

Public Arts Board Minutes

Rooms 202 & 203 Birmingham City Hall – January 16th, 2019

A. Roll Call:

Members Present: Rabbi Boruch Cohen, Barbara Heller, Monica Neville, Linda Wells, Anne Ritchie, Natalie L. Bishai, Amelia Berry (Student), Cole Wohlfiel (Student)

Members Absent: Jason Eddleston, Mary Roberts

Administration: Brooks Cowan, City Planner, Laura Eichenhorn, Transcriptionist

B. Approval of Minutes – December 19, 2018

Linda Wells clarified that Eastern Hophornbeam was 'waiting to be installed', not that Eastern Hophornbeam was 'waiting to install' a sculpture. Motion to approve was made by Linda Wells, seconded by Anne Ritchie.

Yeas: 5 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

Rabbi Boruch Cohen arrived at 6:41 p.m.

C. Committee Report

The Public Arts Board committee report began with the Alleys and Passages committees.

Cole Wohlfiel reported three different clubs are interested in talking to alleyway owners about potential art projects.

City Planner Cowan requested a summary of the proposed projects in writing. The alleyway owners would be sent the proposal summaries, and a meeting would be scheduled between the owners, City Planner Cowan, the relevant members of the Board, and the parties interested in creating the art in the alleys.

City Planner Cowan asked that the summary include the involved parties and the specifics of the proposed projects.

Cole Wohlfiel confirmed that he would reach out to the interested clubs in the next two weeks requesting proposal summaries and confirmation that they would be able to attend a meeting with an alleyway owner. He said he would forward the information to Amelia Berry, Rabbi Cohen, and City Planner Cowan once he receives responses.

City Planner Cowan reported that the City Commission approved the photographic use of LOL, Windswept and Eastern Hophornbeam in City promotional materials. He confirmed that the four sculptures listed in the full agenda packet cannot be used in promotional materials at this time,

and added the City is working on obtaining approval to eventually use said sculptures in City promotional materials.

Anne Ritchie requested confirmation that unapproved sculptures would need to be removed from current promotional materials at this time. City Planner Cowan confirmed.

The branding committee discussed plans to fix errors on the City's website.

Barbara Heller provided the branding committee with the Board's most current mission statement and information on art installations around the City. She confirmed that she would send Anne Ritchie the correct logo, and confirmed that all sculptures could remain on the art installation list.

Monica Neville stated the branding committee would like to generate enough arts content to post to the City's social media account once a month. It was suggested that Commissioner DeWeese be asked to take photos of the City's art installations in the near future.

Anne Ritchie said it would benefit the Board to have a database of all City art holdings.

The branding committee presented a calendar of all City events in the next year, and a calendar of all intended Board meetings. They suggested the Board decide on the intended scope of its presence and engagement at various events, and suggested they begin planning those activities well in advance using this information.

Anne Ritchie confirmed for Natalie Bishai that the Board's posters could not be sold.

City Planner Cowan confirmed he would look into the policy on accepting donations both for the Board's posters and in general.

Barbara Heller said she would look for the Board's information on various ways the public could support the Board financially, including 'adopting a sculpture'.

Anne Ritchie said decisions regarding the Board's event attendance and engagement should be finalized at the February meeting.

City Planner Cowan said he would email the Board and ask that each committee have their event dates and plans in writing for the February meeting.

Rabbi Cohen suggested that coordinated whole-Board endeavors could be more effective than working in smaller committees. He also suggested the Board make coloring book pictures of the City's art holdings.

The Board confirmed that larger, independent efforts would require a permit at least ninety days out from the intended event. Smaller engagement opportunities, like setting up a table at another committee's event, would not require permits.

Rabbi Cohen said the Board should clarify its focus. He said his impression is that the Board seeks to promote public awareness of the City's arts holdings, with a smaller focus on promotion of art in general.

City Planner Cowan confirmed that no more than three people from the Board could meet at a time outside of the official Board meetings.

Rabbi Cohen suggested putting some of the committee projects on hold so the Board could focus its efforts on a few specific activities.

The Board agreed to focus on spending the next meeting selecting events the Board will attend.

City Planner Cowan said committees will be required to submit written memos of their plans and accomplishments in advance of future Board meetings moving forward.

Monica Neville suggested that the committees' goals be overlaid onto the City's calendar of events at the next meeting in order to decide on the Board's presence at the events.

Linda Wells said the Board should focus on what it can accomplish. Projects that are not gaining traction could be paused until a later date.

The Board proposed painting the electrical box outside the Birmingham Theatre with a popcorn box in the style of the popcorn containers used in the Birmingham Theatre, as proposed by Rabbi Cohen at the December 19, 2018 meeting and by Anne Ritchie and Monica Neville presently. The Board discussed asking the Theatre to possibly help sponsor the painting.

Anne Ritchie volunteered to go with City Planner Cowan to meet with the Birmingham Theatre for a discussion of potential sponsorship.

City Planner Cowan confirmed there would need to be a mock-up of the painting and that the plan would require approval by the City Commission.

A motion was made by Monica Neville to paint the electrical box outside of the Birmingham Theatre like one of the Theatre's popcorn boxes with a design by Board member Anne Ritchie. Motion was seconded by Anne Ritchie.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

The Board proposed looking for free pianos on Craigslist, and allocating an amount not to exceed \$750 for moving the piano into Shain Park June 1, 2019 and out of Shain Park on August 31, 2019. On August 21, 2019 the Board would hear from the public regarding the project and vote whether to extend the time the piano would remain in Shain Park.

Cole Wohlfiel said he would look into options and costs for piano movers.

The Board discussed finding a piano with wheels in order to allow the piano to be moved around Shain Park during the season in an effort to increase traffic and engagement. The sidewalk outside of Panera or outside of Pierce garage were discussed, but were determined to be either too crowded or too out-of-the-way to generate enough engagement.

Natalie Bishai said her daughter could test-play any potential free pianos to make sure they are somewhat in-tune.

Anne Ritchie made a motion to approve Shain Park as the location, with the option to move the piano around the park, to approve an amount not to exceed \$750 for the moving of the piano from its original location, installation of the piano on June 1, 2019 in Shain Park, and removal of the piano on August 31, 2019, with the option for an extension of the term to be discussed on August 21, 2019. Motion was seconded by Rabbi Cohen.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

City Planner Cowan said he would bring this proposal in front of the Parks and Recreation Board next.

D. New Business

City Planner Cowan said the discussion of the calendar and event engagement planned for the February 2019 Board meeting is in line with the mandate of the public space activation committee. He recommended coordinating joint projects with the Birmingham-Bloomfield Art Center, and confirmed permits require a 90-day lead time for any projects the Board undertakes that would utilize public space independently of another City event.

The Board discussed asking the Birmingham Shopping District to allocate some space for public arts activities at the Farmer's Market subsequent to the February 2019 Board meeting.

Barbara Heller said she would give another talk at the Library about the City's art holdings once all the public arts materials are finalized.

Communication

Barbara Heller discussed the Sound Heart article in the Birmingham Eccentric and noted that Christina Heidrich should be credited as the sole donor.

Eastern Hophornbeam will likely be installed in April 2019.

The Board reviewed the information on Michigan Spring that was included in the full agenda packet. There was consensus on a 30" base for the sculpture.

City Planner Cowan said he would email Kroger and request that Kroger illuminates Sound Heart.

The Board commented that the sculpture looks wonderful, and the goal is to draw more attention to it. They added that if Sound Heart is illuminated in the right way Kroger could also illuminate its own sign at the same time.

Comments

Barbara Heller asked the Board for consensus about keeping Amelia Berry and Cole Wohfiel on as alternates. The Board consented.

Cindy Rose and City Planner Cowan reminded the Board that they would need to have representatives prepared to present the Board's request for funding at the City's Budget meeting in March.

City Planner Cowan suggested doing a project either with the road stops or potential benches at Bird Avenue by Dairy Deluxe. He also suggested that Birmingham high school students could be involved in the project.

The Board agreed to put this project on the calendar during their next meeting.

Cole Wohfiel and Amelia Berry said they would talk to students at the high school to see who might want to be involved.

Linda Wells asked for approval for Birmingham in Stitches during the Fall Art Fair. She said Birmingham in Stitches would also probably be done during Winter Markt 2019.

Barbara Heller explained that the charity poker dates for evenings in April, May and June 2019 are already full, meaning the Board does not have fundraising opportunities for the next two quarters.

The Board discussed smaller opportunities to solicit donations, such as having a box for donations available, at events where they are engaging the public.

Cole Wohlfiel told the Board this was his and Amelia Berry's last meeting.

Barbara Heller explained that the City Commission appoints students to the Board, and that the City will be writing Cole Wohlfiel and Amelia Berry their community service letters.

Barbara Heller also officially thanked Cole Wohlfiel and Amelia Berry for their service on behalf of the Board.

E. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Brooks Cowan
City Planner