

Salem Public Art Commission Meeting
July 19, 2016

The Public Art Commission (PAC) was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2016, in Room 312, Third Floor, at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA.

Norene Gachignard, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:08pm

Roll Call:

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

Absent: Keshia De Leon, Mary Best

Approval of May Minutes:

Hsu made a motion to approve. Bailly seconded the motion

Discussion: On page 2 of the minutes, Moore said to change, "She said that we could more research" to "She said that we could use more research"

Moore noted that in the "Before I Die Wall" discussion, first paragraph, second sentence, that she said that the mayor picks pet projects which was attributed to Bailly.

Gachignard made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Moore seconded the motion.

Motions passes: 4-0

Discussion and Vote on Proposal:

Documents and Exhibitions: Nine Hole Miniature Golf Around Old Town Hall Criteria for Proposal

Presentation by Ken Reker, Professor of Sculpture at Salem State University for a Nine Hole Miniature Golf Around Old Town Hall. Reker began by mentioning his recent installation at Fort Point Channel called "Double Trouble". He describes it as the absence of water and our love affair with plastic by using plastic bottles that replicate water pouring out of a pipe. He was challenged by the tide differentiation from 8 to 12 foot tides and noted it was like building a sculpture on a seesaw. At high tide the bottles corral themselves at low tide they become rigid flow of bottles.

Every summer Reker has students in a sculpture/mixed media class make a temporary piece of public art that is placed in different parts of the city.

The Nine Hold Miniature Golf around Old Town Hall proposal is a place for communities to meet and discuss serious problems and or fun discussions. The miniature 'putt putt' would hug the perimeter of the building on the 5 foot sidewalk with 4 'holes' on each side. The work would be installed on Monday, July 25 and to be dismantled on Monday, August 29.

Reker explained that each 'hole' would be emblazoned with text that asks a question. He noted that in this election year the game is expected to raise larger questions which were listed in the criteria for proposal. He showed a maquette of each hole. Reker also said that people can also play through and just have fun with the installation itself.

Gachignard asked about the hours of the hall and Greel explained the hours of the Salem Museum and the performance schedule of History Alive.

Gachignard asked how many students in the class and Reker noted that 7 students would be participating. He showed the “putters” that the students made out of different materials which will be used to play the game. Hsu asked if the same students made the “putt putt” itself. The ball to be used is a squash ball.

Hsu asked if each student will match their panel with the slope around Old Town Hall. Reker said that will be achieved. Bailly asked about the handicap ramp and Sullivan said that the egress is at the top of the building and the game will not interfere with the ramp. Sullivan said it would be compelling even if it wasn't played and is intrigued with the statements and questions.

Hsu asked about signage and suggested it explain the project and how to play. Reker said that the putters will be left out but worry that they might be taken. He suggested that he might be able to work with an SSU adjunct teacher, Sibel Alpaslan, who has a studio at Artists' Row to bring the putters in and out of the building.

Greel asked if the 'holes' were attached to the building and was told they would be zipped tied and not easy to move. Hsu asked about the various materials and Reker said they are weather resistant.

Sullivan asked what happens if they get vandalized and Reker said he is responsible for the oversight of the project.

Greel asked about managing the putters and suggested the honor system. Moore and Bailly asked that signage have a hashtag for the project and add to our Instagram account. Sullivan suggested rimming the holes so the ball doesn't roll down Derby Square. Sullivan asked about a frame on the outside of the holes and Reker confirmed that there is a frame.

Bailly asked about the title as a way to express the concept relative to the play and could be used as a #hashtag. She suggested that students come up with a fun term for the play, challenge them. Reker said that some of the students didn't know what 'putt putt' was so he took them to the mini golf on Swampscott road.

Moore asked if their holes are complete. Reker said that they are almost complete. She suggested that they have a little time to get the word out. Students will be there for a kick-off event and hope to get press around the event.

Hsu said that signage should invite people to play and what will draw people to know about this and how to use it. Even when people aren't playing it is compelling in its own right.

Moore asked about scorecards with the questions on the back. Reker noted that information will be on the signage. Gachignard asked about signage on both sides of the building. Hsu said it shouldn't take them long to figure out how to play. Bailly said to use the signage as questions and graphically break it down.

Hsu asked about access and if someone is in a wheel chair can they play. Reker said there is 5ft space between on the sidewalk and so it is possible that it could be played from a wheelchair.

Bailly asked about the age limit and Reker said that it would require parental supervision. She noted that it would be very appealing to children.

Hsu made a motion to approve. Sullivan seconded the motion

Motion passes: 4-0

Tradewind Art Installation:

The Tradewind team, led by Jonathan Scelsa and Jennifer Birkland, was onsite from July 5th to July 9th to install the work. An artist talk was held in Derby Square on July 9th at 4pm with an opening reception at 6pm in Old Town Hall. The installation will be in place until the end of September.

Social Media Platforms: Discussion suspended and moved to August

Discuss Public Art Work plan 2016-2017

Documents and Exhibitions: Work Plan 2016-2017

a. Brainstorm Ideas for Fall

Bailly suggested a way to celebrate the urban environment from the train station to downtown by asking artists to create pathways to our key sites/cultural sites. She noted it would be an interesting development to see where these destinations lead and how to distinguish one place from another. Hsu said they could be 3D. Sullivan said that when you come out of the train station you should be oriented toward downtown. Hsu suggested partnerships, such as the Chamber of Commerce, that could help with a map of Salem. As Salem is a gateway city there might be grants available.

Moore suggested Thirsty Thursdays, a way to think about ideas for the fall and to use Old Town Hall for talks and forums that deal with art and public spaces. She mentioned inviting Creative Salem to talk about using new social media platforms. Also, she noted, to invite public artists to give a talk.

Moore said to think about ideas for the fall and use OTH some kinds of talk and public space, dealing with art and using art as a platform. Invite Creative Salem to talk about using new social media platforms. Hsu said that it would be helpful to have a variety of forums and talks and to get Montserrat College of Art and Salem State University involved which would create mutually beneficial partnerships.

Moore also suggested a pop up art exhibition and invite the community to participate. Moore asked about reserving space at Old Town Hall and try to book two talks/forums each month beginning in November.

Moore questioned what public art is, what does the public know about public art. She and Sullivan noted the value of educating the public through presentations by artists. Hsu said to mine what is locally here and to build up the significance of what is happening. Moore said to select themes and harness all of the ideas for the yearly theme.

Updates:

Salem PAC logo: Rick Rawlins of Rawlins Design at 10 Derby Street has accepted a stipend to design a series of logos for the Public Art Commission. Greel and Hsu met with Rawlins recently to review the first draft of designs. Suggestions on edits to four designs were made. Rawlins will use the suggestions to present another version of the logo before presenting to PAC.

Artists' Row: The installation of new bathroom dividers and repainting of the stalls have been completed. As graffiti has been a problem in the bathrooms Greel is suggesting hiring an artist to paint on the men's room wall. She is in conversation with an artist who was a part of the Mural Slam in June. John Andrews of Creative Salem has been hired to help market the Row. He will

concentrate on three reasons to visit the Row: Maker Spaces, Gallery and Education. Andrews will utilize his vast social media network to help promote the tenants and events. He will attend the tenant meetings every two weeks and will help the tenants understand best practices for social media.

Artbox Program: No updates on the program.

Public Comments: No public comments.

Adjourn:

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

Meeting Adjourned: 8:10pm

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