

City of Bellevue
ARTS
program

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION



Artist Kenji Stoll kicked off the installation of Bellwether 2019 with his huge mural on Doga Church facing the Grand Connection.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

September 10, 2019
SPECIAL MEETING



“The arts are an important expression of how people think of and experience the city and each other. Bellevue seeks to foster a strong arts and cultural community chiefly supported through a wide range of artists, art and cultural institutions, and arts groups offering a variety experiences to an engaged audience.”

-City of Bellevue, Comprehensive Plan, Urban Design & the Arts Element

Department of Planning and
Community Development

Agenda

Agenda

Tuesday, September 10, 2019
Meeting: 4:30 p.m.
Bellevue City Hall, 1E-109

Bellevue Arts Commission
Commission Staff Contact: 425.452.4105

-
1. **CALL TO ORDER** 4:30pm
Chair Manfredi will call the meeting to order.
 2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES** 4:30 – 4:35
 - A. Chair Manfredi will ask for approval of the agenda.
 - B. Chair Manfredi will ask for approval of the July 2019 regular meeting minutes.
 3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** 4:35 – 4:40
Chair Manfredi will entertain oral communications limited to three minutes per person or five minutes if representing the official position of a recognized community organization for other than main agenda items and public hearing subject. A maximum of three people are permitted to speak to each side of any one topic.
 4. **ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Downtown Park NE Corner Public Art Proposal 4:40 – 5:10
 - B. Cultural Compass Update 5:10 – 5:40
 - C. Bellwether Update 5:40 – 6:10
 5. **COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS** 6:10 – 6:15
 6. **REPORTS** 6:15 – 6:20
 - A. Commissioners' Committee and Lead Reports
 - B. Project Updates from Staff
 7. **CORRESPONDENCE, INFORMATION** 6:20– 6:25
 - A. Written correspondence (if any)
 - B. Information
 - i. Committees
 8. **ADJOURNMENT** 6:25pm
Chair Manfredi will adjourn the meeting.

Bellevue Arts Commission meetings are wheelchair accessible. Captioning, American Sign Language (ASL), or language interpreters are available upon request. Please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-6168 (VOICE) for ADA accommodations. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, dial 711 (TR). Assisted listening devices are available upon request. Please contact the Arts Program at least two days in advance jheim@bellevuewa.gov ▪ 425-452-4105 (Voice) ▪ Please dial 711 for assistance for the hearing impaired.

ARTS COMMISSION MEMBERS

Paul Manfredi, Chair
Philip Malkin, Vice Chair
Lydia Aldredge
Ashmita Gulati
Maria Lau Hui
Rebecca Lewis
Carl Wolfteich

COUNCIL LIAISON

John Stokes

STAFF CONTACTS

Scott MacDonald, Arts Program Coordinator, 425-452-4852

Department of Planning and
Community Development

Minutes

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

July 9, 2019
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E -109

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Manfredi, Commissioners Aldredge, Gulati, Lau Hui, Lewis, Malkin, Wolfteich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Joshua Heim, Scott MacDonald, Manette Stamm, Department of Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: Ben Beres, SuttonBerresCuller; Tanja Baumann, Consultant

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m. by Chairperson Manfredi who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Lau Hui, who arrived at 4:35 p.m., and Commissioner Wolfteich, who arrived at 4:39 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Malkin. The motion was seconded was by Commissioner Gulati and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the June 14, 2019, minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Gulati. The motion was seconded was by Commissioner Malkin and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner Aldredge abstained from voting.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Welcome Lydia Aldredge to the Arts Commission

The Commissioners took a moment to introduce themselves.

Commissioner Aldredge said she was honored to serve as a member of the Arts Commission. She said she moved to Bellevue nine years ago from Seattle where she was involved as a member of the Landmarks Board, the Allied Arts Foundation, and the King County Boundary Review Board. She said she is both an architect and an artist specializing in large-scale environmental art. She said she currently works out of the Eastside Artist Collaborative, an interesting space that houses a number of artists.

B. Bellwether Update

Arts Program Manager Joshua Heim welcomed marketing consultant Tanja Baumann and creative director Ben Beres.

Mr. Beres said there had not been many changes on the curatorial side of things since the last update before the Commission. He said the schedule is worked out and the artists are set. The opening night will again be at the Bellevue Arts Museum. The Degenerate Art Ensemble will put on a wild, gaudy costumed and lighted performance. 2D and 3D digital works will be installed at City Hall and the Bellevue Arts Museum, and there will a gigantic mural on the side of the Doxa church. Meydenbauer Center has come on as a new stakeholder and will host full musical events the evenings of both Saturdays. An event called Today's Special will be held in the community education gallery at the Bellevue Arts Museum. It will be actively programmed daily with performance café workshops.

Arts Program Coordinator Scott MacDonald said there will be three conversations with John Boylen. The first will be about art and culture and will coincide with some other things happening at the Bellevue Arts Museum café. The conversation will mostly be with Bellevue-based arts professionals. The second talk will be on Bellevue and a sense of place and will likely occur at City Hall and will focus on the confluence of environment, architecture, art and community. The third talk will be on creativity as a business. It will be a lunchtime conversation in the downtown area.

Mr. Beres said the While Supplies Last event at the Bellevue Arts Museum will be essentially serve as an introduction to collecting. The Cornish grad Anthony White brings to the event a hodge podge of works that are for sale. The event will bring out a young and fun contingent. Mr. White seeks to get five artworks from a hundred artists with nothing selling for more than \$30.

Mr. MacDonald said the week of September 13 to 22 is National Welcoming Week, which is organized by a nation organization that wants to aid communities in thinking about how to welcome new populations of people. It is geared toward immigrant populations and welcoming them to communities. The ongoing cultural conversations in Bellevue started out as a women's group comprised mostly of immigrant and refugee persons wanting to talk about how to connect with the community, to share their concerns, and to seek solutions and to find a sense of belonging. It has since grown into larger storytelling events attended by between 80 and 100 people. The events continue to be specific to women, but there is one cultural conversation that is open to both women and men.

Mr. MacDonald said Ellen Ido, who will be curating Today's Special at the Bellevue Arts Museum, has been talking to a number of the women about pulling together a cultural conversations cookbook. Her intent is to have a caterer recreate some of the recipes at the café, bringing to light the spirit of the women. There possibly will also be a storytelling event open to all around the theme of taking root.

Ms. Baumann said her team was currently working on taking all of the confirmed information and rolling it out on the website. The website talks about the theme, the curators, and the schedule of events. The site will continue to be filled out as more gets confirmed.

Commissioner Lau Hui observed that the lineup and programming for Bellwether had shifted more toward community based activities. She asked how many of the participating

artists are from the Eastside/Bellevue area. Mr. MacDonald said there was only one confirmed Bellevue artist. Ms. Stamm clarified that she only knew the addresses of the artists, not where they do their work. She said there could be more who actually work on the Eastside or in Bellevue. She said she was particularly excited by the fact that the show would be far more diverse than it has been in the past.

Mr. Beres said the curators were tasked with seeking out Eastside/Bellevue artists. What they have reported back is that such artists are hard to find, particularly artists whose works are community based.

Commissioner Gulati asked how the events that will occur during the day will be advertised to those who live and work in the downtown. Ms. Baumann said a suite of marketing materials are being produced, including signs to be posted along the Grand Connection. In conjunction with the Bellevue Downtown Association, postcards will be distributed to a lot of the office buildings in the downtown. Social media and the website will be utilized to spread the word as well. The paid advertising budget will be used to place advertisements in various publications. Last time there was a promotional video that did okay, but the plan calls for capturing some of the installation processes that occur in the weeks leading up to the event. The focus will be on telling artist stories.

Commissioner Gulati asked if the office buildings in the downtown allow for posting promotional materials in lobbies and elevators. Ms. Baumann said they do but they charge a fee that makes taking that approach wildly expensive.

Mr. MacDonald said the mural will be put on the Doxa church wall in the latter part of August. A banner advertising Bellwether will be located on the lift for people to see as the location work is under way.

Commissioner Lau Hui asked how the number of attendees at events is calculated. Mr. MacDonald said the opening night event is by RSVP, making it easy to get a clear number. Attendees at the Meydenbauer Center events will be issued bracelets which will also make getting an accurate number easy. For things like the conversations and the café, a manual count will be taken. For the 2D digital, including the Doxa wall mural, it will not be possible to get an accurate count.

Commissioner Lau Hui said she would be interested in seeing where the attendees come from. Ms. Baumann said an online survey is conducted after the event. The response rate is fair and the results must be taken with a grain of salt. She added that a direct mail campaign was conducted last year that involved sending a postcard to all downtown households and suggested it would be worthwhile repeating that. If an incentive were added to the postcards, they could yield a better idea of how effective the postcards are.

Commissioner Malkin said he was disappointed to see once again light participation on the part of Eastside artists. He suggested developing a registry of Eastside artists. Mr. MacDonald said there is a not-for-public list of Eastside artists covering the full range of genres. Even so, the list is not very large.

Commissioner Aldredge asked if a call was sent to the artists on the list. Mr. MacDonald allowed that that had not been done. Commissioner Aldredge suggested advertising the event through 4Culture, which is free. Mr. MacDonald said both 4Culture and Call for Entry have been used in the past. He said he places a notice of all public art projects with 4Culture but Eastside artists have not been responding.

Commissioner Gulati said the state issues Universal Business Identifier numbers to all businesses, including artists. If the state shares the information, it should be easy to find local artists from the associated zip code. Mr. MacDonald said the cultural resources mapping exercise undertaken with a consultant garnered a lot of that information. He pointed out that the information is quickly outdated, however. Additionally, some artists have their businesses registered at their home address but work in some other community.

There was agreement to continue working toward the development of a more comprehensive list of Eastside artists.

C. Cultural Compass Update

Mr. Heim reported that in May the City Council approved the scope of work to update the Cultural Compass which was initially adopted in 2004. The plan includes a strategic vision that includes four core initiatives around cultural participation, distinctive cultural districts, cultural visibility, and leadership. Overall, the vision is all about Bellevue becoming the cultural hub of the Eastside. The Cultural Compass has not been updated since its original adoption, and the direction adopted by the Council is for the Commission to update the vision and the four core initiatives.

The Bel-Red arts district came about as a result of the Cultural Compass, as did the Grand Connection and the cultural corridor in the downtown.

Mr. Heim said the first step in updating the Cultural Compass will be to create a cultural needs assessment, a process that has been launched. The consultant will conduct two surveys, beginning with a residents survey that will ask questions about the kinds of cultural activities people enjoy and regularly participate in. The second survey will focus on the needs of the cultural community, namely the artists, the non-profits and other stakeholders. Both surveys will be conducted online. The first focus group will be conducted soon with the PowerUp cohort. The focus groups will spotlight artists, creative businesses, non-profits, the regional cultural community and underrepresented users. Part of what will be tracked from the surveys will be demographic information that will allow for aggregation through the lens of race, the aim of which will be to identify underserved and underrepresented groups. Three of the focus groups will zero in on the regional cultural community: one to learn if there are common issues affecting the region which Bellevue can either participate in or provide leadership in addressing; one focused on Eastside arts organizations that serve major Bellevue populations; and one focused on funders such as 4Culture, ArtsFund, Microsoft and the state. For the non-profit focus groups, there will also be three different sessions. The creative businesses focus group will be conducted in partnership with the Bellevue Downtown Association for downtown businesses; with the Eastside Arts Collaborative for Bel-Red businesses; and with One Redmond or DigiPen around gaming companies. There will also be 20 one-on-one interviews conducted with city leaders, representatives of cultural institutions, and emerging organizations serving specific ethnic populations.

Mr. Heim briefly reviewed the project timeline. He reiterated that the survey work would commence in July and noted that the Commission would be briefed on the assessment and discuss the priorities in September. With regard to priorities, he stated that the Council had four specific priorities in mind: create community and neighborhood festivals and events; support cultural enhancements/performing arts center; define the City's role in promoting and sponsoring the cultural arts; and define what actions would be necessary for Bellevue to become the cultural center of the Eastside. In discussing the priorities, the Commission will determine if they speak to current needs and identify what

needs to change where the priorities do not speak to the current needs. From there the Commission will deliver to the Council in the fall recommendations around priorities. The Council will then confirm the priorities and the Commission will then use them to update the vision and the core initiatives.

Commissioner Gulati suggested that the changed demographics in Bellevue since 2004 should be considered a high priority.

Chair Manfredi asked how the Cultural Compass document compares with what cities of relatively the same size have in hand. He also pointed out that the document adopted in 2004 set forth some very specific goals which were largely not met, a fact which could be used to state that the creation of such large works does not necessarily lead to a fulfilling of the vision. Mr. Heim said at the time the Cultural Compass was first adopted, Bellevue was the only city in the region that had such a document. Since then, Tacoma has adopted one. Seattle does not have one. Issaquah started one but has not finished it, and Redmond has a standing section in its comprehensive plan that addresses the arts. One accomplishment that can be tied to the Cultural Compass in Bellevue was the commitment to increase the annual funding for public art. Investments made in the arts, particularly in arts education facilities, are due in large part to the document. The document also heavily influences the city's policy decisions regarding public art.

Commissioner Malkin noted that building the Tateuchi Center would satisfy the Cultural Compass priority of supporting cultural enhancements and a performing arts center. He pointed out that funding was the issue and asked how the gap could be closed. While the city has earmarked dollars, they are contingent on raising the balance of funds needed. Mr. Heim said the design of the space is currently being reconsidered. They are also exploring the role that technology might play. Commissioner Malkin observed that the project is largely where it has been for the last ten years and suggested one big reason for that could be that the city does not have a critical role in driving the funding. Mr. Heim reiterated that the scope of the work before the Commission is to update the vision and the core initiatives. All of the other parts of the Cultural Compass will not be updated until a later time. The recommendation of the Commission could include an outline for sequencing the work to update the other elements.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS – None
6. REPORTS
 - A. Commissioners' Committee and Lead Reports – None
 - B. Project Updates from Staff

With regard to ArtsSpace, Mr. MacDonald said there was not much to report. He said as yet there is no project planned for the second phase of the feasibility study. The next phase budget is \$35,000, which is in addition to the \$20,000 spent so far, but there are no funds currently allocated for that second phase. The reduced number of planning staff is also making it necessary to prioritize projects. Staff are looking at exploring more around cultural facilities and affordability. The cultural needs assessment work will help to gain a better understanding of what the community wants in terms of facilities.

Commissioner Lau Hui suggested that if work on ArtsSpace is allowed to simply stop, all momentum and relevancy will be lost. Mr. MacDonald agreed and allowed that there is some expediency around some of the properties that are potentially being used for different things. It would be helpful to have clear direction from the Commission and the

Council to pursue something. It will take having a strong foundation before going in to the Council seeking the dedication of very expensive land on which to develop affordable housing specifically for artists. There are several possible sites, including in the Bel-Red arts district.

Chair Manfredi asked where the Commission is in the conversation. Mr. MacDonald said currently the only way the Commission is being interjected into the conversation is through the staff. That is because there is no policy backing the Commission to say something like using the Sound Transit site in Bel-Red is a clear goal of the City Council and the Arts Commission. It is not currently known what the focus of the Bel-Red arts district is to be, education and private practice, or studio space and a creative hive housing artists.

Mr. Heim said there are two issues in play: how to get an ArtsSpace development; and how to get space for artists and non-profits who need it.

Commissioner Aldredge pointed out that artists and the like in Seattle have the luxury of occupying older buildings where the rents are lower. The building of new buildings in Bellevue will trigger much higher rents. Serious consideration should be given to already existing structures in Bellevue that could be modified or expanded, which would be far more affordable. Mr. Heim said the ArtsSpace concept only works where land can be donated or where the project can be attached to a market-rate project. Bellevue has neither to offer currently. An ArtsSpace project in Bel-Red is off the table until something changes, or until the city specifically says it wants to see artist affordable housing in that location.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, INFORMATION

- A. Written Correspondence – As Noted
- B. Information
 - i. Committees – As Noted

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Manfredi adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Department of Planning and
Community Development

Action & Discussion

Action and Discussion

Tuesday, September 10, 2019
Meeting: 4:30 pm

Bellevue Arts Commission
Action and Discussion

Downtown Park NE Entrance Public Art Concept

At this meeting, the artist Marc Fornes will present a final proposal for public art at the Downtown Park NE Entrance. The Arts Commission will be asked for feedback and to approve the proposal.

BACKGROUND

The public art opportunity is for an artist to join the Bellevue Downtown Park design team to integrate a signature public art feature into a new park entrance. The overall project budget is \$900,000, including \$90,000 for design. An open request for qualifications (RFQ) was issued on October 11, 2017 and applications were due on November 3, 2017; 98 applications were submitted and reviewed. The firm, Theverymany, led by the artist Marc Fornes was selected as the artist to receive the commission.

INTEGRATED ART DESIGN

The Downtown Park's North East (NE) corner entrance is an important physical and aesthetic connection to Bellevue's Downtown area, while providing access to the Downtown pedestrian corridor and functioning as a focal point for the City's Grand Connection from Meydenbauer Bay Park to the Wilburton Special Opportunity District. The corner will be developed as a portal -to and from the Downtown Park and serve as an urban plaza for informal gatherings and respite for Downtown residents, workers, and visitors. The NE corner will encompass this plaza, from which one can enter either the area of the canal/promenade to the west, the formal garden to the south, and provide access to Bellevue Way. In addition, the NE corner will incorporate a water feature different from others in the park and provide opportunities for integration of public art.

Action and Discussion

Tuesday, September 10, 2019
Meeting: 4:30 pm

Bellevue Arts Commission
Action and Discussion

Cultural Compass Update

At this meeting, representatives from the project consultant will present topline results of the online resident's survey that was conducted between July 8th and September 3, 2019. The Arts Commission will be given the opportunity to provide feedback.

Action and Discussion

Tuesday, September 10, 2019
Meeting: 4:30 pm

Bellevue Arts Commission
Action and Discussion

Bellwether 2019 Update

At this meeting, staff will present an update on the full program of Bellwether 2019.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, Bellevue's long running sculpture exhibition was reimagined into a ten-day event full of art and experiences. This change stems from the visioning work done for the Grand Connection with the goal of it being a cultural corridor. Bellwether 2019 takes place September 13-22nd with artwork and experiences at Bellevue City Hall, Bellevue Arts Museum, along the Grand Connection near Compass Plaza and at Meydenbauer Center Theater.

From the Grand Connection Vision:

Arts and Culture Strategy 9 - Implement a program that supports a wide range of art projects, which in turn fosters community interaction.

Create a curatable, flexible program that continues to draw visitors to a continually evolving and changing art scene. **Encourage experimentation, innovation, and risk with an emphasis on diversity, technology, and community building.** Beginning in 2018, Bellwether should be re-imagined as an annual 10-day curated exhibition and festival. This is a unique opportunity for experimentation and early implementation of the programming vision for the arts and cultural component of the Grand Connection.

PROJECT PROCESS

STEP 1: Arts Commission approves Creative Director

STEP 2: Creative Director develops theme and curatorial team

STEP 3: Arts Commission approves theme and curatorial team

STEP 4: Curators develop artist rosters after contemplating theme and art opportunities – Arts Commission is updated

STEP 5: Artists develop artwork proposals based off the theme

STEP 6: Proposals are refined until staff has all information needed for planning marketing, installation, and events. This includes a legal review.

STEP 7: Artwork is fabricated by the artists and installed

2019 THEME

The theme is a framework for curators to develop their artist roster, and for artists to develop their artwork proposals. This year's theme, Taking Root, gave artists a series of questions they might explore with their artwork. Artwork that came out of this process is the artist's and does not represent the views of the city.

Taking Root: In an era of ever-shifting political borders, identities, and opportunities for personal reinvention, finding a way to put down roots amounts to no small commitment.

Bellevue is a place where new diverse communities have chosen to take root. What does it mean to put down roots, blend and merge cultures, and immerse and engage in aspects of community? What are the seeds that we carry with us when we work to create a new home?

Taking Root prompts a series of investigations into notions of identity, resiliency, change, sustainability, cultural exchange, and intentionality.

2019 PROGRAM

This year's Bellwether will feature 2D and 3D artwork, conceptual performances, workshops, guided VR sessions, projected works, and two nights of music. In all the program will feature over 50 artists and musicians and host 18 distinct events across multiple sites.



A full program of events will be provided at this meeting.

ARTWORK

While this year's program includes many new events, Bellwether continues to be held together by the presentation of 2D and 3D artworks. City Hall will feature approximately 20 artworks from 11 different artists. Bellevue Arts Museum will feature art from 21 artists, some presenting multiple works. Compass Plaza, will feature an approximately 6,000 square foot mural on Doxa Church, with two additional artists developing work for six large ad boxes on the side of the Bellevue Connection building along the Grand Connection.

Within the artwork, a series of subthemes identified by staff have emerged. These include immigration, Japanese American Incarceration, change, and the confluence of food, culture and art. At this meeting staff will share some example artworks of each of these subthemes.

TWO PROJECTS TO HIGHLIGHT

Today's Specials, curated by Ellen Ito, at the Bellevue Arts Museum

Schedule: Friday, Sept. 13–Sunday, Sept. 15, Wednesday, Sept. 18–Sunday, Sept. 22 from 11:00-5:00 PM

Today's Special plays with the history of the former café space it occupies within the museum, riffing on the restaurant tradition and serving up an art infused twist on a café “daily special.” The over 17 works on view are complemented with daily food sharing, artist performances, community conversations and hands-on engagement elements explore identity, roots and cultural heritage, making and craft, navigating the intersections where foodways connect us all.

Untitled Mural [title forthcoming], by Kenji Stoll, at Doxa Church

Site: south-facing wall of the Doxa Church building fronting the Grand Connection



Inspired by the history of Japanese American strawberry fields in what is now downtown Bellevue, Kenji Stoll's mural features a field of earthy tones overgrown with abstract patterns of delicate white blossoms and green leaves intertwined with barbed wire. A response to the incarceration of Bellevue's Japanese American community during the Second World War, the layering of these divergent patterns honors new growth, while acknowledging the past upon which the present is built.

Kenji Hamai Stoll is a multidisciplinary visual artist based in Tacoma. Initially drawn to art as a teenager through graffiti, he now works with communities to reimagine public space, and co-directs the youth organization Fab-5. He is currently working on community based public art projects for Tacoma Housing Authority, Metro Parks Tacoma, and Sound Transit's Tacoma Link Extension.

Department of Planning and
Community Development

Reports

PROJECT UPDATES

GRANT PROGRAMS

2020 Funding Cycle and Allocations Committee

No updates to report.

CIP Cultural Arts Fund

No updates to report.

Power Up Bellevue

No updates to report.

PLANNING PROJECTS

BelRed Arts District

No updates to report.

BelRed Streetscape Plan Update

No updates to report.

Cultural Compass

Update, September 10, 2019: An update will be provided at this meeting.

PUBLIC ART

130th Streetscape Public Art

No updates to report.

Bellwether 2019

Update, September 10, 2019: An update will be provided at this meeting.

Downtown Park Public Art

Update, September 10, 2019: An update will be provided at this meeting.

East Link Public Art

No updates to report.

Grand Connection

No updates to report.

Lattawood Park

Update, September 10, 2019: The artist is nearing final design. The current schedule is to bring the final design for approval to the Arts Commission at the October meeting.

Public Art Collection & Maintenance

No updates to report.