

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

May 1, 2018
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E -109

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Manfredi, Commissioners Gulati, Jackson, Lau Hui, Lewis, Malkin, Wolfeich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Joshua Heim, Scott MacDonald, Department of Planning and Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: Ben Beres, SuttonBeresCuller

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Chairperson Manfredi who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Lewis, who arrived at 4:35 p.m., and Commissioner Wolfeich, who arrived at 4:39 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded was by Commissioner Malkin and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Chair Manfredi called attention to the third paragraph on page 5 and noted in the first sentence the word "fail" should read "hail."

Motion to approve the February 6, 2018, minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Malkin. The motion was seconded was by Commissioner Lau Hui and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Bellwether Program Update

Ben Beres with SuttonBeresCuller reported that all is going well. He said there are about 50 visual artists on board. Of those, 57 percent are female and a third are persons of color. The locations selected include various outdoor sites, Downtown Park, the Bellevue Arts Museum and City Hall.

Arts Program Manager Joshua Heim informed the Commissioners that the dragon project on display at City Hall is by artist Meng Huang who originally was from Hong Kong where he worked in the film industry making costumes and sets. He made his way to the United States and in the early 90s moved into public housing in Seattle's International District where he continued his art utilizing found objects. The dragon on display is the artist's largest work to date.

Mr. Beres said there is an opportunity for a companion piece. Artist Tori Franklin, a silkscreen master who also works with cut paper to create fairy tale-like creatures jumped at the chance to become involved. Her work will involve panels roughly 90 feet long that will become a part of the city's permanent collection.

Mr. Beres said good news was received from the management company that controls Compass Plaza in which permission was given to project onto the Doxa church wall from their site. The idea is to project large videos at night, including an interactive piece. Mr. MacDonald stressed that permission had not yet been received from Doxa church. There have been meetings with representatives of the church and they are on board with the project provided it will not include anything nefarious or controversial.

Mr. Beres said the Bellevue Arts Museum will serve as a main hub. Permission has been received for the entire month of September, with installations to begin in late August. There will be murals in the parking garage and from the second and third floors. One small stage will be set up in Downtown Park and there will be a performance that happens around the ring. A lot of the programming will occur over the two Saturdays, particularly the event-type scenarios.

Chair Manfredi asked about the 50 artists. Mr. Beres said no contracts have been signed up while final permissions from places like Compass Plaza are wrapped up. The easiest venue for swapping in an out is the Bellevue Arts Museum.

Mr. Heim said Commissioner Jackson has been serving as the front person for Bellwether. Currently the consultant team is coming up with a slate of sites and gathering the necessary permissions. Commissioner Jackson will be pulled in once all that is in hand. There is no need to sign artists ahead of having site permissions.

Commissioner Malkin asked how many of the 50 artists are local. Mr. Beres said about 85 percent of the artists are from the Puget Sound area.

Mr. Beres said local artist Troy Pottinger has for the past few years been asking about a graffiti wall. He said he and Mr. Heim met recently with Mr. Pottinger and made the decision to use some of the funding to create a graffiti wall at City Hall on the gray wall that overlooks the light rail construction area. Five or six artists will work together in intertwining their work. Another 60 feet of wall in the parking garage may also be available. The idea behind a graffiti wall is to elevate street art.

Commissioner Gulati said in addition to a flat wall it would be interesting to see graffiti art on the pillars at the transit center. Mr. Beres agreed that that would be amazing. He said to gain permission for that would require talking to Sound Transit.

Commissioner Malkin said he assumed the content of the graffiti art would not be controversial. He asked how that can be assured. Mr. Beres said it will require working individually with each artist. The artists will use the opportunity to portray connections, such as Bellevue to Seattle and the Northwest to the rest of the world. One artist intends to do a collage about the Japanese internment.

Commissioner Jackson added that it certainly will be in the best interest of the artists to refrain from being controversial. If they believe in their art and want to get it out, they will need to shy away from anything offensive.

Chair Manfredi said another location for graffiti art would be the giant green wall on the corner of Main Street and 112th Avenue SE associated with the Sound Transit construction project.

Commissioner Gulati asked if the murals will be permanent or temporary. Mr. Beres said the work at City Hall will be on a temporary wall and once the wall is gone the work will be gone. Commissioner Gulati pointed out that the pillars are not temporary. If they are used there could be a new mural installation every so often. Mr. Beres said programming the pillars could get tricky with regard to the need for more money, more time and more attention. Mr. MacDonald suggested that if the pillars, if utilized, would need to be a project separate from Bellwether.

Mr. Heim said part of the background of pursuing a murals project has included conversations about what a mural program might look like in Bellevue. By including murals as part of Bellwether, it can serve as an opportunity to organization and get the infrastructure together, which is far more complicated than one might think.

Mr. MacDonald said another test location for a mural is the large silver tank where the Rock Bottom used to be at Compass Plaza. The management for Compass Plaza has given its okay to paint on the tank. The tank is slated to be removed later in the fall as the space gets remodeled.

Commissioner Jackson commented that the mural program will be very exciting for Bellevue. Commissioner Lewis agreed and said it will add a lot of life to the city.

B. Community, Culture and Arts Map

Mr. Heim shared with the Commissioners a map born from the Creative Edge project. He said the comprehensive map lists all of the cultural resources in Bellevue that were inventoried as part of the Creative Edge project. The list ranges from art, book and music stores to creative businesses, cultural organizations, education facilities and spaces, faith-based facilities, festivals and events, historic and natural heritage locations, independent artists, public art and monuments, and social services. The driving question behind the Creative Edge project was focused on what Bellevue's niche is. The question led to a need to understand the sum total of what Bellevue has. The map is a byproduct of all that work along with a partnership with the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network which is conducting a feasibility study regarding the need and desire for intercultural programming to advance the city's diversity goals. A part of their methodology, much like Creative Edge, involved cultural mapping. The two separate projects, one about the creative economy and one about diversity, were basically doing the same thing so the decision was made to team up on the mapping work.

Mr. Heim demonstrated the interactivity of the map. He noted that clicking on any cluster returns information about the facility and organizations it contains, which in turn can be clicked on to get to the underlying data. He said the map contains over 1300 cultural resources. The map allows for filtering by type as well, such as individual artists.

Mr. Heim said he rolled out the map at the neighborhoods conference workshop. It will also be unveiled for the Council on May 14. Some cleanup is still needed, and more information will be added.

Commissioner Lau Hui voiced concern over the fact that the map includes the telephone numbers for artists who are included on the map. Mr. Heim clarified that given the source from which the information was drawn indicates the information is already available in the public sphere. He allowed that there have been some talks behind the scenes about blocking such personal information.

Commissioner Jackson suggested the information is particularly valuable for planners and the Council. She said it is often heard that artists cannot afford to live in Bellevue, therefore there is no constituency of the arts in Bellevue. Chair Manfredi concurred. He added that it may be very powerful for the artists who access the map to realize that there are in fact other artists living in Bellevue. Mr. Heim said he estimated that about 85 percent of the information was on the map, which means there are still revisions to be made to it.

Commissioner Gulati commented that because most organizations register with the state, the state may have more information regarding arts and culture groups.

Mr. Heim said in addition to city planning, the map could be used to help neighborhoods find their local identity. Creative Edge has used it to identify more than 900 creative businesses in the city that span a number of different categories, including for-profit companies that focus on the performing arts, such as agents; creative services, which include architecture, design and graphic arts; publishing industries; and information services.

The Commissioners were informed that Spacelabs Northwest, a project of the city of Seattle in partnership with King County, is working to map all cultural spaces. They are tracking space by discipline and has come up with an index to assess the level of each space. Their map allows for searching by neighborhood and also returns demographic information ranging from languages spoken, average income and the nature of the businesses within each neighborhood. Mr. Heim said staff are working with the city's demographer on the goal of attaching to the city's map some similar data. The hope is that that will help the conversation turn to issues around equity, concentrations of cultural opportunities, and correlations between neighborhoods, populations and resources. More broadly, organizations wanting to move down a diversity path for outreach purposes should be able to use the map as a valuable resource to see where the populations are and if there are cultural organizations they may want to partner with.

Commissioner Malkin asked if the Creative Edge project has identified Bellevue's niche. Mr. Heim said it has concluded that Bellevue's niche is arts education across all industries. About half of the non-profits in the city have a core mission to educate, and there are some 70 independents artists and studios that are devoted to arts education, primarily around music.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS – None

6. REPORTS

A. Commissioners' Committee and Lead Reports – As Noted

B. Project Updates from Staff

With regard to the 130th streetscape public art project in Bel-Red, Mr. MacDonald said the key update is that the selected artist will be coming for an open house event hosted by transportation for Bel-Red projects. He wants to talk about his work and the project. He is very interested in music and tying it in with natural phenomena. The artist will also meet with various stakeholders. There will also be a table at the open house to showcase the Bel-Red streetscape plan, though a planning artist will not be on board by the time of the event. The open house will be at the Global Innovation Exchange campus from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Mr. MacDonald reported that *Night Blooming*, which was in storage for a year, has been completed installed at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. The artist Taiji Miyasaki and his construction partner David Drake will be at the Bellevue Botanical Garden for the Mother's Day celebration on May 13 to talk about their work.

Commissioner Wolfeich asked how long the work will be on display at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. Mr. MacDonald said it is intended to be a permanent installation. The work has received very positive reviews. Mr. MacDonald said it is probably one of the best pieces Bellevue has in its collection.

Delight in Green has been taken down from its location on Bellevue Way pending a retrofitting of the bracket to allow for installation on a new pole in Lake Hills.

The Commissioners were informed that the deaccessioned *Life Cycle* work at Chisholm Beach has been removed by the artist who is currently working on developing a replacement using Lebanese Yellow Cedar rather than spruce which was used for the original. The intent of the artist is to rename the work *Return* and have it ready for installation in June.

Mr. MacDonald said the Lattawood Park art and lighting artists Jim Hirschfield and Sonya Ishii are planning to visit Bellevue May 17-19. They hope to tour the city with staff and meet with the remaining Latta family member who lives adjacent to the park. They also intend to host a meet and greet in the park on Saturday, May 19, and possibly may host a meeting that same evening to present their work.

With regard to site reviews for grants, Mr. Heim called attention to several events: May 6, the Sanko Milof troupe performance; May 6 at 3:00 p.m., Bellevue Chamber Chorus; May 6, evening, a theater production by Ivy League; Mother's Day, Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra; May 24, Pacific Northwest Ballet studio rehearsal; May 30 to June 3, Jazz Festival; May 17-June 10 Seattle International Film Festival. Commissioners were asked to volunteer to attend the events and fill out site reviews.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, INFORMATION

- A. Written Correspondence – As Noted
- B. Information – As Noted
 - i. Committees – As Noted

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Manfredi adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.