

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

October 19, 2020

Meeting by teleconference (Zoom) – in accordance with procedures on agenda
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Davis, Ibaraki, Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan

Absent: None

Staff present: Eilen Stewart, Interim Cultural Arts Manager (ICAM), Linda Robb, (Host Participant); and Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 21, 2020

ICAM Stewart pointed out on page 3, paragraphs two and five need revising where staff provided inaccurate info regarding project valuation, and its relationship to project approval. **ICAM Stewart** clarified that all projects, regardless of their valuation must be approved by the City Council, however any resource (equipment, staffing, etc.) that is required to carry out a project, if costing \$5, 000 or more, must go through a competitive bidding process.

Commissioner Rubino requested that the two Work Plan items agendized under “Commission Items” - MBAC Beautification and the Virtual Performing Arts Exhibition Outline - be moved up from to “General Business - Work Plan Items”. **ICAM Stewart** advised against because such would violate meeting/agenda procedures and she doesn’t think those projects are ready for final discussion/vote. When the Committee is done with all background work, then the item would be agendized under General Business and staff will provide a staff report.

Commissioner Rubino disagreed, in that these are work plan projects that she feels should be able to be discussed under the “Work Plan Items”, General Business portion of the agenda. **ICAM Stewart** explained these projects would go under General Business when the Commission is ready to vote to refer a recommendation to City Council.

Chair Ryan redirected the discussion back to approval of the minutes.

It was moved and seconded (Ryan/Marcy) to approve the minutes, with the stated changes on page 3.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Davis, Ibaraki, Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Chair Ryan stated that the motion passed (6-0).

D. CEREMONIAL – None

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit) - None

F. GENERAL BUSINESS – Discussion of Work Plan Items

Chair Ryan stated that she looked at how the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) meetings are managed and found that PRC has been able to limit its meetings to one hour by focusing its discussion (e.g. information and action needed) and she suggested that the CAC, with similar focus, might be able to complete business and end in 1.5 hours. She commented that today the MBAC Beautification and Virtual Performing Arts Exhibition Outline items may require more detailed discussion, while other projects may need only updates and specific input.

Chair Ryan called for a report on the 5 Work Plan items, with focus on feedback needed.

1. Utility Box Beautification Round 2 (Davis/Marcy): Commissioner Marcy displayed a PowerPoint presentation and discussion ensued with the following main points made:

- a. Timeline: will need to be revised/finetuned, but aiming for CAC recommendation by year-end, RFP Jan. '21, Commission selection Feb. '21, Council approval March '21; install Apr '21. APPC (Art in Public Places Committee review TBD (raised by Chair Ryan).
- b. Cost: \$18k est. 12 boxes, including \$500 artist stipend. \$16k allocated, options include increasing funding or cut cost (fewer locations) – can leave up to City Council.
- c. Theme: “Diversity and Lifestyle” - tie diversity into MB beach lifestyle; marketing plan highlighting one box location per month w/focus on context and significance.
- d. Locations: 12 scattered throughout City, including prominent locations in El Porto-North End. 12 boxes fit in with marketing plan for monthly stories.
- e. RFP: to be simplified and more visually appealing, to South Bay artists, preference to Manhattan Beach residents w/strong community ties; may need to re-bid for a vendor for installations (requires more time).
- f. Next steps: ICAM Stewart will review RFP; update map of utility box locations: already wrapped vs. those being proposed for Round 2; determine priority (in case Council doesn't increase funding, and alternate locations (in case Council disagrees with CAC first choices). At next available CAC meeting, ICAM Stewart will agendaize under General Business, prepare a staff report; Commission will give final feedback including locations (1st and 2nd choices) and vote on a recommendation. When submitted to City Council – include map of box locations: existing, first choices, second choices. Prior to next CAC meeting, committee to send ICM Stewart list of all locations to be mapped.

2. Sculpture Garden (Manna/Ryan). Chair Ryan commented that the Committee still needs to meet, meanwhile her understanding is that pending actions include installing a couple pieces (going away from “pot and pole” – working with Public Works), and figuring out a process to determine whether some works should be refurbished or retired. She clarified the term “sculpture garden” does not refer to a specific location, but means all the public sculptures in the City in various locations.

Chair Ryan pointed out that this is an example of a project that is an already approved Work Plan item that belongs under “General Business” in that its already pretty organized and progressed but other projects still need to be “built out” and should be discussed under “Commission Items”.

3. City Murals (Manna/Ibaraki): Commissioner Manna reported that no significant progress has been made as they are waiting for direction from the City Attorney on some issues; discussion focused on mural locations primarily around Civic Center; Commissioner Manna noted that he and Commissioner Rubino have discussed that one or more murals in this item may become part of the Art Center enhancement item where new murals have been suggested. But, currently there are three already installed murals and two that are pending - Bo Bridges works on City Hall wall facing library and on parking structure on 12th Street. ICAM Stewart clarified that these locations were chosen by City Council

and that the City Hall wall installation will involve removal of shrubs and replanting with drought tolerant grasses matching other landscaping in that area and this will improve the visibility of that piece on the wall.

4. Art Assessment/Conservation (Davis/Ryan): Chair Ryan noted that a list of the art assets has been put out by ICAM Stewart; ICAM Stewart noted that she would like to go over the list and edit as needed and resubmit to the Committee, that will be done and she can discuss with the Committee the next steps; the Committee discussed their availability in the next week.

5. Art Grants (Rubino/Marcy): Commissioner Rubino stated that there is no new info to report.

G. STAFF ITEMS

1. Cultural Arts Division Updates: ICAM Stewart discussed and clarified the significance of project budget of \$5k or more: that when any resources meet or exceed this amount, then staff must utilize a competitive bidding process to procure. This corrects information given at the last (Sept 21) meeting.

ICAM Stewart reported that the Fall exhibit “Form and Movement”, the work of sculptor Simon Ouwerkerk is now installed; the exhibit starts October 16 and will be virtually available; staff is also looking into: whether they can set up an informal walk-through of an outdoor gallery – with face masking/social distancing and putting together a craft kit related to the exhibit that can be purchased. Interim Cultural Arts Supervisor Eric Brinkman is working diligently on the ceramic studio subscription program - maybe offer more open lab sessions and other online subscription classes; **Staff will send info to CAC.** Chair Ryan noted this could be something that the Marketing Committee could publicize.

ICAM Stewart mentioned that a County voting box that has been installed at the rear of the Art Center near the curb adjacent to the parking lot and it is expected to remain for some time. Brief discussion ensued in that on one hand it in a way advertises the Center via voting, but on the other hand it is occupying a space that is being looked at by the Center enhancement committee. **ICAM Stewart will check into what options are available.**

2. PATF Budget Update: ICAM Stewart reported that the fund still has \$2.1 million with \$750,5000 allocated and there’s no expirations till the end of 2023. A brief discussion followed about whether the City has a way to predict the fund balance i.e. when new projects get building permits and pay into the fund. ICAM Stewart indicated that usually staff doesn’t have an indication – an exception was during construction of Manhattan Village Shopping Center – when the contractor applied for the first big building permit, that could be a signal that all the related permits will be coming in.

3. City Council Updates: ICAM Stewart reported: 1) breaking news: the North End BID is having an artist create/donate a sculpture to them; the installation location is 35th Street/Highland; staff is already communicating with artists, the BID and once finalized at the staff level (including estimating costs to the City) it will come to the CAC for a Council recommendation. The review by the CAC will be regarding the visual merit. Once approved by Council it will be installed and added to the collection of City cultural assets; and 2) the street banner policy is delayed at the council level for 3-6 months but this doesn’t mean that the CAC can’t move forward with its banner plan – just means that the policy is as currently stated which allows for pole banners and for right now, in budgeting for, say the banner component of the Art Center enhancement, include costs for: the banner fabrication, the installation and the cost of the hardware.

Staff member Linda Robb explained the Council’s intent on delaying the banner issue – that on November 4th they will be considering a COVID-19 related initiative, Local Love, where various business groups are coming together to present a proposal from a joint work group (North End BID, Downtown business

Association, Manhattan Village mall, and MB Chamber of commerce) to do a local business promotion whereby the City would be blanketed with city business support banners. The Council didn't want to approve a policy that approved 30 poles and then immediately go against it and put 100 of them up. So, they will consider the business initiative proposal first before the overall city wayfinding program for pole banners.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS

1. Rainbow Sidewalk - Commissioner Marcy presented on this item, with a PowerPoint, making the following main points:

- Proposal: City to sponsor a colorful “Rainbow Sidewalk” project comprised of crosswalks for the 4 “legs” of intersection on MBB/Peck or MBB/Redondo Avenue.
- Purpose: to communicate that the City of MB is all-welcoming, all-inclusive, and abides by One-Human Family spirit.
- Timeline: goal to install in time for June, 2021 that month being “LGBT+ month”.
- Budget: \$40k - \$140k (depending on design and number of sidewalks)
- Design: Many different types, see examples: West Hollywood, San Diego, Venice Ca, San Francisco, and many other cities throughout the nation.
- Research: CAC Committee has researched various city’s projects including date, number of walks, cost, funding strategy and technical issues (e.g. safety, maintenance).
- Project category: New Work Plan item, or Community Grant project.

The Commission provided feedback; key discussion topics included: project timeline; importance of diversity, location and cost/durability. Commissioner Marcy explained that for West Hollywood, San Francisco, and other cities, implementation was facilitated by prior study and approval by California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS), which deemed it safe due to incorporation of white limit lines and having the white limit lines does not preclude vibrant colors. Commissioner Marcy acknowledged that the design, location etc. will require review and approval by the City engineering and traffic staff. The Commission believed the location at a park, near the middle school appropriate.

The Commission came to a consensus, unanimously supporting the concept, with emphasis that the project should be a type and design that maintains durability as well as vibrancy, and the City should start with one intersection with the possibility that it could be done in other locations as well. It was determined that the next step would be for ICAM Stewart to work with Chair Ryan in composing a letter to Council explaining the project urgency, importance and tie-in to City diversity. ICAM Stewart will also work with Director Leyman and staff member Linda Robb, to chart a course, convening the Art in Public Places Committee (APPC) and subsequent scheduling for City Council to consider approving as a new CAC Work Plan item (instead of an art grants program because that program has not yet been set up).

It was moved and seconded (Rubino/Manna) to conceptually approve adding a Rainbow Sidewalk project, as presented, to the CAC’s current Work Plan.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Davis, Ibaraki, Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan.
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Chair Ryan declared that the motion passed (6-0); she congratulated Commissioner Marcy on a great job and noted that he may be called upon to attend a council meeting with her.

Slightly more discussion was held in which it was suggested by Commissioner Manna that this could tie in to the work of the Bruce's Beach Task Force.

2. MBAC Beautification Plan Proposal – Commissioner Rubino presented a PowerPoint “Current Art Center Façade and Grounds” describing the Committee’s proposal, with the caveat that the three phases are conditional and the scope can be changed. Her main points were:

- Three phases of work: 1: Clean up, minor repair e.g. vinyl mural; 2: Signs and mural; and 3: Creation of sculpture garden, MBAC façade upgrade
- Phase 1 includes: landscape cleanup, building power wash, temp pole banners, advertising CAC events (6-month timeline)
- Phase 2 includes: MBAC identifying signs, directional signs, and murals in strategic places. (includes moving the existing low-scale pole sign in front to back and a new front eye-catching vibrant sign). (12-month timeline)
- Phase 3 includes hiring a consultant(s), to design landscape treatments for a sculpture garden on the exterior and upgrade the Center façade. (2-3 year timeline)
- Next Steps: to Obtain feedback and move forward with three phases described (may overlap).

Commissioner Rubino explained the phases are progressive but overlapping and for all items, the City must stay within the parameters of the arts trust fund by being centered around art (e.g. the 3rd phase landscape design work would be eligible if supporting a sculpture garden and the architectural design, if supporting the Van Hammersveld mural. Commissioner Rubino showed photos of the Center’s exterior and the need for cleanup and landscape repair/maintenance. The temp pole banners would be on Manhattan Beach Blvd, ideally from Aviation to Sepulveda and minimally, adjacent to the Center. The new sign at the front could be something really simple or more eye-catching like neon – there’s a lot of leeway. Commissioner Rubino noted five locations where murals could be installed.: 1) wall behind fountain; 2) back wall (may include Manhattan Heights Park); 3) Front of building between windows (Sign/mural combo?); 4) Back (interior) parking lot wall; and 5) “Dragon Tale Wall” (low wall may require removal). Commissioner Rubino noted that the murals and the landscaping/architectural conceptualizations from consultants should coordinate the sculpture garden with the landscaping and be a way of attracting people to the center and likewise those at the center for a specific event (exhibit) would enjoy the landscaping and grounds and want to come back. By upgrading the building façade and improving the lighting – there would be better continuity from indoor to outdoor space.

Chair Ryan opened the floor to Commission feedback, questions. With the following discussions:

- Davis: can the median on MBB be used for sculptures? ICAM Stewart indicated that she doubts that due to the fact that many of the sculptures are more three dimensional not thin and vertical and if in the median, the sculpture would be open to being hit by a runaway car. Minimally, the CAC would have to work with Public Works and Building and Safety. Commissioner Manna added a concern that the City may not want to encourage people to go across the street, attracted to a sculpture in the median and it is hard to get people to use the crosswalks at the intersections.
- Marcy: three main thoughts: 1) can some tasks be moved from phase three to one; and 2) can move pole banners to phase three; and 3) could the center be rebranded and called “Manhattan Beach Arts and Multi-cultural Center?”
- Davis: Can the City include a power washing service for not only the building but all the outdoor art pieces? ICAM Stewart responded that she thought this would be possible and this is something that would be part of a maintenance plan, through the Art Assessment project, but the time line for both projects would have to be synchronized – that might be difficult and she thinks it might work better to put the Art Center beautification at the forefront. They might be able to discuss this

with Public Works, but if all works in the city are to be cleaned, that would be a much larger conversation.

Chair Ryan summed up that in general there is agreement with the project as presented but some refinement needs to be made as to what each phase will involve and then this project would be ready for a staff report and forward to the City Council.

Brief discussion continued; ICAM Stewart clarified that the project phases are well defined but more items can be possibly added in; at the present, items included are those that absolutely must be done and are first priorities.

Commissioner Rubino stated that the Committee will come back for a vote and will include things mentioned to possibly be added. Chair Ryan commented that she thought it appropriate that the Committee refine both the items in each phase and who would do, and bring back to a meeting where the Commission would vote on taking to Council; then the staff report would be written and on to Council.

ICAM Stewart commented that upon further reflection, this is an item that could have been under General Business in that it has progressed to the point where a recommendation can be formulated for Council. She suggests the best course of action is to have a hybrid approach, to propose to Council a multi-phased approach and that phase one also be refined based on comments made tonight. She will consult with staff and the Director Leyman on how to do a more defined phase one and more fluid phases two and three.

It was moved and seconded (Manna/Marcy) that the MB Art Center Beautification project, as presented, minus pole banners taken out of phase one (done later) - advance to the City Council.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Davis, Ibaraki, Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan.
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Chair Ryan announced that the motion has passed.

4. Virtual Performing Arts Exhibition Proposal.

Commissioner Marcy updated on the project, noting:

- ICAM Stewart has advised that based on feedback staff has gotten - projecting a recorded performance onto a public wall, even on a loop, would attract too many people under Covid-19 conditions.
- The proposal has been revised to be a solicitation of artists of all types of performances, to submit videos for a virtual show.
- The Committee and ICAM Stewart will review submissions and narrow down – preference will be given to MB artists.
- No permits required.
- Timeline will be refined – goal is to have the premiere in March 2021.
- Budget: Less than \$5K

There was a brief discussion and it was subsequently moved and seconded (Manna/Marcy) that the presented Performing Arts Project proposal be advanced to a recommendation to the City Council at the next CAC meeting.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Davis, Ibaraki, Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan.
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Chair Ryan announced that the motion has passed.

Chair Ryan asked if there were any other items to be discussed.

Commissioner Marcy raised the issue as to how the CAC members and their work can become known to the community – would be a good way to get feedback; and there are many artists in the City who could get a spotlight.

Chair Ryan endorsed the idea and suggested it could be considered in her and Commissioner Davis’ marketing committee and she also reminded that the “Did you know?” media concept is a good way to get the word out. Commissioner Manna noted it would be great to get Councilmember Napolitano more involved to promote the cultural arts programs.

In closing, ICAM Stewart thanked all for their hard work and great ideas and responded to Commissioner Marcy’s question about educating the public about the Commissioners by indicating that this issue has come up in the past, and the introduction of the CAC’ers typically is done at openings of exhibits and special events. Chair Ryan thanked ICAM Stewart for her support.

I. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:03 P.M, Chair Ryan, seeing no objection, adjourned the meeting to November 18, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom.