

Salem Public Art Commission Meeting

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

Norene Gachignard, Chair of PAC called the meeting to order at 6:09pm

Roll Call:

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

Members Not Present: J Michael Sullivan,

Approval of July Minutes:

Fallon made a motion to approve. Hsu seconded the motion.

Discussion: Gachignard noted that in third paragraph under Discussion of 2017-2108 Work plan the sentence "Greel said \$7,500 of the budget included the community art and site specific " need to add 'art' after site specific.

Motion passes: 4 - 2 abstentions (Andrews and Bailly were not at previous meeting)

Discussion and Vote on Phoenix School Proposal for their Eco Bottle Brick Bench

Documents and Exhibitions: Flyer showing Examples of Eco Bottle Brick Bench

Discussion: Mistral Dodson and Leslie Levesque of the Phoenix School presented to the commission. They described using single-use plastics to form bricks into a structure such as a bench with interactive details. This would support the school's project of marine science. They want to reach out to other schools and place bench in the community. Dodson is looking for feedback on where to place the installation, since it is a permanent piece. She provided images of previously done projects to the group. To finance the project, they applied for a grant with Toshiba to support STEM projects and anticipate being able to pull from local resources.

Since it is a public art piece Greel suggested the PAC decide where it was placed, Artists' Row, being a self-contained area, would make it easy for the public to be invited down for building workshops. As Claudia Paraschiv from the Salem Public Art Project will not be doing another public art project next season for the Salem Arts Festival this could help fill that void. Andrews made suggestions such as 289 Derby Street, the site of a new park to be completed this spring, Lappin Park and in front of Bit Bar, a local restaurant. Greel noted that a central location is important but a place like Derby Square may not be suitable and that she would help the students, and school figure out the best spot.

There was a discussion on the size of the project. While some benches seem to be removed in the downtown area, it may be better to have several smaller pieces, as illustrated in the example sheet Dodson handed out. Possible ideas are small animals like a snake or turtle. Dodson and Levesque agreed that the math and science of figuring out the curves would be good lessons for the children.

Gachignard was curious if the city would maintain the structure if it was vandalized. Greel said it was possible, that usually if it's tagged with graffiti the sheriff is called and informed as they can remove the graffiti.

Fallon questioned if the Phoenix School would be in charge of the collection and storage of plastics. Dodson informed the PAC that this is a learning piece of the project. Phoenix School wants the students to plan out the logistics for; from where to receive the material, such as the community and local stores, and how to collect then store them.

Gachignard wanted to know if the final design will be brought back to the commission and Dodson said yes, they would like the students to create a presentation. Dodson will work on an agenda and could we come back in about 2 months with a couple proposals and a few children. Hsu proposed a sequence of determining a site first then having the students pick a design. Greel said that since the proposal is not complete that the PAC will not vote on the Eco Bottle Brick Bench this meeting.

No vote was taken on the project.

Discussion of Salem Cultural Council Grant

Discussion: While working with the Salem Cultural Council (SCC), Greel found that the PAC is eligible for a grant from the SCC. The application is due October 16th, but Greel noted since the PAC has a large budget compared to other organizations it's possible the PAC may not be awarded the funds. The SCC funding is \$14,000 and they are attempting to reach out to newer groups that could apply. Hsu suggested going through the PAC's work plan and possibly utilizing the SCC grant application to cover some of the public art projects. Liberty and Bailly concurred, Greel suggested possibly the Mural Slam would qualify. Greel said that the SCC is "energized" and Gachignard inquired as to who the chairperson is of the SCC and Andrews informed the group that the chair is Liz Polay-Wettengel. Gachignard requested to get on the SCC agenda for the next meeting. Liberty agreed that a collaboration would be good. Andrews provided the date of Monday, Sept 25, 2017, at 7 pm for the next meeting of the SCC, and informed that the SCC website has the requirements for the grant on the website.

Discussion on 2017-2018 Work Plan and Budget

Documents and Exhibitions: *Draft of the 2017-2018 Work Plan and Budget*

Greel presented the prospective use of the PAC budget for 2018 adding a list of organizations that Greel collaborates with throughout the year.

Discussion and Vote on Allocating Funds for a Clerk

Bailly made a motion to accept the proposal Liberty seconded the motion.

Greel asked for a vote to use \$675.00 of the budget to fund a clerk to take the minutes at the meetings as a follow-up to a discussion at the July meeting. Greel also proposed the PAC apply for an SCC grant for programming that, if successful, could make up for the amount paid for a clerk. Motion passes: 5 to 0

Discussion of Work Plan Management

Hsu voiced concern about the number of projects on the Work Plan and the amount of work it leaves a sole staff member to implement. She noted that under Programs/ Forums/Talks, PAC should think about paring down and concentrate on planning one program each year. Greel acknowledged this and informed the PAC that the North Shore Community Development Corporation has asked her to collaborate to build publicity for the Punto Urban Art Museum for a "Women in the Arts" program. Greel mentioned that Bailly could be one of the presenters or moderators. Greel suggests choosing 2 organizations and having one in the future be a collaboration with the PAC. By doing this it would bring awareness of the PAC by engaging a new audience. Gachignard, Bailly, Hsu and Liberty agreed it would be a good starting point, and suggested Greel start coordinating. Hsu recommended reviewing the budget first to get the amount available, Greel agreed that a possible budget of \$500 might be suitable for the program. Greel suggested creating marketing postcards to promote the event. Bailly mentioned giving the artists a stipend, Fallon remarked to help with transportation costs for the artists. Facilitating a discussion with the artists would align with the suggestion of doing Forum Talks. Hsu noticed the Punto Urban Art Museum is mostly men, but Andrew noted that there is a woman from Boston and he may be able to locate her information. Greel said there may be nine women coming and Hsu suggested having a woman in the art forum focus that did one of the walls.

Discussion of Art Boxes

Gachignard describes Art Boxes to Liberty as the utility boxes around town that are painted. There are 23 Art Boxes and the maintenance of them has been difficult. The city maintains them and

cleaning often removes the paint, and it costs \$500 each to have them repainted. Greel noted there's 2 boxes they really need to be updated, one of a whale in the Church Street parking lot and one on Derby Street. Andrew commented that the project has been beneficial to supporting unknown artists, that have now become recognized such as Caleb Neelsen. There could be a way to create an interactive map of them. Greel informed the group that a map had been prototyped in a Story Map program by an intern from Salem State University at one point and that all the details of the boxes, including the artists, are in the program which no one knows about. Hsu asked if the PAC is going to set aside budget money for the Art Boxes. Liberty agreed refreshing the information and use it to reach out for fundraising, though it would be best to make look nice before promoting them. Creative Salem has pictures and interviews from a few years ago and Andrews has them in his archives. Greel said this is a project I wouldn't be able to manage and suggested a marketing/communications intern. Liberty was interested if the project would qualify for an SCC grant. It would be preferable to have sponsorships, but Andrews noted there would need to be signage to encourage it. Hsu pushed back that having a nonphysical promotion like a QR code or having it listed on the Story Map would be a way to acknowledge the sponsorship. Greel suggested creating a sponsorship packet. The Rotary may also be another good place to secure funding suggested Greel. Andrew suggested the PAC table the conversation and discuss more of a plan. Greel and Gachignard agreed to revisit the Art Box Project next month.

Discussion and Vote on Public Art Proposal by thanhthuy phambui

Documents and Exhibitions: *Criteria for Proposals by thanhthuy phambui*

Discussion: Greel introduced the proposal from Phambui, a wooden sculpture installation that makes a comment on the current and past refugee situations, which is piece currently in Boston. After reviewing the proposal and photos, the first concern from Liberty, Andrews, and Greel was the similarities with a current wooden sculpture, Pavilion, installed at the corner of Washington and New Derby Street. Conceptually I like it said Bailly, though now may not be the right time downtown with the tourist season, for fear of the sculpture being damaged. Other ideas were considered such as the Salem Commons, a school, playground or the area in front of Bit Bar, a restaurant. Andrews and Greel look forward to having 289 Derby, a new park to be built this spring, set up to possibly have a section dedicated to sculptures.

Gachignard suggested the artist submit a different proposal or bring it to the PAC at a different time. Greel suggested that maybe another organization may be interested, the cultural impact for a High School may be beneficial.

No vote was taken.

Updates:

Greel presented the following information to the Commissioners:

Artists' Row Artist in Residence Program Final Report - Claudia the Artist in Residence for Artist Row has filed her final report. Greel thought the Artist in Residence Program was hugely successful and the Artist Row tenants were amazing. Gachignard agreed that it was a great collaboration. Greel I love that this is the whole community. The YMCA came with the children and the food program fed them a meal and all the parents came to pick them up on Artist Row instead of at the YMCA. Even the pollinator tables excited the public. Greel noticed that the adults weren't as involved it was seen as a children's program and she would like that to be different as well as the tables have become less functional and more of an art installation. We're looking to have people to adopt the bee buckets, and ways to store the tables. There has been no vandalism on Artist Row and sales are up in the area. With the painting of the building and the new windows the Row looks beautiful. Greel would like another artist in residence program. Hsu asked if Greel did a de-brief with Paraschiv. Greel said, yes, a lot of it is in the report but she was the right person at the right time and worked with the Lesley group.

289 Derby Street Murals

Greel informed the PAC that the murals from a previous mural slam on Artists' Row that were installed on a building at 289 Derby Street will need to be removed soon. She also noted that the city owns them and not sure of the next steps but they are faded and may not be usable. Andrews agreed and noted that Notch is moving fast with construction Greel asked if the PAC should reach out to the artists and see if they want them. Andrew suggested the PAC auction them off, Gachignard agreed that's a good idea, check in with the artists first.

Lesley University Artists' Row Redesign

Project is 99% completed with the approximate amount of \$26,000 spent for the new windows, doors, paint and signage. Gachignard was impressed and Bailly asked for a copy of the original report. Greel directed her to a previously sent email and said it will be online.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjourn

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

Meeting adjourned: 7:32pm