

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

January 10, 2018  
Manhattan Beach City Hall, City Council Chambers  
1400 Highland Avenue  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Gill called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairperson Gill, May, Manna and Chase  
Absent: Prigozhin, Rubino

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None**

**D. CEREMONIAL – None**

**E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit) -**

Chair Gill opened the floor to public comment.

Trek Thunder Kelly, artist – posed the idea of two giant wave murals leading down to the pier on either side of Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He suggested two waves pouring down Manhattan Beach Boulevard with the caption, “Where there’s a will, there’s a wave.” He mentioned the possibility of augmented reality where people can point their phones at the waves and they will see the waves pouring down.

The floor was closed to public comment.

**F. STAFF ITEMS**

Cultural Arts Manager, Martin Betz recommended cancelling the regularly scheduled January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The February meeting will be rescheduled for February 26<sup>th</sup> due to the Presidents Day holiday.

**G. GENERAL BUSINESS**

Skechers Mural presentation – Rachel Rodi, artist commissioned to design the mural for the Skechers renovation spoke. Manager Betz recommended looking at the project as two different sections, Manhattan Avenue and Manhattan Beach Boulevard. The Manhattan Avenue portion is of the most urgent need to address.

Ms. Rodi is a mosaic artist based in Oakland, California, focused on large scale public space projects and commercial projects. This project uses stained glass as the medium for the mosaics. Her first inspiration is the pier and roundhouse aquarium at sunset. The Manhattan Avenue mosaic will be 16.5 ft wide by 6 ft 2 inches high. The mural foreshadows the pier as you cannot see the pier from Manhattan Avenue. The pier mural has already been built due to some miscommunication, but has not been installed.

The underwater theme for the Manhattan Beach boulevard mosaic is based on inspiration from the Roundhouse Aquarium. The current design is a close up view of the kelp forest to depict the

local wildlife. She described the process of using different colors and materials for different lightplay.

Manager Betz reiterated the past concerns of the commission and past public comments.

- One concern is that the basic look of the mural looks like every other underwater scene in the South Bay
- Relationship between Manhattan Beach and the underwater scene which does not necessarily connect with Manhattan Beach life

Chair Gill voiced that the commission was presented with drawings and couldn't really connect with the pencil drawings.

Commissioner Chase likes the choice of materials for sun reflection and liked the photo of the waves on the posts.

Commissioner Manna stated that he is not a mosaic person and has an issue with the Manhattan Beach Boulevard mural not occupying the whole wall and looking like a picture on a wall. He is fine with the Manhattan Avenue pier mosaic. He questions whether there should be two mosaics. He stated that Manhattan Beach is not necessarily an underwater community.

Commissioner May stated that she felt that the mosaic design looks too simplistic. She questioned if it would be an advertisement for the aquarium. The Skechers representative stated that the intention is for the mural to foreshadow the aquarium experience and to be a picture taking opportunity for parents and children. She stated she felt that such an iconic wall should have a more dynamic design.

Commissioner Gill asked how many public projects Ms. Rodi has done. She replied that she has done about 40 pieces. He asked if the mural could be backlit. Ms. Rodi replied that under the current proposal, the pieces would be mounted directly on the wall and would not be backlit.

Commissioner Gill thanked Ms. Rodi for bringing in samples materials as the drawings conveyed a more simplistic picture and the samples help to give a better idea as to the color quality of the piece.

Commissioner Gill opened the floor to public comment.

Deanne Chase, resident offered her comments. She stated that she likes the mosaic designs but agrees that the Manhattan Beach Boulevard mosaic seems to have a lot of empty space on the wall and should be more proportionate. She likes the idea of the undersea theme as long as the connection is made to the aquarium.

Gary McAuley, resident – wanted to tag along with the no undersea camp, waves are better. If undersea, he believes that it should be a local undersea theme. He wants to ensure that this is not a Catalina scene and is a Manhattan Beach scene.

The commissioners discussed the various aspects of the designs.

Commissioner Chase liked the smaller pier design for Manhattan Avenue but thought that the underwater scene could be reconsidered.

Commissioner Manna acknowledged Mr. McAuley's desire for the undersea theme to be accurate but questioned whether most people would know the difference between an underwater

Catalina scene vs. an underwater Manhattan Beach scene. He is more concerned about whether the underwater theme itself is the most appropriate.

Commissioner May mentioned that Manhattan Beach has one of the largest sand dollar beds in the state right at the pier.

Chair Gill stated that this presentation is more of a formality. He stated that it is difficult to know what the pieces will look like in the end as the renderings can't accurately reflect the actual materials that will be used. He would like to see the two buildings communicating a unified theme and that it would be great to try to work with the building on the other side of Manhattan Beach Boulevard for complimentary pieces.

Commissioner Manna moved to approve the mosaic on Manhattan Avenue. Commissioner May seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote (4:0:0:2)

Commissioner May stated that if the picture could be more dynamic with better colors and shading and inclusion of sand dollars, it may be good.

The Skechers representative stated that there are financial implications if a decision is not made on this night.

Commissioner Gill moved to approve the mosaic to face Manhattan Beach Boulevard with the hope that some of the commissions suggestions will be incorporated. Commissioner Manna seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ayes: Chair Gill, Commissioners Manna and Chase

Noes: Commissioner May

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioners Prighozin and Rubino

#### **H. COMMISSION ITEMS**

Commissioner Gill reminded the commission of the FOLA event that is coming up Sunday January 28<sup>th</sup> and the Lightgate Sunset will be on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **I. ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:40 P.M, Chair Gill adjourned the meeting to the regular meeting at 6:00 P.M. on February 26, 2018 in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue and there being no objections, it was so ordered.