

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

January 12, 2017
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E -118

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Madan

STAFF PRESENT: Joshua Heim, Patrick Foran, Department of Planning and Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: John Sutton, Ben Beres, Zac Culler, SuttonBeresCuller

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. by Chairperson Manfredi who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Wolfteich, who arrived at 4:42 p.m.; Commissioner Lau Hui, who arrived at 4:49 p.m.; and Commissioner Madan.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

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

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the December 6, 2016, minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Lewis. Second was by Commissioner Malkin and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Shelley Brittingham, assistant director of the Department of Parks and Community Services, spoke representing Eva Stone, recipient of Arts Commission funding who produces a festival called Chop Shop at Meydenbauer Center. She noted that Ms. Stone also works with Parks and other organizations to create free dance experiences for youth and families. The Commission was reminded about the upcoming performance on February 18 and 19.

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Collective Impact Presentation

Department of Parks and Community Services director Patrick Foran said it was his understanding that the Commission was looking for mechanisms or models for increasing capacity within the community. He explained that collective impact is a model for education

organized by Eastside Pathways, a grassroots community non-profit organization for which he serves as a founding board member. The organization came together some five years ago around the notion of trying to close the achievement gap for persistent deficiency within the school population in Bellevue. It was recognized that at the achievement gap level there were some academic issues involved, but by and large the primary issues were external to the school. Eastside Pathways was formed around the collective impact model, which came out of the Stanford social network research organization. Eastside Pathways is operating as a backbone organization which in a collective impact model is a third party citizen group that helps all of the other organizations in charting a path to collective success. More than 40 individual partners are working in a variety of collaboratives within the Eastside Pathways framework, and all are focused on collective successes in moving kids through the education system. The Department of Parks and Community Services has incorporated the collective impact model into a large portion of the work it does, and works through collaboratives to achieve its mission within program areas.

A short video on the topic of collective impact was shown to the Commissioners.

Mr. Foran pointed out that the model is not specific to any social problem. The ideas of collective impact can be applied in any number of ways to fit specific goals and objectives. The model incorporates a system and a strategy for different players to work together toward common goals using common measurements in search of common outcomes. While that is easily said, it is not always easy to carry out. Even where there are overlapping missions and visions, every organization has different programmatic areas, competes for different funds, undertakes different ideological approaches, and utilizes different metrics. There is no need for the organizations to fully align, rather there is only a need to find common ground.

It has been found that people working within the collective impact framework have discovered additional capacities by forming relationships with others. In some cases programmatic links have been made, in other cases resources have been shared, and in still other cases organizations have been able to appeal to a broader audience.

With regard to increasing the capacity, organizations cannot expect to each get a bigger piece of the pie, rather the hope is that the pie will get bigger. In terms of the effectiveness of programs, one program may be focused on a set of prescriptions for a certain outcome but may be lacking other pieces needed to make the be more productive; by partnering with organizations that provide the missing pieces, there is no need to duplicate them. Organizations participating collectively gain access to more funding, greater resources, and a broader sweep of solutions. The work is ongoing rather than something that is started and then finished; the work involves systems changes and systems operations.

Mr. Foran said the wraparound services project began in Bellevue more than ten years ago. It came about as the city was involved in trying to find solutions in neighborhoods for educational and social service problems that were coming through the schools. At the time there were dozens of non-profit organizations, social service organizations and recreational organizations all focused on helping the schools achieve their goals, but the schools lacked the capacity for managing the services, and a strategic approach. The wraparound services model was created to interject the strategic planning piece and served as the backbone organization of the collective groups that shared similar responsibilities and objectives. The result was a method for having the various groups operate together, and the value of what each organization provided was increased without increasing any of their actual resources. The capacity of the schools was also increased by being able to focus on specific areas. At the end of the school year, the system allowed all involved to measure progress.

The collective impact model is designed to organize a collective of actors that have similar missions, visions and programmatic approaches to achieve certain outcomes in a planned, systematic and ongoing way. The city the approach to be very effective on a site-by-site basis, but wondered how it could be applied citywide. The formation of Eastside Pathways was the answer and the city climbed on board in support of the effort. When disparate organizations come together and experience working collaboratively, they find that their activities when structured in certain ways reinforce the activities of others.

Organizations like to find scholarship programs to enhance access to what they offer. The idea of broadening access to scholarship programs has been beneficial to a number of programs that work within the collective impact system. Some organizations were tapping into some resources while other organizations were tapping into different resources. By working together in identifying mutually reinforcing activities, organizations have been able to sell their donors and new donors on the concept of producing more collectively than is possible individually. The response has been favorable on the part of funders.

Mr. Foran said there are a number of ways the collective impact approach could be applied to the Commission's mission. Clearly the Commission works with multiple organizations that have specific programs and similar goals and visions. The collaborative system can tap them in a more collective way, and the result could be greater capacity in the community.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Malkin, Mr. Foran explained that Eastside Pathways serves solely as a facilitator. They do not prescribe actions or solutions, rather they facilitate the various groups in coming together in a planned and organized way. Eastside Pathways provides facilitators to work with groups in coming up with plans, objectives, measureables and outcomes. Arts Program Manager Joshua Heim added that Eastside Pathways takes from the organizations the burden of collecting data. Mr. Foran agreed. He noted that everyone always wants data and measurable outcomes. Individual organizations always struggle to collect data for a variety of reasons. One function Eastside Pathways plays is to receive and organize the data then report it based on the collective outcomes. The organization also has an education function in which it actively goes out and trains people to work within the collective impact model.

Mr. Foran said he did not know enough about the Commission's criteria to be specific about how the collective impact approach might relate. He said if the Commission has a set of goals and objectives for handing out funding to achieve those goals and objectives, it could encourage groups involved in delivering for the community to operate in a collective fashion, such as through sharing venues, instructors, and coordinating schedules.

Mr. Heim explained that he attended a staff presentation regarding the model and was able to chat with the wraparound services coordinator who is a city of Bellevue employee. He said she told him about all the art services she procures, and as it turned out they were all tied to special projects and Eastside Arts Partnership grantees. Arts organizations are already operating at the sites but for some reason they are not part of the collective impact.

Commissioner Jackson suggested that it is the collective impact model rather than Eastside Pathways as an organization that is most applicable to arts groups. Eastside Pathways does wonderful things for kids in the community, but it may not be the appropriate way to build capacity for arts organizations. The collective impact approach, however, could be useful in carrying out the responsibilities of the Commission.

Chair Manfredi suggested the Commission should focus on what could be accomplished collectively rather than on structuring a specific model. He said he was unclear how the large number of organizations operating as part of Eastside Pathways function, if there is a

collective meaning, and a hierarchy of understanding establishing the overlapping goals. Mr. Foran called attention to a handout which outlined the organizational structure. He explained that the various individual partner organizations self-assign themselves to work within the collaboratives that are most in line with their missions. Each works within the collaboratives to have their programs align in ways that will achieve the overall common goals.

Commissioner Malkin allowed that each organization has a different vision and different priorities and asked how all those differences are prioritized. Mr. Foran said organizations that move into the collective work examine their priorities and modify them as necessary on the behalf of the overall collective. Organizations certainly are challenged to think about their priorities in terms of a broader set of impacts. No organization is required to do that, but the systematic approach causes them to reassess their priorities, often to their benefit.

Mr. Heim pointed out that the Commission is in the middle of updating the Cultural Compass vision and the strategic initiatives, one of which concerns lifelong learning in the arts. Diversity is another strategic initiative. It is after looking at achievement outcomes by race in Bellevue that disparities appear. The main reason the city chose to become involved in Eastside Pathways was to serve families, communities and neighborhoods. Mr. Foran agreed and said the focus is on moving those goals along because as that has been done, academic achievement has improved.

Mr. Foran said the partner leadership committee serves as the policy group for Eastside Pathways. The focus of the collectives is determined by the executive directors of the organizations that are working at the program level. The people actually doing the work serve in leadership roles in terms of monitoring and overseeing the work of the collectives. Eastside Pathways has also made a strong commitment to focus on issues of equity. The data council is the group Eastside Pathways has staffed in. The data council works directly with all of the organizations to come up with a data model and reporting structure for their outcomes. The Eastside Pathways backbone is the board. All is driven by the actual organizations; Eastside Pathways simply facilitates the framework.

Commissioner Malkin said the model is very good and suggested it would take some work on behalf of the Commission to adapt it to arts groups. Mr. Foran agreed that the collective impact model implies having a third party that facilitates people working together.

B. Draft Vision for Art and Culture in the Grand Connection

Mr. Heim welcomed the SuttonBeresCuller team, consultants for the Grand Connection project. He said the team is engaged in developing a master plan to advance a vision, strategy and action plan for art and culture in the overall Grand Connection project. He noted that the project was in its second phase and is focused on community engagement and conducting a needs assessment, and was ready to step into the third phase, plan development, which will take the next couple of months. Ideally a final plan for the Commission to consider will be read in April.

Mr. Heim reminded the Commissioners that the stakeholder interview was conducted in October 2016 with the Commission. The team also conducted on-site inventories and surveys during the Bellwether exhibition. With the help of staff, the team has also been administering an online survey which to date have generated more than 200 responses. The team has been meeting with specific stakeholder groups, including property owners and organizations that operate on the Grand Connection route. The information gathered in the interviews has helped to shape the community's vision for the Grand Connection. It is clear there is a design to have the Grand Connection be an attractor that will become a destination. There is a clear willingness on the part of many to collaborate on the project.

The survey rolled out right before the new year. The respondents represent a good cross section of the community. Close to half are aged 55 and over. Two-thirds are Bellevue residents. About half of the respondents are involved in the arts and half are not.

The survey results show that people are not satisfied with arts and culture in Bellevue, except for those over the age of 65. The fact is, however, downtown Bellevue and the city as a whole is becoming much younger. Overall, the survey respondents want to see public art used to improve the civic experience. Advancing Bellevue's identity and brand abroad are secondary concerns. To the open-ended question about what art should do, the top answers given focused on defining the identity of spaces; tell stories; and serve as a platform for community expressions. Park installations and private development displays of art were highlighted by the survey respondents. They also indicated the like photos about building features and paving patterns. They said they do not like super identifiable whimsical features on buildings. With regard to gateway features, most indicated they do not like what currently exists. Asked about temporary works, respondents from all ages were resoundingly supportive. People indicated support for games, performances and screen-based media. With regard to programming location preferences, everyone indicated they would like to see more in Downtown Park and stressed the importance of the pedestrian corridor and private development. The Bellwether exhibition was called out as a top event attended by the respondents. Those who indicated they had not attended or participated in programmed events listed as reasons why quality and relevance, lack of awareness, and mobility.

Mr. Sutton said the vision and goals are still being refined. The next step will be to present the Commission with opportunities and recommendations. He said the vision as drafted highlights the Grand Connection as a crucial component to the development of downtown Bellevue as a place to encounter cultural extremes, innovative and immersive art experiences, music and performance. The Grand Connection will serve as a connector as well as a destination, a creative spine in the core of the city that draws a public audience. At the core of the vision is the notion that Bellevue's public art should not only be an integral part of the city but also something that excites and promotes dialog across ethnic and generational lines, demonstrating that Bellevue's investment in contemporary public art is on par with the world's cultural centers.

Mr. Beres said the Grand Connection corridor should be considered as a whole with an aim to interweave smaller intimate projects with signature eye-catching works of a larger scale. Some of the works will be short-term temporary projects sited for weeks or months at a time, and some will be designed to be permanent installations, including signage, wayfinding guides, and other suggestions for art interventions and ways to experience the site. The scale and breadth of the Grand Connection afford a significant opportunity to create new ways to view, interact with, and discover art. It will be imperative to consider the longevity and generative potential of the pieces placed along the route, many of which will ideally continue to impact the site for generations to come. The works will be designed to be accessible and enjoyed by the widest range of the public.

Mr. Culler said the outreach efforts have highlighted a need for stronger art and cultural offerings. The initial results indicate the Grand Connection art and cultural priorities should focus on improving the civic experience of Bellevue's public spaces. Art should play multiple roles in the public realm with equal emphasis on defining identity and the use of space, and as a platform for community gathering.

The goals for the Grand Connection are to become a cultural corridor and/or an arts district; create opportunities to support local and regional arts through performance, temporary installations, studio space, galleries and so forth; initiate and implement programs to

communicate, educate and engage the public; showcase a wide range of projects that will impact the everyday coming and going of people in numerous ways; encourage communication and cross-pollination between existing organizations and community groups; foster partnerships with artists, city and county agencies, private landowners, arts organizations, and cultural institutions to enhance the civic experience for the residents and employees of Bellevue; promote high-quality public art in all new development; create a curatable flexible program that continues to draw visitors; and improve on programs and spaces that are already in place.

The themes include bringing a sense of whimsy and delight to everyday spaces through the use of color and humorous sculptures in unexpected locations and lighting; creating a cohesive unified aesthetic that emphasized playfulness and surprise; supporting the growth of the local arts community by expanding opportunities and spaces to display and experience the visual and performing arts; positioning downtown Bellevue as a cultural destination for a wide variety of events, including visual arts, performing arts and music venues; taking existing cultural events and creating a network for cross-pollination; helping build and reinforcing distinct neighborhood identities along the hub, including the new transit area by I-405, Compass Plaza, Downtown Park, Old Bellevue and Meydenbauer Bay; promoting community interactions, strengthening social networks and connections to diverse populations; creating a pedestrian orientation and experience through informational kiosks, maps and sculptural infographics commissioned by artists; drawing attention to the natural environment and environmental issues facing the community; installing permanent informational elements along the route to promote education about local biodiversity with an emphasis on native plantings; incorporating solar technology to illuminate pathways, bridges and canopy infrastructures; and highlighting the history of Bellevue that includes auto row, hemlock forests, strawberries and the future of the tech industry.

Commissioner Jackson asked why the decision was made to focus on whimsy and playfulness. The answer given was that the notion came from the intercept surveys done during the Bellwether exhibition. That came back as the top answer for what public art should do. Much of the work done in the past by SuttonBeresCuller has focused on that genre. There is always a desire to create works that will be attractive to a broad range of people. The goals and themes could be rewritten to avoid making it seem as though all of the various works will be whimsical and playful, but there is a clear need to have the works be bright and colorful. Mr. Sutton agreed with the need to create works and programs that will be dynamic and of high quality and that build on what is already in place.

Mr. Beres noted that people are thirsty for things to do and reasons to keep them in Bellevue. They do not want to have to cross the lake in order to enjoy arts and culture.

Chair Manfredi called the approach music to his ears. He said he wondered about the mechanisms for advancing the agenda. Mr. Sutton said that will be the next focus for the team. If called a cultural corridor and/or arts district, there could be incentives provided to developers to provide more arts spaces. A number of temporary spaces have already been identified. Being clear about what should happen and setting for some examples will serve as a course to follow going forward. As property owners and developers see the benefit of having an active street and an active corridor, they may elect to include an artistic space in their next building. Mr. Beres agreed and commented that getting temporary projects going during the summer months will help to build knowledge that the connection is happening, and that will raise awareness with the public.

Chair Manfredi pointed out that the term “arts district” has already been applied to a certain part of the city. Mr. Sutton allowed that it may be the wrong term for the Grand Connection. The term as envisioned for the corridor should be deemed a placeholder only.

Mr. Heim shared with the Commissioners a map of the Grand Connection route, the area within a quarter mile, or five-minute walk, and the area within a half mile, or ten-minute walk. The map also noted the location of dedicated cultural spaces, adaptive spaces that currently host cultural events, and temporary or planned art installations. The future Tateuchi Center was located on the map as well. He pointed out that while the area is not a de facto art or cultural district, it does have a cluster of activities. Arts Program Coordinator Scott MacDonald highlighted the need to include on the map the public plazas that are used as cultural spaces. Mr. Heim added that he has been working with the city's GIS staff to add layers, including public art, restaurants, and residential and employment centers.

Commissioner Jackson said the map was very helpful. She said the challenge of the Grand Connection as a corridor is that not all of the pertinent spaces are on the corridor. The Tateuchi Center is not on the corridor, nor is the movie theater. The routes between the various venues are not necessarily pleasant to walk. The Grand Connection will serve as the backbone and it will be surrounded by a constellation of capabilities and venues.

Commissioner Lau Hui asked if any consideration has been given to the area east of I-405. Mr. Sutton said no decisions have been made about what sort of crossing will be created, but the team is very aware of the Eastside Rail Corridor and the coming of light rail. There have been meetings with Sound Transit and representatives from 4Culture and the Eastside Rail Corridor. He said one of person from the consultant team will be serving on the panel for the art that will be selected for the Eastside Rail Corridor where it connects to Wilburton and the future Grand Connection.

Commissioner Malkin commented that downtown Seattle hosts an art walk once a month and asked where something similar could occur in Bellevue. Mr. Sutton said the Grand Connection offers that opportunity. Currently, the pedestrian corridor from the Bellevue Arts Museum to the transit center is the most defined section and it offers many opportunities for pop-up installations. Some experimental events and festivals will be proposed to see how they work.

C. Bellwether - 2016 Look-Back; 2018 Bellwether Schedule

Mr. MacDonald said the general vision or purpose developed for Bellwether was to increase the percentage of residents and visitors who view Bellevue as a visionary community in which creativity is fostered. From an evaluation standpoint, that is very difficult to measure. For the visual arts platform, the performance measure established was the number of artists supported, which was 51. For the teen project, the measure was the number of young people engaged, which was 12, only half of the target. The measure relative to partners was the number of partners involved, which exceeded by two the projected target of three. The number of views on mobile devices was the measure for the using technology goal, but the measure was not ultimately used. In terms of engagement, the number of event attendees was the measure, which was estimated to be 1200 between the opening event and the art walks, exceeding the target of 1000. For the goal of awareness, the measure was the number of Bellevue households exposed; the event was highlighted in *It's Your City*, which has a circulation of 63,000, in *Neighborhood News*, which has a circulation of 1800, and in paid advertising which reached 137,761. The awareness goal was also specific social media, and the measure was the number of impressions made; the target was 32,000, and the result was 29,494 on Instagram, Facebook STQRY and YouTube.

Mr. MacDonald suggested that attendance at the exhibition could have been down because of the ongoing construction work in Downtown Park. He also said the impacts of Pokeman Go

should not be underestimated; very large numbers of persons came to the park for the game, not to see art, and parking at the park was severely limited as a result.

With regard to the goal of using technology effectively to build better awareness of and access to the exhibition, Mr. MacDonald allowed that in some ways the degree to which the goal was achieved was hard to measure outside of Facebook and other social media platforms. In years past the highest number of artworks submitted for consideration was 170, but for the 2016 exhibition there were over 600. It would be fairly easy to conclude the increase was tied to the jump to digital notification. In terms of the overall quality of the submissions, it should be admitted that it was down somewhat. There were far more regional and fewer local works submitted, and far more national and international works submitted.

The Commissioners were asked to comment with regard to what worked and what did not work about the exhibition; sites, types of artworks, events and diversity of artists; the target audience and if it was the right audience; and the impact of Bellwether in the community and how future programs can build upon past successes.

Chair Manfredi commented that going forward Bellwether and the Grand Connection should not be viewed as separate things; the objectives of each overlap to a considerable degree. The notion of connecting to the audience will be accomplished once people are actually physically connected. To the extent possible, sites chosen for the exhibition should be associated with the future Grand Connection.

Commissioner Jackson said she would like to see the performance aspects of Bellwether continued and enlarged. Bellwether was originally simply called a sculpture exhibition, but it would be better going forward to hold a giant arts festival every two years, incorporating all manner of art, including performance art.

Commissioner Malkin agreed that Bellwether should not necessarily have to include only sculptures. Sculpture should certainly be part of the event, but the visual and performing arts should be combined. Bellwether should be redefined and the invitation list should be opened to more than just sculpture artists. The Pokeman Go phenomenon should be a lesson learned about the need to include a digital art component. If they can be afforded, digital display screens should be put up at different locations.

Chair Manfredi stressed the importance of the opening event at City Hall. It serves as an anchor for the event and also makes it clear who the event host is.

Commissioner Lau Hui voiced her support for the art walk tours and suggested that element should be continued. They should be scheduled to cater to a variety of people. Commissioner Jackson agreed and said they should be expanded to engage the youth by working with after-school programs.

Chair Manfredi suggested that the teen project had been enormously successful, resulting in a product that is now part of the city's permanent collection. While the number of teens involved in the project was less than hoped for, the resulting work was excellent. That speaks well of the artist who was brought in to work with the teens.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS

Chair Manfredi asked for an update regarding Art Space. Mr. MacDonald said an internal conversation is scheduled with ARCH to discuss how they would like the project to integrate with their work. Another element in the works is development of the affordable housing strategy. More will be known after January 20 in terms of scheduling.

Mr. Heim announced a training for Councilmembers and board and commission members about the LGBT community on January 25. He said he needed to know by January 17 which Commissioners want to participate.

6. REPORTS

- A. Commissioners' Committee and Lead Reports – As Noted
- B. Project Updates from Staff – As Noted

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 6:36 p.m.