

Salem Public Art Commission Meeting

August 16, 2016

The Public Art Commission (PAC) was held on Tuesday, August 16, 2016, in Room 312, Third Floor, at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA.

Norene Gachignard, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:01pm

Roll Call:

Members Present: Norene Gachignard, Austen Barron Bailly, J. Michael Sullivan, Amanda Moore and Deborah Greel, Public Art Planner

Absent: Keshia De Leon

Approval of July Minutes:

Hsu made a motion to approve. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Discussion: Hsu wanted added to the minutes, can we integrate the branding of Artists' Row and the Public Art Program. John Andrews of Creative Salem, who is marketing the Row, connect the branding and identity for the Public Art Commission.

Motions passes: 4-0

Discuss Public Art Workplan 2016-2017

Documents and Exhibitions: Public Art Workplan 2016-2017

Programs/Forums/Talks – Gachignard suggested asking heads of the Salem State University art department to make a pitch for a forum and talk to create a backbone of what we want. She asked if the programs would be once a month or quarterly depending on the ask and as suggested at last month's meeting, call it "Thirsty Thursdays". Moore asked about the availability of using Old Town Hall. She also said that partnerships with other organizations could help in the planning. Greel mentioned the Art Summit that was held when she first became the Public Art Planner in partnership with Destination Salem and Salem Main Streets. Sullivan was at the summit and said it was well attended with artists from all genres and this could be a good follow-up.

Moore talked about "Pecha Kucha", a short, live presentation by a presenter to inform the audience of their non-profit or business. Bailly said it was a very engaging format. Moore said that they can present their work however they want in a precisely timed format. She said that the Public Art Commission (PAC) could be the first to present the "Pecha Kucha" at a Thirsty Thursday event. Moore also suggested that the PAC could research each other and then present. The date of November 10th was suggested by Sullivan to host another summit. Hsu asked what is different from the first summit and to add another constituency to include education and schools. She said it would facilitate a conversation about art in our community and to make sure that we invite the Artists' Row artists. Bailly said it becomes a snapshot of what is happening in the community. Sullivan talked about getting businesses involved in the arts. He said that the restaurant, Opus, is doing a public art piece in their back outdoor seating area and the "Pecha Kucha" could be a forum for presenting projects. The agenda for Thirsty Thursdays would include who we are (PAC) and allocate time for presenting works according to Moore. Hsu mentioned having things that will present an example, such how a restaurant benefited from public art. Moore also mentioned a public art tour. She also suggested that we work on a list of people to present who are doing art shows and unsanctioned pop up shows.

Community Art - Hsu mentioned that Ken Reker from Salem State University has done public art projects every year. The project, "What Matters Most?" around Old Town Hall could lead to more collaborations and a more successful way to present art. She mentioned if we had worked with him and looked at a particular site and create something specific to the site. Moore said if there was more money to have a call for art or something in writing to partner with institutions. Hsu asked if some of the revolving funds from could be used and there could be more direction, helping with site. Greel noted that the Derby Square/Artists' Row revolving account has specific uses and public art is one of them. Sullivan said to have the funds to use and then proposals are sought from educational institutions and set aside part of the budget for funding these projects. Greel suggested using part of the budget for a producer series. Moore said to formalize the process. Moore also suggested an NEA grant to use for inventorying Salem's art inventory.

Celebrating the Urban Environment – Bailly said there should be another discussion for celebrating the urban environment. Moore mentioned again about an art tour. Hsu said that money could be spent from the PAC budget and shift the site for public art instead of just around Old Town Hall. She said the PAC could explore the idea of creating pathways and narratives that highlight the area at the train station that draws you into the downtown. Moore said that in one of the PAC meetings we look over all of the pieces in the city's inventory. What should be considered public art and can we inspire works?

Social Media Platforms:

- a. **Facebook** - Moore will make a google sheet and asked about gmail accounts and will share passwords.
- b. **Instagram** – Moore said that we haven't been posting but we are getting more followers. She said that as she initiated this and should be more involved.
- c. **Shared image bank for communications and social media** – Moore will make a Flickr account. Social media platforms are launched and they will grow. Bailly said we have 212 followers on social media which can promote Salem. Moore said that as long as it relates back to public art for the post. Moore suggested starting a twitter account. Moore asked to have social media on the agenda for each meeting to check in.
- d. **Shared Calendar for Events**- Moore will add PAC members to a Google calendar.

Updates:

Tradewind Installation: The installation nearest the entrance to Old Town Hall was vandalized last month with 10 poles bent to the ground. The police were notified and they bent the poles back up. Unfortunately, the poles bent have been compromised and although standing they have a weak spots where bent. Two poles had to be completely removed as they fell within the installation. The installation nearest Derby Square has also been vandalized but the poles have only been bent slightly. There are no working cameras on the installations. Noted also are some of the twirling pieces are slipping. Upon investigation the rubber bands that have been holding them in place have been breaking. The plan is to zip tie in place those that have slipped.

A sign about the project has been installed near the installation closest to the entrance of Old Town Hall.

Salem PAC Logo: Rick Rawlins has not presented the edited designs. Hsu and Greel will follow up by the beginning of September.

"If I Had One Wish" Project: When Greel went to purchase the stencils for the "Before I Die Project" she noticed the "If I Had One Wish" stencils and reached out to the Mayor and suggested that these words be used instead. The Mayor agreed. The plywood for the mural has been purchased and is in the process of being painted. Installation is scheduled for the last week in August.

Artists' Row: Tommy Gagnon of Boston Woodturning has been hired to refurbish all 6 of the pushcarts including new, yellow vinyl for the roofs. New signage has been ordered to replace the outdated signage in the two pushcarts used to direct people to Artists' Row which are located on the pedestrian mall and on Derby Street. The pop of yellow color is quite noticeable. Tables, chairs and umbrellas that were previously in Derby Square (due to a donation of newer tables, chairs and umbrellas) were placed on Artists' Row and some at the Lobster Shanty. Each tenant has the responsibility of one table with three chairs and one umbrella. The table are placed in such a way so that people have to meander through the row, slowing down their pace and hopefully taking more time to notice the shops.

Painted Stairs: After seeing the condition of the stairs at Mack Park that had been suggested being painted in a piano design it was determined that the stairs are not in good enough shape, concrete wise, to paint. And the placement and spacing of the stairs does not lend itself to an effective design. Greel will suggest to the Mayor's office that this is not a good place for this project.

Public Comment:

Claudia Paraschiv, Community Artist, Salem Public Space Project, 10 Derby Square, Salem, MA, presented a letter about community art. The letter discussed the confluence of two recent public art projects. One was "Move with Me" a community art project for the Salem Arts Festival conceived and led by Paraschiv and the second was the PAC commissioned "TradeWinds", both in proximity of each other. She noted that during a public talk about "Tradewinds" by the design team it appeared that she was not informed that the concept used for this project was similar to her project. She noted that both projects represent valid forms of art making but felt that the community project was marginalized. She said that the projects could have worked closer together and created more dialogue.

Sullivan noted that this might be a missed opportunity to look at the commonality of the wind as driving force in the projects. Bailly asked if there is more clarity for separating community art and that community art is woven through public art. Moore mentioned that this could be a "Pecha Kucha" presentation.

Jim Fallon, 1 Hibernia Lane, Salem, MA said he was interested in serving on the PAC. Gachignard invited him to talk about his career in the theatre department at Salem State University. Gachignard described the commission and what they do. Sullivan said it was a great educational forum and rewarding us of his time. Hsu noted we need to think about public art as not just visual and it would be good to have more expertise.

Adjourn:

Sullivan made a motion to adjourn. Hsu seconded the motion.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00pm.