

The City of Frederick, Maryland
PUBLIC ART COMMISSION
Minutes of October 8, 2019
(Approved November 12, 2019)

Members Present: A. Cain, W. Poindexter, T. Daniel, D. Rosano, K. Kuranda, E. Martin, E. Wise VanderWoude, L. Stewart

Regrets / Absent: N. Long-Parker, Alderman Donna Kuzemchak, Bob Smith, Dep. Director Parks & Recreation

Staff Present: Sarah Stamper, Office Manager

Guests Present: Ms. Louise Kennelly, Frederick Arts Council; Bernard Gouin, Rotary Club of Carroll Creek, Margot de Messieres, artisan.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

A. Cain called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

MINUTES:

September 10, 2019: The minutes were approved with the addition of one sentence for clarification. T. Daniel moved to approve and E. Wise VanderWoude seconded.

NEW BUSINESS

Review and discussion of a request by Frederick Arts Council for a mural at 201 South Market Street.

Ms. Louise Kennelly, Frederick Arts Council, was present for this application. She passed around a binder with sketches of the mural. She gave the background of the request and artist. They prepared an RFP and did a call asking for a design which included the flora and fauna of Frederick, and the artist retained is a nationally known muralist. The artist researched the community / area and developed a sketch which included an Oriole, Herons, and Black Eyed Susans.

There was discussion regarding the graphics sketch presented with the application. Ms. Kennelly indicated that because the building is in the Historic Preservation district, the painting could only cover bricks that had previously been painted, and that no mural paint would be on the woodwork and cornice of the building. The entire design is paint, no applique. Ms. Kennelly noted that the eyes in the drawing are to symbolize eye of wisdom, eye of sight, etc. She hopes to have the painting completed the first week of November.

There was discussion about the markings of the birds (Heron) for the sketch, and it was determined that the artist was to check/research the markings, and adjust the sketch accordingly. There was also discussion about revising the graphics to clarify that there would not be mural paint on the window frames or cornice.

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There was discussion regarding the Historic Preservation Commission review, and whether the mural could be downsized if necessary.

Signage or an informational plaque explaining the mural was suggested. Ms. Kennelly indicated that the maintenance details would be part of the MOU. The owner of the building asked for help with the cost of maintenance of the artwork.

W. Poindexter moved to approve the design and size of the mural, subject to clarification of the bird markings. D. Rosano seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

Old Business:

Review and discussion of a request by Rotary Club of Carroll Creek to create a Kinetic Art Promenade. The applicant proposes the introduction of a new community event, Carroll Creek Kinetic Art Promenade, which would offer the residents and various organizations of Frederick the opportunity to creatively participate in the continuing beautification of Carroll Creek.

Mr. Bernard Gouin, Rotary Club of Carroll Creek, was present for this request. He indicated that he had brought the request before the Public Art Commission in May, and at that time had agreed to come back to the commission with details. He said an RFP processed by the Ausherman Foundation received three design submissions. Given the artisans' reputation and diversity of the project, the Rotary decided to proceed with all three designs. The project will kick off March 2020. The artisan Margot de Messieres was also present at the meeting to answer any questions about her design. The kinetic art will be displayed March – November. The Rotary club will install and anchor the pieces in the creek. The anchors weigh 1300 lbs. and will remain installed. During the off season the top portions will be removed. The anchors and posts will be painted black to protect against corrosion. The art will not interfere with the boats in the creek. In coming years the applications for the kinetic art will be directly received by Rotary, and the Rotary will come before the Public Art Commission as requests are received.

There was discussion about the moving parts, and safety. Mr. Gouin explained that the art will be anchored in the creek and will be out of arms span-- an individual would have to wade in the creek in order to touch/vandalize the sculpture. If something breaks or needs removed, the Rotary have already secured a crane operator. The water moves very little. The center of the art pieces will be 18 inches above water. The Rotary will charge a \$500 display fee each season. The owners of the art pieces must store the art when not displayed. The Rotary plans to expand the collection on display each year.

There was discussion about the Thomas Sterner Tree of Life piece. The commission liked the concept and the written description, but felt that according to the sketch, it was too busy/cluttered with no one focal point. There was also discussion about colors. Mr. Gouin said he would relay the comments to the artist. He also noted that the main priority of Rotary is to make the project accessible to financially cosponsor.

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There was discussion regarding the piece by Margo de Messieres, who was present at the meeting. Ms. Messieres responded to a question by stating that the artist is not opposed to the shape of the sculpture seeming like a boat, but the main focus is the face of Theophilus Thompson. The shape seemed natural above the water as Mr. Thompson was an oysterman. There will be a faint tinkling sound from the natural effect of the aluminum tiles rotating.

Mr. Gouin stated that next year, the Rotary will invite the artisans to submit directly to the Rotary. He asked for some guidance from the Public Art Commission regarding what is acceptable. W. Poindexter responded that the Public Art Commission does not have any specific guidelines in writing. However, he personally looks for craftsmanship and composition as well as idea of diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Mr. Gouin responded to a question by stating that he would like to have some type of signage with information posted to recognize the art piece, sponsors, etc.

K. Kuranda moved to recommend concept and design approval of the pieces by Erin Aylor and Margot de Messieres & Tsvetomir Naydenov, the concept of the Tree of Life piece by Thomas Sterner, and to request another rendition of the Tree of Life design by Thomas Sterner. The motion was seconded by E. Wise VanderWoude, and unanimously approved.

Review and discussion of Public Art Commission administrative procedures and projects.

D. Rosano distributed a one page document for members to update and return to her listing his/her personal contact information as well as skills set. This information will be compiled and will be helpful when looking to fill commission vacancies to ensure the commission collectively meets the skills set requirements.

A. Cain reported she had worked with K. Kuranda (subcommittee) on the disbursement process for Public Art Funds. D. Rosano and A. Cain also met with the Mayor. The disbursement process document may need further refinement but first more feedback is needed from Alderman Kuzemchak, B. Smith and the Mayor.

There was discussion and a general consensus that the money in this year's budget should be used to revive applications for which there was no funding. Two such projects are the dog park, and the bicycle.

E. Wise VanderWoude left the meeting at 5:40 pm. due to a personal commitment.

There was discussion about whether an RFP is necessary, or if the commission may merely choose these two projects – dog park and bicycle - and request BOA approval for funding from this year's \$25K Public Art Reserve Fund.

A. Cain noted she will meet with B. Smith on Friday, and Alderman Kelly Russell afterwards.

K. Kuranda asked if they can get the determination in writing as to whether an RFP is necessary, along with the ordinance or reference authority regarding the RFP requirements.

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A. Cain asked who would volunteer to be on a subcommittee to work on the request and /or RFP for FY 2021. T. Daniel and E. Martin volunteered and will form the subcommittee. The deadline will be pushed from October 31 to November 30th. The Commission will vote on the RFP in the November meeting and vote on the artist selection in the December meeting. Artwork in the area between Culler Lake and the Schifferstadt House will be the focus for the FY2021 RFP.

A. Cain distributed the draft City of Frederick Public Art Commission Member Handbook. She stated that this document, along with the skills set survey distributed by D. Rosano would be used to fill commission vacancies. The member handbook will be distributed to all members of the Public Art Commission.

K. Kuranda moved to approve the City of Frederick Public Art Commission Member Handbook. E. Martin seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

Adjournment:

D. Rosano moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 p.m. T. Daniel seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.