

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

### **Public Arts Committee Meeting: February 5, 2015**

Meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM at the Knoxville Museum of Art.

#### **Attendees Present:**

Bart Watkins – Committee Member  
Bill Dockery – Guest  
Catherine Oakroad – Guest  
Chuck Morris – Committee Member  
Duane Grieve – Committee Member / City Council Representative  
Elizabeth Wright – Committee Member  
Erin Donovan – Committee Member  
Faris Eid – Committee Member  
Gene Burr – Guest  
Jeff Lockett – Committee Member  
John Powers – Committee Member  
Judith Foltz – City of Knoxville, Special Events  
Lisa Duncan – Guest  
Liza Zenni – Staff Liaison  
Melinda Meador – Committee Member  
Rachel Perkins – Committee Administrator  
Rick Emmett – City of Knoxville, Downtown Coordinator  
Susana Esrequis – Committee Member

Liza welcomed the visitors and introduced them to the committee.

**Approval of January Minutes:** Melinda moved to approve the minutes. Susana seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

#### **Old Business:**

##### **A. Vote on State Street Garage Sculpture: “Threaded”**

Liza asked the committee if anyone had any questions regarding the sculpture at State Street Garage before the committee votes. Duane asked for a quick reminder of the issue being voted on. Liza asked Rick to summarize the history of the piece and the money available to either a) purchase the existing sculpture or b) commission a new piece. Rick recounted that the piece was installed with funds from the construction of the new State Street Garage. Rick contacted Lisa Duncan to see if Dogwood’s Art in Public Places would consider installing a temporary piece at that site. Lisa suggested Isaac Duncan’s sculpture “Threaded” and Rick provided the funding (\$3,200) for the installation of the piece at State Street Garage. The piece is scheduled to be removed in March 2015 if the committee decides not to purchase it. Rick stated there is

approximately \$35,000 available. Liza stated that the question before the committee is whether the city should purchase the existing piece or commission a site specific piece of art. Jeff stated that he would like to initiate a motion to respectfully decline the offer from Art in Public Places and initiate a Request For Proposals (RFP) that addresses the committee's desire to commission a site specific sculpture. Chuck seconded the motion, with an amendment that the committee would help Dogwood pay for the removal of the current sculpture from the site. Lisa asked the committee to consider the 92 sculptures that were submitted for the upcoming Dogwood exhibit as a replacement. Lisa stated that the committee could pay for seven years of temporary exhibitions with the \$35,000 currently available. Chuck feels that the mission of the committee is to procure permanent pieces for the city's art collection. Duane stated the committee appreciates the work that Dogwood has done, but he feels it is time for the committee to start commissioning pieces. Jeff stated that it is important to consider local artists in the RFP and the piece must be site-specific. Chuck suggested writing a note of thanks to Isaac Duncan. The committee voted to remove the existing sculpture and commission a new site-specific piece using the \$35,000 available from the garage construction fund. The committee will work to quickly develop an RFP.

#### **B. Cradle of Country Music Park: RFQ**

Liza stated that the committee is ready to create an RFQ for the Cradle of Country Music Park. Rachel pulled some examples of RFQs from the Americans for the Arts Public Art Network and the committee can use them as a guide to create an appropriate RFQ for the park. The mayor has set aside \$210,000 for the park, and there is additional money available to commission public art either at the park or for other projects. Duane will request \$200,000 in additional funds for FY 2016. The application to the NEA was successfully submitted on January 15, with a request for \$200,000 for the park. The request for \$15,000 to the East Tennessee Foundation was submitted on February 5. Liza will gather feedback from the committee members to prepare the RFQ over the next several weeks.

#### **New Business**

##### **A. Potential Sculpture for Vestal Park**

Gene Burr presented a potential sculpture for Mary Vestal Park that is being offered as a gift by David Witherspoon. Gene shared images of the original sculpture by Joe Falsetti that was installed at Vestal Park in 1978. The original piece was made of wood and ceramic and was eventually destroyed by termites. Gene and several others worked with the community and the Public Arts Committee to find a UT student to help re-create the original sculpture. Ultimately, that idea was unsuccessful.

The potential sculpture was created in 2003 by Joe Babb in collaboration with Alan Finch. It is six feet tall, made of marble and steel and is valued at \$5,000. Joe Babb feels the piece will be easy to maintain since the steel is thick enough to endure rusting over time. The piece could be bolted to the existing concrete base that supported the original Joe Falsetti sculpture. The donor is gifting the piece to this site specifically. Liza asked Gene if the City of Knoxville Engineering Department had assessed the piece to determine its safety. Gene was unsure, but Rick stated the department had not seen the piece. Duane suggested the law department and city engineers assess the piece for any potential risk. Melinda asked if there was money available for maintenance. Liza stated that the committee will need to develop a maintenance fund in the future – currently there is no designated fund for maintenance of any public art in the city. Susana asked if there were alternative images available of the sculpture. Liza asked if the committee members would be willing to visit the piece in person and make a decision at the next committee meeting. Gene provided the location of the piece and the committee will vote at the next meeting, after the engineering and law departments give their approval.

### **B. Airport Idea & Wikipedia “List of Sculptures”**

Susana proposed two ideas for the committee to consider. First, she suggested commissioning artists to do stained glass pieces for the large windows at the airport. Liza spoke with staff at the airport, and the staff indicated it might be possible in the future, but there are numerous regulations. Susana also suggested updating the Wikipedia page “List of Sculptures” to include the numerous pieces in the city’s public art collection. Rachel will update the Wikipedia page.

### **C. Suttree Landing Park Update**

Liza met with members of the South Knoxville Foundation, city representatives, and park designers to discuss Suttree Landing Park. Liza felt it was important to urge the designers to

include pieces of public art that reflect the ethos of the book. Liza met with Wes Morgan, a Suttree expert, to learn more about the specific plants mentioned in the book that could be used in the design of the park. The South Knoxville Foundation will meet at the end of the month to determine their vision for the park and its public art elements. Liza will meet with them again in March and will encourage them to include small elements of the book throughout the park.

#### **D. Art in Public Places Presentation**

Lisa Duncan asked the committee if they would like to see a new temporary piece installed at the Cradle of Country Music Park for 2015-2016 while the committee accepts proposals for the park. Liza asked Bart if that location would benefit the Art in Public Places exhibition. Bart said it would. Several committee members suggested that it would be nice to have a large piece, similar in scale to the Paley sculpture, for the site while the park plan develops. Art in Public Places will select a piece for that site for 2015-2016. Lisa reminded the committee that Art in Public Places had partnered with the Public Arts Committee for seven years, and she hopes that now that there is a budget for public art, the committee will consider supporting Art in Public Places financially. Duane stated that his intention when he asked for money to support the Public Arts Committee was to grow the city's permanent public art collection – inside or outside. Currently, the most valuable part of the public art collection is housed inside the Knoxville Convention Center. Duane would also like to see a fund developed to maintain the collection. Several committee members stated they agree with Duane and that the intention of the committee is to commission and maintain permanent public art for the city.

Bill, the media representative for the Shopper-News, asked if the committee has any plans for public art in East Knoxville. Liza shared an idea that Sara Pinnell suggested – to issue a press release asking for public input for potential locations for public art around Knoxville (especially outside of downtown). Liza has also met with members of the Five Points Working Group (East Knoxville) to learn what members of that community would like to see in their neighborhood and had selected Walter Hardy Park in East Knoxville as a potential site.

#### **Future Meetings:**

- A. The next regular meeting is Thursday, March 5, 2015 at 4:00 PM
  - a. The meeting will be held at the Knoxville Museum of Art boardroom.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:08 PM.**

**Members Absent:**

Mark Heinz  
Marcus Hall  
Mike Fowler  
Sara Pinnell