

Public Art Board

May 26, 2011



Members present:

Robert Todd, Chair
Julie Roepnack-Calhoun, Vice-Chair
Jaan Ferree
Nancy Sokolove
Sharon Trammel

Staff present:

Diane Ruggiero, Cultural Arts Superintendent
Christy Bass, Business Services Supervisor
Jenny Bowen, Cultural Arts Specialist

Guests present:

Kitty Love, Arts to People, Downtown Master Plan Cultural Arts sub-committee
David Starkey, Asheville Lyric Opera
Graham Hackett, Asheville Area Arts Council

Robert called the meeting to order at 4:08 pm.

1. Approval of April minutes:

Robert asked if on page 3 of the April minutes the addition of a naturalist to the scope of the board should have been a landscape artist. Robert asked that landscape architect be added to the scope.

Jaan motioned to approve the April minutes. Julie 2nd the motion and all approved unanimously.

2. Urban Trail brick orders:

Diane recapped the topic of the Urban Trail bricks and how they were dug up during the Pack Square construction and in the process some were damaged. There has never been a process for managing the donor bricks and subsequently, there is a form that was created to help track and identify brick orders and donor information. The brick will have 13 characters on 3 lines to identify what the donor would like engraved on the brick. This process will help track bricks and identify when bricks are missing or damaged. The form can be found on the City's website and each brick will cost \$150 to cover the brick, delivery, and money contributed to Urban Trail maintenance fund.

Jaan asked if there will be a way to proof the bricks to ensure that what is being asked for is being delivered. Diane stated that the engraver that will be used can contact staff for clarification on language and spelling corrections. Additionally, due to how the City manages the website, it will not be possible to provide a continuous update or way for donors to check spelling and language of what will be engraved. Diane stated that

although brick orders will be taken throughout the year, there will only be an annual brick order placed to help save on resources and better predict when bricks will be delivered.

Jenny asked how much space is available for bricks. Diane responded that there are currently 150 bricks with space for up to 5000 bricks possible.

Julie motioned to accept the Urban Trail brick donation process. Sharon 2nd the motion and motion passed unanimously.

3. Bus Wraps update:

Diane reminded the board that the bus wrap program was initiated a little over a year ago. The transit department has made a formal request to remove the bus wraps as they are showing wear and tear. It should cost about \$1200 to remove the wraps and while the Transit dept. likes the bus wraps, they are working on the new branding strategy and the bus hybrid program and would like to focus the attention there. Julie asked if the Transit department is interested in doing bus wraps again. Diane responded that the Transit department is working on their mission and hybrid bus program and has not said that they are not interested, just that their focus is on other programs.

Nancy suggested that if the material is usable by artists could this be a possibility when the wraps are being removed. Diane has not heard as to when the bus wraps are scheduled to be removed. The artists will be notified of the wrap removal.

4. Artist Selection Amendment:

Diane stated that this was part of last month's discussion about the budget by City Council. There had been a question posed by the Mayor to create an amendment to define regional artists and what the region will include, to allow an extra effort to be made for local artist's access to public art opportunities. Diane stressed that as calls for artists are made, who would be encouraged and what geographical areas would be included to help show that Asheville is supportive of the arts. Diane stated that she has reached out to her counterparts in Chapel Hill and various art organizations and this request is very common and the language suggested is similar to what is used by other areas and organizations.

Sharon suggested an open call to include artists within a certain radius. Nancy agreed that it is preferred to reach out to local artists and art that is contextual to our region; however there is a benefit to reaching out to artists nationally. Nancy added that at the museum there is a Western North Carolina exhibit that includes art by an artist who was born here but may not live here anymore. Nancy also questioned how this art would compare contextually to an artist who has only lived here for a year or so. This topic will be discussed further at the June meeting.

5. Roles & Responsibilities:

Robert recapped that during the Public Art Board retreat, as a board they are being asked to define the roles and responsibilities as they relate to the PRCA Department, the Downtown Arts Commission and the roles of the Public Art Board. Robert stated that

what the board needs to do is synthesize the existing board policies with the PRCA Master Plan goals. Diane stated that in the draft roles and responsibilities that section one (1) is from the existing policy and sections two (2) through five (5) are the new suggestions. The language used in the new sections is the same as what is currently in the PRCA Department Master Plan.

Robert stated that this proposed roles and responsibilities helps define roles of sub-committees and make best use of the variety of opportunities for public art. Diane stated that there are six (6) focus areas such as marketing, education, advising, advocacy and cultural programming that were added to the draft roles and responsibilities. Cultural programming was not included because that is the overall goal of the Cultural Arts division and the focus areas ultimately would support that goal. Nancy asked if members of a sub-committee are limited to being in Buncombe County. Diane stated that there are no restrictions on where sub-committee members can be drawn from if that is the desire and meeting structures can be adjusted accordingly.

Robert stated that this is a draft and something that can be discussed further. He added that one of the goals he took away from the retreat was to be more proactive.

Kitty Love, Arts to People and part of the Downtown Master Plan Cultural Arts sub-committee, stated that she thinks there should be a board, but not the Public Art Board, that interacts more with the community. Her original goal would be to have a separate commission that is responsible for cultural arts programming in the committee. She added that there is more that could be included in the proposed roles and responsibilities. She asked that board members keep an eye out on what is happening in the community and to be connected to it more.

Robert added that from a festival permitting standpoint, could there be a way for the board to help facilitate more information exchange or the possibility of getting festivals happening. Kitty responded that the issue is bigger than just the permitting and process. There are lots of creative people in the community and there is not a place for conversation with these people to happen. Kitty added that she is hoping for a more synergistic relationship to be created.

Dave Starkey, Asheville Lyric Opera, stated that as a leader of the performing arts and a non-Asheville resident, he would like to be more involved. His relationship with Pack Place forces him to form relationships with organizations like the YMI and Asheville Art Museum and how this is beneficial. Part of his interest lies in the fact that the opera utilizes all forms of art, such as visual, design and performing arts. The history of the opera is rooted in the Cultural Arts. He stated that the word culture defines more than the use of the word public and that there is a voice for the performing arts included in the roles and responsibilities. He stated that where we are all going is actually defined by relationships.

Robert stated that another thing that came out of the retreat, they are looking at how public art is defined more than a piece of art in the community. Nancy added that there

are new members on the board interested in temporary, contemporary art in nature and hopes that the board vision incorporates this more.

Graham Hackett, Director of Asheville Area Arts Council, they are in the process of an organizational redevelopment and excited to be partnering with the City. He suggested that as the board expands their pervue to look at those populations that are not seen or heard as much, such as minority and disadvantaged groups. He added that because there are so many entities with various motivations the need for more communication between the city and creative people is needed. When organizations double the same efforts, it weakens the overall result. He stated that there are many people in the creative sector interested in opening the communication lines as much as possible.

Nancy asked if there was a way for the Public Art Board to have a forum at the various organizations around the community. Diane stated that yes, there is a way by utilizing sub-committee members, or a member of the board attending, however if the entire board was to have a meeting, this would require two (2) weeks lead for public notification of the change of location.

Robert stated that what has been heard from the guests, that we are all on the same page and this draft of the roles and responsibilities is a step in the right direction. Diane asked if this is something that could be addressed at the June meeting so that staff can prepare for when it is presented to City Council. Robert suggested that all members join in via email to have a clear direction and possible name change for the June meeting.

6. Committee Updates:

No updates heard.

7. New Business:

To be discussed at the June meeting: Public Art placement in street round-abouts.

Robert called the meeting to a close at 5:42 pm.