

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

November 16, 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: Mark Leyman (Parks and Recreation Director) Eilen Stewart, Interim Cultural Arts Manager (ICAM), Ginna Muzingo, Cultural Arts Division staff (Host Participant); and Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - October 19, 2020

Recording Secretary Lackow noted a typo to be removed: Page 1, 3rd paragraph under “Approval of Minutes” in the second line after “Work Plan Items” - strike “and”. With this change, it was moved and seconded (**Ryan/Rubino**) to approve the minutes as submitted.

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

Parks and Recreation Director Mark Layman addressed the Commission and commented that: he appreciates the hard work the Commission is doing; he reminded all of the challenges to staffing in that there are vacancies, but Eilen Stewart is filling in well as the Interim Cultural Arts Manager as are Eric in the Supervisor role and Ginna in the Coordinator role; it's a really exciting time as many projects are progressing; he knows the Commission will be developing a Work Plan and prioritizing projects; he reminded that while staff is doing an excellent job, resources are strained, and this situation will likely remain as is until the next fiscal year (July, 2021). He concluded by assuring that he and the staff team (Eilen as the lead contact) are available, especially if information is needed on how to prioritize staff resources.

Commissioner Rubino thanked **Director Leyman** and noted that the Commission appreciates that the staff team is very small and hopes positions can be filled as soon as possible.

Director Leyman informed that the joint meeting with the City Council has been scheduled for Monday January 4th.

Chair Ryan announced the Commission would now review each of the existing Work Plan items, discuss and prioritize them. She shared preliminary thoughts as to the ratings and the reasons behind “A”, “B”, and “C” ratings. **Chair Ryan** mentioned that having met with **Director Leyman** and **ICAM Stewart**, she has a better idea of what is realistic for the new Work Plan. In prioritizing, consideration should be given to perhaps pushing back some projects given staffing challenges, as she assumes the Commission does not want to be spending a lot of time on items that cannot be executed.

ICAM Stewart assumed the floor and went through the list of preliminarily ranked projects, organized in three categories: 2020 Approved CAC Work Plan, Items Outstanding from previous Work Plans, and Additional Projects that were not on the Work Plan, but came to the list via initiative action. The highest ranked projects (A) are those that are already underway (at least half done) and it made sense to keep those going to get to completion; however, this is not completely rigid - if there is a compelling reason, a project that is underway can be paused, or a project that is not underway but there is much passion for, can be reprioritized and moved up.

ICAM Stewart, sharing a word doc, briefly touched on each of the following 17 projects, including their preliminary rankings, with input from **Director Leyman**. Projects were grouped by where they originated.

2020 Approved CAC Work Plan (3 projects)

1. MBAC Revamp: **B**
2. Performing Arts Campaign – Virtual Performance: **C**
3. PR and Marketing Campaign: **A-** (essential in providing visibility for other projects)

Outstanding CAC Prior Approved Work Plan items (8 projects)

4. Sculpture Garden: **C** (on hold with PWD due to Covid work constraints)
5. Utility Box Beautification: **A-** (able to accomplish in Covid)
6. Citywide Murals: **C** (Covid constraints)
7. Arts Grants: **A-** (can go forward - incorporate murals into grants)
8. Citywide Arts Assessment: **C** (a lot of work not done yet)
9. City Hall Lobby Art: **A** (going to Council tomorrow)
10. AC Conner Exhibition: **A** (already in progress no Covid constraints)
11. Historical Archiving: **A** (ongoing, no end date)

Additional Public Art Initiatives (6 projects)

12. Bo Bridges Murals: **A** (already underway)
13. Catalina Classic Sculpture: **B/C** (private group initiative, a lot needs to be done)
14. North End BID Sculpture: **B** (artist has made proposal, location selected)
15. Scramble Crosswalk Artwork: **A** (MBB at Highland, and Manhattan Ave. – CA staff jumped in, high CC priority)
16. Rainbow Crosswalk: **B/C** (needs CC approval)
17. Bruce’s Beach Artwork: **C/D** (preemptive place holder; ad hoc committee to work on)

The A ranking (8) includes: PR/Marketing, Utility Boxes, Arts Grants, City Hall Lobby, AC Conner Exhibition, Historical Archiving, Bo Bridges Murals, and the Scramble Crosswalk (2 downtown), **the B rankings (2)** include: Art Center Revamp, North End BID Sculpture; **the B/C rankings (2)** include: Catalina Classic, Rainbow Crosswalk; and **C rankings (4)** include: Performing Arts Campaign, Citywide Murals, Sculpture Garden, Arts Assessment and Bruce’s Beach.

Goal tonight is to review these and in December the Commission will finalize the rankings for 2021 Work Plan. General questions were raised and answers were provided as follows:

1) (**Marcy**) **Are all the A’s feasible as there are so many?** Answer (**ICAM Stewart**): yes, but cannot add any more if you want to raise one to A, need to lower another one but swaps need to be considered holistically and judiciously as to staffing impacts;

2) **(Marcy) Could Bruce’s Beach and Rainbow Crosswalk have a higher priority**, if they were to be evaluated more on what is most important or relevant to the community? Answer **(Chair Ryan)**: Those have a C because more input is needed on how to honor, from the Ad Hoc Committee, especially from Council. At this point the CAC is more reactive but, for example, once the Bruce’s Beach committee forms a recommendation, the CAC will become more proactive.

Follow-up discussion: **Commissioner Marcy** requested consideration for, in terms of consistency and optics, moving up Bruce’s Beach to be similar to the Rainbow Crosswalk as a B or B/C. In discussing, **Commissioner Manna** offered that the Rainbow Crosswalk could be an example of the Commission being proactive and requested that a copy of the entire list and rankings be emailed to the Commission. **ICAM Stewart** stated she will send out a clean copy of the ranking list with an accompanying document that gives more information on each project. As to the Rainbow Crosswalk, this project may seem simple but it is big in terms of cost and logistics so this will be going through a formal bid process through the City Council. **Commissioner Manna** suggested that using the City Logo might be a good non-distracting image for the Scramble Crosswalk. **ICAM Stewart** acknowledged that it has been discussed that two different art works are desirable for the Scramble, one being the City logo. **Chair Ryan** clarified that the Scramble Crosswalk wasn’t on the CAC radar because originally it was to be a crosswalk only with no art.

In response to **Commissioners Marcy** and **Rubino** on the timeline for the Scramble Crosswalk, **ICAM Stewart** added that that project did not come to the CAC list under the “normal” Work Plan process, and due to its urgency, has been referred to the APPC (Art in Public Places Committee) and in fact that group will be meeting this Thursday. She further explained that routinely the CAC has 2 members on an APPC review; the review process is: CC → APPC → CAC → CC (with final recommendation). Staff is using in-house talent on this case to help fast track this process. **Director Leyman** explained how using in-house talent will expedite the process.

3) **(Davis) First, could a rainbow image be considered for the downtown Scramble Crosswalk art to tie in with the Rainbow Crosswalk?** Answer: **(Chair Ryan)** since the Rainbow Crosswalk has not even been discussed yet, this is premature, but she can raise that idea in Thursday’s APPC meeting. **Second, has the Scramble been examined for traffic safety?** Answer: **(Chair Ryan)** yes, by Public Works. **Third, to expedite it and help staff, can the Utility Boxes be moved down to a C to assist staff with the expediting of the Rainbow Crosswalk?** Answer: **(Chair Ryan, ICAM Stewart)** That is possible and the rainbow concept can be raised on Thursday, but this needs to be a group decision and it’s important to go through the entire list rankings.

4) **(Rubino) To staff: should all A projects, ahead of the ranking exercise, be given a timeline?** Answer: **(ICAM Stewart)** Just a few have a timeline and everything else is “on-going” or does not have a completion date. **Chair Ryan** requested that staff assign an estimated completion date for those they can do that for. **Rubino** suggested that all the on-going projects be grouped as a specific class – this may help the Commissioners to understand how to rank and the completion dates be indicated. She added that if possible, can the Bruce’s Beach committee be told that the CAC is strongly supportive of the possible artwork, and at Thursday APPC meeting, **Chair Ryan** will be happy to mention globally that the CAC is very supportive.

5) **(Ibaraki) Will the Commission’s Ad-Hoc project assignments be adjusted to reflect rankings once established** e.g., if a project she is on an Ad Hoc CAC committee for gets changed to a C ranking, can the CAC Ad Hoc committee members synchronously work on an A project while still be assigned to a C? Answer: **(Chair Ryan)** Yes, she will note as they move through the projects list, who is working on each, and work already done for a C project she assumes will be frozen but hopes more resources will be provided to projects with the higher rankings. **ICAM Stewart** added that she will work with assigning work so that each Commissioner has a fitting work load.

Chair Ryan initiated discussion on the rankings focusing on those which have already had Commissioners assigned to working on:

1. **MBAC Revamp: Chair Ryan** explained that this is a B because part of the work has already been “blessed” by Council and researched by staff but not yet implemented. Discussion: Both **Manna** and **Rubino** approved of this ranking (perhaps B+). Commissioners **Rubino** and **Manna** pointed out that the work that can be started is aligned with their “Phase 1”. As to the banners in place for the AC Conner exhibition, **ICAM Stewart** pointed out that as that exhibition will be virtual, she doesn’t think the City will want to attract people to the Art Center, and the media (paintings and prints) do not lend themselves to being outdoors. **Director Leyman** stated that an initial power wash and landscaping work may be able to be done by PWD under the current budget, but not ongoing maintenance.
2. **Performing Arts Campaign: Commissioner Rubino** was interested in moving this to a B as a lot of work has been done, but **Chair Ryan** explained that the main constraint is Covid. It was agreed to leave as a C for now and the **Chair** will try to get more information at the APPC meeting.
3. **PR/Marketing:** It was agreed to keep at high (A-) level as it can be done easily during Covid. Ideas were discussed including doing the “Did You Know?” buffering publicity campaign for all projects and, as time allows, enlisting **Commissioner Ibaraki** to possibly advise on engaging younger audience participation.
4. **Sculpture Garden:** Keep at C due to Covid constraints.
5. **Utility Boxes:** It was agreed to change to A-/B; **Chair Ryan** will mention at the APPC meeting.
6. **Citywide Murals:** Keep at C due to Covid constraints.
7. **Arts Grants:** After lengthy discussion it was agreed to rank at A- as this project (to establish parameters and criteria, a basic framework) is not only ready to go forward, but it would function as a sort of anchor program that would enable many others coming forward from the community.
8. **Arts Assessment:** Keep at C.
9. **City Hall Lobby Art:** Keep at A.
10. **AC Conner Exhibition:** Keep at A.
11. **Historical Archiving:** Keep at A.
12. **Bo Bridges Murals:** already discussed, keep A.
13. **Catalina Classic:** already discussed, keep B/C.
14. **North End Sculpture:** already discussed, keep B.
15. **Scramble Crosswalk Artwork:** already discussed, keep A.
16. **Rainbow Crosswalk:** Upon discussing a possible upgrade from C to A, it was agreed to keep the project on the list, though not yet approved by Council, and omit a ranking (see following discussion).
17. **Bruce’s Beach Artwork:** It was agreed that this project, and possibly the Rainbow Crosswalk, since both have not been either identified or approved, should either come off the list or be added to a category of “anticipated projects” which are not yet ranked.

In further discussion **Commissioner Rubino** raised the point that the title of this document: “Approved Projects” may be misleading and this led to an agreement that the document should be perhaps organized in three categories: Approved (started and/or ongoing), Approved, and Potential Additional Projects, and in the last group both the Rainbow Crosswalk and Bruce’s Beach Art project should be listed with no ranking (left blank). The latter was deemed very important both for keeping a record for staff but also for optics. **Commissioner Marcy** felt this would create a proper placeholder and address optics.

G. STAFF ITEMS

1. **Cultural Arts Division Updates - ICAM Stewart** reported:
 - Staff (**GINNA, ERIC**) are working on the upcoming AC Conner/Eva Goldshield exhibition;
 - Art Center “Walk-throughs” - based on a successful initial pilot event in October, additional “walk-throughs” will be held November 21st and December 19th (Saturdays) where the featured steel sculptures of Simon Ouwerkerk (the current exhibit) are brought outdoors and the public, masked and socially distanced can enjoy the artwork. **GINNA MUZINGO**, staff, added that the December event will go till 8 pm so that holiday lighting will be incorporated with the sculptures.

Commissioner Rubino, an attendee of the initial event reported that the walk through was wonderful and participants were very excited about viewing the sculptures.

2. **PATF Budget Update:** no new information to report (fund at \$2.1 million/\$750,5000 allocated/no expirations until the end of 2023).
3. **City Council Updates:** no new information to report.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS - None

I. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:55 P.M, **Chair Ryan**, seeing no objection, adjourned the meeting to December 21, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom and wished everyone a blessed Thanksgiving and all Commissioners reciprocated.