaign. We did not get the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 passed by waiting for the government to do the right thing. We as a community became active participants in the democratic process and helped to educate the American public. We insisted that all those who wanted to testify should be able to speak at the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in 1981. At those same hearings we insisted that Japanese translation be provided for the Isseis and that there be an evening session at Little Tokyo Towers so that working people could participate.

The community won redress by writing letters, gathering petitions, speaking to any and all organizations, conducting candlelight vigils and lobbying the United States Congress. With the sponsorship of Congressman Mervyn Dymally we even wrote our own bill which called for \$25,000 for each individual and a community fund to help rebuild our community. In 1987, 127 ordinary folks went to Washington D.C. and told their stories to different congress people who eventually voted for the final redress bill. We did not get the Appropriations Bill passed in 1989 by hoping that Congress would allocate money to really pay individuals before more of our community had passed away (already over half of those interned were no longer alive). We sent letters, telegrams and made phone calls to our representatives and organized a Day of Protest with over a 1,000 people in the JACCC Plaza. We learned a lot about the political process and how a bill becomes law. We spoke up, stood up and became stronger as a community.

The current effort to build a Rec Center has been going on for eight years. Over twenty years ago, the community was promised a gymnasium in Little Tokyo as part of redevelopment. Instead of a gymnasium next to the community center, we have the Noguchi Plaza. It will take a community wide campaign to make a Rec Center a reality on the only available and viable space, First Street North. We will not win this campaign by waiting for City Council to do the right thing or by hoping that another site will become available in the future. We will again need to gather petitions, speak to any and all organizations and lobby Councilwoman Jan Perry. We did not win redress and we will not get a Rec Center by being quiet. We demanded redress and even challenged those politicians who opposed the bill.

VISION FOR LITTLE TOKYO

NCRR has its roots in Little Tokyo. Many of the individuals who formed the organization were people who had participated in the redevelopment struggle of the 1970's as part of the Little Tokyo Peoples Rights Organization (LTPRO). Before the Isseis were evicted from the Beacon and Narasaki Hotels, LTPRO pressured the city to wait for the Little Tokyo Towers to be built. They

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NCRR 9/11 COMMITTEE

REMEMBERS & CONNECTS

By Mike Yanagita and Kathy Masaoka

Since the candlelight vigil in Little Tokyo, the NCRR 9/11 Committee has been actively developing closer relationships between Muslim and Arab American community organizations. Aside from the "Break the Fast" event at Senshin Buddhist Temple, in early December we joined the Burbank/Glendale chapters of MPAC at a picnic in Sierra Madre. Reverend Mas Kodani invited the attendees to the Senshin obon in July and a few were able to join the dancing. MPAC also invited our members to its Awards Dinner where individuals were recognized for their contributions to positive media images of Muslims. NCRR was thanked for its support of the Muslim community.

We have been involved in an ongoing process of educating ourselves and people in our own community about the issues facing Muslim and Arab Americans. After the Day of Remembrance program, "1942 and 2002 - Without Due Process," the committee sponsored a program on peace in the Middle East with Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, an Israeli speaker, Yosshi Khen and Cr. Mahmoud Ibrahim of Cal Poly Pomona who explained the history of the current conflict and the efforts to establish a lasting peace. We hope to better understand these issues so that we may be a viable force in protecting and ensuring the civil liberties of all people and help promote peace in the Middle East.

We feel it is important for everyone to understand these issues as it affects our relationship with other communities. We need to guard against another mass relocation of a people based solely on race does not occur again since the basis for the camps has not been overturned. There are still many in this country who look upon anyone who comes from a different country, religion or culture with suspicion and fear. This can easily lead to

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NCRR members (L-R) Mike Murase, Bruce Iwasaki, Evelyn Yoshimura, Mark Masaoka, Kathy Masaoka and June Hibino at 7/13 MPAC awards dinner. (Photo courtesy of Evelyn Yoshimura)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: LITTLE TOKYO REC CENTER UPDATE, REDRESS UPDATE, EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT, HISTORICAL PRESERVATION PROJECT, 911 COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

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worked with the Latino families of the Sun Hotel, saw almost a 1000 units of low income housing destroyed, and demanded that relocation benefits be provided for those evicted.

NCRR commends the vision of the Little Tokyo Service Center CDC and the concrete work that they have done to revitalize Little Tokyo. By renovating the San Pedro Firm Building and building Casa Heiwa, LTSC CDC has brought residents back to Little Tokyo. It is still not the numbers it was before redevelopment, but it is a start. LTSC CDC has shown its ability to work with other organizations such as the East West Players, Visual Communications and Art Core in the creation of the Union Center for the Arts thus preserving Old Union Church. We look forward to the opening of the Far East Café, a place where we celebrated many important events as Japanese Americans. All these projects have enriched our community as well as Little Tokyo.

Their work is an example for other communities to follow.

Although redress may have benefited individuals, the struggle empowered our community and our victory contributed to the movement for greater civil rights in this country and abroad. A Rec Center on First Street North will provide a permanent home for the senior lunch program, Koreisha Chu Shokukai and bring families and children back to Little Tokyo for tournaments and sports. It will serve the people of Little Tokyo, the broader Japanese American community, the neighboring communities and will show how strengthening communities strengthens the entire city of Los Angeles.

We came together as a community to win redress. We can come together again and build a Rec Center in Little Tokyo.

Redress Now! Recreation Center Now!

NCRR EDUCATION COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

By Janice Yen

LA CWRIC Hearings Tapes In 2nd Printing

In 1998 the Education worked in collaboration with Visual Communications to preserve, index and summarize the thirteen videotapes of the historic three-day 1981 Los Angeles Hearings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). Individuals, schools and institutions throughout the United States have purchased the VHS videotape set, *Speak Out for Justice*. Because only one complete set of the tapes remains in inventory, a second round of duplications from the digital master is being done. The complete set (\$300 for individuals), individual tapes from the set (\$30 each), as well as the Viewer's Companion (\$20), are available for purchase. Call Janice at 213-680-3484 for more information.

Lazo Film Set to Film in September, But...

The Committee is currently serving as an advisory body to Visual Communications on an educational video, *Stand Up for Justice*, a docu-

drama about a Latino teenage (Ralph Lazo) who accompanies his Nisei friends to Manzanar during World War II. The video, funded in part by grants from Civil Liberties Public Education Fund (CLPEF) and the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCLPEP), is scheduled for completion by 2003.

Do you know the perfect actor to portray Ralph Lazo? Ralph was a fun-loving, friendly teenager who, in the film, is about seventeen years old. Utilizing trade magazines, local high school acting classes, and leads from friends, the Lazo Project has auditioned over forty young Latinos for the Lazo character. A second round of auditions is now necessary. We're looking for a young male Latino actor with some acting experience, a person who has, at the very least, participated in high school drama productions. Age-wise he can be in his early 20's but must look like a high school student. Please call Janice at 213-680-3484 if you have any leads. Thanks.

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another mass hysteria should any other terrorist attack happen. The better educated we are, the more communication we establish and the more understanding we have of each other, the more protection we will have from further injustices.

The NCRR 9/11 Committee plans to continue to deepen its relationships with MPAC, ADC, CAIR and SAN through such events as a women's gathering, a "Break the Fast" during Ramadan. The committee is open to helping with speakers and educationals. The next event will be a film showing of hate crimes against South Asians sometime in the fall.

Some things people can do: 1) Get involved. There are lots of organizations which are actively working to promote peace in the Middle East. 2) Log on to the websites of these organizations: mpac.org, cair-net.org, icujp 3) Write/e-mail your congressperson-communication through the internet has become a powerful tool.

On April 5, NCRR was recognized with as a Community Supporter at the KIWA Awards Dinner. Tony Osumi (at podium) accepted on behalf of NCRR. In the back are Danny Park, Executive Director of KIWA and Jan Tokumaru of APALA. (Photo by Janice Yen)



See more photos and stories at
www.ncrr-la.org

REDRESS STILL ALIVE!

By Richard Katsuda

Although it has been 14 years since the Civil Liberties Act (CLA) of 1988, the fight for redress still goes on. Japanese Latin Americans (JLAs) and many Japanese Americans have been unjustly denied redress for technical reasons.

In addition, Congress had intended that \$50 million be used for public education about the World War II experiences of Japanese Americans, but only \$5 million was actually appropriated. The federal government said there were insufficient funds to fully redress Japanese Latin Americans and to fulfill Congress' intent regarding public education. However, NCRR learned that the Dept. of the Treasury had failed to properly invest the redress fund, as stipulated by the CLA. NCRR determined that the loss of funds as a result of the government's failure would have amounted to more than enough to fully redress JLAs and to cover the shortfall in education and filed a lawsuit. The court did not dispute NCRR's argument, but ruled that, because the CLA and its Office of Redress Admin. had closed, it was not possible to remedy the situation.

Since 1996, NCRR has been working with the Campaign for Justice, Redress Now for Japanese Latin Americans! (CFJ). Through the initiative of Representative Xavier Becerra (D-CA) and Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI), CFJ has been rallying support for major legislation that would resolve the remaining redress issues for Japanese Americans and JLAs. This legislation, titled the Wartime Parity and Justice Act of 2001 (S.1237 in the Senate and H.R. 619 in the House of Rep.), needs your support for passage. We need constituents to contact their representatives in Congress and urge them to sponsor this bill. Address letters to: Honorable (name), U.S. House of Representatives, Wash., D.C. 20515.

In the Senate, there has been some discussion about having a hearing on the bill by the Senate Judiciary Committee. Please call or write to Senator Daniel Inouye, asking him to call upon members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to expedite a hearing. Please call or write to Senator Feinstein, a member of the Judiciary Committee, urging her to take a lead in convening a hearing. Address letters to Senator Inouye or Feinstein to: Honorable (name), U.S. Senate, Wash., D.C. 20515.

In the courts, Isamu "Art" Shibayama and his two brothers, represented by Karen Parker, await a ruling in their case where they sued for full redress and other demands regarding mistreatment and suffering of JLAs.

Robert Murakami, represented by John Ota, is a member of the category of "Japanese American children born after their parents had left camp." Murakami asserts that his parents were not realistically free and able to return to their home. In a hopeful sign, the case has been returned to the Department of Justice for reconsideration, with a decision due October 2, 2002.

For more information, or to help in this effort, please contact Richard Katsuda at (323) 664-0323; e-mail to rstoma@earthlink.net; or write to CFJ, P.O. Box 251425, Los Angeles, CA 90025.

CUBAN-JAPANESE-AMERICAN EXCHANGE POSTPONED

By Kathy Masaoka

Plans for an exchange with Cuban Japanese women Maritza Tamashiro Linares and Naiyu Yamaguchi Rodriguez are on hold until July 2003. The two women were unable to obtain their travel documents and visas and, in fact, it is uncertain when and if they will get their documents. Travel to and from Cuba has never been easy due to the US embargo and sanctions against Cuba and has become even more difficult since Sept. 11. According to the Cuban Interests Section in Wash. D.C., the US Attorney General was reviewing each visa application individually and now seems to be approving visas only for those Cubans who are immigrating to this country. In spite of assistance from the Cuba Friendship group, ICAP, and the Japanese Consul in Havana, the Society of Japanese has not been able to process the necessary documents for the two women.

Tamashiro and Yamaguchi were invited by a dozen organizations to California to continue the exchanges begun in 2000 with the visit of Mr. Francisco Miyasaka, President of the Society of Japanese in Havana. Miyasaka spoke about the 100 year history of Japanese in Cuba and invited a delegation to come to Cuba the following year. In August 2001, NCRR sponsored 18 people who shared our obon traditions and foods with the Japanese on the Island of Youth. Upon their return the delegation reported back what they had learned about Cuban Japanese and Cuba at programs in Los Angeles and in San Francisco and Oakland.

NCRR hoped that our communities would continue to learn about each other's history and culture through the visit of these two women. We would like to thank all the organizations that wrote letters of invitation and supported the tour. The Cuba Committee is committed to building understanding between Japanese Americans and Cuban Japanese and has started to make plans for both the Cuban Japanese Women's Tour in 2003 as well as a Japanese American Delegation in Spring 2004.

A video of the NCRR Delegation to Cuba 2001 by Janice Yen is available for \$15. For more information, please call NCRR at (213) 680-3483.

Bob Bratt Update

Former ORA director Bob Bratt has recently reported that his plans to clear his name and seek a remedy for the allegations made against him by the Department of Justice's Inspector General in the Fall of 2000 are still on hold. He expressed that although this ordeal has consumed several years of his life, timing is very important in his plans. He will keep NCRR updated of any change and when he may need support from the Legal Defense Fund (LDF).

Last year, a check of \$3,250 from the LDF was sent to Bob's lawyer to help defray costs involved in seeking important information about Bob's case from the DOJ. Although this request was denied, Bob was very appreciative of the community's support and concern.

NCRR encourages individuals and organizations to continue to assist in Bob's legal defense through donations to the "Robert Bratt Legal Defense Fund/NCRR" c/o NCRR, 231 E. 3rd St. Suite G-104, Los Angeles, CA, 90013. Donations are tax-deductible. For further information contact NCRR at (323) 680-3484.



On March 27, students from DePaul University visited NCRR during an Asian Civil Rights Tour. The students heard first-hand internment and redress movement experiences from NCRR members such as Bernadette Nishimura (left) and others. (Photos by Janice Yen.)

PERRY TO DECIDE ON LITTLE TOKYO RECREATION CENTER

By Christina Shigemura

The battle over seven acres of city-owned land north of First Street is heating up, and City Councilwoman Jan Perry is expected to decide soon whether to allow the Little Tokyo Recreation Center to be built there. After holding two public hearings at the Japan America Theater and a private meeting which was limited to certain First Street North stakeholders, Perry said that she plans to meet individually with stakeholders before announcing her decision.

However, many Rec Center supporters have criticized the city's process of deciding who gets a lease on First Street North as unfair and undemocratic. Although the Children's Museum claims to have a lease on the northeast corner of the block, no one has been able to show us the lease. If the Children's Museum does not have a lease, then why doesn't the Children's Museum have to jump through all of the hoops that the Rec Center has been asked to? Also, the Children's Museum has not performed an environmental impact assessment after doubling its planned size from 40,000 to 80,000 square feet. Current plans for the Children's Museum reveal a seven-story, metallic monstrosity which "looks like it fell down," according to Tad Nakamura, a Rec Center supporter. The Children's Museum plan has also been criticized for providing insufficient parking.

Yet concerns about the unfairness of the city's lease-granting process are not limited to the Children's Museum. There was no opportunity for public input to decide whether the Geffen Contemporary Museum, whose location on First Street North was originally temporary, should be allowed to stay permanently. Additionally, the city gave the Geffen and JANM more than \$300,000 of taxpayer money to develop a plan for the Central Avenue Art Park (CAAP). This plan was supposed to be approved by the CAAP Steering Committee, yet it was never voted on.

Throughout discussions of First Street North, Rec Center supporters have remained willing to compromise with other stakeholders on the block. LTSC CDC offered the Go For Broke vets office space in the Rec Center, doors and windows were moved to face away from East West Players to minimize the amount of noise and foot traffic, an outdoor stage was added to the back of the Rec Center for use by the Geffen for outdoor performances, and landscaping was added to the Rec Center in order to make it fit in better with the proposed Art Park. These gestures of goodwill, however, have been met with coldness and sometimes outright hostility.

LTSC CDC has investigated more than 25 sites in Little Tokyo. Other than First Street North, no available site exists in Little Tokyo which is large enough or can be acquired without the power of eminent domain, which Councilwoman Perry has indicated she is unwilling to use.

REC CENTER TO GO UNDERGROUND

At the last Little Tokyo Community Council meeting on July 30, the new Recreation Center plan was presented by Mr. Takase who has been working with the Coalition for the past 8 years coming up with new designs for each new site (see insert). This new plan answers all the concerns about noise, parking and proximity to the Veterans' Monument. In fact this new plan adds more parking than the Art Park plan. We applaud Mr. Takase's creativity and sincere desire to resolve the problems. He said, "I love our community. I am proud of our community. It makes me sad to see it divided into two parts." He also stated that "it's an architect's duty to find a way to accommodate both an Art Park and gym together on the same block."

The Rec Center would bring large numbers of families back to Little Tokyo, something that other stakeholders on First Street North have been unable to do. First Street North is the only viable location for the Rec Center, so please act now. Email City Councilwoman Jan Perry at perry@council.lacity.org or write to her at 200 North Spring, RM 420, Los Angeles, CA 90012. For updates on the Rec Center campaign, visit <http://reccenter.ltsc.org> or call 213/473-1690.

Are you an NCRR member? Have you renewed recently? Join or renew now and support continuing efforts for redress, civil rights and social justice!

NCRR Membership (tax-deductible):
 \$30 One-year
 \$15 Students and low-income
 \$500 Lifetime membership
 Please make checks payable to NCRR

Mail to: NCRR
 231 E. Third Street G104
 Los Angeles, CA 90013

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State, ZIP _____

27 GRADUATE FROM SUMMER ACTIVIST TRAINING

Another successful Summer Activist Training was held at the end of June with 27 young people who were eager to learn more about organizing and community work. Some of the youth came from as far away as Philadelphia, Penn. and were involved with an organization called Asian Americans United in the Chinatown area. More people applied for the training this year and we expect an equal number next year as activism among young people increases. The SAT was sponsored by five organizations: NCRR, Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates (KIWA), Garment Workers Center (GWC), Pilipino Workers Center (PWC), Thai Community Development Center (Thai CDC). These groups along with volunteers from past SATs provided the coordination, trainers, food and housing for the four-day training. Many of the past SAT participants continue to be involved with community, campus or civil rights issues. This year, NCRR sponsored Tomo Matsuoka (no relation to Jim) who is currently working at the Little Tokyo Service Center CDC with the Residents Council. The training is sustained solely on donations since it is free to the participants. Any donations for SAT can be sent to NCRR.

NCRR Historical Preservation Project in Progress

NCRR's Historical Preservation Committee (HPC) continues to document NCRR's role in the 1980's and 1990's historic redress campaigns through oral histories, journal writing, and the gathering of photos, notes, and artifacts from the over two-decades long effort. A grant from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program has enabled NCRR to begin an oral history project. Writer Sharon Yamato and filmmaker, Janice Tanaka have continued to work with NCRR for the past year to videotape the oral histories of Miya Iwataki, Jim Matsuoka Bert and Lillian Nakano, and Alan Nishio. Also, interviewed recently were Suzy Katsuda, Richard Katsuda, Kathy Masaoka and Kay Ochi. The grant project is nearing completion with the transcribing and indexing of the tapes. NCRR has also begun discussions on how to publish broader perspectives on current issues through the involvement of younger Asian/Pacific Islander Americans, artists and activists. For more information, please contact Kay Ochi at (213) 413-6537.

Attention Readers: If you do not wish to receive NCRR's Banner in the future, cut out the mailing label with your name and address and send it to NCRR at "NCRR, 231 E. Third St. G104, Los Angeles, CA 90013".

**NIKKEI FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS & REDRESS**

231 E. THIRD STREET G104
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(213) 680-3484

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Latest Development...New Recreation Center Plans!

At the last Little Tokyo Community Council meeting on July 30, a new plan for the Recreation Center was presented by Mr. Takase who has been working with the Coalition for the past 8 years coming up with new designs for each new site (see article). This new plan answers all of the concerns about noise, parking and proximity to the Veterans' Monument. In fact this plan adds more parking than the Art Park plan does. We applaud Mr. Takase's creativity and sincere desire to resolve the problems. He said, "I love our community. I am proud of our community. It makes me sad to see it divided into two parts." He also stated that "it's an architect's duty to find a way to accommodate both an Art Park and gym together on the same block."

Architect Unveils New Rec Center Plan

Plan calls for building gymnasium underground at First Street North.

By GWEN MURANAKA

RAFU ENGLISH EDITOR

Yahiko Takase, project architect for the Little Tokyo Recreation Center, unveiled a new concept that would place the gymnasium complex underground at First Street North at a meeting Tuesday of the Little Tokyo Community Council held at the Japanese American National Museum.

Takase, whose projects include the Kajima Building, Higashi Hongwanji Temple and New Otani Hotel, said the new plans came out of a brainstorming session held July 17 with Takase, Bill Watanabe, Dean Matsubayashi of Little Tokyo Service Center and architect Michael Enomoto of Gruen Associates. Takase said it was an attempt to find a solution to the current impasse between proponents of the proposed rec center and Central Avenue Art Park projects.

"One week after the July 10 (public) meeting, we had a brainstorm session and had a long discussion what to do, Michael Enomoto almost murmured, what if we buried our building, put it completely underground," said Takase.

The new plan which had yet to be presented to 9th District Councilperson Jan Perry would place the entire six-court facility under the site where the Art Park would be constructed. At press time, a representative from Perry's office was unavailable for comment. Among the concerns expressed about the previous rec center plan was that noise from the gym would disrupt performances at the Union Center for the Arts and that the building would disturb the sanctity of the Go For Broke Monument.

Michael Maltzan, the architect of the Art Park also made a presentation to the Community Council. Echoing earlier

comments at the July 10 public hearing, he explained his concept for the park as an extension of Little Tokyo, with rows of cherry trees extending out of the park towards the trees recently planted on Central Ave.

"What we were trying to do was imagine a way of creating a park that was both at the center of the block and in the sense was a frontyard for all the businesses and institutions," said Maltzan. "We've looked at trying to imagine certain elements standing as an icon for the different participants around the park. So the cherry trees in a sense would really stand for Little Tokyo moving into the park."

Following Maltzan's presentation, Takase said he was impressed by the Art Park proposal and supported both an Art Park and a rec center.

"I really want to have an Art Park in this space," said Takase. "But on the other hand, we need a rec center for kids. So it's an architect's duty to find a way to accommodate both an Art Park and gym together on the same block."

Takase said he worked "day and night" for four days to come up with the plan and found inspiration from a similar concept designed by Japanese architect and Pritzker Architecture Prize winner Tadao Ando.

First Street North stakeholder representatives, including George Takei, chairman of the Japanese American National Museum and Colonel Young Oak Kim (ret.), chairman of the 100th/442nd/MJS WWII Memorial Foundation were in attendance at the meeting, along with Tom Kamei, president of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Brian Kito, president of the Little Tokyo Public Safety Association and Frances Hashimoto, president of the Little Tokyo Business Association, and representatives from Nikkei Student Union and Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress.

Speaking after the meeting, Takei

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said he was "intrigued" by Takase's plan and praised the architect's ingenuity. The JANM chair asked the architect questions about sound proofing and passageways for local businesses to remove trash. Other concerns raised included where air conditioning units would be placed and the underground gym's proximity to water pipes and the local water table. The architect said he believes that the technical issues can be worked out.

"It's a great creative problem solving attempt and I hope that it can be worked out. Obviously it's in the very early stages, but the details can be creatively solved," said Takei. "With this conceptual plan comes a very high price tag. So that's going to be another area that we all have to think about. But if this will get us past this unfortunate divisiveness, and it all should have been avoidable ... I do applaud Mr. Takase for his creative problem solving."

Col. Kim expressed concerns that the Children's Museum of Los Angeles would obstruct the Go For Broke Monument. A representative from CMLA was not present at the meeting.

"We're going to fight anything that

is going to be big and diminishes the value of the monument," said Kim to the Rafu Shimpō. "When the Children's Museum idea came up, which was only about 3 or 4 years ago, we agreed to the concept of the Children's Museum moving into the Art Park. Two locations were mentioned. One was on Temple and Alameda and the other was Temple and Judge John Aiso. We voted for the Temple and John Aiso because we didn't want it too close to the monument, overshadowing it."

Takase estimated that the underground plans could add an additional \$2 to \$2.5 million above the initial estimates of \$8.8 million. He also estimated that the structure would be 76,000 square feet and would have to be built at least 26 feet deep to accommodate the basketball courts. Takase emphasized that he felt that the additional expense would pale compared to the cost of land.

"I think this is the last chance for the recreation center group to build a rec center. If we miss this chance, we will never build a rec center, forever. Because even if the city is nice enough to find another site, it takes time—2 to 3 years at least. In the meantime land prices are going up," said Takase.

—ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY KAO GUNJI

NCRR Supports the Recreation Center on First Street North. We hope you will too.

Over twenty years ago, the community was promised a gymnasium in Little Tokyo as part of redevelopment. Instead of a gymnasium next to the community center, we have the Noguchi Plaza. It will take a community wide campaign to make a Recreation Center a reality on the only available and viable space, First Street North. We will not win this campaign by waiting for City Council to do the right thing or by hoping that another site will become available in the future. We will again need to gather petitions, speak to any and all organizations and lobby Councilwoman Jan Perry.

What you can do:

1) Take the petition (enclosed) to your organization, church and friends. When the sheet is filled out please return to: **The Little Tokyo Recreation Center Coalition**
%231 East Third Street, Suite G 106
Los Angeles, CA 90013

You can also bring the petition to the Tofu Festival on August 10 or August 11 or to the Japanese Village Plaza on August 18 during the Community Ondo. There will be petition tables at both events.

2) Set up a house meeting with your family and friends. The Recreation Center Coalition will provide the literature and speakers. **Call: (213) 473-1670**

3) Arrange for a presentation to your organization or church group. **Call: (213) 473-1670**

4) Write JANM, MOCA, the East/West Players and the Go for Broke Veterans Monument expressing your support for the Recreation Center.

5) Write or email City Councilwoman Jan Perry at perry@council.lacity.org or write to her at 200 North Spring, RM 420, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

For more information on the Little Tokyo Recreation Center, check the website: **<http://reccenter@ltsc.org>**



Petition to Support the Little Tokyo Recreation Center on First Street North

We, the undersigned, support the Little Tokyo Recreation Center on First Street North. We encourage all stakeholders to develop a plan that includes both a Recreation Center and an Art Park. We believe a Recreation Center in this location will revitalize Little Tokyo and that any and all concerns can be resolved.

[illegible]