

MINUTES
PUBLIC ART COMMISSION
Thursday, December 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
Darlene Katsanes, Program Asst., Arts & Sciences
Council Liaison: John Barton

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

ROLL CALL

Minutes of November 20, 2008 were approved as corrected.

Commissioner Usich arrived at 7:03 pm.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Commission reviewed their budget.

ACTION

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

Craighead announced that this item has been removed from the agenda. The Public Safety Building item is scheduled to go before City Council in February 2009. DeMarzo reported on the recent meeting with staff and the architect regarding a RFP and artist selection for this project. Commission reviewed the list on how to target artists and asked that Artsopolis.com be added to the list. Commissioners are asked to forward any suggested project artist to Katsanes.

BILL BLISS MEMORIAL ART PROJECT

Subcommittee reported on the recent meeting with Laura Thompson, Bay Trails and Mrs. Bonnie Bliss. This meeting was to review the scope of work for the RFP. Richter asked the Commission to approve \$3,000.00 in additional funds for the Bill Bliss Memorial Project so the Commission would have an active collaboration. Commissioners are reluctant to add monies to the budget at this time. Commission agreed that they are open to being flexible with the Bill Bliss Memorial Art Project budget in case the art project needs a budget increase. Commission asked staff to send them a copy of the artist mailing list.

LYTTON PLAZA

Bakke reported that the subcommittee is requesting that a RFP be created where artists can suggest a variety of interventions into Lytton Plaza, and to consider an exhibition of the proposals themselves. Bakke commented that the subcommittee is open to inviting students of all levels to participate in this request. Two things are being sought with this RFP: first, a realizable project with the Art in Public Places funds, and second, an exhibit of ideas to be displayed in the Civic Center lobby space. Sunde suggested that this idea not be presented as a confrontation to the public-private partnership and the ARB. The Commission will want to include stakeholders on the selection committee and suggested that ARB member Judith Wasserman be included as well. Craighead asked that the PAC approach this process as good collaborators. Barton advised the PAC to be very careful and clear that the RFP is a conceptual process. Coleman commented that the Commission is not constrained to accept the proposal.

Next steps: Subcommittee to meet to develop project scope.

NON-ACTION

ARTIST SERIES

Bakke reported that David Huffman is confirmed for the first date of the Artist Series. Program will begin at 7:00 pm. Bakke is still confirming the other artists for the series. Bakke suggests creating a low cost card advertising the Artist Series to be sent out in January. Craighead commented that it is up to the Commission to design card. Craighead was asked if the PAC could use the art alert system to advertise the series.

Next steps: Craighead will review the schedule to see if there is an available date to send out an art alert.

COMMUNICATIONS

Craighead reported that the pro bono offer from Lunar Design to create a visual brand for the Commission can be accepted as a gift to the City. Craighead also clarified that Coleman could accept an offer to work with Lunar Design in future. She would then abstain from participating in any future decision relating to Lunar Design. It was recommended that Coleman contact the Fair Political Practice Commission to confirm if there is any potential conflict of interest with her relationship with Lunar Design. Coleman is committed to moving forward with the pro bono offer from Lunar. She will outline the services that the PAC will receive. The pro bono offer needs to be clarified in writing from Lunar Design and accepted by the City as is the City's gift policy.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Commission discussed plans for the holiday party. Acebo-Davis confirmed that the venue is handicapped accessible. Bakke volunteered to work on the digital projections which will occur in Acebo-Davis's studio. Staff was asked to reserve the laptop and project for this display. Special meeting before the holiday party will begin at 5:30 in Acebo-Davis's studio.

CIVIC CENTER PLAZA ART INSTALLATION – PHASE II, SAMUEL YATES

Craighead asked the subcommittee to check in with Yates on the selection of the color for The Color of Palo Alto, and to discuss with Yates the plans for project de-installation.

MAINTENANCE OF CITY COLLECTION

Craighead reported that this item will return to the agenda in January with a recommendation to extend Andrea Antonaccio's hours to complete the process of updating the database. A meeting can be set between the subcommittee and Antonaccio so that Antonaccio can report on her progress with the database. Antonaccio can also meet with the website committee.

BIKE RACKS

Craighead reported that the Bike Rack subcommittee will meet with staff on December 23rd to talk about the possibility for creative bike racks in Palo Alto. Commissioners were asked to send their suggestions for potential bike rack locations to staff.

CALIFORNIA AVENUE FOUNTAIN PROJECT

Bakke reported on his concerns regarding the California Avenue Fountain Project and the motion by Council at their November 10, 2008 meeting to appoint Bruce Beasley as project artist for the Mitchell Park Library/Community Center project. His concerns are the decisions made by the City Council on 11/10/08 with the rejection of the Beasley fountain for California Avenue and the mandate given to staff regarding the placement of a Bruce Beasley artwork in Mitchell Park as well as the decision to send the California Avenue fountain project back to the PAC to come up with an art fountain to replace the existing fountain. He questioned what does it mean for the viability of the PAC that Council voted down the previous PAC's recommendation that came after a multi-year process. He queried why would Council vote on Mitchell Park as an alternate site for an artwork by Beasley without discussion with the PAC? Why wouldn't the PAC discuss first if the PAC supported an alternate fountain at the end of California Avenue before PAC funds were discussed as being available. Barton commented that he met with

attorney to review a possible Brown Act violation with the motion and was told by the attorney that the motion did not because it was secondary to the motion.

Barton stated that the Council has provided direction on the fountain for California Avenue and advised the Commission to accept Council's direction. Craighead plans to schedule a meeting for January including the subcommittee, representatives from CAADA, a few community members and staff to discuss a RFP for an art fountain for California Avenue. This art fountain will be modeled after the Mitchell Park Sculpture Project process with the community involved in the voting process.

Bakke hopes that Council's motion is not binding. Barton advised that staff ask the attorney for clarification on Council's motion. Barton stated that the Commission has a few options. 1. The Commission can write a statement of protest to Council saying the Commission's charter position was violated. 2. Commission can take the motion from Council and implement it. 3. Commission could ignore the City Council's motion and go off on their own but he said this is not good governance, and 4. Commission could resign. The only option Barton would not recommend is number 3.

Sunde commented that the PAC needs to be more proactive in the process. Commissioners need to talk about important projects first with staff and then later with Council. Barton said that PAC works in a political environment and they need to learn how to develop processes to handle opposition and find the best way to make political decisions.

Next steps: Craighead will set a meeting to meet with the attorney and Chair Sunde.

Council liaison Barton left meeting at 9:10 pm.

WEBSITE - Commissioner Usich said subcommittee's goal is to have the art collection accessible on the website. Usich recommends that the website include the following data about each artwork - title, artist name, media and accession number. The current Commission list needs to be revised on the PAC website. Usich will recommend someone who will be able to make these changes to the Commission webpage since HD Projects is out of the picture.

FILAREE

Craighead reported on the recent community meeting regarding the siting of *Filaree* at Greer Park. Generally the opinion of *Filaree* was positive. Another meeting has been requested and set for January 12 to explore other options that came up at meeting. Annette Ashton was present at meeting and suggested a possible child created artwork or alternative piece in City collection for Greer Park. Sunde asked Craighead if she would ask artist Gene Flores to proceed with creating a base for the artwork now without compensation.

Next step: Craighead will ask artist to create base.

ARTS PLAN

Sunde is working on pulling together a draft Arts Plan and taking it to the subcommittee for review.

MITCHELL PARK COMMUNITY CENTER/LIBRARY

This item was discussed under the California Avenue Fountain Project above. Craighead reported that the project architect and Bruce Beasley have met. Project is moving forward with design development which will take until spring 2010.

NEXT MEETING AGENDA – JANUARY 15, 2009

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT – Chair Sunde adjourned the meeting at 9:53 pm.