

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION MEETING

A regular meeting of the Public Art Commission took place on Wednesday, February 19, 2013, at 5:30 P.M. at the Cambridge Arts Council.

The following members were present: Cynthia Smith, Alex Van Praagh, T.K. McClintock

Staff present: Jeremy Gaucher, Lillian Hsu, Rika McNally

1) PAC Membership

T.K. McClintock officially ended term in November of 2012. Asked to serve another term – He will consider and report back to the PAC.

2) Gallery Update

Al-Mutanabbi Starts Here exhibition upcoming events:

Artist Books Exhibition - Part 1: through February 28, 2013

The first 80 books of the 3-part series through the end of the month of February.

Anthology Reading: Al Mutanabbi Street Stars Here

Wednesday, February 20, 2013, 7pm

Harvard Bookstore, 1256 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge

Poet Meena Alexander & Romy Ruukel of PM Press will read from Al Mutanabbi Street Stars Here : Poets and Writers respond to March, 2007, Bombing of Baghdad's "Street of the Booksellers," edited by Beau Beausoleil and Deema Shehabi (PM Editions)

Salon Discussion: "Locating Al-Mutanabbi Street"

Monday, February 25, 2013, 6pm

CAC Gallery, 344 Broadway, Cambridge

A discussion about Baghdad's bookseller street with Nasser Rabbat, Jeffrey Spurr, Laurie Alpert, Ingrid Sanchez, Jesseca Ferguson Gheed Itani, Shatha Al-Aswad, and Wasma'a Chorbachi.

3) Cambridge Street Underpass Update (Artist Dan Borelli present)

After adjusting proposal to color waves against light wall on all sides as opposed to alternating, due to cost and visibility, Artist has reworked the scheme to have the wave as the dark color on a light wall (likely white) after consulting with site engineers that believe a black background would leave the tunnel too dark. The general contractor will be applying the materials to the wall. Artist will provide stencils and oversight. Still determining if the material will be sprayed or rolled.

In terms of maintenance Rika believes that the material cannot be power washed, perhaps a less powerful option can be determined. DPW is being consulted. Artist will provide instructions for future maintenance. Once the materials are procured, there will be a prefabrication review. At that point staff will meet with DPW and engineers to discuss maintenance plan. Artist will begin creating prototype stencils in the near future.

Staff will work with DPW to identify appropriate placement of artist project information – perhaps in conjunction with other street signage.

It is staff's intention to have a CAC Gallery exhibit to highlight the process and the Artist's body of work to go along with the tunnel installation.

4) Project Updates

MLK School/New Work: The Art Jury has chosen 3 finalists to create proposals - Christopher Janney (Ryan is his studio manager.) Benjamin Ball, sculptor (Los Angeles) Sandra Bryant, works with her partner, Carl Bryant, doing primarily mosaics (Washington state) Jeff Zimmerman, primarily murals (Chicago). The larger Site Committee will meet March 18 to review the proposals and choose an artist for the site.

CRLS/Zeigler: The current plan is to have one large exterior piece, and 7-9 smaller interior pieces. Mel sent (electronically) a number of proposed sites and designs for spaces to the CRLS group that was formed to review the proposal.

Their feedback (via e-mail):

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Holm [<mailto:SHolm@cpsd.us>]

Sent: Thursday, February 07, 2013 4:31 PM

To: Hsu, Lillian

Cc: ekoury@cpsd.us; btynes@cpsd.us; dsmith@cpsd.us; mel.ziegler@vanderbilt.edu; Weeks, Jason

Subject: Re: Mel's artwork selection

Dear Lillian,

Thank you so much for sending us these pictures of how "Notes" work might look in our school.

I have had discussions with Bobby, Damon, Elaine and Elizabeth Menges (a CRLS art teacher who is on the building committee).

I have been asked to summarize the conversations so that you might be able to move forward with the project. It is really amazing to me how powerful these representations can be, so thank you again for doing this work.

Since we have already discussed the outside of the building, I will concentrate on the images of the inside only.

There are 5 different images that are connected to the stairwells. Of those, PATH, CIRCLE IN MOTION, and ZOO PLANKTON have all been judged as workable. Everyone felt that the other 2 images, FOOD CYCLE and LOG FIRE seem to be a little too naive for the walls of CRLS. This could be due to the choice of multiple colors, or to the images themselves. I do not know. Is the color choice a given? The LOG FIRE seems especially juvenile, and we do not want it to be used.

The next image, BOWL, blends in well with the color scheme of that particular zone of CRLS, and would work well.

SALSA SIDE STEP fills the space really well, and is interesting as you walk around the corner. There is some concern about the color choices. I do not know if something that blended with the floor would be appropriate.

Both MOVEMENT and EXPOSED SHORE were problematic for my panel of judges. These images also appeared to be too childlike for our school. In the case of MOVEMENT, the stick figures were a problem. I understand that stick figures are a staple of note taking, but large green and magenta renditions of these figures were too elementary and does not suit the overall culture of our school. It was also pointed out that neither color was representative of the zone in which it would be placed.

EXPOSED SHORE was the least appreciated of the group. The colors seemed elementary, and we just didn't get it. Again, the group consensus was against using these two image. (MOVEMENT and EXPOSED SHORE) I do not know if you had planned on using every image for CRLS. The sheer number of images was overwhelming. We did not expect so many. Depending on your plans, we would be happy with 5 images. Here is our order of preference: CIRCLE IN MOTION, ZOO PLANKTON, PATH, SALSA SIDE STEP, BOWL.

Thank you for all your work, and I hope this was informative. Please contact me at any time.

Susan Holm
Teacher-In-Charge
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-----END COMMUNICATION-----

PAC Reaction: PAC generally agrees with the School staff constructive comments - particularly the number of five interior pieces and one exterior; that the “stick figure” image is somewhat indiscernible in what it represents; and that the colors should be further developed/reconsidered.

Meeting Adjourned 7:30pm.

6) Next Meeting Date

March 13, 2013, 5:30pm