

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Minutes
June 10, 2020

Members Present: Karen Askin, Liliane Blom,
Patricia Dubroof, Melissa Law,
Jesse Marciniak, Howie Jung, Helen Aberger,
Therese Capal, Gary Gill

Members Absent: Tim Nixon, Connor Lee

Councilmember: Mark Pierzchala,

Staff Present: Andy Lett, Laura Creech, Betty Wisda

Guests Present: None

Karen Askin called the virtual online meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Re: Approval of the Minutes

The Cultural Arts Commission unanimously approved the minutes as written for the May 13, 2020 meeting.

Re: Councilmember Report

- Mayor and Council have now met seven times virtually. Dealing with Covid 19 issues. Closed off Gibb St. to allow for additional space for outdoor dining. Federal Reality would not agree to take down the stage, so Mayor and Council approved a layout that Federal Reality approved for the town square to move the restaurant corrals, leaving the green space and the stage intact. Approval was held up until Friday morning due to permits needed.

Re: Chairperson's Report

- VisArts approached by Duball Construction to do some art along the construction site on Middle Lane. The project called for community involvement but because of Covid 19 it was modified. Karen will check to see if the community can get more involved considering the upgrade of Maryland to phrase 2.
- Mark, Andy and Karen attended a virtual meeting with Federal Reality

Re: Staff Report

Staff reported the following items.

- The City has been busy with reopening plans of all the facilities, parks and programs. Challenging with changing guidelines from state and county.
- Andy will share the latest information with commission members from Department of Health, County Executive Office on opening phases.

Re: Arts in Public Places

- David Scull Park Tree Carving Project – recommendation made to award to Kris Connors the \$4,000 commission for the proposal of the Red-Tailed Hawk for the tree carving project. Need approval from the committee. Karen made a motion to recommend going forward with the project. Betty will send a memo to Rob DeSpirito who will forward on to Mayor and Council.
- Rockville Swim and Fitness Center project - received 210 submissions. The Artist Nomination Committee submitted our top artist. Will meet June 16 to narrow the choices down to three.
- Gateway Project – received 150 submissions. The Artist Nomination Committee is narrowing the down the submissions and plans to meet on June 22.
- Underpass Project - Purchase Order was issued for Gable Co. to prepare conceptual drawings of an attachment for artwork for Underpass Project. Next step is the site survey and creation of drawings. These will be submitted to CSX for approval.

Re: Cultural Arts Organizations and Arts Summit Planning

- No report - however Chairperson Jesse will set up virtual sub-committee meeting. Andy to set them up on Webex.

Re: Old Business

- Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan – Karen said there was a consensus among the commissioners with regards to King Farm, RedGate, Arts and Culture Coordinator position and Rescos. She thanked everyone who had added their comments.
- City cut the FY21 budget by three million dollars due to Covid-19. There are three or four critical positions in the City that still need to be filled. The Arts position was not approved for FY21. Currently no one city employees have been laid off. Less revenue is being brought in by city. Mark suggested advocating for the arts position by making a business plan for position. Economic justification needed for position to be considered. Need to incorporate parts of the Arts

- Study into the Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan so it doesn't lose momentum for when the City is a better position to consider the Office of Arts.
- The Cultural Arts Commission should invite Rockville Recreation and Parks Foundation members to meeting to see if they can possibly collaborate and raising funds for the arts. Mark said the Foundation does good work and their funds support specific projects. Chip Boylan would be a good person to speak invite to meeting.
 - Moving forward Karen suggested other funding sources such as private businesses. We should approach developers and builders about the artwork they will have to buy. Instead of buying a piece of artwork, maybe work to support art organizations since funding to support those groups will come after essential services. Are there other opportunities for collaborations?
 - Questions from the theatre Resident Companies - where can they perform that is safe? If the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre can't reopen, what are the parks they can use? Rental, permitting etc. still applies. Would like to advocate that Rec and Parks look outside physical structures and consider outdoor spaces for performances. Could they rent the hillside next to the mansion?
 - Karen stated that Arts will need to be done under Rec and Parks for the future. How do we get involved? How can we make sure the work we have done in the past year isn't derailed by Covid 19.
 - Andy suggested the Cultural Arts Commission advise Rec and Parks what the key elements are that they want to achieve through the strategic plan. Is the long term plan is to have an office of the arts with that position? As a group you can look at what Martin stated in the Culture Arts Study and incorporate those suggestions to the strategic plan.
 - Everyone will need to concur with the statements and add your name below that you agree with the author's statements.
 - Extension to discuss at July 8 meeting will be requested.
 - Karen asked everyone to focus on how to move forward under Rec and Parks and look for ways to move forward outside of Rec and Parks. Important to go back and look at the arts survey again and add more thoughts to the R&P Strategic Plan.

Re: New Business

- Jesse announced that the next meeting will be his last. He is resigning from the commission. He would like space on next month's agenda to discuss his observation and suggestions on how to move forward. He is moving to LA in the fall to continue his career as an actor and advocate for the arts. Karen thanked him for his energy and drive to moving the commission forward. He will be sorely missed.
- Karen mention that the CAC expects to have more openings on commission in the next few months. She plans to ask the Mayor to give us time to find the right people to fill the position with a focus on increasing diversity from a racial and

ethnic standpoint. Karen asked that you think of someone you might know who would benefit the CAC. Andy will put her in touch with Community Resource Staff to assist generating ideas on diversity.

- Throughout the country, communities have created art installations in front of their homes. VisArts discussed today. Interesting project for us to get involved in. One or two weekends. Make a map. Montgomery College does something like this. We would work with everyone and anyone. Need to find people interested in working on this. How can this be funded?
- There was a time when Art in Public Places(AIPP) funded temporary art installations called “Sculpture on the Grounds”. Installation each lasted about six months. Funding moved to support tree carving projects when interest declined.
- The City has closed West Montgomery Ave. in front of the movie theater to create an outdoor area. Dubal funded East Middle Lane but not Montgomery. Is there a possibility AIPP funds could be used for a mural project? Betty said not in FY21. But, can discuss later with AIPP subcommittee.
- Patricia shared that she sent a similar message to Mayor and Council saying its time for spontaneous art – sidewalk chalk, posters on fences. Etc.... So many other cities are doing this kind of relief sculpture. It would be fun to find a location in Rockville. Need to keep it cleaned up, supplies, documented.
- Karen- VisArts hosted a protest sign workshop last week and will be doing more. Gibbs Street was just closed. Maybe that road could be used for spontaneous art.

Re: Announcements

Patricia is has Rockville Spirit goods she is promoting to support Rockville Arts Groups. Congratulations to Therese’s daughters Kyra and Cameron Longabaugh on their graduation from Richard Montgomery High School.

Re: Next Meeting

The next meetings will be held at 7 p.m. On Wednesday, July 8, 2020 location Webex.

Re: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.