

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

December 1, 2015
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E -109

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Manfredi, Commissioners, Jackson, Lewis, Madan, Malkin, Wolfteich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Lau Hui

STAFF PRESENT: Scott MacDonald, Department of Planning and Community Development; Robin Cole, Department of Parks and Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT: Samara Hoolahan, Bellevue College; Barbara Luecke, Kurt Kiefer, STart; Debra Westwood, Patricia Wheeler

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Chairperson Manfredi who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Wolfteich, who arrived at 4:37 p.m., and Commissioner Lau Hui, who was excused.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Jackson. Second was by Commissioner Malkin and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Malkin called attention to the fifth paragraph on page 4 and indicated he had not made the comment attributed to him in the first sentence. He proposed simply deleting the sentence.

Motion to approve the November, 2015, minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Jackson. Second was by Commissioner Lewis and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Samara Hoolahan, a student at Bellevue College, said she serves as liaison to the city of Bellevue for the Office of Student Legislative Affairs. She said the students are pleased to be a part of Bellevue and the arts and culture scene. She announced that the student government has voted to fund a multicultural art walk on the Bellevue College campus in May 2016. A variety of mediums created by students will be featured. A number of cultural events occur throughout the year, including musical and theatrical performances. The art walk is intended to promote the arts on the campus and to engage the community, and to

provide sustainable art pieces on the campus for years to come. She said she hopes the art walk will be promoted alongside other arts and culture events in the city.

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. STart and Wilburton Station Artist Phillip K. Smith III

Kurt Kiefer, STart, introduced Phillip Smith, the artist chosen by the panel to develop a project for the Wilburton station.

Mr. Smith shared photos of some of his prior projects and noted that the common thread is the use of mirrored surfaces activated by colored light and sunlight. He described the proposal he is making for the Wilburton site as a 40 foot tall mirrored surface structure utilizing precise color programming merging colors together.

Commissioner Jackson asked how the program is managed, by time or by ambient light. Mr. Smith said the lights can be turned on and off based on both those elements. For instance, on a very dark day the piece could come on, but it can also be controlled by a very precise schedule that is aware of sunrise and sunset times throughout the year. He said there have been discussions about the appropriate times for the work to be lit and when the lights should not be on. Commissioner Jackson commented that the light in southern California is different from the light in the Northwest. Mr. Smith said he initially held two concepts, one about mirrored and colored light, and one about light and shadow and how they interact with the sun. He said he has utilized the latter in his California works. The fact is, in the Northwest for most of the year the shadows are very diminished, so it makes more sense to bring to the gray a boldness of color and beautiful light.

Commissioner Malkin asked if the top of the work will be visible from the train. Mr. Smith said the structure will be dialed in to be no higher than level with the train. There is nothing to see on top and as such should not be visible.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Lewis about future housing possibilities, Mr. MacDonald said the intent is to eventually have some transit-oriented development around the site. As yet there are no details as to how much and where it will be located. Commissioner Lewis said her concern would be on overpowering housing units with light. Barbara Leucke with STart said the work will have more of a glow than a glare and as such will not add to light pollution. Mr. Smith added that while there will be times when most of the colors are on, there will also be times when only 30 percent or so of the lights will be on; even then, some will be at full brightness as others are emerging and receding.

Commissioner Wolfteich asked how high the work will be off the ground. Mr. Smith said it currently is at eight feet, but ten feet has been discussed. The idea is to make sure it is out of reach. There have been meetings with the landscape architect to talk about the area around the base of the piece. The pallet of grasses that will be used will soften the edge where the piece meets the ground; the piece will not appear to be just coming up out of concrete.

Commissioner Wolfteich asked what those walking under the piece will see. Mr. Smith explained that it will have a flat steel edge with a silvery finish. The mirrored surface above will dominate the viewers' experience, and the topside and underside will simply need to be kept clean.

Commissioner Madan asked about maintenance of the electronics. Mr. Smith answered that the light is created by 16 LED panels. The panels are made up of fixtures that can be

unscrewed, pulled out and easily replaced. The component that tells the lights when to turn on and off can also be easily slipped out and replaced. Very little maintenance is required. The program is not accessible remotely via wifi, only by the controller in the electrical room that could be updated or adjusted as necessary.

Commissioner Malkin asked if the station colors have been decided. Ms. Luecke said there will be red accents above the ticket vending machines and the entrances. The balance will be a pallet of silver and concrete. Mr. Smith added that the red is quite beautiful and bold, and by locating the piece away from the station structure the station can be the station and the artwork can be the artwork.

Mr. MacDonald asked if consideration has been given to modeling interaction with the street traffic. Mr. Kiefer said that modeling work is under way and the results will be passed along once they are in hand. Mr. Smith said it is all about the angle of the sun. If the angle is above, the light will not hit anyone on the train or on the street.

Commissioner Wolfteich said he likes the vibrancy of the piece. The boldness of the color and the reflective material will stand out, especially during gray days.

Commissioner Madan asked Mr. Smith if the Bellevue project would be his first permanent installation. Mr. Smith answered that he has done as many as 15 permanent pieces across the country. He said he would be installing a permanent mirrored work in West Hollywood in 2019 ahead of the projected installation date of the Wilburton station project. The Wilburton project is the largest.

Chair Manfredi said the panel, of which he was a part, was very excited about the work.

Chair Manfredi voiced his support for the piece. Commissioner Malkin agreed and suggested that it will serve as a marker representing Bellevue. Commissioner Jackson said at the very least the work will put Wilburton on the map.

Answering a question asked by Chair Manfredi about the landscaping, Mr. Kiefer said it makes sense to have the piece rise from a planting bed. For one it is a simple place to put a footing, but it also will keep people from walking casually up to the base of it. However, design of the plaza is not finalized.

Commissioner Lewis said she liked the fact that the piece will be seen and enjoyed by everyone, not just those riding the train. She asked if the work has a name and Mr. Kiefer replied that it didn't at that time.

The Commission positively endorsed the work.

Because the public hearing was not scheduled until 5:30 p.m., a motion to amend the agenda to move forward Agenda item 6 was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis and the motion carried unanimously.

6. REPORTS

Mr. MacDonald reported that the application period for Bellwether 2016 closed on November 8. Over 400 artworks were submitted, which is about a hundred more than are normally submitted. In years past the exhibition included indoor and outdoor artwork. A few exhibitions ago the Commission chose to include site-specific installations along the pedestrian corridor, which proved to add the interesting element of connecting City Hall to

Downtown Park along the art walk and offered a bigger experience for the public. The 2014 exhibition included direct select artworks, which were artists offered up by the jury; that proved to be very successful. For the 2016 exhibition, there will be three direct select pieces along with the regular indoor and outdoor works. The installation category has been expanded to include temporary site-specific work that comes with a materials budget as a way of accounting for the uncertainty surrounding what areas will be available in Downtown Park. The average per-piece materials budget has been set at \$1500.

Commissioner Malkin asked if the increased number of submissions can be tied to promoting the event through Café. Mr. MacDonald said there was a clear link.

Mr. MacDonald said the jury will meet to review the submissions on December 9. The jurors will include Mark Anderson from The Foundry in Walla Walla, and Beth Sellars from Suyama Space in Seattle. Stefano Catalani from the Bellevue Arts Museum has been asked to fill in for a juror that had to decline due to scheduling. A technical review is slated for December 11 with city risk managers and parks maintenance personnel, as well as Art Site consultants to comment on the feasibility of each work.

Mr. MacDonald said there will also be issues with the Pedestrian Corridor with several projects will be under construction, potentially including City Hall plaza. Siting the various works will require some creativity.

With regard to the Lattawood Park project, Mr. MacDonald said he met recently with the Horizon Heights/Collingwood community. He said he presented the idea of the project and the general schedule. The community members asked very good questions. There was no negative feedback and no concerns voiced. There were many who indicated they would like to be involved. There are four neighborhoods associated with the park, and the plan is to have a cross-neighborhood meeting in the coming months.

Mr. MacDonald said legal discussions are under way with Puget Sound Energy and the wireless affiliates concerning the Lake Hills public art project. The focus is on having an agreement in hand that will preclude one of the parties pulling out once the fabrication process has begun. The agreement will also detail the responsibilities of the various parties.

Commissioner Lewis asked if the community is being kept in the loop. Mr. MacDonald said he has been told that the legal discussions will wrap up by the end of the year. Until then, things are on hold. Commissioner Lewis said the community should be given that information.

Mr. MacDonald informed the Commission that the process to hire a replacement for Ms. Byrne is continuing. A second round of interviews has been scheduled.

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS (Continued)

B. Meydenbauer Bay Public Hearing

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Lewis. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wolfeich and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Madan, Commission lead and chair for the Meydenbauer Bay Park Phase 1 project panel, reminded the Commissioners that the project involves three site-specific commissions: 1) the ravine; 2) the beach house; and 3) the promenade and pier. The panel selected artists Adam Mclsaac to address the ravine; Stuart Nakamura to address the

promenade and pier; and Laura Brodax to address the beach house. Each artist was given a budget and asked to come up with a design; they were also asked to describe what they would do if they had a larger budget. He explained that the total budget for the enhanced proposals was \$268,000 rather than the \$343,535 that was shown in the packet.

Commissioner Madan explained that in the ravine there are two viewpoints, both of which were identified as prime opportunities for art. The artist selected by the panel, Adam Mclsaac, has a background in nature art and his proposal is for guardrail panels that incorporate a combination of flora and fauna as well as Chinook salmon and references to the whaling industry. As envisioned, the panels would encapsulate both viewpoints. Mr. Mclsaac also identified a location near the stream to be daylighted as appropriate for a sculpture, and he proposed a bronze salmon piece about 30 inches tall anticipating the return of the salmon and serving as a greeting to guests entering the west end of the park through the ravine.

Chair Manfredi asked how tall the railings will be and he was told by Commissioner Madan that they will be approximately three feet tall and span 27 linear feet. He added that the landscaping in the area will be allowed to go back to a natural state.

Ms. Cole explained that there will be a sediment pond at the top of the ravine. As water travels down through the channel it will be cleaned. That will create an opportunity in the lower portion of the channel for juvenile fish to seek refuge. Fish will not be able to swim up the channel.

Commissioner Madan noted that the beach house is recessed into the landscape. There is a concrete wall on both sides of the structure, and Laura Brodax was asked to develop a design for the wall. Her research into the history of the area led to a number of photographs, including photos of the Meydenbauer family wading in the water. Her proposal is for two three-foot-tall murals spanning 75 linear feet and set into the wall behind the beach house. The historical tile mural represents a narrative homage to the rich historical past of the bay in a scroll format and sets a mood that is both peaceful and timeless. There will also be a water fountain feature where all the water collected from above the beach house will flow before going into the bay.

Commissioner Madan said Ms. Brodax has extensive experience in working with ceramic tiles and was able to share with the panel that they have great longevity and are easy to maintain. He explained that the historical images will be hand-drawn. The primary color will be a sepia tone, and the secondary color will be a pale blue.

Mr. MacDonald clarified that regular maintenance, including cleaning, will be performed by parks staff. Major maintenance, if required, will be covered by the Arts Program budget.

Commissioner Madan said the third project, which is the largest of the three, was originally identified for either the promenade or the terminus of the pier. The artist Stuart Nakamura came up with the idea of incorporating the Salish tribe and whaling history of the bay. His design proposal is for four standing oar and paddle structures bookending the promenade and supported by concrete footings with decorative water designs and text.

Mr. Nakamura's proposal for the terminus of the pier included two possibilities, a four-foot sundial on the center point of the end cap, and herons and eagles represented as being in flight on the tops of the four support structures. It is possible that the Coast Guard will require the placement of navigational lights on the pier. The panel concluded that if navigational lights are required and their placement will disrupt the symmetry of the four birds, the birds should not be included.

Mr. MacDonald said staff are checking into whether or not there is flexibility with regard to where the lights would need to be placed. Ms. Cole added that plan sheets have been forwarded to the Coast Guard and when a response is received it will be passed on to the Commission. She added that the Coast Guard has a fairly systematic approach to the use of navigation lights that are required to protect boaters.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Lewis, Ms. Coles noted that about six boat slips will be eliminated as part of the park project.

Commissioner Jackson asked what the general tenor has been of the people who have seen the proposed artworks. Debra Westwood, a member of the panel and a Meydenbauer Bay resident, said the display was up for several days and garnered a lot of attention. Many grew nostalgic in looking at the historical photos. The kids liked the salmon. Several had a difficult time wrapping their minds around the models of the railings, but the response was generally very positive and engaging. The variety and the mediums to be used were well accepted.

Chair Manfredi opened the floor to comments from the public.

Patricia Wheeler, a resident of Meydenbauer Bay, noted that the Meydenbauer Bay Neighborhood Association is very pleased with the art selection. The concepts fit very well with the environment, the purpose of the bay, and the historic themes. The artists have been delightful to work with, as has the panel members, and the public is very appreciative that they have been able to have a say.

Ms. Cole explained that the whaling building was constructed in 1928 by William Loggen who at one time was mayor of Bellevue. Mr. Loggen's grandfather started the American Pacific Whaling Company. The whaling was done in Alaskan waters and the boats would winter in Meydenbauer Bay. The whaling building is on Pier 1 and to the west is a little house that served as an ice house. The marina caretaker currently lives in that house. The buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places and are sentimental to people who have lived in Bellevue for a long time.

Ms. Westwood said she has lived in Bellevue for 25 years and served as a member of the panel. She noted that in addition to being a resident of the Meydenbauer Bay area, she is a kayaker and is anxious to see the artworks from the perspective of the water. The tile mural by the beach house will be visible from the water, as will the railings at the viewpoints. The oars and paddles along the promenade will invite engagement. The bass salmon sculpture located at the top of the hill will likely become something visitors will rub with their hands until its nose shines. The designs are such that they call out for people to interact with them; they offer an excellent blend of visions that flow into each other.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Malkin agreed with the recommendation of the panel to not include the birds on the pier if the Coast Guard requires navigation lights and their placement will interfere with the symmetry of the pieces. Mr. MacDonald pointed out that the Commission could vote to move ahead with the enhanced design assuming that all four of the pillars will be installed.

A motion to endorse the panel's recommendation that the City commission Adam Mclsaac to implement the design proposals, "Meydenbauer Bay Ravine Viewpoint Guardrails" and "Salmon Yaka Chaku" as presented to the Arts Commission was made by Commissioner

Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to endorse the panel’s recommendation that the City commission Stuart Nakamura to implement the design proposal “Floating Worlds” as presented to the Arts Commission was made by Commissioner Malkin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to endorse the panel’s recommendation that the City commission Laura Brodax to implement the design proposal “Meydenbauer Bay Tile Mural: Revisiting the Past” as presented to the Arts Commission was made by Commissioner Lewis. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wolfeich and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS

A motion to schedule the next meeting of the Commission on January 19 was made by Commissioner Malkin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the amended minutes of the October, 2015, meeting was made by Commissioner Lewis. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jackson and the motion carried unanimously.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, INFORMATION

- A. Written Correspondence – As Noted
- B. Information
 - i. Future Agenda Items – As Noted
 - ii. Committees – As Noted

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Manfredi adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.