

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

Salem Public Art Commission meeting, Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 7:30 pm, Old Town Hall, 32 Derby Sq., 1st Floor

Norene Gachignard, Chair of PAC called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm

Roll Call:

Members Present: Norene Gachignard, John Andrews, Janine Liberty, Kurt Ankeny-Beauchamp, Carly Naik Dwyer, J. Michael Sullivan

Members Not Present: Emily Larsen and Kate Luchini, Staff Planner for Art & Culture

Approval of December Minutes:

Liberty made a motion to approve. Andrew seconded the motion.

Motion passes: Unanimously in favor

Vote on deaccession(s) of prints from the removed Derby Square Kiosk:

PAC would like to reach out to the artists and provide the option to collect the art.

Sullivan made the motion to deaccession, Andrews second motion.

Motion passes: Unanimously in favor

Updates and discussion:

Old Town Hall (OTH)

- Grants to be explored for funding initiatives related to the restoration and improvement of the building, such as HVAC and bathrooms
- There are currently no updates on request for proposals of OTH
- Public guests asked if would OTH be leased to a for-profit business
- Gachignard would like to see the space utilized and said the PAC would like to see a proposal that maximizes the utilization of the historic building
- Public Guests want to know if there has there been an assessment on the structure of the building. A previous fire and settling have caused the sinking of the building and buckling of the floor.
- Gachignard agreed that it would be in the City's best interested to have an engineer assess the infrastructure of the building
- Andrews asked for this info to be written out because Mass Cultural Council will likely require an infrastructure study for any funding proposal
- Public guest asked about rumors that OTH is to be developed as a night club
- Andrews feels that this is not currently on the table, but that Luchini and the City are looking at all options to further efforts to both preserve and activate the building and are receptive to ideas.

- History Alive members would like to know what the overhead costs of maintaining OTH is for the City in hopes they can help meet cost increases
- Andrews feels that there is as much concern about the activation of OTH and Derby Square as there is for financial considerations, noting that currently there are issues prohibiting further activation of these spaces, such as noise restrictions during History Alive performances that don't allow for simultaneous outdoor performances. Installing HVAC/AC would help to alleviate this problem.
- Naik Dwyer feels that having Cry Innocent at the PAC meetings is beneficial to start/continue a productive conversation about the use of OTH
- In Sullivan's experience, the best time to do any renovations or maintenance would be during the HVAC installation process, if it goes forward
- Public Guests have a great concern of maintaining historical features during renovations
- History Alive voiced specific concerns regarding the renewal of their current city contract. Andrews informed them that there is not a guarantee for a contract extension for both parties but that Luchini would be the best person to reach out to.

Artists' Row Call for Creative Entrepreneurs

- PAC agrees that the new rental pricing structure for the Call looks appropriate
- Liberty wants a line included in the Call to the effect of: "we want this to be a viable business for you and we would like to see activation of the space as well"
- Andrews thinks the Call should detail what services are provided to the artists
- Ankeny-Beauchamp thought we were holding off until next year, Andrews felt there may have been a push for a rotation this year because the Call is supposed to be issued once a year and requests have come in regarding the vacant ZBY space
- Andrews would like to remove the artisanal food option from the Call because of food regulations in the City
- Gachignard and Naik Dwyer wanted to know what happens if not enough people want the space, but Andrews has heard that there have been numerous inquiries
- Naik Dwyer would like to see the information about the retail time commitment more clearly highlighted, and Liberty felt would be helpful to have the contract dates clearly stated as well
- Andrews noted that the existing requirement for artists to offer 12 public workshops is too much, suggesting instead a requirement of 2 seasonal engagements a year (such as Salem Arts Festival). Luchini suggested requiring fewer, collaborative engagements with all Artists' Row tenants participating.
- Andrews feels that asking artists to provide a marketing plan would be beneficial

Top Five Concerns/Updates for Artists Row RFP

1. Take out required 12 engagements
2. Under Program goals, keep it to a maximum of 4 engagements

3. Rework language about being a “money-making opportunity”
4. Remove the date typo of “2017”
5. Take out the language that speaks to the priority of artists accepted

Gachignard requests that the commission should revisit this Call. It will be reviewed and discussed at the next PAC meeting.

PAC Mission

- The PAC will revisit this at a later date.

Discussion of draft d. 2019 PAC plan

- ***PAC rotations***
 - Each member will reach out to Luchini with any concerns about appointments
- ***Electrical box in Derby Square***
 - A new electrical box was installed by the City to replace the failed Derby Square kiosk. However, after numerous resident complaints, the City is evaluating another location for a kiosk that does not interfere with the site lines of Old Town Hall, yet is conveniently located to provide power for outdoor concerts, the farmers’ market and other events
- ***4 Higginson Alley***
 - The City electricians installed the power for the light strings in the wrong location and Luchini now has to contract an outside electrician with a bucket truck to complete the installation
 - Once complete, a press release will be sent and a possible celebratory event can be planned
 - Joey Nicotera of Retonica will provide training on programming the lights
- ***Patronicity***
 - Beyond Walls and Punto have used this platform
 - Mass Development may match funds raised
 - There would need to be a PAC subcommittee created to pursue this
- ***Crossing water***
 - Montserrat received a grant to implement this program from ECCF/Barr. Salem is listed as a partner and Luchini is on the implementation committee for the September festival, which is still in the early planning stage.
- ***Artweek***
 - Opportunity for a collaboration of artists and businesses between Salem and Lynn- Luchini has worked with Downtown Lynn Cultural District Director Carolyn Cole to propose an art/eats/drinks event that possibly uses the MBTA as a conduit for the shared arts experience.
- ***Council Priorities***

- PAC needs to help educate the City Council about the benefit of public arts for the local community and economy, including concrete data about the creative economy
- The PAC would like to find a way to tie in social causes to their 2019 plan
- Imagine Salem did a citywide survey that had a good response and the figures may help to demonstrate accomplishments to the City Council
- Andrews would like to see PAC offer micro-grants to support local festivals (poetry fest, jazz fest, film fest) that are struggling
- Naik Dwyer would like to see more art representing minority groups and their languages, such as featuring the native Naumkeag language. Sullivan envisions this as an exhibit but not necessarily a city initiative.
- The PAC would like to see an Augmented Reality program that gives interaction with local murals
- Liberty introduced the idea of creating a google document that everyone can use to collaborate on ideas

Public Comment

Adjourn

Andrews made the motion to adjourn at 8:25 pm, Ankeny-Beauchamp seconded the motion. Motion to adjourn approved at 8:26