

Salem Public Art Commission Meeting

February 16, 2016

The Public Art Commission (PAC) was held on Tuesday, February 16, 2016, in Room 313, Third Floor, at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA.

Norene Gachignard, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:05pm

Roll Call:

Members Present: Norene Gachignard, J. Michael Sullivan, Mary Best, Amanda Moore, and Deborah Greel, Public Art Planner

Absent: Austen Barron Bailly, Keisha DeLeon

Welcome and Introductions:

Gachignard welcomed new members, Mary Best, Keisha DeLeon, and Amanda Moore to the Public Art Commission.

Approval of January Minutes:

Best made a motion to approve the minutes. Moore seconded the motion.

Motion passes: 5-0

Review of 2015-2016 Work Plan

Documents and Exhibitions: Public Art Commission 2015-2016 Work Plan

Hsu noted that the program needs more of a budget and that the Public Art Commission should request more money for the program. Greel explained that the budget is level funded for the 2016-2017 budget. Hsu said that the City put forward money for a Public Art Masterplan, a commission and staff but with only \$10,000 per year the budget falls too short for the vision of the masterplan. Moore said that it is important for the Public Art Commission to go record and that we requested more funding and if they want a public art program to make a difference they have to fund it. Sullivan asked if they can approach the Council to increase the budget. Greel said that the budget is presented to the Council from the Mayor. He suggested that in October or November we look to ask for adding \$5,000 to \$10,000 to the budget. Greel said that in 2017 when Footprint Power Plant comes online that public art will receive \$40,000 for three years as part of the Community Benefits Agreement. Hsu also noted that there be a statement that it is difficult to develop a public art program on a shoestring budget. She also asked what would the structure be for increasing funding. Sullivan, Moore and Hsu concurred that the commission needs a work plan strategy that will address how increased funds would be spent.

Moore asked about social media and marketing the Public Art Program and suggested a Facebook page that publicizes all kinds of art activities happening in Salem and especially public spaces. Hsu asked Moore about the social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram.

Moore mentioned working with partners to engage public spaces. Greel noted the collaboration with volunteers to present the Derby Square Flea/Salvage/Art Market to take place in Derby Square once a month from May until September.

Gachignard noted that many boards and commissions have City Council liaisons and she will speak with the Mayor to see if the Council can assign a liaison.

Discussion of New Initiative

Documents and Exhibitions: The Before I Die Guide

Photographs of possible locations

Greel informed the commission that the Mayor requested that she bring the "Before I Die" Project to Salem. The project is a public art project using a chalkboard wall that people fill in the blank "Before I Die_____". Greel presented to the commission possible locations that included walls on the pedestrian mall and Lappin Park. Sullivan noted that parks are good opportunities for contemplation. Moore said that alleys are more for candid responses. Hsu liked the Rockafellas (wall) for visibility and engaging that space. She asked how long is it durable and can it last four seasons? Best concurred that this was a good spot. Gachignard said it needs to be monitored and maintained and suggested that maybe the Boys and Girls Club as well as the Boy Scouts could be part of the project. She asked if the Department of Public Services could build it. Hsu suggested internships and to reach out to artist, Ken Reker from Salem State University. Moore mentioned interns that can be used for the social media component. Greel is researching the cost of the project. She will also reach out to the owners of Rockafellas and ask for permission to use the wall on their building.

Updates:

Artists' Row

The deadline for "Call for Creative Entrepreneurs" for the Artists' Row 2016 season is due on Friday, February 12. Only two applications from two previous tenants have been received. I anticipate two or three more applicants but it is much lower than the 18 we received last year. The deadline may have to be extended. Feedback I have received is that the time commitment of 6 days a week, 7 hours a day, is difficult for one artist. I will wait to see what comes in and then see if we need to extend the timeframe for due applications and resend the call.

The Salem Artists' Row Framework Plan, the report from the Cecil Group, recommends quarterly meetings with the Mayor's office and the Department heads to discuss the infrastructure management and improvements for the 'Row'. A meeting has been scheduled for March 1st.

Public Art Installation

The deadline for RFQ submissions for the Call for Artists and Designers is Friday, February 12th. Nine submissions have been received. The Artist Selection Panel will review the proposals on February 18. Three artists will be selected and asked to submit a full proposal.

Big Hammock

The Big Hammock is 8' x 33' on a self-supporting steel frame, was developed as a public art project by Hansy Better Barazza of Studio Luz Architects and was installed on the Greenway in Boston for a length of time beginning in 2010. The Big Hammock project has been donated to BR+A+CE in order to be brought to other public sites. I spoke with Ms. Barazza about the possibility of bringing the Big Hammock to Salem. Initially thinking the cost would be \$7,000, the project seemed manageable. Ms. Barazza said that the hammock needs to be rewoven which would immensely add to the cost and the expectation is that Salem would be responsible for funding the re-weaving. Ms. Barazza will give me a budget for the project by the end of February.

Public Comments: No public comment

Adjourn:

Hsu made a motion to adjourn. Moore seconded the motion.

Adjourn: 7:21