



City of Sebastopol
 Incorporated 1902
 Planning Department
 7120 Bodega Avenue
 Sebastopol, CA 95472
 707-823-6167
 707-823-1135 (Fax)
www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us

APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE
 CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
 MINUTES OF June 07, 2017

SEBASTOPOL CITY HALL
 7120 BODEGA AVENUE
 10:30 a.m.

PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE:

The notice of the meeting was posted on June 01, 2017.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gordon called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present:	Chair Gordon, and Committee Members Arnold and Mills-Thysen
Absent:	Committee Member Deedler (excused) Committee Member Vertz (unexcused)
Staff:	Kenyon Webster, Planning Director Rebecca Mansour, Planning Technician

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 03, 2017

Committee Member Arnold made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Ayes:	Chair Gordon, and Committee Members Arnold, and Mills-Thysen
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None

4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Director Webster updated the Committee on the following:

- Recently, the Council approved an ordinance to implement a number of provisions from the new General Plan and Zoning Ordinance changes. Included in those were;
 - The Public Arts Committee will now have final approval authority over private art proposals, rather than the Design Review Board.
 - Changed composition requirements, from rigid requirements to guidelines, for the Public Arts Committee.

The Committee asked questions of Director Webster.

- Last night, the City Council held a lengthy discussion of the Pine Grove square concept. The Council decided to commission a parking study before moving forward with further work on the conceptual project.

The Committee asked additional questions of Director Webster.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Ned Kahn, a resident of Sebastopol, commented:

- Parking structures are a great opportunity for art.
- If there is any traction for one, he would be willing to present a slideshow full of examples of amazing parking structures.

Chair Gordon commented that that would be within the purview of the City Council.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Gordon closed the public comment period.

6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: There were none.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR: There were none.

8. REGULAR AGENDA: There were none.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Chair Gordon referred to the minutes of May 03, 2017 and commented:

- The minutes are really accurate.
- The minutes serve as a very informative record of past discussions.
- The minutes are helpful.
- Thanked staff.

The Committee concurred.

Ms. Mansour thanked the Committee.

A. UPDATE REGARDING SITING OF NED KAHN SCULPTURE: Artist Ned Kahn's proposal was selected by the City Council for the City's first commissioned art work, however, a site selection was deferred. Mr. Kahn and City staff will provide an update on site selection.

Mr. Kahn gave a presentation.

Chair Gordon asked a procedural question of staff.

Mr. Kahn concluded his presentation and was available for questions.

The Committee asked questions of Mr. Kahn.

The Committee discussed the process for their discussion.

Comments from Chair Gordon included:

- Expressed having an issue with precedent regarding change to an accepted design after a selection process.
- Color samples would be nice.
- A visit to the desired site should be part of this process.
- There is a full circle component to this that he likes, which is that much of the money in the art fund was generated from the Barlow's contribution to it.
- Can imagine Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Kahn having collaborated on a piece for the Barlow outside of this process.
- Likes the siting, even though it's on private property.
- Likes that the desired placement is near a gathering place.
- Likes the redesigned artwork about one hundred times more than the initial.
- This piece, in the way it reflects light, colors, and water, among other things, is very successful.
- This process has been very frustrating and almost unfair.
- The Committee is going out of its way to ensure that the problems that have presented themselves through this process do not show up in the next.
- Loves the collaboration aspect and believes that you end up with better artwork because of it, however, it can be problematic for a commissioning agency to have selected an artist based on their proposal and then tell the artist to create a new proposal.
- This is a very exciting project and the location is very good.

Comments from Committee Member Mills-Thysen included:

- Likes the new design, thinks it's great and a definite improvement over the initial design.
- Feels strongly on the issue of precedent.
- The City can proceed with this artwork while taking the position that, 'this will not set precedent' as has been done elsewhere.
- Expressed having a very different view than Chair Gordon on the matter of precedent.
- With a priority of providing the community with the most wonderful art possible, she is of the opinion that it is okay to work with an artist to make an artwork even better and that that is more important than being worried about precedent.
- Having the ability to work with an artist on their artwork, if the artist is interested in doing that, is not a terrible idea.
- With regards to the location, it is significant that Mr. Kahn likes the idea of placing it at The Barlow, however, she would prefer to have it set in nature as suggested by Committee Member Arnold.
- If set in nature, the artwork would be much more powerful and beautiful.
- It is unfortunate that neither of the identified locations are central for viewing by the public, whether on foot or in a car.
- In her experience, the Barlow is not busy.
- The Barlow has a different atmosphere than the rest of town and attracts a certain type of clientele.
- Out of the two locations, she could be okay with either.
- Expressed being disappointed because she would love for it to be in a more visible and central location.

Comments from Committee Member Arnold included:

- If we're going to continue this in order to hear from our other two members, a model and material samples should be provided.
- Would prefer to have it set in nature and referred to the site that he prefers which he mentioned at the last meeting. The site is identified as being near the Blincoc trail arbor by the South entrance to the Community Center parking lot, which has an existing sculpture on it.
- The piece should be installed in nature.
- The Barlow is too industrial for an artwork that has that general feeling while trying to tie it to nature.
- Likes the new design.
- Could fall back on the initial design if the redesign doesn't work out.
- Expressed frustration over being stuck with regards to siting.

On the frustrations regarding siting, Mr. Kahn commented that it wasn't for a lack of effort.

Chair Gordon commented:

- It is unfortunate that the Committee did not identify a site before putting out the call. It is also unfair to the artist.
- In response to Committee Member Mills-Thysen's comments on precedent and the process for this artwork he commented;
 - The Committee is not a design group.
 - It is really important to understand that it is up to the artist to create the work. The Committee's role is to either select the artwork, or not.
 - While the Committee may make suggestions to the artist, the Committee's role is not to be collaborators and designers on public art pieces.
 - It is really important that the Committee act in the way which it has been defined by the City Council.
 - Expressed feeling really strongly about the points he was making.
 - Based on how this process has unfolded, it almost seems unfair to not let the other artists in the top three have a chance to redesign their proposal.
 - Artists love to have flexibility but that isn't the type of call we put out.
 - We selected a proposal and then asked the artist to redesign his piece.
 - Disagreed with Committee Member Mills-Thysen's interpretation of what was happening.
 - The way that this has happened is problematic.
 - Understands that the City will move forward regardless and that the piece will succeed.
 - The way that this process has unfolded cannot be repeated unless the parameters for the call change.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen responded:

- The Committee isn't designing this piece.
- Mr. Kahn has chosen to modify his artwork in response to some of the feedback that he has heard.
- Disagreed with Chair Gordon's interpretation of what was happening.
- We can move forward and say that this shall not set precedent.

Committee Member Arnold interjected, asked a question of Director Webster and commented:

- Wished that Chair Gordon and Committee Member Mills-Thysen would have this debate at another time and place.
- If at the Barlow, he suggested that the landscaping in the area around the proposed location be redesigned to be more welcoming in a natural setting.

Mr. Webster commented that a redesign of the surrounding landscape would be up to the property owner.

Mr. Kahn responded:

- Agreed on there being some ways to soften the surrounding landscape while keeping the space functional and commented that Mr. Aldridge would probably be amenable to that.
- In response to the discussion between Chair Gordon and Committee Member Mills-Thysen, he commented:
 - In redesigning the piece, he really tried to stay pretty close to what he originally proposed.
 - The scale, height and diameter, of the structure is the same.
 - The conceptual arrangement of the piece, and inner kinetic surface with an outer kinetic surface, has not changed.
 - The \$1,000 honorarium was essentially given for a conceptual proposal.
 - It is very common for some modifications to occur between the conceptual proposal and engineering and fabrication of the piece.
 - Does not feel like the redesigned piece is completely different from his conceptual idea.
 - The redesigned piece is an improvement over the conceptual idea, not something completely different.

Chair Gordon responded:

- Loves Mr. Kahn's response.
- Understanding that the redesigned artwork is essentially the same concept using slightly different materials and sizes gives the City a way to move forward through the problem that he sees.
- Appreciates Mr. Kahn's response.

The Committee discussed process and asked questions of Mr. Kahn.

Director Webster noted that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Wednesday, July 5, which is the day after a holiday, and asked if members would be available on that day.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented that she did not know if she would be available to attend.

Committee Member Arnold and Chair Gordon commented that they would be available on that day.

Mr. Kahn commented that he too would be available on that day.

The Committee expressed general support for the modified design and desired location and requested that Mr. Kahn return to the Committee at their next meeting with a scale model,

material samples, and a response from The Barlow on the suggestion to soften the landscape in the area around where the piece is being proposed.

Mr. Kahn agreed.

- B. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE PUBLIC ART PROJECTS:** The Committee is requested to discuss potential sites and other parameters for the next public art project. A draft call for proposals will be reviewed.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen provided an introduction.

The Committee discussed Committee Member Mills-Thysen's general call for proposals template, and suggested some revisions.

The Committee agreed to continue discussion of this, including review of the revised general call for proposals template, at their next meeting.

- C. INFORMATION ON HIGHWAY 12 BRIDGE ART PLATFORMS:** The packet includes information concerning the art platforms constructed by Caltrans at the City's request.

The Committee asked questions of Director Webster.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- This could be the ideal site for the next public art project.
- Suggested that the Public Arts Committee move forward with a call for proposals for this site next.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- Concurred with Committee Member Arnold.
- Suggested that the Committee look at the balance in the art fund, consider any anticipated funds that are projected to come, and perhaps wait until the fund has as much money as can be reasonably expected before putting out a call.
- This would be a project, at the entrance to our town, which should be special and fantastic.

The Committee asked additional questions of Director Webster.

10. REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEE/STAFF: There were none.

- The lead artist of an older Sculpture Jam piece, known as 'The Door' which is presently located in the plaza, is putting together a proposal. Once ready, the proposal will come before the Public Arts Committee as well as the City Council.

The Committee asked questions of staff.

11. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: There were none.

12. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Gordon adjourned the meeting of the Sebastopol Public Arts Committee at 11:48 a.m. to the regular Public Arts Committee Meeting to be held July 05, 2017 at 10:30 a.m., at the City Hall Conference Room, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kenyon Webster
Planning Director