

PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 13, 2019
450 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor
Richmond Conference Room
Richmond, CA 94804

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Jenny Balisle (Vice Chair), Tom Herriman, Gretchen Borg-Hillstead, Linda Kalin, Phillip Mehas (Chair), and Jessica Parker

Absent: Michelle Baker

Staff: Michele Seville, Arts & Culture Manager
Katy Curl, Library & Cultural Services Director

Guests: None

I. Chair Phillip Mehas called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. Roll Call

III. Agenda Review and Acceptance

On motion by Committee Member Borg-Hillstead, seconded by Committee Member Kalin and carried unanimously to accept the agenda, as submitted.

IV. Minutes from the July 9, 2019 Meeting

Arts & Culture Manager Michele Seville requested an amendment to the minutes in the next to last paragraph on Page 2, to read as follows: *Michele Seville, Arts & Culture Manager, explained how the procedure, which had not followed protocol, had been changed by Ms. Day and Mr. Valery, in discussion and consent of the Mayor's Office, to create a more level playing field.*

On motion by Committee Member Kalin, seconded by Vice Chair Balisle and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2019 meeting, as amended.

V. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

VI. Welcome Phillip Mehas and Jenny Balisle as New PAAC Officers

Ms. Seville welcomed and acknowledged the experience of the new PAAC Officers; Chair Phillip Mehas and Vice Chair Jenny Balisle.

VII. Report on Website Update

Committee Member Baker was not present at this time to provide a report on the website.

VIII. Discussion on Having PAAC Liaisons to Private Development Projects

Ms. Seville advised that one of the instructions to private developers pursuant to the recently developed Public Art Brochure was a requirement to come before the PAAC to present their ideas for public art to get feedback. She described the process that would occur when projects were deemed to be eligible for the one percent for public art requirement, and advised that it would be important for a member of the PAAC to become familiar with and be involved with each project in a more inclusive process working collaboratively.

The public art in private development review process states that the Arts & Culture Division confirms that an artist has been selected, that a signed contract is in place, ensures compliance with the one-percent requirement, and signs off on occupancy on the Planning checklist.

On the discussion of the role of the PAAC liaison to private development projects, which was reminiscent of the Neighborhood Public Art (NPR) grants, the liaison role was recommended to help the process, offer ideas, and get experience in the development process.

Chair Mehas supported a volunteer effort of support for the projects by PAAC members, wanted it to be fun, and recommended the item be placed on each meeting agenda.

Committee Member Kalin suggested the PAAC have the responsibility to extend the expertise of its members to get the best art for the projects. Other members also saw the PAAC as shepherding the art and providing information.

PAAC members identified their projects of interest as follows:

- Shops at Hilltop (Balisle)
- RYSE Center Expansion (Borg-Hillstead)
- PowerPlant Park (Herriman)
- Office Conversion to The Factory Bar (Parker/Kalin)

Chair Mehas advised that he would work with Ms. Seville to identify the role of the liaison to private development projects, to be presented to the PAAC at its next meeting.

Ms. Seville reported that the applicant for the Shops at Hilltop had expressed a desire to bundle the requirement for public art from each shop to be able to provide a more comprehensive art project. The applicant intended to send a boiler plate agreement from their legal department. Richmond's Legal Department would review the agreement to determine whether it met the guidelines of the one percent for art requirement.

Ms. Seville acknowledged the PAAC's request for a report back on the request to bundle the public art requirement, and the request from Committee Member Kalin to be the liaison for the Artists in Cove project and to identify its status.

IX. Report on Existing/Future CIP Projects

Given that there would be no CIP projects in the foreseeable future, Ms. Seville recommended that the item be removed from the agenda, although Committee Member Kalin requested that the item be retained on each regular agenda pending the completion of the John Toki project.

X. Report on 12th/Macdonald Private Development Project

Ms. Seville reported that Winifred Day had previously presented the PAAC with the proposed artwork for the 12th and Macdonald project, and Ms. Day had requested a summary memo of the City's involvement in the project to be able to submit to the City's Design Review Board (DRB) so that it would know that the PAAC and the Arts & Culture Division had been involved in the selection panel for the artists, had reviewed the submissions, and had talked to developers. She had sent the memo included in the staff report to the Chair of the DRB who had indicated that it was "premature." She disagreed, and it was now in the hands of the private developer to choose which artists the selection panel had thought were most interesting, and she wanted that to be clear to the DRB.

Ms. Seville described the situation with respect to the art project involved which had been initiated many years ago with City discussions with the Oakland artist Mario Chiodo about some grandiose bronze sculpture for a "Dormitory O" monument. She explained that the City of Richmond had been looking for years for a place to install the sculpture and had failed for many reasons. The artwork had become a conversation between the National Park Service and the City. Since the passage of the Public Arts Ordinance, it had been suggested to be sited in one of the public art projects. There was some money in public art (\$400,000) that could go towards that sculpture. She described what had occurred after Ms. Day, the Project Manager for the 12th and Macdonald project, had expressed concern how the project had been brought about.

Ms. Day had recommended backtracking and putting out a Call for Art through the Project Manager to create a level playing field to invite other artists in to make a proposal. There had been a selection panel, Committee Member Parker

had been a member of that panel, and artists had been selected.

Ms. Seville clarified that what had occurred with respect to that project had not been part of the City's established process. The developer had indicated that space would be provided for the monument although the City was to raise the money for it. She noted that the situation was upside down and this was the best possible resolution to a difficult political situation.

Committee Member Parker took issue with the transparency of the feedback from those on the selection panel. She had noted her concerns with some of the artists that had been selected along with some represented on the selection panel. She described the process of the selection, identified areas of concern, and asked if it would be worthwhile to point out that the process represented a gesture only and not a working selection panel.

Vice Chair Balisle validated Ms. Parker's time as a dedicated volunteer who had taken time off work thinking that the process related to a serious selection. As professionals, she emphasized that PAAC members needed to be recognized for the time dedicated to the PAAC and to the process, which she reiterated the project had not followed.

Committee Member Kalin stated that when the developer and Ms. Day had presented the pieces from the artist, every piece represented the same theme, the same subject, with no variety, and she suggested the project was being turned into a theme park, which was not good for the City or the developer.

Ms. Seville clarified that the theme had been included in the developer's contract.

Committee Member Kalin suggested that people would not want to walk in and out of their office everyday into a WWII diorama, with flashing red, white and blue lights along an entire wall.

On the concerns expressed, Ms. Seville requested that Committee Members Parker and Kalin memorialize their concerns with the "Dormitory O" theme in writing that could be shared, if requested.

In the discussion, other concerns had been expressed that the art proposal could be offensive to the community and that the PAAC did not want to be included in a selection committee that had accepted the selection of all Caucasian artists to represent an event that had killed African-American men in a primarily African-American neighborhood, and where flashing red and blue lights represented something different to the African-American community.

PAAC members emphasized their responsibility to identify those and other concerns, such as where the art would be constructed. A bullet point Google document was recommended to identify the PAAC's concerns, to return for consideration by the PAAC at the next meeting.

XI. Report on Family Justice Center Public Art

Ms. Seville presented the status of John Toki's sculpture for the Family Justice Center, and reported that Mr. Toki had indicated that this had been the most difficult public art project he had ever been involved given its size and internal water elements. She noted that Mr. Toki's contract was due to expire on October 31, 2019, and had been extended to the end of the year to allow completion of the sculpture.

XII. Work Plan Review and Discussion

Vice Chair Balisle described the background and ongoing process to create the Work Plan that had been prepared at the request of the City Manager (Carlos Martinez). She presented the final document that had been reviewed and approved by both the PAAC and the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission (RACC). Since Mr. Martinez was no longer the City Manager, she would submit the Work Plan once a new City Manager had been identified.

The PAAC discussed the implications of waiting or not waiting to submit the Work Plan, and considered ways to encourage the powers that be to listen to and recognize the needs of the PAAC and the RACC along with the hard work that had been done to address those needs.

Ms. Seville suggested that the Work Plan be evaluated to identify a solution to each area of concern, and then identify the best way to accomplish each item since many could be done in-house.

PAAC members expressed frustration and disappointment given the time and effort the volunteer members had expended over multiple years to address the need for policies and procedures and to address the many issues that had stymied the PAAC and RACC over the years, which had gotten to a point of urgency to address those issues.

Ms. Seville advised that she would have a conversation with the City's Legal Department and identify the Work Plan and the issues that had been identified by priority and ask what would have to be done to address those issues.

XIII. Staff Report

Ms. Seville reported that there would be an event at the Ferry Terminal on October 5, 2019 from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M., to include a light show that would be on the seven individual sculptures, and funds were being raised to allow the light show 365 nights a year. The Community Conversations Mural would be going up next to the Hacienda Grill. In December there would be an intergenerational conversation at UC Berkeley, with Dante Clark and Betty Reid Soskin to continue the community conversation.

With respect to Richmond Writes! 2019, certificates had been awarded to those who had submitted poetry from Washington Elementary School and the 2019 poetry book would be submitted to those students who had been omitted. NPA grants this year had been fantastic and were primarily completed. The Officer Bradley A. Moody Underpass project was being extended through December 2020 and Yuki Nagase was working on the sculptures at his studio.

Committee Member Kalin reported that the Public Art Brochures had been sent out to the artists who had allowed their art to be illustrated in the brochure and those artists were reportedly honored to be on the cover of the brochure.

XIV. Next Steps Discussion

- Vice Chair Balisle would work on the Work Plan, Shops at Hilltop, and create a Google document to identify the PAAC's observations on the selection panel process for the 12th and Macdonald project;
- Committee Member Borg-Hillstead would meet with the RYSE Center with Michele Seville;
- Committee Member Parker would attend the light show at the Ferry Terminal, go to The Factory Bar, and work on the Google document;
- Committee Member Parker would work on the Work Plan and support Ms. Seville;
- Committee Member Herriman would liaison with PowerPlant Park and was available for assignments on projects if needed;
- Committee Member Kalin would help Committee Member Parker at The Factory Bar;
- Chair Mehas would work on a description of the Liaison to Private Development Projects, and continue to monitor the DRB; and
- Ms. Seville reported that she would work with the Legal Department for advice on the Work Plan.

XV. Announcements

Committee Member Kalin identified a Richmond Museum of History fundraising dinner to Restore the Mural on September 12, 2019, starting at 5:30 P.M.

XVI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 P.M. to the next meeting on September 10, 2019.