

The City of Knoxville: Public Arts Committee

Public Arts Committee Meeting: October 6, 2015

Meeting was called to order at 4:01 PM at the Knoxville Museum of Art.

Attendees Present:

Duane Grieve – Committee Member, City Council Representative

Jeffrey Lockett – Committee Member

John Powers – Committee Member

Judith Foltz – City of Knoxville, Office of Special Events

Liza Zenni – Staff Liaison

Melinda Meador – Committee Member

Rachel Perkins – Committee Administrator

Rick Emmett – City of Knoxville, Downtown Coordinator

Approval of the Agenda: Duane moved to approve the agenda. John seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Approval of September Minutes: Duane moved to approve the minutes. John seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Master Plan: Gay Street & Summit Hill

Liza shared the planned Master Plan RFQ that will be issued later this month by Janice McClelland with the City of Knoxville's Purchasing Department. The RFQ will seek qualified artists and landscape designers to create a design plan that features both the artwork and planned landscaping. The selected artist and designer will be compensated for their designs, with the understanding that the landscaping will be completed at a later date as funds become available. Joe Walsh (Parks & Recreation Director) will request funds for park landscaping to be included in next year's budget. Duane asked that as the committee continues to develop additional projects, it is careful to reserve enough funding for the artwork for the park. He would prefer at least \$250,000 be set aside for that particular piece.

Calls for Steps Projects

Liza shared images of several staircases in Knoxville that have been identified as potential candidates for the steps beautification project. The project idea was suggested by Susana Esrequis. The six locations identified include stairs at the Civic Auditorium, TVA, Cumberland

Ave & 11th Street, South Knoxville leading to Kerbela Shrine, Convention Center, and the stairs leading to the Regal Cinema from State Street. Judith felt that beautifying the stairs with mosaic tiles might have a longer lasting impact than just paint. Duane suggested premium paints, such as the 100-year paint that was used for the Miller Building mural. Duane asked if the committee is considering all six sites or if a few sites could be considered. Melinda felt strongly that the stairs in South Knoxville would have the most impact and are the most important to consider for the project. Melinda also stated that the designs would need to be evaluated for their safety – some designs could make it visually challenging for people to navigate the steps. Rachel will research safety considerations for the steps. Melinda suggested that the committee prioritize projects like the steps in South Knoxville because they have a high visual impact but are rarely used. Liza asked the committee how many sites they want to include in the initial RFP for the steps project. After some discussion, the committee decided to include the following sites, in order of priority: 1) South Knoxville/Kerbela Shrine, 2) Cumberland Ave/11th Street, 3) State Street/Regal Cinema.

Calls for Murals

Liza shared images of five sites in downtown Knoxville that have been identified as potential candidates for murals. The locations have been identified by Liza and other committee members as part of the committee's ongoing future public art location identification. The five sites identified include 1) the series of retaining walls leading to Outdoor Knoxville, 2) the small white space above the archway adjacent to Nama Sushi, 3) the State Street Garage wall facing James White Parkway, 4) the Kessel Garage, and 5) the brick wall on Wall Street owned by Lerner Lofts. Rick stated that the Kessel Garage is owned by the county and it might be better to focus on some smaller, more manageable projects for the first round. He also informed the committee that the city may add another level to the parking garage and it would be best to wait until that project is completed before designing a mural for the space. Judith felt the Lerner Lofts mural site could be a great connector to the improvements the city hopes to do in Strong/Artist Alley. The city plans to install a cobblestone walkway and new lighting in the alley. Liza suggested that the Outdoor Knoxville walls could benefit from a mural that includes nature or sports elements, to reflect the area. After some discussion, the committee decided to

issue an RFP for the following sites, in order of priority: 1) Vol Landing/Outdoor Knoxville walls, 2) wall adjacent to Nama Sushi, 3) Lerner Lofts.

Other Projects

Liza shared with the committee three additional projects that will eventually come before the committee for approval. The first project is a temporary installation by Dogwood Arts for the Open Streets Festival at Emory Place. The sculpture is by Jordan Parah and is titled "Peaceful Passage". There are two large, lightweight aluminum forms that need to be secured to two 4' x 4' concrete sculpture pads. The sculpture itself is 9.5' x 5' x 3'. The sculpture was donated by the artist for Dogwood's permanent collection. Dogwood hopes to have the piece installed from October 20 to March 20, but the piece will need to be approved by the committee before it can be installed. It will also need to be reviewed by the City of Knoxville Engineering Department for safety. Liza will contact members of the committee individually and will relay the committee's decision to Kate Creason at Dogwood Arts.

The second project is being spearheaded by East Tennessee Quality Growth, which hopes to create a large mural at Chilhowee Park. ET Quality Growth has received \$6,000 from the Tennessee Arts Commission, but it will need to raise a significant amount of money before the project can move forward. Liza shared images of the proposed site, which includes a long wall and the pedestrian tunnel that crosses Magnolia Avenue. Liza will continue to update the committee as the project develops.

The third project is being led by Kaye Bultemeier with the Hill Avenue Neighborhood Association. The Association has partnered with Derek White, a local metal artist, to design a proposed sculpture that would be installed at the corner of Hill Avenue and Volunteer Landing. Liza shared the design plans with the committee. Judith stated that the design would need to be evaluated by the City to ensure that it does not interfere with sight lines. The Association will raise funds for the project and will present the final design proposal to the committee when it is ready to move forward with the project.

Public Art Locations

Melinda shared images of the potential public art site she identified as part of the committee's identification project. It is a green space on Hall of Fame Drive near the corner of Randolph & Magnolia. Melinda feels it would be an excellent place for a significant sculpture and it is a high traffic area. The committee thanked Melinda for her efforts.

Future Meetings:

- A. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at 4:00 PM
 - a. The meeting will be held at the Knoxville Museum of Art boardroom.
- B. Future meetings:
 - a. December 1, 2015 at 4:00 PM
 - b. January 5, 2016 at 4:00 PM

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Absent Members:

Bart Watkins
Chuck Morris
Elizabeth Wright
Erin Donovan
Faris Eid
Marcus Hall
Mark Heinz
Mike Fowler
Sara Pinnell
Susana Esrequis