

MINUTES
PUBLIC ART COMMISSION
Thursday, September 18, 2008
Palo Alto Civic Center
250 Hamilton Avenue
Council Conference Room
7:00 p.m.

Commissioners present: Terry Acebo-Davis, Erik Bakke, Nancy Coleman Elise Griffin
DeMarzo, Ally Richter, Einar Sunde, Larisa Usich
Staff present: Linda Craighead, Staff Liaison, Director Arts & Sciences
Staff absent: Darlene Katsanes, Program Asst., Arts & Sciences

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Sunde.
ROLL CALL

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Minutes of August 21, 2008 approved as corrected.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Commission reviewed the financial report.

NEW BUSINESS

BILL BLISS MEMORIAL ART PROJECT

Patrycja Bossak, Bay Trail Planner, on behalf of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project asked the Commission if they are interested in helping them fund an artwork in memory of former board member and executive director Bill Bliss. Bliss was killed in 2005 on a solo cross country bike trip. Bill Bliss was a charismatic and passionate cyclist and advocate for bicycle safety and the first cyclist admitted to the California State Recreation Commission. After Bliss's tragic death over \$6000 in donations were collected, and his wife Bonnie Bliss will match that amount. Bliss's family has decided that they want to create a memorial in his honor. Bossak said that Bonnie Bliss lives in San Jose and would like the artwork close to her home. Bossak met with Greg Betts, interim Community Services Department head and Craighead, and the perfect site for an artwork at the Baylands was identified. Budget is to include artwork, installation and transportation. Artwork should be durable and not need a lot of maintenance. Bossak asked the Commission to help them find an artist to take on the creative challenge of creating an artwork that will capture Bill Bliss's spirit. Site on the Bay Trail for the artwork is viewable from Highway 101.

Craighead is pleased that Bossak wants to bring this artwork to Palo Alto. A subcommittee was formed: Richter, Usich, and Acebo-Davis. Subcommittee will meet to bring item back to next meeting for a vote to move forward. Craighead stated that the Commission might consider adding additional funds to this project. Bossak is available to work with staff to create a RFP which includes a portrait of Bill Bliss, who he was and what life meant to him. This item will be on the agenda for next month.

BIKE RACKS

Bill Courington gave a presentation on proposed artful bike racks for Palo Alto. He believes that artful bike racks can demonstrate that public art can be practical. He showed images of overcrowded bike racks in Palo Alto where bicycles are locked to trees and stop signs, etc. He believes that Palo Alto needs more bike racks that are fully functional, sited in convenient locations for cyclists and safe for bicyclists and pedestrians. Courington showed examples of artful racks by artist David Byrne and other artists to show the freedom of bike rack options. Siting and funding and function for artful bike racks would need to be reviewed.

Craighead commented that the artful bike racks are a great idea. She said that Transportation Dept. does have dollars for standard bike racks in city locations. Acebo-Davis commented that the City of Honolulu has racks shaped like bicycles. There may be potential for public-private collaboration between businesses and the City for artful bike racks. A subcommittee was formed: Acebo-Davis, Coleman, and DeMarzo. Advisor: Bill Courington. Craighead said that she can arrange for Transportation staff to meet with subcommittee and Courington.

DAMAGE TO CALIFORNIA AVENUE, CALIFORNIA NATIVE

Craighead reported that there has been damage to the brickwork at the *California Avenue, California Native* installation. Many of the bricks with text have been damaged. Staff is receiving bids for the brickwork repair and this item will be on the action agenda in October.

Next step: Commissioners asked to visit site to view damage.

ACTION

RETREAT

Subcommittee requested funds to hire a facilitator and provide lunch at retreat on October 11, 9-1 pm. Richter reported that subcommittee chose Stephen Wagner as the facilitator. His fee is \$125.00/hour for 4 hours for a total of \$500.00. Richter asked for \$150.00 for refreshments. Commission discussed whether to cancel their regular meeting on October 16 and decided to keep their regular meeting in place.

Motion: Move to approve up to \$650.00 for the facilitator and refreshments at the retreat.

MOVED: Richter: Seconded: Usich: Ayes: Unanimous.

Next step: Commission to finalize agenda. Staff will email lunch menu to Commission.

MITCHELL PARK SCULPTURE PROJECT

Commission discussed plans for dedication of *Arch-Cradle* at Mitchell Park on November 8 at 1:00 pm. Funds are needed to create a plaque, a postcard and provide refreshments for the dedication. Acebo-Davis volunteered to ask past Commissioner Deem if she would be willing to create the postcard. Commission discussed how to bring this event to the communities' attention. Commission asked staff to advertise the dedication in the Utility bill. Commissioner Usich would like there to be an email list to send out these types of announcements to the public in future. Craighead recommended that the announcement can be made using CANS email. She said that if the calendar works out she will send out an art alert for this event.

Motion: Move to approve up to \$800 for expenditures for the dedication of *Arch-Cradle*.

MOVED: Richter: Seconded: DeMarzo: Ayes: Unanimous.

MAINTENANCE OF CITY COLLECTION & DEACCESSIONING

Commissioner DeMarzo reported that the subcommittee met and they decided the first step was to get a meter to read light and humidity conditions at each site of artwork. DeMarzo has identified a meter for purchase for \$198.95. She is awaiting a callback from Stanford regarding their opinion of this particular meter. Craighead presented the proposal from Andrea Antonaccio to take a reading of each artwork and access current artwork condition. Bakke recommends taking a separate reading of each site so if the artwork shifts location the reading of each site is already on record. A new loan agreement for City artwork is being prepared. Commissioner Coleman suggested that Antonaccio take her laptop with her to input data. Commission discussed methods for identifying artwork. Craighead commented that most of the work on the condition reports has already been completed, and Antonaccio will only be updating each record.

Motion: Move to allocate \$750.00 towards a light meter and for Antonaccio's proposal to take light readings and update condition report.

MOVED: Usich: Seconded: Coleman: Ayes: Unanimous.

NON-ACTION

CALIFORNIA AVENUE PROJECT

Craighead reported that she is working on the Bruce Beasley CMR for approval at the October 6th Council meeting. Craighead has been working on finding funds for the project. She reported that there has been some communication from the public wanting the City to retain the current fountain. Commission advised Craighead to have an image created that shows the Beasley fountain at the site showing the proper scale of the fountain and a little more detail of the water element.

PALO ALTO PUBLIC ART WEBSITE

Commissioner Usich reported that the subcommittee met to discuss the website. She also reported that she met with Chris Carvalho, City webmaster, and staff regarding the public art website. The public art website will be converted to the City site with the webmasters help. Staff will make future updates to the website along with a few commissioners who can have access to make updates. Usich said that Carvalho feels confident that he can create an application that can pull from fields in the art in public places database so that artwork can be displayed and accessible for view by the community. The website will be a communications tool for what is going on with the Art in Public Places program. There could be a rotating field displaying an artwork like the current public art website has. Usich wants to see a list serve developed so the community can subscribe to receive updates about the collection and events. Subcommittee wants to have confirmed that when the public art site is transferred over to the City website that the www.paloaltopublicart.org domain URL can be retained. News details on the City website can educate the community on aspects of the public art program. Commission discussed having blogs on the City website but blogs are problematic and would have to be reviewed by the Attorney. Next step: Commissioner Usich asked each commissioner to review another City public art website to see what they are doing and have available. Usich will have a list of questions and everyone could research a website before the retreat.

CIVIC CENTER PLAZA ART INSTALLATION – PHASE II, SAMUEL YATES

Craighead reported that the community can register to vote for The Color of Palo Alto at Yates website. Voting can occur from October 4 to November 4. Commission asked that the vote be advertised on the Utility bill.

ARTIST SERIES

Commissioner Bakke reported that the subcommittee met and concluded that they will keep the same artists and make a few additions. They want to add David Huffman, and Jeffrey Reed and Jennifer Madden to the series. Timing of series can begin in late January. Bakke will serve as moderator and has volunteered to contact artists. He said this item can be under action at the October meeting to discuss budget, dates and honorariums. Subcommittee is discussing filing a walk through of Benton's studio to screen at the artist series event. They discussed having scholars speak, and a possible collaboration with Stanford and sister cities.

ONGOING

FILAREE - No report

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING - No report

PUBLIC ART AT SAN FRANCISQUITO CREEK STORM WATER PUMP STATION

Commission reviewed new image of building where art will be installed.

LYTTON PLAZA

Craighead reported that the subcommittee will meet with staff Clare Campbell, and the private side of project Le Levy and Barbara Gross to discuss the proposed project and where they are with everything.

Chair Sunde queried when the Commission should deliver their comments on this project. Commission concerned about where Digital DNA will be sited on the plaza. They question whether the fountain is the best solution for the plaza. Commission Usich said that the first step would be to become part of the team and sit at the table and get the facts before making recommendations. Craighead said that after the subcommittee meets they can then send a letter to the Architectural Review Board with their recommendations.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

October 6 – Bruce Beasley CMR on the Council agenda for approval.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Sunde received an RFP from Union City regarding a project they are sponsoring.

ADJOURNMENT – Chair Sunde adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.