

LOCAL NEWS

Sausalito council favors arts center at former bank site



The vacant Bank of America in Sausalito, Calif., on Friday, July 30, 2021. (Alan Dep/Marin Independent Journal)

By [GIUSEPPE RICAPITO](#) | gricapito@marinij.com |

PUBLISHED: January 13, 2022 at 3:42 p.m. | UPDATED: January 13, 2022 at 4:32 p.m.



Sausalito plans to rent the former Bank of America building on Bridgeway to a group proposing an arts center at the site.

Councilmembers Jill Hoffman and Ian Sobieski, who evaluated proposals for the building's use, presented the arts center as their recommendation during the council meeting on Tuesday.

The arts center idea beat out proposals such as a meditation and retreat center; affordable housing; a community center connecting Sausalito and Marin City; a retail-market-restaurant space; and an exhibition and office space.

"It wasn't just about money. It was about impacts and about how the building would serve our community," Hoffman said during the meeting.

The center would be revamped to include a gallery, event space and a rooftop wine bar. The downstairs space would be a partnership with the Sausalito Art Festival Foundation for the presentation of visual, dance, music, textiles, pottery, poetry, song and theater events. The space could also host programs from businesses, hotels or the city, a city staff report noted.

The council did not vote on a proposal. Instead, the members directed staff to negotiate an arts center lease, which they said typically lasts between 10 and 20 years.

The rooftop bar would be considered a separate lease, depending on the center meeting its fundraising goals and getting the project off the ground.

Monica Finnegan, a real estate executive who sits on the city's economic development committee, led a presentation on the proposal. She called it a site where "culture, arts and the community intersect."

"It will be a venue for use by all of our community," she said. "We see this center for the arts as a place we can aggregate information, we can aggregate resources and we can aggregate this community that already exists."

Finnegan said the group plans to create a nonprofit to operate the center. A board of directors would include representatives of Sausalito and Marin County arts organizations.

She said the group aims to open the center in May.

Sobieski described the plan as a public-private partnership that would generate commerce and support city goals. He said the mission of the group also aligned with the artistic history of Sausalito.

“The center of the arts has the possibility to really anchor activity in the heart of downtown,” he said.

Additional ideas for the building included rezoning it as commercial and selling it; tearing it down to expand an adjacent parking lot; and rezoning it to a civic institutional space and establishing a community center.

The council said it would consider more ambitious ideas in parallel with the arts center, and those options could be evaluated further if the center fails to meet its performance goals or when its lease expires.

Louis Briones, chair of the Sausalito Art Festival Foundation board, said the group planned partnerships with nonprofits and businesses to ensure revenue.

“In doing so we would become kind of the first customer for the building and guarantee a certain amount of revenue for the building,” he said.

The city purchased the 5,875-square-foot building at 750 Bridgeway for \$2 million in 2020. Bank of America is paying the city a monthly fee of \$2,000 for five years to keep the cash machines on the side of the building. After that, the fee will incrementally increase every four years for 20 years.

Bank of America closed the branch to walk-in customers in May 2019, and it has been vacant since. It was built in 1956.

Tags: [Ian Sobieski](#), [Jill Hoffman](#), [newsletter](#), [sausalito](#), [Sausalito City Council](#)



Giuseppe Ricapito | Reporter

Giuseppe Ricapito covers southern Marin.

gricapito@marinij.com

Amazon Hates When Prime Members Do This, But They Can't Stop You

Online Shopping Tools | Sponsored

Melissa McCarthy Casually Flaunting Her Beautiful Figure

Loan Insurance Wealth | Sponsored

Doctor Says Slimming Down After 60 Comes Down To This

Dr. Kellyann | Sponsored

Someone Asked AI To Create The Most Beautiful Woman For Every Country

Here are the results

Yeah Motor | Sponsored

7 Mistakes People Make When Hiring a Financial Advisor

SmartAsset | Sponsored

Wolf Surprises Staff After Breaking into Hospital

Take a look.

Yeah Motor | Sponsored

What if the US never became a superpower? Game simulates historical scenarios

This game takes you back to a crucial moment in US history.

Historical Strategy Game | Sponsored

Seniors on SS Are Now Entitled To These 24 "Kickbacks" In September (Tap For Full List)

Seniors who get less than \$2,348/mo with SS are now getting these 24 "Giveback" benefits in 2023

YourPennySaver | Sponsored

Cardiologists: Overweight? Do This Before Bed

Healthy Guru | Sponsored

The Killer New Envision SUV Is Close To Perfection (Take A Look)

CommonSearches | Sponsored

Jennifer Lopez Takes Off Makeup, Leaves Us With No Words

Finance Wealth Post | Sponsored

Remember Chaz Bono? Take A Look At Him After The Weight Loss

Sweet Penny Stocks | Sponsored

Marin history: The healing hills of Fairfax

Marin

2 interesting music events coming up in Marin

Marin

30+ Clever Gifts Nobody Would Expect

Unique gift ideas for the person who has everything. (Up to 75% OFF)

TheGrommet | Sponsored

Here Are 29 of the Coolest Gadgets for This 2023

USA: 29+ best selling gifts you'll regret not getting before they sell out.

Top Gadgets | Sponsored

The App That's Teaching Millennials Spanish in Just 3 Weeks

Limited Time Offer: Get 55% Off on select subscriptions

Babbel | Sponsored

Bear Waves To Family Every Day - One Day Dad Decides To Follows Him

Tips and Tricks | Sponsored

SMART to add weekend trips, suspends new 'Starlighter' service

Marin

Marin softens housing development affordability requirements

Marin

What if WW1 had split up the U.S.? Game simulates alternative history



This strategy game makes you become a player in the crucial situations of history.

Animal Activist Katherine Heigl: Don't Feed Your Dog These Foods

Katherine has spent years working with dogs and learning about their health. And what she's discovered...

Badlands Ranch | Sponsored


2022 > January > 13



SPONSORED CONTENT

Can You Really Get a Premium Tablet, On a Budget? This New Model Is Shaking Up The... [↗](#)

By ProTabletX



Affordable yet high-quality tablets are revolutionizing the market. Find out how this new model is disrupting the...
