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City of Sebastopol Public Arts Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: July 6, 2020
Agenda Item: 5A
To: Public Arts Committee
From: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Black Lives Matter Mural/Graphics Project
Recommendation: Discuss Project and Recommend Actions to Council

Introduction:

At its June 30, 2020 Special Council meeting, the City Council received a request to help facilitate an art project to apply graphic arts related to the Black Lives Matter movement by a group of Sebastopol and area youth activists. The Council approved this concept and directed staff to work with the Public Art Committee (PAC) to facilitate this request, and to provide guidance and input to the youth involved with this project. Council further directed that this was an appropriate project to utilize Public Art Funds to support, as it will create a visual commitment to the community within the town.

Discussion:

The activist youth are invited and encouraged to participate to discuss the concept and potential locations. The discussions at Council were that this should be a youth-led/directed effort, with an opportunity to work with the PAC for guidance and support.

Location(s)

One location which was mentioned during public comment at the PAC's regular meeting on July 1, 2020, was Weeks Way, the roadway that wraps around the Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza, between Petaluma Avenue and McKinley Street, see Figure 1. There may be other potential locations as well.

Concept

The initial concept for this location was the text "Black Lives Matter" painted within the roadway area in large graphic letters. There may be multiple concepts to discuss, if so the PAC can help guide the discussion given its expertise in public art. As noted earlier, there is a strong desire that this be a youth led effort given the high level of youth activism on this topic. The PAC could also provide recommendations to Council if multiple projects are discussed.



Figure 1

Funding

The Council has directed that this project is an appropriate use of Public Art funds and asked the AC to provide a recommendation to Council once the concepts has been discussed.

Public Art Committee Involvement

The PAC may also wish to designate a PAC liaison (1-2 members) to continue work on this project with the sponsors and youth to provide additional guidance as the project moves forward.

Recommendation

Discuss the project and various aspects with the project sponsors to provide guidance on this project. Additionally, the PAC should develop a recommendation for City Council on any actions, locations, and funding.

Recommendations will be shared with the City Council at their July 7, 2020 meeting for any further action so that the project can proceed in a timely manner and harness the community's energy.

Attachments:

None.