

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION**

May 14, 2013
Manhattan Beach City Council Chambers
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:21 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Russ Samuels
 Vice Chairperson Nancy Humbarger
 Commissioner James Gill
 Commissioner Peter De Maria

Absent: Commissioner Nancy Dunn

Others Present: Parks and Recreation Director Mark Leyman, Recreation Services
 Manager Gina Allen, Artist Christoph Kapeller, and Recording
 Secretary Krishna Berkes

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the April 9, 2013 meeting were approved with the following amendments:

- Commissioner Gill as liaison for the Greenbelt Master Plan
- Commissioner De Maria as liaison to the Mobility Master Plan
- Correct Clark to Clerk on last page of minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Gill made a motion to approve the minutes of April 9, 2013.
Commissioner Samuels seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioner Samuels, Gill, De Maria

Noes: None

Absent: Commissioner Dunn

Abstain: Commissioner Humbarger

D. CEREMONIAL

Chairperson Russ Samuels presented Vice-Chairperson Nancy Humbarger with a Certificate of Recognition and flowers for the completion of service.

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

12/0911-2 The Architectural Bench Design for the Strand Bench Donation

Recreation Services Manager Gina Allen briefly recapped the Strand Alcove Bench Program presentation to be given to City Council regarding the new “Shell” bench design for the brochure. This was the same presentation she gave in February. She then transitioned to Christoph Kapeller, the artist for the newest proposed bench.

Artist Christoph Kapeller presented the refined proposal for City Council, concentrating on new material and any questions the Council might have, including dimensions of bench, comfort and safety (made full scale cardboard mockup, has pictures with person sitting on bench), weep holes to prevent water pooling, material (glass fiber reinforced concrete –GFRC) and process.

Ms. Allen stated that the proposal going to the City Council is for approval of the design, and within the presentation is the budget and costs for the bench. The Commission may have to present the cost and budget to City Council. Mr. Kapeller stated the budget could be taken out of the presentation; however, that he wished to disclose the manufacturers, their proposals and the offers he received from them, along with other costs. The budget for the new bench is \$16,000. Included in the price is a one-time master cast which would cost \$3,900.

Chairperson Samuels suggested including the budget in the presentation, but not as a City Council cost. The cost would be paid by a buyer of the bench. Vice Chairperson Humbarger suggested having the Commission buy a new bench for public viewing.

Mr. Kapeller brought up another point that City Council might ask for end caps on the new bench design. He only wanted to present it if the City Council asked for it. He preferred to keep the ends open. Chairperson Samuels agreed that he should present the bench as is, but to have the alternative ready if City Council asked for it. Mr. Kapeller also stated he could bring the full sized mock up to the presentation but did not recommend it. Chairperson Samuels agreed that the pictures in the presentation were adequate, and not to bring the mock up.

Mr. Kapeller stated that the color of the bench may vary in mixing. He would also introduce a new model of the bench with grooves at the City Council meeting.

Regarding cost in the presentation, Chairperson Samuels wanted to get the design approved first and into the brochure before asking the City Council to approve buying a bench. Vice Chairperson Humbarger suggested the design and purchase of the bench should be asked for at the same time.

Regarding the presentation to City Council, Commissioner Gill inquired on whether the small gap at the back ledge of the bench would be comfortable. Mr. Kapeller stated that the gap had to be there and that it is comfortable. Commissioner Gill also inquired if the bench would have sealant. He also wanted to know if the bench would fade. Mr. Kapeller stated there would be no sealer, and the bench would not fade.

Commissioner De Maria commented that the Commission should only present the new bench design to City Council one time, and that the full cost of the bench at \$16,000 should be included, but with no required funds from City Council. All buyers should purchase the bench at the same \$16,000. Any surplus funds incurred from additional purchases should be put into a reserve to maintain the benches in the future.

Commissioner De Maria suggested purchasing a bench with the Public Art Trust Fund.

The presentation to City Council will be June 4, 2013.

Chairperson Samuels opened for Public Comment.

Manhattan Beach Resident Mr. Gary McAulay questioned the artist regarding the color of the bench and whether he intended the color to match the pier railings. Mr. Kapeller stated the color choice is a reflection of the ocean color at certain times of the day.

Mr. McAulay also commented that from the artist's drawings in the presentation that the bench is intended to seat two people one way and one person the other way. He inquired if City Council would be able to view the various 3-D cross sections on paper and be satisfied that it is a comfortable bench. He also stated he would not buy a bench out of a catalog unless he could sit on it. It was a question he thought the City Council might have.

Mr. Kapeller reported that he would make sure the bench is comfortable. He also stated he would have a model for City Council to view.

Chairperson Samuels closed Public Comment.

The Commission suggested that the artist have a sample of the bench material at the City Council meeting so members could view it in the sunlight.

Recreation Services Manager, Gina Allen inquired if the Commission wanted to have a discussion on the purchase of the bench. Chairperson Samuels, Vice Chairperson Humbarger, and Commissioner De Maria already had commented. Commissioner Gill suggested the Commission should get the bench in the catalog and approved first by City Council. The money should be a separate issue as to what the Commission wants to do. He stated that the City should pay for the \$3,900 up front cost in order to reduce the cost of the bench. They would be able to make it back over the next several purchases. He did not support spending \$16,000 to buy a bench.

MOTION: Vice Chairperson Humbarger made a motion to purchase a "Shell" bench for the City. Commissioner De Maria seconded the motion.

Ayes: Vice Chairperson Humbarger, Commissioner De Maria

Noes: Chairperson Samuels, Commissioner Gill

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Dunn

The motion was not approved.

MOTION: Commissioner De Maria a made motion to present to City Council the proposal that the Cultural Arts Commission purchase a \$16,000 “Shell” bench at the June 6, 2013 City Council meeting. Commissioner Humbarger second the motion.

Ayes: Commissioner De Maria, Vice Chairperson Humbarger

Noes: Commissioner Gill, Chairperson Samuels

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Dunn

The motion was not approved.

13/0801-3 Ansel Adams Exhibition

No update. The Commission filed this item.

13/0208-1 Sculpture Garden

Recreation Services Manager, Gina Allen stated she wanted to review the invitation letter to artists first and touch base with Parks and Recreation Director Mark Leyman before giving it to the City Attorney and bringing it to the Commission. She had not gotten the list of artists, but would send it in an email to Commission once available. Ten artists will be selected. The design will be open to not only “pot and pole” designs.

Commissioner De Maria shared the Urban Revitalization Project presentation to expand on the Sculpture Garden. He approached the American Institute of Architects (AIA) of the Long Beach/South Bay chapter to host a competition that would focus on this plan, called the “Manhattan Beach Green” (Green). The future sculpture garden would be located along this Green that extends from Metlox on 12th Street all the way to Manhattan Avenue. The idea was to close 12th Street down to any vehicular traffic, except for Manhattan Avenue, Highland Avenue and Morningside, and to reduce parking along 12th Street. He proposed using the AIA to get initial studies done or host a student competition over three or four months, so no city funds are used.

Commissioner Gill inquired if the suggestion was to have the Commission give the AIA approval to start the studies. He also inquired if approved, would it then go to City Council for approval. Commissioner De Maria did not believe the Commission would need to approach City Council since no city funds were being used. He would simply present the ideas from the students to the Commission. He suggested combining the Green with the Sculpture Garden, using the block between Center Place and 12th Street, effectively tearing down the parking structure and the whole block to Manhattan Avenue. The businesses that backed up to Center Place would be backing up to a Green as opposed to the parking garage.

Commissioner De Maria requested that the Commission approve the proposal. Commissioner Gill stated that the idea was bold, nonetheless, since it had not cost involved, he was open to having the AIA present ideas.

Vice Chairperson Humbarger also approved of the proposal.

Commissioner Gill stated that something needed to be done ahead of time to alleviate the uproar of the businesses affected by the proposal. He suggested that the City Attorney look at the proposal first before the Commission approved it.

Ms. Allen suggested that the proposal be a separate item to the Sculpture Garden. She would discuss it with Mr. Leyman.

The Commission agreed to agendize the proposal. The Urban Revitalization issue will now be separate from the Sculpture Garden and will have a separate agenda item.

Chairperson Samuels opened for Public Comment.

Manhattan Beach Resident Mr. McAully appreciated Commissioner De Maria's grand plan concept. He could envision the proposal as an art student project, although what was proposed was to change downtown. This would be an enormously big undertaking. He stated that there may be support, but there would also be a lot of opposition. Parking would be a big problem and he did not believe turning downtown into open space was wise when the City already had the beach. Even at a surface level this would tie up City staff.

Chairperson Samuels closed Public Comment.

13/0208-2 Stair Case

Commissioner De Maria recapped the proposal made by the architectural firm designing the stair cases to the beach two weeks ago. The firm touched on the challenge of making the stairs ADA compliant. Aesthetics were barely discussed. Instead, discussion focused on satisfying handicap requirements using sturdy materials. The California State Long Beach presentation by students solved most problems brought up in the meeting. They recommended adding plants to make a living wall. They brought up compelling ideas on how the city should be embracing nature that is at the beach. He agreed that any design should be natural and low-key, and something you see when you look back from the ocean.

Recreation Services Manager, Gina Allen stated she would request a meeting between the Commission and architectural firm to discuss all of their design ideas, to give feedback, and possibly contribute Cultural Arts funds to help pay for designs. The Commission will then communicate with City Council on the outcome. She will get back to the Commission with an update.

13/0512-1 Library Civic Art Relocation

The Los Angeles County Library System is looking to relocate the mural on the outside wall of the Manhattan Beach Library. The County identified the outside wall to the entrance of the parking lot at City Hall as the new site for the artwork. The City Manager asked for approval from the Cultural Arts Commission. The County will donate the mural to the City, pay for removal and replacement of the mural. The mural will be removed in June and relocated in July. Recreation Services Manager, Gina Allen stated that the County wanted the mural to be near the library.

The Commission took a five minute recess to see the mural and proposed new site at the City Hall parking lot.

The Commission resume at 8:28pm.

Chairperson Samuels opened for Public Comment.

Manhattan Beach Resident Mr. McAulay inquired on who the artist was and whether the city should wait for better artwork. He inquired if it was necessary that the city take the artwork from the county.

Chairperson Samuels closed Public Comment.

Ms. Allen reported that the mural artist was Lee Whitten and the piece, Sea and Sand Motif, was commissioned in 1975. It was dedicated to the artist's father.

Vice Chairperson Humbarger approved of moving the artwork, but would also include a plaque to note it as a historical piece of art.

Commissioner De Maria also approved of the artwork move. However, he also requested to salvage the fossil artwork located in front of City Hall.

MOTION: Chairperson Samuels moved to relocate the library mural artwork. Commissioner De Maria seconded the motion.

Ayes:	Chairperson Samuels, Vice Chairperson Humbarger, Commissioner De Maria, Commissioner Gill
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Commissioner Dunn

The motion was approved.

The Commission will include the status of the fossil artwork on next month's agenda. The Commission will look into relocating the artwork.

Vice Chairperson Humbarger suggested recreating and updating a map of the City's artwork that used to exist. Ms. Allen suggested that it should be a brochure.

Commissioner De Maria reported that he attended the meeting at the county office regarding the artwork going inside the new library. He and Mayor David Lesser were able to speak with the artist (who has not been disclosed yet). He felt assured that it would be a smooth transition with the artist.

Chairperson Samuels wanted to maintain communication with the City Council regarding the artwork *Light Gate*, which is scheduled to go right outside the new library. It was designed and created for a very specific location. The Commission wanted to stand by the original location of the piece. Chairperson Samuels requested the *Light Gate* location be added to next month's agenda up for confirmation and give it to City Council, stressing that it is very location dependent.

Item will be titled *Light Gate Progress Report*. The City Attorney will review it with Risk Management regarding the location. All concerns will be brought up at the next meeting.

G. REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Gill and De Maria reported they attended the MCHS Congressional Art competition at the Cultural Arts Center. U.S. Representative Henry Waxman was also in attendance. Commissioner Gill reported that the artwork was very impressive. Commissioner De Maria was one of the judges.

Commissioner Gill reported that ARTS Manhattan would be having an exhibit named "Light Knots" curated by Homeria Goldstein starting May 23rd at the Manhattan Beach Creative Arts Center.

Commissioner Gill also attended one of the Greenbelt Strategic Plan meetings. He reported that the majority opinion was to keep the Greenbelt the same and keep it natural. There was a suggestion of boulders as seating, and discussion of plant selection and maintenance. There was no consensus at this time. The report is on the City's website.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:09pm.