

## **The City of Knoxville: Public Arts Committee**

### **Public Arts Committee Meeting: November 3, 2015**

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

#### **Attendees Present:**

Bart Watkins – Committee Member  
Duane Grieve – Committee Member, City Council Representative  
Elizabeth Wright – Committee Member  
Erin Donovan – Committee Member  
John Powers – Committee Member  
Liza Zenni – Staff Liaison  
Marcus Hall – Committee Member  
Mike Fowler – Committee Member  
Rachel Perkins – Committee Administrator  
Rick Emmett – City of Knoxville, Downtown Coordinator  
Sara Pinnell – Committee Member  
Susana Esrequis – Committee Member

**Approval of the Agenda:** Duane moved to approve the agenda. Susana seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

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

#### **RFP Murals: Vote**

Liza shared images and RFPs for the three locations that the Committee identified at the October meeting as priorities for murals: Vol Landing, Nama Sushi, and Lerner Lofts. Duane asked when the RFPs are scheduled to be released. Liza stated the RFPs are ready to go out, once the Committee gives its approval. Mike asked if the RFP would include the proposed budget. Liza asked Mike if he felt that would be important for the artists to consider. Mike responded that from his perspective, it is hard to prepare a project proposal without knowing how much is budgeted for the project. Mike stated that a budget range could be included, or the RFP could state that the budget is “less than X dollars”. Several Committee members expressed agreement.

Liza stated that the site preparation costs will not be part of the budget, and the Committee should expect to spend \$5-6,000 for 3,000 square feet, based on estimates from Cincinnati’s ArtWorks program. Liza added that a separate RFP would be issued by the Purchasing

Department to have the sites prepared for the artist(s). Bart asked if having the site prep prepared separately would release the artist from responsibility if there is an issue with the integrity of the mural. Liza stated that she would check with Janice and suggested that the Legal Department might also have some insight on that issue.

Mike added that the submission requirements should be stated more clearly. Liza asked for suggestions from the Committee to clarify the requirements. Sara requested that references be required. Mike suggested the RFP should require an artistic rendering and indications of color. He stated that it is important that all submissions should provide the same detailed information, so they can be compared equally. Mike also questioned Section 4.3 of the RFP, which states that, "All materials submitted pursuant to this RFP shall become the property of the City of Knoxville". Mike wondered if it means the artistic design would become the property of the City, and if so, he felt many artists would not submit because they would not want to give up the rights to their design. John stated that he read that passage as the physical copies of all submissions would become the property of the City, not the intellectual rights. Liza will ask Janice to work with the Legal Department to clarify Section 4.3.

Liza stated that she estimated approximately \$42,000 for the Vol Landing project, and she asked the Committee if they thought that was appropriate. Several Committee members expressed concern that the number was too low, and asked Liza what the number was based on. Liza stated that she received quotes from other mural programs based on square footage, and she applied those numbers to each of the projects. Liza asked the Committee if they would feel more comfortable with an upper limit of \$60,000 for the Vol Landing mural. The Committee agreed with the new estimate. After some discussion, the Committee agreed that \$10,000 should be allocated for the mural near Nama Sushi and \$30,000 for the Lerner Lofts wall. Liza stated that the wall at Lerner Lofts will likely require additional prep work since it has been subject to frequent graffiti.

Duane asked if one artist could be selected to do all three walls. Liza said the RFPs are open to allow for consideration of an artist for one, two, or all three projects. John asked, with the inclusion of the budget in the RFP, will the Committee require artists to submit an itemized

budget with their proposal? Sara felt an itemized budget would be helpful for the Committee when it comes time to review submissions. The Committee agreed.

Duane moved to approve the three RFPs with the suggested additions from the Committee. Mike seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve and send out the three updated RFPs as soon as possible.

### **RFP Steps: Vote**

Liza shared images and RFPs of the three sites the Committee identified for the steps beautification project at the October meeting: Regal Cinema landing, Cumberland Avenue & 11th Street, and South Gay St/Kerbela Temple. Liza stated that the proposed budget for the steps at Regal Cinema is \$3,000 and asked the Committee if they felt it should be higher. Sara and Mike expressed concern a \$3,000 budget might limit artist submissions, especially if the Committee hopes to attract exceptional artists. Sara suggested \$10,000 as an upper limit for the budget. Liza reminded the Committee that the artist would only be designing artwork for the face of the steps (the riser). Sara suggested updating the submission requirements to match the mural RFPs, including an itemized budget, to help guide the Committee's decision. Duane expressed concern that the Committee might make decisions based on the lowest proposed budget. Several Committee members stated that they would not feel compelled to select a proposal based on budget, and many members feel the itemized budget will help clarify the differences between the projects. John suggested that some artists might work alone, while others would work with a team, and those differences would shape their proposed budgets. The Committee agreed to include a \$10,000 maximum budget for the Regal Cinema steps and to add the additional submission requirements suggested for the mural RFPs to the steps RFPs.

The Committee discussed the Cumberland Avenue steps and reached a consensus that the maximum budget will be \$40,000. Sara asked that the submission requirements also include an "other" suggestion, to allow artists to share other unique qualifications that may not be asked for specifically within the document. The Committee agreed to add the new language to the steps and mural RFPs.

The Committee discussed the steps in South Knoxville at the Kerbela Temple. Sara expressed concern regarding the safety of the steps, and asked if the steps met current code requirements. Liza stated that she was unsure about the code and she added that the steps are on private land, and as such, people would not be encouraged to use the steps. Liza also stated that the steps do not lead to any destination and are purely decorative. Mike felt concerned that if the Committee beautifies the steps, people will feel encouraged to climb them, which could become a safety concern. The Committee had a lively discussion regarding the safety concerns of the steps and the importance of the site in the ongoing redevelopment of the former Baptist Hospital site. The Committee agreed to table the RFP for the steps at Kerbela for now, and will re-visit the idea at a later date.

Sara motioned to approve the steps RFPs for Regal Cinema and Cumberland Avenue with the suggested additions. Bart seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve and send out the two RFPs as soon as possible.

### **Poet Laureate: Vote**

Liza shared a project idea proposed by Mayor Rogero in the beginning of her first term for a Poet Laureate for the City of Knoxville. Liza prepared a nomination form, selection criteria, and the responsibilities for the selected Poet Laureate. Initially, the Arts & Culture Alliance was the obvious choice to oversee the process, but as Liza prepared the documents for release by the Purchasing Department, she felt the Public Arts Committee might be a better place for the Poet Laureate to be managed. Sara asked if the Poet Laureate would be a paid position. Liza stated that they would receive a \$3,000 honorarium, and they would have a variety of specific responsibilities, laid out in the guidelines. Liza cautioned that she has not brought the idea of including the Committee in the selection process to Mayor Rogero, because she wants feedback from the Committee first to determine if the Committee feels it should be part of the process. The Committee reviewed the nomination form, selection criteria, and Poet Laureate responsibilities. Sara stated that she liked the idea of broadening the definition of public art to include the performing arts and literary arts.

After some discussion, Duane made a motion to table the inclusion of the Committee in the process until a later date. Elizabeth seconded the motion. The Committee voted to revisit the idea at a later date. The Arts & Culture Alliance will continue to develop the project.

### **RiverHill Gateway Art Project (Hill Ave & Vol Landing): Vote**

Liza reminded the Committee about the proposal from the Hill Ave Neighborhood Association and shared images of the proposed project, to be designed by Derek Aulden White at Bird on the Wire studio. The design will include three panels of highly polished steel, featuring 2-dimensional silhouettes in the foreground of people participating in outdoor activities. The Association has asked the Committee to approve the design and proposed location, and the Association will begin fundraising for the project once the Committee gives its approval. Liza asked Rick if the Engineering Department has given approval for the project. Rick stated that he has not seen anything about the project in the Engineering Department, but it will have to be approved by them before the project moves forward. Sara asked if the Association has requested any funding from the Committee for the project. Liza stated that the Association intends to raise all funds for the project.

Bart motioned to approve the proposed design and location at the corner of Hill Ave & Vol Landing. Susana seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve the design and location. Liza will share the Committee's decision with Kaye Bultemeir, the head of the Hill Ave Neighborhood Association.

### **Chilhowee Update**

Liza has been working with Julie Graham, Executive Director of East Tennessee Quality Growth, to prepare an RFP for the Chilhowee Park project. ETQG's Executive Committee will meet on November 11 to review the RFP and give final approval. The Purchasing Department will distribute the RFP and the Friends of Chilhowee community group will review the submissions and will submit three preferred designs to the Public Arts Committee, which will give the final approval of the winning project. Liza will update the Committee as the project continues to move forward.

**Future Meetings:**

- A. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at 4:00 PM
  - a. The meeting will be held at the Knoxville Museum of Art boardroom.
- B. Future meetings:
  - a. January 5, 2016 at 4:00 PM
  - b. February 2, 2016 at 4:00 PM
  - c. March 1, 2016 at 4:00 PM

**Meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.**

**Absent Members:**

Chuck Morris  
Faris Eid  
Jeffrey Lockett  
Mark Heinz  
Melinda Meador