

Salem Public Art Commission Meeting

The Public Art Commission (PAC) was held on Tuesday, December 19, 2017, in Room 314, Third Floor at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA.

Norene Gachignard, Chair of PAC called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Norene Gachignard, John Andrews, Austen Barron Bailly, Janine Liberty, and Deborah Greel, Public Art Planner

Members Not Present: Lillian Hsu, Jim Fallon, J. Michael Sullivan

Approval of October minutes:

Liberty made a motion to approve. Bailly seconded the motion.

Motion passes: 4 to 0

Discussion and Vote on ArtBox Sponsorship Program

Documents and Exhibitions: City of Salem ArtBox Sponsorship Program Agreement; City of Salem ArtBox Program Application

Liberty made a motion to approve the ArtBox Sponsorship Program. Andrews seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Greel noted that ArtBox Sponsorship Program was approved by Beth Rennard, the City Solicitor. Greel also said that a press release will be needed to publicize the program. The City, through the Electric Department agreed to allow the PAC to paint any and all electric boxes that are owned by the City. There would be a sponsorship call first, then a call for artists.

Liberty, Gachignard and Andrews expressed a concern as to whether a sponsor would be able to choose their own artist. They suggested that the sponsorship form be edited describing the details of artist selection. The artist would still need to be vetted by the PAC and then the PAC would run it by the sponsor. Logos will be allowed to be part of the signage but not in the art itself. Greel will be working with the sponsors in helping them understand the process. Liberty would like to see these art boxes added to the story map and it be promoted on social media. It should be ready after the holiday hopefully with a press release and photos. Gachignard suggested the PAC take vote to approve the Art Box Sponsorship with the understanding that a modification will be made that clarifies the artist vetting.

Liberty made a motion to approve the ArtBox Sponsorship Program. Andrews seconded the motion.

Motions passes: 4-0

Discussion on 2017-2018 PAC Work Plan and Budget:

Documents and Exhibitions: 2017-2018 Public Art Commission Work Plan and Budget

Discussion:

Initiatives:

Programs/Forums/Talks

The PAC needs to confirm if they are willing to set aside funds for the forums. The PAC would ideally have Bailly moderate the program with three artists invited. Liberty is working with a

woman that is using calligraphy in her arts and she will ask her availability. Greel suggested fiber artist, Michelle Bonner. The forum is collaborating with the North Shore Community Development Coalition (CDC). Andrews would like to connect the forum with Salem Arts Festival as well it would be a great way to connect the Point neighborhood, and the Punto Urban Art Museum with the Salem Arts Festival (SAF), the first week in June. It would allow the invited artists coming to Salem to see the SAF. Andrews wants to know is it possible to ask for sponsorship from local businesses or financial institutions, Greel said that it is possible but likely not banks. The overview of expenses would be \$150 per artist and the remaining would be marketing, Liberty would like to know if the costs of incidentals like refreshments or A/V would be included in the space provided by the CDC. Greel will confirm with Mickey Northcutt of the CDC to find out the capacity and any limitations that may come with space. Andrews and Liberty would like to confirm that if the Salem Cultural Council (SCC) money isn't award will there be enough funding to cover incidentals. Greel will know by Dec 20th and they can check in again after then have confirmation.

Greel mentioned an Art summit in April called Creative Connects at the Cabot Theatre hosted by the Art and Culture Initiative at the Essex County Community Foundation and may have a nationally recognized speaker. The expected attendance is likely up to 800 people.

Social Media/ Marketing/Signage

Liberty would like to hold a gathering educating the PAC members on best practices on social media possibly in her home as a social/educational event possibly in February or March once the new members are added. Andrews pointed out that having a PAC section on Artist Row websites.

Community Art/Celebrating the Urban Environment/Site-Specific Art – Call for Art

Greel told the group that Celebrating the Urban Environment project could change to Connecting Spaces. Andrews and Greel meet with Sperling Interactive and after their conversation they found that maybe Connecting Spaces would be a better fit for public art in 2018. Places such as Higginson Square, it's adjacent allies, Derby Square, Artist Row, and eventually 289 Derby could each have an individual project or all the spaces be treated as one. While Artist Row has their own budget, the PAC can utilize their funds for the pop up events. The main goal would be to have a call for 5 popups, the PAC won't manage the events but the call would require the artist to create and manage the events. Artist Row could have their own program. If there was more creative placemaking or pop-ups in these spaces, the PAC could put out a call for artists and see how artists propose engaging the community. Events could take place on a summer night leading people through the downtown. Andrews says there is the challenge because Artist Row is closed at night, some of the alleys are dark and there's a lot of private property that may give pushback. Andrews would like to see the main area be Derby Square lit with objects like light up cubes and a green screen. The cubes could work as breadcrumbs to lead people through the city, maybe even businesses would purchase cubes and participate. Andrews is looking into bulk pricing, but if the basic shells were purchased they can be programmed. Liberty had seen a company called Soofa Boston which has solar power phone chargers that also tracks urban planning data as well as signs that they need an artist to make. Andrews noted the void of public music and art (outside of restaurants and bars) would be able to be filled with creative placemaking. Andrews suggested that local businesses, such

as Sperling Interactive, could sponsor an event and “leave something behind” such as a mural or even the light up cubes.

Liberty noted that there is already a lot of programming surrounding Artist Row. Greel feels that Artist Row could have their own programs, and Andrews suggest that it would make sense to purchase a dozen light up cubes for the Artist Row tenants with their budget.

Andrews suggests that mapping out the alleys, what physical constraints would be found from the local businesses and community, creating parameters such as when, what time, and what topic for the call would be necessary. Greel will first work with the City to be sure that each area activated is safe for the public, then the business owners then meet with the 10 Derby Street Group.

Artists’ Row/Artist in Residence Program

Andrews noted that instead of a creative placemaking project this year Artists’ Row could benefit from performance art. Andrews feels that if there was a budget people would come out of the woodwork to create immersive theatre, dancers, as well as musicians. The PAC agrees that each performer would need to be highly vetted, and Liberty would like if to be clear that this would not be along the lines of busking.

Carly Dwyer Naik, of Immersive Theatre, in a meeting with Andrews and Greel mentioned the lack of opportunity for theatre people. The performers could utilize Old Town Hall, Derby Square and Artists’ Row. This would adjust the idea about Artist in Residence. The performer / groups that respond to the call for art, Andrews emphasized the need for marketing and follow the same standard of reporting and document that the prior Artist in Residence had. It would be ideal to do an entire summer of programming. The call could even extend to the Poetry Fest board, or the Phoenix School could create art space. Or simply have a “Performer in Residence” who coordinates all the programming but also be open to creating a variety of times places and types of programming. Greel, Naik and Andrews will meet to create the call to art.

Site Specific Public Art – Call for Art

Greel has discussed a possible mural project on a local school, with Kelley Rice, the Communication Director for the Salem Public Schools, Lynn Mullen, the head of the art department of Salem High School and Glen Burns, principal of Collins Middle School. Andrews informed the group that Al Wilson and Pedro Soto from Beyond Walls or Ruben Uberia from the Punto Urban Art Museum may be able to help with logistics and equipment.

Mural Slam

The mural slam will likely be paid out of the Artist Row fund. \$100 per mural with the same specifics as prior years.

Other Business

Andrews gave a synopsis of the Neon Dream Container event at Artists’ Row. Over 1000 people came through the Neon Dream, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The fact that it was temporary made it very easy to market heavily, people seemed to enjoy that it was interactive and temporary.

Greel has spoken to Steve Fineman who has purchased The Olive Oil company and is adding two parks and will make the property adjacent to the bike paths and these may be a good space for more public art. Greel will be meeting with the Fineman and his architect to see what the ideas are for space. It's possible that Patronicity would match a public art budget and has been following the local Salem happenings, but they enjoy a lot of urban development.

Public Comment

No public comment

Adjournment:

Andrews made a motion to adjourn. Bailly seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:26

DRAFT