



**Public Arts Commission
North Adams, Massachusetts**

Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2017

The North Adams Public Arts Commission held a public meeting on April 26, 2017 at City Hall's law library, 10 Main Street, North Adams.

Members Present: Julia Dixon, Chairperson
Erica Manville, Vice Chairperson
Cynthia Quiñones, Secretary
Gail Kolis Sellers

Absent: Nancy Ziter
William C. Blackmer, Jr.
Eric Kerns

Also Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dixon called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Manville moved to accept the Public Arts Commission minutes from its March 3, 2017 public meeting. Sellers seconded. All voted in favor. None opposed.

MICHELLE DALY'S UPDATE/PRESENTATION OF DOWNSTREET ART PARKLET DESIGN PROPOSALS

Postponed until an upcoming meeting.

UPDATE ON GRIFFIN LABBANCE'S MONTANA STREET PROPOSAL

The commission reviewed and discussed Griffin Labbance's emailed update (see attached).

GROUP PHOTO

Postponed. Dixon will have Katrina contact members that still need photos taken.

OLD BUSINESS: DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE BOARD MEMBERS FOR "FRIENDS OF..." NONPROFIT

Manville reported that William Archer agreed to advise in the creation of the Friends Of organization. Dixon reported that Krystal Henriquez is interested in participating. Commission members will continue to seek out potentially interested members.

DISCUSSION OF PURPOSE STATEMENT REVISION

Dixon noted that the purpose statement the commission wrote during its first meetings does not include active language that reflects our revised proactive stance.

"The North Adams Public Arts Commission will guide, support, and provide opportunities for artists seeking to create public art and enhance the quality of life in the city of North Adams."

Manville motioned. Sellers seconded. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINAL WEBSITE REVIEW

Postponed until next meeting. Dixon suggested the inclusion of a short form application, based on recent experiences with artists approaching commissioners about how to apply. She also proposed the inclusion of a resources page.

Manville made a motion to include a short form of the application on the website for artists interested in pursuing a public arts project. Quiñones seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None opposed. Dixon will adjust the application to include a step for an initial inquiry.

PUBLIC ATTENDEES CONCERNS

None present.

MEMBER CONCERNS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Future agenda items will include a website design update, a presentation from Michelle Daly about the DownStreet Art parklet designs, and a presentation from Larry Smallwood and Joe Thompson about an art installation involving Notre Dame.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Public Arts Commission will be held at 5:30p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, 2017, at the Eclipse Mill Gallery.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Quiñones moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m. Manville seconded. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Quiñones, Secretary

Labbance Update

Melanie Mowinski: I have spoken with Melanie who is an Art professor on campus. She has 6 students who are completely up for helping with the painting project. They will all be returning in the fall to campus, and also will be happy to come back to campus during the summer if need be. They're just on hold, waiting to hear what their perimeters are (shapes, colors, size, etc).

President Birge: I spoke with the President and updated him with where I was at. He said to keep moving forward until I get a "no, this won't work at all" answer from someone. We brought up the idea of painting in a parking lot but this would be a MCLA campus project, and not something that would involve the city. He wanted to continue down the road of a collaboration, until it's not a possibility anymore.

Michael Canales: We have been in an email exchange. Here are the emails again:

"In the past we have done chalk art on a city street that washes up but to paint a roadway with art that could possibly distract a driver is not something we should consider in an area where there is significant pedestrian traffic (also not allowed in any area with a speed limit of 45MPH or greater). We could consider use of sidewalks, based on approval by the Arts Commission, but the use of the roadways would be limited to the use of chalk."

I emailed back with some tweaks, asking if there was anyway to change the shapes or such to make it work. I did hear back from him regarding sidewalk usage as well as only the block lettering:

"Most likely the sidewalks running along the road are owned by the City, but I will confirm. Even though it is a one way street and traffic is local, there are a large amount of pedestrian traffic. The student murals are difficult because we do not know what they will contain. Also block lettering can be an issue as they create confusion with drivers that is why most street art is actually not on the roadways"

Right now I was the last one to email him. I haven't heard back regarding my questions about the sidewalk usage/could we change the design plan to make something fit.

As I type this email, I am thinking back to some research that I did in order to try to find other cities that have done this and maybe reach out to them. I actually couldn't find any. It's all murals that are painted on the sides of buildings or in crosswalks. Searching "street murals", Downstreet Art is one of the first results...just thought you all would be happy to know that!

My questions are:

1. Is there another direction/way to look at this project? Someone else to go to? I was suggested to go meet with the Mayor but don't want to do that if it is not the right order of command.

2. If the project shifts (such as omitting the murals but keeping the MCLA block lettering), would the new concept have to be re-approved?

I guess that I am just feeling some what stuck in the sense that I don't really know where do go/what to do. Again, maybe this is the answer to that this project isn't feasible. I'm going to push on a little bit longer but if the Arts Commission has any thoughts, the help would be great. You all are experienced with this type of work, while this is my first go at it all.