

4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Director Svanstrom provided the following updates:

- During last night's City Council meeting the three incumbent members were sworn in.
 - Councilmember Hinton is the new Mayor and Councilmember Slayter is the new Vice Mayor.
- Met with the Director of Creative Sonoma.
 - Creative Sonoma has engaged a consultant regarding coming up with a percent for art public art fee, similar to what Sebastopol does.
 - This would be a countywide program for unincorporated areas.
 - There is the potential for joint projects.
 - Has a copy of their annual report which she'd be happy to share. The report is available on their website as well.
 - Creative Sonoma currently receives funding through the Economic Development Board.

The Committee asked questions of Director Svanstrom.

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

Matthew Rose, Branch Manager of the Sebastopol Regional Library, commented:

- Library staff would love for the Arts Committee to choose a piece of art for their building.
- Thanked the Public Arts Committee for designating the Sebastopol Regional Library as a spot for public art.
- This is a great opportunity for the Sebastopol Regional Library.
- Any art that is chosen should convey the Sebastopol Regional Library as a welcoming space for all genders, classes, races, and ages.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Gordon thanked Mr. Rose for his comments and closed the public comment period.

Chair Gordon requested, based on a prior discussion, that the idea of a plein air art competition be placed on the next agenda.

Director Svanstrom concurred and responded that that could be a future agenda item.

Chair Gordon asked procedural questions of Director Svanstrom.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen complimented the new 'experience Sebastopol' brochure and commented that "sculpture" should be included under 'Art'.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Concurred with Committee Member Mills-Thysen.
- Committee Member Mills-Thysen makes a great point.
- Sebastopol has so many sculptures.

Director Svanstrom responded that she could forward Committee Member Mills-Thysen's suggestion to the organization that created the brochure.

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

7. CONSENT CALENDAR: There were none.

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF FINALIST TO COUNCIL: At this meeting the Committee will discuss each of the two submittals based on; artistic merit; site relevance & safety; technical competence; and public feedback. The Committee will deliberate and will select a finalist to recommend to Council. City Council review of the PAC's recommended artist is anticipated to be on the January 15, 2019 City Council agenda.

Chair Gordon spoke on process and asked procedural questions of Director Svanstrom. His questions included whether the Committee could recommend against both proposals if they did not feel that either should be installed.

Director Svanstrom concurred on that being an available option for the Committee.

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- It does not seem right for the Committee to not recommend either of the projects after getting this far into the process.

Director Svanstrom responded:

- Believes that is stated as an option in the RFP.
- Hopeful that the Committee will agree on a proposal to recommend to the Council.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- These proposals have already been vetted by the Committee.
- The Committee should be in the position to recommend one of the proposals to the Council.
- Would like the Committee to agree to selecting a proposal through a motion.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- The Committee could have selected artists who had great proposals but terrible maquettes.
 - If this were the case, recommending against either proposal could be warranted.
- Doesn't feel that way about the two proposals that are before the Committee today.
- Doesn't like the idea of requiring the Committee to select a proposal.

Director Svanstrom responded that doing so would most likely require a change to the Ordinance which requires a more involved process.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Gordon asked for comments on the proposals from the Committee.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- On the sculpture by Mr. McGinnis;
 - The site is enhanced by this sculpture.
 - The site is fairly unattractive as is so it's a real challenge to make it look good.
 - Will be quite visible and will be enhanced by ambient lighting.
 - There is some disagreement about this piece intellectually.
 - Likes Mr. McGinnis' intention.

- The fundamental purpose of a library is to simulate the brain with knowledge, fun, mystery, etc.
- It can take time for people to grow to appreciate art.
- Believes that people will grow to appreciate this sculpture.
- On the sculpture by Ms. Serrao;
 - Too small for the site.
 - It doesn't even go 1/3 of the way up the 17' wall.
 - The patina will blend it with its surrounding too much.
 - Artificial lighting will be needed to make the artwork come alive.
 - The look of the child changed quite a bit from the first presentation.
 - It would have been appropriate to have the child be a boy or a girl.
- General comments;
 - Both proposals have a wonderful message.

Chair Gordon thanked Committee Member Arnold for his comments.

Chair Gordon commented:

- General comments;
 - So pleased to see all of the public comments that were received.
 - The comments were wide ranging and really helpful in terms of being able to get a sense of how people will react to these proposals.
- On the sculpture by Ms. Serrao;
 - Little kids love it.
 - The statue has a very literal and exciting concept.
 - The statue, as first presented, was fun and flighty.
 - The second iteration has almost nefarious quality to it.
 - Concurred with Committee Member Arnold on the statue being too small.
 - Questioned if the size of the statue was an issue of money.
 - Doesn't understand the decision on size.
 - In mural making, figures that are life-size or smaller never look right.
 - While the artist said it will be life-size, it doesn't feel life-size.

Assistant Planner Morrison and Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented that Ms. Serrao was clear about the reason behind her decision on the size of the artwork.

Chair Gordon commented:

- On the sculpture by Mr. McGinnis;
 - Sculpture has a lot of positives.
 - Initially he was not so sure of this proposal.
 - The more he thought about it, and the more he listened to Mr. McGinnis talk about his sculpture, the more he began to feel like it reaches into the core values of the library.
 - This artwork is sophisticated and intriguing.
 - People will grow to like it.
 - The scale of it reads well.
 - Likes being surprised by what an artist presents.
 - The public comments that were received seemed to clarify to him that the public would accept this.
 - Due to his own aesthetic reasonings and both artist's explanations of their work, he leans much more towards this sculpture.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- General comments;
 - Likes both proposals.
 - The City is poised to install two reflective sculptures by Ned Kahn.
 - Wants something different.
 - Neither sculpture really takes up the space.
 - Would like both of them to be larger.
 - Wants something that is recognizable.
- On the sculpture by Mr. McGinnis;
 - Light reflectivity is nice, but it's not enough.
 - When looking at sculptures, the art is what is seen, not some extensive explanation.
 - This piece doesn't have an obvious connection with the library.
 - Even the title of "Gray Matter" is not appealing in that it reads as a brain stuck on the wall.
 - The library is about more than the gray matter of our brains, it's about our hearts, interactions, etc.
 - Does not seem like an image that would be associated with Sebastopol.
- On the sculpture by Ms. Serrao;
 - The child on the book has more to do with the heart and is immediately recognizable and clear.
 - Seems like an image that would be associated with Sebastopol.
 - Children will grow up and have a history with this piece.
 - The artist was clear about why she chose the size that she did.
 - Prefers this sculpture.
 - Gender was a concern of hers.
 - From a distance you cannot really tell if the child is a boy or a girl.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- On the sculpture by Ms. Serrao;
 - Really liked the girl on the book as was first presented.
 - The changes detracted from the artwork and moved it in a direction that she didn't want to see.
 - The statue doesn't occupy enough space and will get lost in the bushes.
 - Sorry that this artwork didn't go in the direction that she was hoping.
- On the sculpture by Mr. McGinnis;
 - The community was overwhelmingly in support of Gray Matter.
 - There is a cerebral sense to the artwork.
 - Once she heard the explanation, the artwork seemed to make a good amount of sense in terms of its connection to the library.
 - Likes how it fills the space.
 - Public support for the Gray Matter sculpture makes her decision easier.
- General comments;
 - Wants to listen to what the community says.
 - Her thinking has changed dramatically from when this process first started.
 - Did not anticipate that she'd feel the way she does at this point.

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- On the sculpture by Ms. Serrao;
 - Referred to the initial presentation by Ms. Serrao and commented that it had changed quite a bit.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented that Ms. Serrao had indicated that the changes that she made were based on comments from the Committee.

Committee Member Arnold commented that the piece changed greatly when the child was taken off the concrete block.

Committee Member Langberg comments continued:

- On the sculpture by Mr. McGinnis;
 - Agrees with much that has been said about this sculpture.
 - The quality of light could be wonderful.
 - Public comment reinforced many of his thoughts.
 - In the positive, this artwork is open to different interpretations, makes him think and ask questions.
 - In the negative, this artwork seems cliché, dated, seems to be geared towards kids so adults may not be as interested in it.
 - The artwork shouldn't need or have an explanation that goes with it.
 - Kids could be very fascinated with it.
 - This sculpture is more interesting, open ended, and fills the space in a better way.
- On the sculpture by Ms. Serrao;
 - Won't have the same richness as Mr. McGinnis' artwork would.
 - Public comment reinforced many of his thoughts on this sculpture as well.

Chair Gordon asked for Committee comments on maintenance for either piece.

Committee Member Langberg commented that one of the public comments mentioned cobwebs in relation to Mr. McGinnis' artwork.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented that one of the public comments mentioned that Mr. McGinnis' artwork would be a dust catcher.

Committee Member Langberg commented that that was from the same person.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Gray Matter requires no maintenance.
- Bi-annual maintenance is recommended for Magic Carpet Ride.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- Both materials are extremely durable.
- The patina on the bronze will change if it's not waxed as recommended.
- If high quality stainless steel is used, no maintenance will be required.
- The City's maintenance people have a lot to do already, polishing of the bronze may not be a priority to them if that is the chosen one.

The Committee asked clarifying questions of Director Svanstrom.

The Committee discussed safety, liability, improving the wall before anything is installed, and the positioning of Mr. McGinnis' sculpture.

In response to a question from Chair Gordon, Director Svanstrom asked to hear from the Committee on the artistic modification of raising Mr. McGinnis' sculpture.

Chair Gordon commented:

- Committee Member Langberg made some very valid points on the idea of having the artist provide a plaque explaining their artwork.
 - Feels the same.
 - Something visual shouldn't have to be explained verbally.
 - In this case, he may make an exception, as it could add understanding in a public space.

Vice Chair Vertz and Committee Member Langberg commented that the plaque could simply state the title and artist's name regardless of which one is selected.

Chair Gordon commented:

- Could use some money from the Public Art Fund to repair and prepare the wall before installation of an artwork.

Director Svanstrom responded that that could be recommended in the staff report if it was the consensus of the Committee to do so.

Board Member Langberg commented:

- Repairing and preparing the wall could open a can of worms in terms of other needs of the building façade.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen asked to hear from the Committee on the theme of Mr. McGinnis' artwork being similar to Mr. Kahn's in that it's abstract and relates to light.

Board Member Langberg commented:

- Committee Member Mills-Thysen makes a valid point.
 - The similarities in their work is not reason enough to choose the other proposal.
- Of the two, he prefers Mr. McGinnis' artwork over Ms. Serra's.

Vice Chair Vert commented:

- Does not believe that Mr. McGinnis' artwork will be confused for that of Mr. Kahn.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen clarified that she was asking for comments on their similar themes.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- The Committee overwhelmingly voted in support of Mr. Kahn's work.
- The Committee clearly likes the theme of his artwork.
- Understands what Committee Member Mills-Thysen is saying.
- Did not necessarily want to have something similar in theme to Mr. Kahn's work.
- Mr. McGinnis' sculpture is different than the work of Mr. Kahn.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- In the future, he'd like to work with the Chamber of Commerce on doing a walking map of public art.
 - This could also include explanations of the artwork.

Chair Gordon commented:

- Had Mr. Kahn's piece been installed by now, we may have heard a similar sentiment to that expressed by Committee Member Mills-Thysen via public comment.
- The Committee is tasked with making a decision on these two pieces.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen asked to hear from the Committee on the change in the maquette for Ms. Serrao's sculpture. She noted:

- Ms. Serrao had indicated that the changes were made in response to comments from the Committee.
- On the Committee there is a range between fluidity and rigidity in terms of communication and interaction between the artist design and the Committee.
- Asked if returning to a design closer to Ms. Serrao's initial presentation change the Committee's mind.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Really liked the first presentation.
- It's too late to go back and make changes at this point.

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- Didn't like how malleable she was in terms of her design.
- An artist should be bold about their artistic intent.

Chair Gordon expressed being in agreement with Committee Member Langberg.

The Committee discussed ownership of the maquettes and who owns them.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- Ms. Serrao must have had this maquette on hand.
- A bronze sculpture cannot be made from scratch in a month.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- There is a big range and a lot of inconsistency in Committee feedback.
- The Committee should acknowledge how an artist may react to that.

Chair Gordon commented:

- In the end, the Committee is tasked with deciding on the final iteration of an artwork.
- If the Committee feels that the piece is insufficient, then that's what it is.
- A retreat for the Committee to better define its role, as has been previously discussed, would be helpful.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen concurred.

Director Svanstrom explained how a retreat could work and noted that one could be scheduled.

Director Svanstrom commented that she would look at the RFP to see if maquette ownership is spelled out.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Felt as though the process went really well this time, especially when comparing it to the first public art project.
- Committee member opinions are valid.
- Ms. Serrao interpreted comments made by the Committee and changed her sculpture as she saw fit.
- Appreciates how much smoother this process went.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- Agreed on this process running smoother.
- Part of that is due to how specific the RFP was.

Chair Gordon commented:

- The following were really beneficial to the process;
 - Identifying specific placement.
 - Having the maquettes on display at the library for the public to comment on.

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- Would not want banners to be hung on the wall where the art will be installed.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- The library may have an opinion on that.
- While there are other walls where banners could be hung, the wall in question is the most visible.
- If Mr. McGinnis' sculpture is what the Committee is in consensus on recommending, exact placement of it should be discussed.

Chair Gordon commented:

- The artist has aesthetic reasons for placing where he did.
- The artist wants the sculpture to be centered on the wall.
- Placement on the maquette is fine as is.
- Would be interested in hearing from the artist before recommending that the placement of it be changed.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- Moving the piece higher up would make it more visible and would allow it to take up more of the space.
- Raising it would be safer.
- Would like to see it larger as well.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Could see the sculpture being centered from the top of the bushes to the top of the building.
- Expressed being fine with it as proposed on the maquette as well.

After some additional discussion, the Committee agreed on higher placement being desirable. The Committee made a tick mark on the maquette to indicate the approximate desired placement. The Committee asked procedural questions of Director Svanstrom.

Committee Member Arnold made a motion to recommend Ms. Serrao's artwork as a finalist for Council consideration.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Committee Member Mills-Thysen
 Noes: Chair Gordon, Vice Chair Vertz, and Committee Members
 Arnold, and Langberg
 Abstain: None

Committee Member Arnold made a motion to recommend Mr. McGinnis' artwork as the finalist for Council consideration.

Vice Chair Vertz seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Chair Gordon, Vice Chair Vertz, and Committee Members
 Arnold, and Langberg
 Noes: Committee Member Mills-Thysen
 Abstain: None

Director Svanstrom thanked the Public Arts Committee for all of their work throughout this process.

Committee Member Arnold commented that the Committee should start looking at, and talking about, sites for the next public art project.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen made a motion recommending that the artist position Gray Matter higher up on the wall (as indicated by a mark on the maquette).

Vice Chair Vert seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Chair Gordon, Vice Chair Vertz, and Committee Members
 Arnold, Mills-Thysen, and Langberg
 Noes: None
 Abstain: None

The Committee was in consensus on discouraging placement of banners on this wall.

Director Svanstrom commented:

- Suggested that the Public Arts Committee meeting of January 02, 2019 be cancelled.
- A meeting is expected to be held on February 06, 2019.

Committee Member Arnold requested an update on funding, as well as projects in the pipeline at their next meeting.

Director Svanstrom responded in the affirmative.

The Committee asked additional questions of Director Svanstrom.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- The Sebastopol Center for the Arts is curating an in-memoriam project for famed artist and founder of hippie commune, Bill Wheeler.
 - The first night will be held at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts on January 10 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 - The second night will be held at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts on January 11 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
 - There will be no charge.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Committee Member Arnold made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Vertz seconded the motion. Chair Gordon adjourned the meeting of the Sebastopol Public Arts Committee at 11:49 a.m. to the next regular Committee meeting to be held January 02, 2019 at 10:30 a.m., at the Sebastopol City Hall, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kari Svanstrom
Planning Director