

Public Arts Board

Rooms 202 and 203 Birmingham City Hall – June 21, 2017

Meeting called to order at 6:45 PM

A) Roll Call –

Members Present: Rabbi Baruch Cohen, Jason Eddleston, Barbara Heller, Monica Neville, Linda Wells

Student Members Present: Sarah Evans, Cecilia Trella

Members Absent: Anne Ritchie, Mary Roberts

Student Members Absent: Celeste Demps-Simpson-Simons

Administration: Sean Campbell, Assistant City Planner,
Jana Ecker, Planning Director

B) Approval of Minutes – May 17, 2017

Motion by Linda Wells, seconded by Monica Neville to approve the May 17, 2017 minutes with the following changes:

The elimination of “of where the Board’s interests are in the City” and the insertion of “of site locations in the city” in the last sentence of the 7th paragraph under Unfinished Business, Map of Prioritized Locations for Public Art with Parks and Recreation Feedback.

The elimination of “2015” and insertion of “the last two events” in the first sentence of the second paragraph under Committee Reports, Birmingham in Stitches.

The insertion of “|” between “Inside” and “Out” in the third sentence of the fifth paragraph under Communication, Alleys and Passages Plan Presentation.

Yeas: 5 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

C) Unfinished Business

PAB/CCBB Charity Poker Fundraiser

Barbara Heller informed the board that there are eight time slots open for volunteering at the Charity Poker Fundraiser. Monica Neville indicated that she would try to sign up for another slot. Linda Wells stated that if necessary she would volunteer on July 8th in addition to the 6th and 7th.

D) New Business

Dexter Rock Project

Mr. Campbell provided an overview of the Dexter Rock Project that occurs in Dexter, Michigan. He informed the Board that a Birmingham resident reached out to the City about the project and recommended holding a similar activity in Birmingham. The project involves children painting miniature rocks with positive messages and placing them across the city. Participants are encouraged to share pictures of painted rocks on social media before hiding them and upon discovering them. The project is intended to inspire creativity in all ages and energize people to explore the different areas of the city while placing and finding the rocks along the way.

The Board expressed an interest in the project as it would require no funding on the Board's behalf and would also engage the community in a fun activity. Ms. Heller suggested holding the event biannually between the years that ~~the Chalk Project~~ **Birmingham in Stitches** is not happening.

Rabbi Cohen remarked that all of the decorated rocks from the program could create an end product such as a wall or an accent feature in a garden. Ms. Neville proposed having the rock decorations focus on a theme and include a date on the underside. The Board also liked the idea of developing a smart phone application that participants of the program could use for geocaching purposes.

The Board shared a few concerns over the project such as the size of the rocks and their placement. Ms. Neville added that offering prizes might be problematic as it might create competition that detracts from the spirit and intent of a fun project.

Motion by Monica Neville, seconded by Linda Wells, to direct the subcommittee to develop the Rock Painting/Geocaching "Birmingham Rocks" program and to prepare a high level outline for the next PAB meeting for feedback.

Yeas: 5

Nays: 0

Updates to Public Arts Board Rules of Procedure

Mr. Campbell explained that in light of recent activity, such as the revisions to the Art in Public Spaces application, the adoption of a new procedure for reviewing public art applications, and the adoption of site and placements guidelines, it is mandatory that the Board updates its Rules of Procedure. He also explained that this would be an opportunity for the Board to make any further amendments as they see fit.

Ms. Ecker explained that while the verbiage in the current Rules of Procedure is good and informative, some of it does not belong there. She further explained that the Rules of Procedure are intended to establish how the Board is structured, when it meets, how the agenda works, the order of business, the ethics clause, and so on.

It was the consensus of the Board that some of the language does not belong in the Rules of Procedure but is still valuable and worth including in a separate document about the Art in Public Spaces Program. As discussed, the document would include the Board's history, mission statement, the site and placement guidelines, and procedure for reviewing and approving proposed art. Ms. Heller had remarked that before CityScapes was established in 2006, the call for entries program was called "Art in Public Spaces" and that a logo was created for it. She stated that she would find the logo and forward it to Planning Staff so they can include it in the discussed informational piece.

Ms. Heller suggested changing the Rules of Procedure to not assign one specific City department to carry out the administrative functions of the Board, but for it to instead say "City Staff." She also recommended moving the language under Conduct of Business to the Presiding Officer section because it seemed more appropriate there. It was then decided by the Board to have the Conduct of Business section list the order of business items for regular meetings. Ms. Heller stated that the Rules of Procedure should track the date of revisions at the bottom of the page.

The proposed removal of the glossary was brought up. Ms. Ecker explained that as a rule, if the Rules of Procedure needs a glossary, then it is not written simply enough for the general public. The Board agreed that it is not a necessary component for the document and that it could be eliminated.

The Board had a few questions regarding the 3-year term limit on chair positions and was unsure as to its purpose. Ms. Ecker explained that it is common to have limits on chair positions because it gives boards the opportunity to change things up once in a while if they so choose. Ms. Neville was concerned that given the fact that it takes so long for the PAB to get things done that 3 years might be too short of a term for the chair positions. Ms. Ecker advised that if the Board wishes to change the term limits,

once established, it would require a supermajority of 5 votes. The Board decided to table the discussion about chair term limits until the next meeting.

Ms. Wells suggested changing the language for the procedure for electing officers to say "elected" instead of "appointed" regarding Chairs and Vice Chairs. She explained that this would make more sense because the City Commission appoints members, whereas the Board votes to elect its chair positions. The Board agreed with this change.

The Board directed staff to make the changes as discussed to the Rules of Procedure and put together a separate Art in Public Spaces Program informational piece. It was also requested that the Rules of Procedure revisions be completed within two weeks so they could be distributed to Board members for review prior to the meeting. Ms. Ecker advised that Board members can review the document individually but cannot collectively discuss Board business until the next public meeting.

E) Committee Reports

Public Space Activation Subcommittee

Mr. Campbell advised the Board that the Public Space Activation Subcommittee held their first meeting on June 20, 2017. During the May 17, 2017 PAB meeting, it was discussed that the primary focus of the Subcommittee would be parklets. Additionally, the Board had also showed an interest in exploring different ways to incorporate public art in the pedestrian passages downtown. Following this direction, the Subcommittee discussed these broad topics at length and focused on identifying specific, feasible projects.

Rabbi Cohen prepared and gave a verbal summary of the Subcommittee's first meeting. He first explained that they reviewed the Reclaiming the Right of Way report to generate ideas around application of the concept in Birmingham. He added that the Subcommittee had some hesitation over the parklets because it would involve the elimination of already scarce on-street parking spaces, which could be controversial. As discussed, it seemed more logical to do something reminiscent of a "deeplet," which is the same basic idea as a parklet but utilizes other pedestrianized spaces rather than parking spaces. The Subcommittee reviewed Ms. Neville's Pinterest page for possible ideas and discussed how they could be incorporated into parks, trails, and alleyways. Based on these materials and further discussion, it was decided that interactive art was the direction that the Subcommittee wanted to move in. Under this concept, it was envisioned that various public spaces could have creative mini golf parklets, giant chess boards, human chess, foosball, or ball pits. Having musical installations and programs, like painted pianos placed across the city, was also a favorable idea. Mr. Eddleston remarked that he has connections with several local businesses/talent, such as Robot

Garage, who he could reach out to for potential sponsorship opportunities. Ms. Ecker advised that all such interactive programs should clearly tie to and promote public art. The Subcommittee would like to make use of various parks (namely Shain Park), trails, alleys, and possibly the Farmer's Market. Lastly, there was discussion about including local grade school students in on an event, giving them the opportunity to display their artwork in various places across the city.

Ms. Neville inquired about when and how often the envisioned art projects would occur. Mr. Eddleston suggested that new ideas could be tested out on weekends and based on their performance and receptivity the Board could consider extending them to be monthly or seasonal programs in the future. He further stated that art projects should be sustainable and require minimal upkeep.

F) Communication

Update on Russell Thayer Sculpture *Wind Rapids* Donation

Mr. Campbell provided an update on the Russell Thayer sculpture *Wind Rapids*. He explained that the City Commission postponed approval of the sculpture pending confirmation in writing that Mr. Thayer understands that once the sculpture has been accepted by the City, the City has the authority to relocate the sculpture as needed. Additionally, the City Commission instructed Planning Staff to revise the Art in Public Spaces application to explain this to potential donors.

Update on Barnum Park Sculpture Pad

Ms. Ecker reported that the City was preparing to pour the Barnum Park sculpture pad sometime over the next couple of weeks.

G) Public Comments

No public comment.

H) Adjournment

With no further business being evident, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.