

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Cultural Arts Commission Minutes

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

Members Present: Karen Askin (chair), Cristin Cash, Frances Bevington, Therese Capal, Patricia Dubroof, Lydia Tyburski, Brian Rogers, Howard Jung

Members Absent: Spencer Knoll, Liz Ortuzar

Councilmember: Not in Attendance

Staff Present: Karyn Miller, Betty Wisda

Call to Order

Chairperson Karen Askin called the virtual online meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Patricia made a motion to approve July 12, 2023 minutes and Therese seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Report

- Karen did not have a report but asked the new CAC member Lydia Tyburski to introduce herself. Lydia explained her involvement in the arts and work as a practicing artist. Lydia also shared that she's a resident of the Twinbrook neighborhood. Karen and other commissioners said that they were happy to have a new commissioner representing a diverse part of the City.

Councilmember Report

- The Councilmember was not in attendance.

Staff Report

- Karyn Miller gave the staff report and shared that the City received a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, which goes to support city managed arts programs like the Rockville Civic Ballet and other groups.
- Betty Wisda talked about the presentation of Coppelia by the Rockville Civic Ballet which had a nearly full capacity for both performances.
- Karyn shared reports from recent meetings including a meeting with Karen and Frances about additional changes to the Art in Public Places Implementation Plan. Permanent and Temporary Art Subcommittees also met to discuss projects in pipeline and what's coming up for 2025.
- Karyn and Betty met with Deborah Rodriguez from Past Matters LLC to examine and discuss the Lincoln Park Memory Walk. Betty also received estimate to do conservation work for Lincoln Park Mural which is about \$17,000.

- Karyn met with the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County to discuss the Montgomery County Cultural Plan and discussed the opportunity for the City of Rockville to play a role with the County's planning efforts.
- Karyn discussed the efforts by the City's Community Planning and Development Services team on a master plan for Town Center and encouraged commissioners to attend the arts community round table on Wednesday, August 23rd at 7 PM.
- Karyn discussed the arts related programming for Rockville Goes Purple with artist Suzanne Firstenberg. Karyn explained that it is a smaller and simpler project than the shipping container last year.

Art in Public Places Implementation Plan

- Karen introduced a discussion of the Art in Public Places Implementation Plan. Frances discussed recent changes to it and said the document and the changes all look terrific and explained that it is not substantially different from what the commission put forward for recommendation to the city several months ago. At this point, there are a few tweaks to the goals, but in her opinion, they are improvements and probably intended to increase the flexibility of the document as a guidance document to the city. Frances offered endorsement and said the edits that Karyn made are improvements and she agrees with all of them.
- Karen explained the big focus, or the biggest changes have to do with the creation of tiered levels of public art. And the relationship between those levels, which are for the most part, decided by a monetary value and then the process that by which they come forward to the city to speed up the process for these temporary works of art and to engage elected officials earlier and as the public input process.
- Karen said it is up to the commission to approve this draft during this meeting.
- Cristin stated some concerns about unsolicited proposals and donations. Cristin wants clarity on what types of artwork are considered donations of public artwork. Cristin also had questions about whether there's a collections policy in place for acquisitions and accession or whether this document a seedling of that kind of thing.
- Karen asked that Cristin work with Karyn on updates to this section. Frances shared that she did not have sufficient knowledge to write about for the implementation plan and that Karyn has already added language that clarifies that section more than she was able to.
- Karen encouraged CAC Members to read this and focus on it and discussed the need to make sure a new Mayor and Council understand the City's arts efforts and public art programs.

Human Right Commission Liaison Report

- Brian discussed how the Human Rights Commission is trying to rewrite their ordinances and had questions about how the CAC went about doing it. Karen talked about how this was a long process and offered to talk to Brian more.
- Brian shared that the main thing the HRC is focused on is their elections, likely for the next meeting. He shared that Andrew Lin and Amina Shafi Rogers are going to step back and let some other people lead.
- They're having a meeting with City of Rockville and they're trying to step back a little bit from the events that they do like Pride and MLK. They want to focus more on policy.

Arts in Public Places Subcommittees

PERMANENT PROJECTS

- Betty talked about permanent art subcommittee meeting – including the completion of murals, discussion of Woodley Gardens Park, the assessment for Lincoln Park Mural, and the Memory Walk. Betty also discussed the Swim Center the need to have a more organized or a process to get community input.
- Karen talked about how this has been discussed a lot and some of this is captured in the Art in Public Places Implementation Plan and could be part of the CAC website. She discussed role of surveying for specific projects.
- Frances said we put a lot of kind of ideas for community engagement in the implementation plan but that there is still work to do to determine when to engage and how to engage.
- Karen talked about difference between big picture project pipeline input and input on individual projects and how communities bring ideas for new projects.
- Patricia talked about how all work is temporary give the level of decay that happens with all works and proposed bringing the two committees back together. Patricia recommended putting the expected lifespan of artworks in part of project outlines and proposed revisiting the Unicycle project for Woodley Gardens.
- Karen said she would be happy to see that come up again but that the project was not moved forward previously.
- Frances said given the budget cycle if that was the direction that the permanent committee wanted to recommend that it would have to be put forward for 2025 instead of this year. So, that would mean, like, pushing that piece off.
- CAC members discussed combining temporary and permanent art subcommittees. Cannot go over a quorum unless we want to make them public meetings. Karen asked Karyn to make a recommendation to the CAC on subcommittee structure going forward.
- Karen talked about the Swim Center. Asked about timeline and stated importance of engaging the community. Suggested direct mail, emails to users, etc. Karyn explained that the project is scheduled to deliver in spring of 2025. Karen said that a lot of times in the past community input has been limited and it comes in very late in the process.

TEMPORARY PROJECTS

- Frances said the current project plans for the two murals for this fiscal year are at College Gardens and Twinbrook. There was discussion of the College Gardens site and Frances shared that it is similar to the Senior Center and the generator screen in terms of scope and methods.
- Frances shared that the subcommittee talked about a slightly different approach for the Twinbrook Annex that would have a focus on community involvement in the creation of the actual artwork. There was a very robust discussion about community engagement and when that happens and how that happens.
- Frances also talked about creation of community grants and that there is interest in this idea of small community grants. If we were going to move forward with a project like that to start figuring out the scope of what that would look like, and how we would do it.
- Karyn shared that the subcommittee also discussed funds budgeted for a Public Art event. The group talked about the possibility of working with the HRC around Pride to do some things.

- Karen talked about how we focus very much on the visual arts and not as much on culture or history and there are opportunities.
- The group discussed makeup of the Artist Nomination Committees and Frances shared that she thought we would have many eager volunteers for those artists selection committees because it was a lot of fun to participate in the other ones.
- Karen said that these selection committees require fair amount of flexibility on our part. For example, if we were going into do a project at Lincoln, she certainly would want to see some community reps on there. Staff have strong feelings about what's on their building and where it and so do the people who work there. Karen also mentioned having Lydia participate in the Twinbrook Project.
- Therese volunteered to be a part of the Woodley Garden Artist Nomination Committee.

OLD BUSINESS

- None noted.

NEW BUSINESS

- Karen asked Howie about whether he's had success reaching out to Morguard about putting City's musical groups into rotation. Howie has not reached out again yet.

Announcements:

- Patricia talked about F. Scott Fitzgerald literary festival. They just ordered the posters for this year. The artist is Fernando Santiago. There will be a play reading and short story event leading up to the festival. Patricia talked about role of F. Scott in Rockville and how it isn't talked about enough and was very important.

Next Meeting:

- Karen said that the last order of business tonight is to choose a September date. CAC lost the 2nd Wednesday for their usual meeting because of the Volunteer Appreciation event. Karyn to send out a Doodle Poll and pick a date.

Next Meeting:

Karen asked for a motion to adjourn.

Frances moved to adjourn and Patricia seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:43pm