

Public Arts Board Minutes

Public Meeting on Zoom – December 15th, 2021

A. Roll Call:

Members Present: Barbara Heller, Monica Neville, Annie VanGeldereren, Jason Eddleston, Anne Ritchie, Natalie Bishae

Members Absent: Marla Kaftan, Nora Sherifaj (Student Rep)
Hadley Lovell (Student Rep)

Administration: Brooks Cowan, City Planner

B. Approval of Minutes – November 17th, 2021

It was noted that Anne Ritchie was not in attendance for the November meeting and that Jason Eddleston was in attendance.

Motion to approve minutes as amended made by Annie VanGeldereren, seconded by Monica Neville.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

C. Unfinished Business

1. Marx Sculptures "Untitled 1" & "Untitled 2"

Staff discussed the conversation that occurred with the owner of the sculptures regarding their placement. The owner had indicated they would like the yellow sculpture at Quarton Lake and for the other sculpture to be placed somewhere more visible for everyone to see. The Chester Street fire station had previously been brought up as ideal location for a sculpture and staff suggested placing it there. The Arts Board evaluated the green space on the east side and west side of the building and determined that they prefer the west side of the fire station. The size of the sculpture would fit well between the window and small landscape gardens and it would be visible from the stop light at W. Maple. Staff indicated they would verify the location with the Fire Department and the sculpture owner before next month's meeting and report back on their input.

2. 2022 Call for Entry

The Public Arts Board continued their discussion for what they wanted to accomplish in their call for entry for 2022. Staff presented suggestions based on previous discussions that involved two artistic benches, one electrical box design, and one artistic crosswalk design.

Board members discussed a preference for recruiting artists for one electric box versus doing a series of electrical boxes throughout downtown. The case for having multiple boxes painted was to have a type of tour to walk around and see the various designs. The

act of painting the electrical box could also be an interactive and interesting site to see. The Board thought it would be fun to select a theme or palette of colors and allow the artists to then paint what they wanted following the guidelines. Staff indicated it is difficult to have proposals like that approved in Birmingham.

Recruiting for four electric boxes and paying each artist \$500 was brought up. Staff brought up the issue that there is limited funding in the budget, and recruiting for multiple artists with a small amount of money may not get the desired results. Primer, paint, materials, and sealant for the popcorn box at Merrill and S. Old Woodward cost around \$350. Given the time requirements to do all of this, \$500 may not be worth it. The Board would have to give up other items such as artistic benches in order to have adequate funding to make it worth the artists time.

Staff commented that the City already has one painted electrical box, and that allocating funding for one quality art project at the electrical box at Hamilton and N. Old Woodward would be more efficient than splitting up funding across multiple boxes. The Arts Board eventually agreed that picking just one would be more efficient financially and time wise.

When asked what projects the Arts Board prefers, there was general consensus that they wanted to prioritize artistic benches, then an electrical box, then the crosswalk painting. Both of the proposed bench locations are in Terminating Vista locations where the Arts Board would like to follow their Terminating Vista report recommendations for artistic furniture. The Board felt that the intersection of Pierce and Merrill was best for a crosswalk painting, given that the street had been closed multiple times already in the past year.

The Arts Board also felt like benches should receive the most money and that funding should be tiered. The board felt that \$3,000 for each bench, \$2,000 for the electrical box, and \$1,000 for painting a crosswalk was adequate.

A motion was made by Anne Ritchie, seconded by Annie VanGeldereren, to recommend a call for entry in 2022 for two artistic benches; one at the southeast corner of S. Old Woodward and Brown, the other at the intersection of Pierce and Martin, an artistic design for the electric box at N. Old Woodward and Hamilton Row, and a crosswalk design at the intersection of Pierce Street and Merrill.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

3. Interactive art projects

The Arts Board then discussed interactive art projects for 2022. The Board indicated interest in recruiting multiple chalk artists to do drawings during Day on the Town. Staff would coordinate with the BSD later in January of 2022 when they had time to review where this could be done. The Arts Board also wanted to pursue a piano in Shain Park. Jason Eddleston said he would be able to lead this project. Annie VanGeldereren also indicated she would be willing to assist with crafts packages for the Farmers Market once again.

D. New Business

1. DIA Inside – Out

The Detroit Institute of Art approved Birmingham to be a part of their Inside – Out program for 2022. The DIA proposed art work to be posted outside in six locations throughout Birmingham. The Public Arts Board liked the proposals but wanted to pursue having another piece of art installed at the BBAC. Staff indicated they would contact the DIA to inquire about another piece of art.

A motion was made by Anne Ritchie, seconded by Annie VanGelderren, to recommend the temporary installation of the DIAs Inside Out artwork in the proposed locations, and to pursue additional art from the program to be installed at BBAC.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 0

The motion carried.

E. Communications

Helen Hierta's "Weathered" and Ray Katz's "Astral Projection" were approved by the Parks and Recreation Board and must now complete the art on loan agreements and appear before City Commission.