



**Public Arts Commission
North Adams, Massachusetts**

Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2017

The North Adams Public Arts Commission held a public meeting on October 23, 2017 at the Eclipse Mill Gallery at the Eclipse Mill Artist Lofts, 243 Union Street #102, North Adams.

Members Present: Erica Manville, Vice Chairperson
 Cynthia Quiñones, Secretary
 William C. Blackmer, Jr.
 Nancy Ziter
 Gail Kolis Sellers

Absent: Julia Dixon, Chairperson
 Eric Kerns

Also Present: Tammy Daniels
 Phil Sellers

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Manville called the meeting to order at 5:36p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ziter moved to accept the Public Arts Commission minutes from its September 21, 2017 public meeting. Blackmer seconded. All voted in favor. None opposed.

OLD BUSINESS: MOASS MoCA Communication Update

Manville reported that she had written to Mass MoCA but received no response. She will continue to check in with them in hopes of establishing clear lines of communication between the museum and the Public Arts Commission.

PROJECT/PROPOSAL UPDATE: Eagle Street Initiative

With Kerns absent and responsible for this update, the commission agreed to table this item for a future meeting.

PROJECT/PROPOSAL UPDATE: Griffin Labbance's Montana Street Project

On behalf of Dixon, Manville reported that on October 3, Dixon and Griffin Labbance met to talk about his project, which will no longer involve painting directly on the road (not feasible with the restrictions). He is now interested in doing a crosswalk painting project. Labbance spoke with Phil Sellers in the spring about what he will need to do it, but he is interested in having a large section on Montana Street be designated as a crosswalk area (between a walkway on one side and campus housing on the other side in between Bowman Hall and the gym) to paint along with the Hoosac/Montana crosswalk and perhaps a few others. Dixon sent an email to Mike Canales on his behalf inquiring about this possibility. He sees this as a fall or spring project.

PROJECT/PROPOSAL UPDATE: Ramona Fabregas's Prayer Flags Project

Ramona Fabregas told Manville and Sellers she has more than 500 flags created, but is still searching for funding for the remainder of the project. Manville advised Fabregas to research grants via the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and also shared local after school program contacts with her to help her proceed with her project. A site for the flags has still not been selected, nor has a complete proposal been submitted.

NORTH ADAMS CULTURAL DISTRICT/PLAN UPDATE

On behalf of Dixon, Manville reported that the cultural district group will be meeting on Wednesday, October 25. Some notes indicated that the group may develop its own cultural plan, so Dixon would like to wait to see what that might look like/who that might serve before launching a draft public art plan. Perhaps these two things can be one in the same.

PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION EMAILS DISCUSSION

Sellers expressed concern regarding a series of emails from Joseph Smith that she and Ziter felt were inappropriately managed by the Public Arts Commission's chair. This information came to her attention via a city councilor, and Sellers felt blindsided by the news, having never seen the emails. This situation led the commission to hold a discussion regarding how emails from the public are shared and responded to by the commission.

Ziter felt it would be appropriate for the commission to set up an automated response indicating that the email would be responded to within 48 hours, and that then either the Chair, or someone designated by the chair, should respond during that time window, if the email posed a question that could easily be addressed. After further discussion, the commission agreed that if, however, the questions or comments appeared to require a lengthier, or less straight forward response, the Chair would encourage the emailer to attend the next commission meeting, and would either add the item to the agenda, or invite the emailer to voice their comments during the "Public Attendees Concerns" portion of the agenda. Any relevant emails could then be passed along to the other commissioners for

review as attachments with the agenda. The commission agreed this seemed a reasonable way of ensuring that commissioners be as informed as possible, members of the public feel their voices are heard, and all open meeting laws be upheld.

Regarding the specific concerns of Joseph Smith, the commission recommended that Sellers respond by encouraging him to layout his current specific questions in an email for discussion at a future meeting.

PUBLIC ATTENDEES CONCERNS

Phil Sellers, in reference to the bridge columns, asked that the commission look into the current plans for the Harmonic Bridge art installation, and how long the project is intended to remain in that location. Ziter suggested that someone from the commission approach the City Solicitor and ask what rights the city has regarding the placement of art in that location if no contracts are in place with the city. Sellers and Manville agreed to set up a meeting with Mike Canalis for further review of the issue.

MEMBER CONCERNS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Quiñones noted that, for personal reasons, she intends to step down from the position of Secretary in December, and invited other members to consider taking on the role.

Future agenda items will include an update on the Harmonic Bridge's intended duration, an update on the Eagle St. Initiative, and an update on the Cultural District plan.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Public Arts Commission will be determined by an online poll established by the chair.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Ziter moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:25p.m. Quiñones seconded. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Quiñones, Secretary