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APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF September 05, 2018

SEBASTOPOL CITY HALL
7120 BODEGA AVENUE
10:00 a.m.

PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE:

The notice of the meeting was posted on August 30, 2018.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gordon called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL: **Present:** Chair Gordon, Vice Chair Vertz, and Committee Members
Arnold, Langberg and Mills-Thysen
 Absent: None
 Staff: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
 Rebecca Mansour, Planning Technician
 Dana Morrison, Assistant Planner

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 07, 2018

Committee Member Arnold made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Vice Chair Vertz seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Chair Gordon, Vice Chair Vertz, and Committee Members
 Arnold, Langberg and Mills-Thysen
 Noes: None
 Abstain: None

Chair Gordon welcomed Director Svanstrom.

4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Director Svanstrom thanked the Committee for the warm welcome, provided a brief introduction of herself, and updated them on the following:

- There will be a City Council election for three positions this Fall.
 - The three incumbents and one new candidate are running.
 - Additional information can be found on the City's website.
- The City Council is currently reviewing the Draft Zoning Ordinance and Map. Continued Council review will occur on October 2, 2018.

- After several meetings, the Council appears close to adoption of the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.
- Hotel Sebastopol has submitted their building permit for plan check and review by the City.
 - In addition to the Ned Kahn artwork, they are planning one or two additional options as well to fulfill their public art fee requirement.
 - All are planned to be onsite and all will require review by the Public Art Committee.
- Per the City's Engineering Manager, Ned Kahn's public artwork is in the final stages of permitting and engineering.
 - There are a couple of technical/engineering signoffs at Caltrans that still need to happen as part of the permit processing.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen asked if an estimated timeframe for installation was known.

Director Svanstrom responded that that was not yet known and commented that she would provide that information to the Committee once she had it.

Director Svanstrom asked for further questions from the Committee.

There were none.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Dave Gordon commented:

- He was involved with the proposal of a large mural on the north side of the Basso building, facing the Miller Oil Company property.
 - After a year and a half, they had a design and seed money with a plan to raise the rest through crowdfunding.
 - Everybody was very excited about it.
 - The owner of the Miller Oil Company property, Bob Miller, would not give them permission to hang scaffolding over his property in order to access above the building because he felt that the mural would be so well liked by the public that any future development that he might want to do wouldn't be allowed.
 - They tried reassuring Mr. Miller that they'd be willing to accept the risk that the mural may be covered up at some point in the future, but Mr. Miller would not budge.
 - The project is no more as it is very site specific.
 - Hopes the property will be purchased by a combination of the City and private interests at some point in the future and that it will become a pocket park which would allow the mural to come to fruition.

6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

Chair Gordon commented:

- He has either worked alongside or employed a couple of the submitting artists over the years.
 - Does not have ongoing financial arrangements with either of these artists, and is not currently working with them.
 - Wants to be transparent about knowing and having worked with a couple of these artists.

- The artists he knows and has worked with are Eleanor Yates and Martha Wade.

Director Svanstrom explained what it means to have a conflict of interest, and when a committee member must recuse themselves.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR: There were none.

8. REGULAR AGENDA: There were none.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF SUBMITTED ARTIST PROPOSALS: The City issued a Request for Proposals for a public art project with a submittal deadline of July 31, 2018. Twenty-one artists made submittals. The objective for this stage of the project is to narrow the group down to three artists, who would then be asked to make conceptual art proposals for the specific site.

i. Process

- Member presentation of top 3-4 artists (5 minutes each Committee member) (25-30 minutes)
- Group Discussion (15 minutes)
Fill out Individual ranking sheet (15 minutes)
Group Discussion and tabulation of overall rankings (45 minutes)
- Determine selection of top 3 finalists, or creation of semi-finalist (5-10 artists) list for review at October 3 meeting if needed (5 minutes)

ii. Determine date for Finalist presentations to PAC and Public Presentation

- Date proposed: November 14, 2018

Chair Gordon spoke on process.

Members of the Committee asked procedural questions.

Assistant Planner Morrison made procedural clarifications.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Martha Wade:
 - Muralist,
 - Submittal completeness is a step below what she would have liked to see,
 - Likes the idea that the artist has presented,
 - Has good work history,
 - Confident in her ability to complete this artwork if selected,
 - She is a fantastic artist
- Nicole Ponsler:
 - Hummingbird and succulent mural,
 - Her concept is beautiful,
 - Has good work history,
 - Confident in her ability to complete this artwork if selected
- Linda Serrao:
 - Bronze sculptor,
 - Her proposal looks amazing,
 - Without knowing how far the artwork can project out, she would like to investigate the possibility of placing this artwork as proposed,
 - The artwork is gorgeous,

- Beautiful work history,
- The proposal is unbelievable,
- Almost surprised that this can be done within the stated budget
- Roger Stoller:
 - Metal lace artwork,
 - Loves a lot of what was submitted,
 - Lacking a complete description of what his proposal would be,
 - Liked so many of his other artworks,
 - Could see this type of artwork working very well within the designated area,
 - This could be a positive option and is worth considering,
 - Reiterated that his description was too vague
- Joey Mason:
 - Likes artwork,
 - Description is too vague,
 - If in a Sebastopol context, she could see it being fantastic,
 - The proposal is incomplete,
 - The art is unique,
 - Likes the art

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- Some of her selections overlap with those of Vice Chair Vertz.
- In trying to visualize some of these on the wall itself, she was surprised to find that some of the flatter pieces didn't seem to work as well.
 - The wall needs something strong, with shape, that is big and will project out from the wall.
- Martha Wade:
 - One of two 1st choice selections,
 - Likes work,
 - The drawings do not make the artwork appear as strong as it might in reality,
 - Concerned with the figure being depicted as a white male,
 - Gender and ethnicity is significant and should be discussed,
 - Lovely drawing,
 - Lovely ideas,
 - A lot of her past work is very nice as well
- Linda Serrao:
 - Second of two 1st choice selections,
 - Likes sculpture,
 - Seems small, could be bigger,
 - Gender and ethnicity discussion as well,
 - Likes the idea,
 - The total budget came out to \$35,000 with lighting costs unknown,
 - California artist,
 - Likes most of her other work,
 - Likes the idea of relating to the library very strongly
- Roger Stoller:
 - One of two 2nd choice selections,
 - Metal lace artist,
 - Some of his past work was less strong than others,
 - Could see this type of art along the library wall,
 - Wouldn't have to worry about gender and ethnicity
- Michael McGinnis:
 - Second of two 2nd choice selections,

- Likes past work,
- Proposal could be bigger, stronger
- Pretty much all of the artists said that they like to work collaboratively.
 - The Committee has had past discussions on the type of input they can have.
- Nicole Ponsler:
 - 3rd choice,
 - Proposal is strong,
 - Proposal is a little frenetic,
 - Birds feel a little uncomfortable,
 - Some of her past work is more spaced and feels more comfortable

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- Martha Wade:
 - Strong in how it completely takes over the wall and pops out in front of it.
 - Makes a grand statement which he appreciates
- Linda Serrao:
 - Likes the strength of the artwork,
 - The proposal is dynamic
- Ann Perich:
 - Unique proposal,
 - Likes past work,
 - Likes repurposing cork,
 - If it becomes abstract enough, he finds the idea of this as a moving, undulating piece very interesting
- Rich Lanet:
 - Geometric configurations are interesting,
 - Proposal is somewhat unclear,
 - Seems small, could be bigger,
 - Could work well with the vertical fins of the board and batten siding of the wall,
 - This is an interesting sculptural approach
- Maxwell Carraher:
 - "Looking" is interesting,
 - Proposal is somewhat unclear in terms of its meaning,
 - This piece could make a very strong statement

Chair Gordon commented:

- Some of these are obvious standouts.
- His selections are in no particular order.
- Martha Wade:
 - Paints very well,
 - Her paintings are very colorful,
 - Her proposal could benefit from further development,
 - Reiterated that he has had a conflict of interest with this artist,
- Nicole Ponsler:
 - Very colorful,
 - Loves some of her past work,
 - There is a frenetic energy in all her paintings which he finds commendable and interesting,
 - Would be interested in seeing if this concept winds up being her final design,
 - We're lucky to have gotten this proposal
- Ann Perich:
 - Her work is really interesting,

- Concerned over longevity of cork,
- Interesting concept,
- Seagrass or kelp doesn't seem Sebastopol-centric,
- Very site specific,
- Would like to see further development of this proposal
- Noted that the Committee has the opportunity to select a top 4, rather than a top 3, if needed.
- Linda Serrao:
 - The bronze sculpture is really nice,
 - The artwork is site specific,
 - Likes the way people tend to interact with her work,
- Eleanor Yates and Terri Pasquini:
 - Likes artwork,
 - Unfortunate that they did not present anything eye-catching,
 - Reiterated that he has had a conflict of interest with these artists,
 - Glad they applied,
 - Expressed disappointment over their submittal
- Expressed being pleased to see that the Committee has found more than one proposal, out of 21, that they believe to be appropriate.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- Michael McGinnis:
 - 1st choice,
 - "Knot of Learning" is intellectually provocative,
 - Presentation is unfortunate,
 - Two existing large shrubs are not shown in the rendering although they would work with this piece,
 - Could be enlarged and/or elevated,
 - Very durable,
 - Thought provoking
- Nicole Ponsler:
 - One of two 2nd choice selections,
 - Tons of energy,
 - Would work large really well
- Linda Serrao:
 - Second of two 2nd choice selections,
 - Likes bronze sculpture,
 - Artwork is framed beautifully between the two existing shrubs,
 - Very durable
- Roger Stoller:
 - Metal lace,
 - Finding appropriate imagery would require some work,
 - Material and workmanship are quite good
- Ann Perich:
 - The proposed cork piece is very unique,
 - The fact that it will move and undulate is quite definite,
 - UV will be a factor as this is a south front facing wall,
 - Durability of the materials against the elements is an important consideration
- Likes a lot of what was submitted, skipped over a lot as well.

Assistant Planner Morrison summarized the Committee's feedback thus far.

Director Svanstrom and Assistant Planner Morrison spoke on process.

Chair Gordon asked for an additional round of Committee comments, either on their own selections, or on the selections of others.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Joey Mason:
 - Willing to strike from the list due to the incompleteness of his submittal and the fact that as she was the only member to speak in support of him.
- Ann Perich:
 - Surprised about the support for this as she did not see cork as being long-lasting,
 - Could become a maintenance issue if/when it begins to fall apart,
 - The proposal itself is fascinating, and could be great,
 - The undulating quality of it could feel a lot like a Ned Kahn piece
- Maxwell Carraher:
 - Hard to know what piece the Committee is voting on,
 - The artwork is already in process,
 - The submittal is unclear

Board Member Langberg commented:

- Maxwell Carraher:
 - Agreed on it being somewhat unclear.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Could be happy with any of these.
- Would love to have Martha Wade, Linda Serrao, and Nicole Ponsler come back as they appear to have received the most Committee support.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- There are five that seem to stand out based on Committee member comments thus far.
- Ann Perich:
 - Expressed concerns over durability,
 - Agreed on it feeling too much like a Ned Kahn piece,
 - Vulnerable to vandalism,
 - Relevance to wine, not much else
- Suggested Martha Wade, Linda Serrao, Roger Stoller, Nicole Ponsler, and Michael McGinnis for further Committee discussion.
 - Of these, she considers Linda Serrao's to be the strongest.
- Maxwell Carraher was at the bottom for her.
- Found Rich Lanet's artwork to be too abstract and lacking connection.

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- The question on gender and ethnicity and how it's depicted is unavoidable.
 - The Committee needs to decide how it wants to address that.
- Maxwell Carraher:
 - Willing to strike from the list as his proposal is too unclear.
- Ann Perich:
 - Shares concerns on the durability of this proposal,
 - That may not need to be decided right now,
 - Further development could be a valid argument here

Chair Gordon commented:

- Ann Perich:
 - Intrigued by this piece.
 - Agreed on it being a little similar to Ned Kahn's work.
- In terms of gender and ethnicity issues;
 - You'll never satisfy everybody,
 - Young children can be androgynous.
- Likes sculptures of children.
- Linda Serrao:
 - The artwork is tied to the function of the building,
 - Has some permanence,
 - Somewhat trite, a very safe choice,
 - An additional element that could take it to another level would be cool
- Likes to push limits a little.
- The Committee has plenty to move forward with.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- His top three are Michael McGinnis, Nicole Ponsler, and Linda Serrao.
- In terms of durability all three are safe and good bets.

Chair Gordon commented:

- Did a mural for the Coddington Library 20+ years ago.
 - In terms of the submittals received, he expressed frustration and wished for more of a connection between the outside of the building to the inside.
- The Committee should understand that the amount of time an artist spends on a concept should not reflect what they might actually do if given the chance to bring it to the next level.
 - The Committee should allow for further development.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Gordon spoke on process.

Assistant Planner Morrison listed the artists that had been identified for ranking as follows:

- Rich Lanet
- Michael McGinnis
- Ann Perich
- Nicole Ponsler
- Linda Serrao
- Roger Stoller
- Martha Wade

Director Svanstrom and Assistant Planner Morrison spoke on process.

Assistant Planner Morrison handed out the ranking sheet.

The Committee completed the ranking sheets.

Director Svanstrom and Chair Gordon exited the meeting to confer.

After discussion and clarification from Director Svanstrom, Chair Gordon returned to the meeting and recused himself from the evaluation process as he realized he did have a current conflict of interest with one of the artists who submitted.

Chair Gordon left the meeting.

Vice Chair Vertz will now Chair the meeting.

Director Svanstrom spoke on process.

Committee Members read off their rankings.

Staff tallied the rankings.

The top two artists selected by the Committee were:

- Linda Serrao
- Nicole Ponsler

The Committee discussed Michael McGinnis and Roger Stoller.

Committee Member Langberg commented:

- Roger Stoller should drop off the list as he did not provide a concept for the site.

Vice Chair Vertz commented:

- Concurred with Committee Member Langberg in that Roger Stoller's submittal was too vague, although she was fond of his work history and felt like his artwork could work for this site.
- Give the above, she chose Michael McGinnis over Roger Stoller.

Assistant Planner Morrison noted that the Committee has the opportunity to select a top 4, rather than a top 3, if needed.

Director Svanstrom commented that the goal should be to select a top 3 if they can.

Committee Member Mills-Thysen commented:

- Understands the points made by Committee Member Langberg and Vice Chair Vertz.
- In looking at the art, she prefers Roger Stoller's work more than Michael McGinnis'.

Vice Chair Vertz concurred with Committee Member Mills-Thysen.

Committee Member Arnold commented that Roger Stoller did not present anything specific.

Committee Member Langberg asked if the RFP called for the artists to submit a site-specific concept.

Committee Member Arnold commented:

- Wished the City had money for more.
- Roger Stoller's artwork is magnificent.
 - The other artists have jumped ahead of him through their submittals which gives him pause.

In looking at the RFP, Director Svanstrom confirmed that the RFP did call for the artists to submit a site-specific concept.

The top three artists selected by the Committee were:

- Linda Serrao
- Nicole Ponsler
- Michael McGinnis

Director Svanstrom commented:

- Because the Committee has identified its top 3, continued deliberation at their meeting on October 3 is not needed.
- Target dates for artist presentation and the evening community meeting are to be determined.

Vice Chair Vertz and Committee Member Arnold requested that the artists bring a to-scale maquette.

Director Svanstrom commented that the evening community meeting would probably be held at 6:30 p.m.

Committee Member Arnold requested that an update on Mr. Kahn's public artwork be provided at their next meeting.

Director Svanstrom responded in the affirmative.

10. REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEE/STAFF: There were none.

11. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: There were none.

12. ADJOURNMENT: Vice Chair Vertz adjourned the meeting of the Sebastopol Public Arts Committee at 11:45 a.m. to the regular Public Arts Committee Meeting to be held October 03, 2018 at 10:30 a.m., at the City Hall Conference Room, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kari Svanstrom
Planning Director