

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

September 20, 2021

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

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Marcy called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Manna, Ryan (until 7:07 pm), Spackman, Tokashiki, Rubino, Chair Marcy

Absent: None

Staff present: Eilen Stewart, Cultural Arts Manager (CAM), Linda Robb, Parks and Recreation Management Analyst, Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - August 30, 2021 -

Chair Marcy tabled this item to allow more time for review.

D. CEREMONIAL – None

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

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. 21/0920.1 Catalina Classic Sculpture

Presentation/Q & A

CAM Stewart provided a brief summary of the staff report on the request. South Bay Boardriders Club (SBBC) proposed to install a commemorative sculpture of the annual Catalina Classic Paddleboard Race was first reviewed by the CAC in 2018, and City Council in December 2020. In its review the city council considered the possibility of the city purchasing the artwork (estimated at \$350k) and waiving permit fees (estimated at \$14k). The City Council directed that the SBBC work with staff to refine and possibly reduce the statue's footprint and that staff notify the surrounding neighborhood for input. The SBBC has now submitted a revised design which has three variations: A, B, C.

CAM Stewart noted the revised proposal was recently reviewed by the Arts in Public Places Commission (APPC) and Attachment 3 to the staff report lists issues discussed. The CAC role now is to review and make a recommendation to City Council.

The CAC heard a presentation by the SBBC including a summary of the SBBC request including history of the commemorative paddleboard race (**Ed McKeegan**); artwork purpose (**Tom Horton**, SBBC President) and the location and design options (architect **Michael Lee**). **Mr. McKeegan** clarified they are currently asking that the city approve three things: donation of the statue to the city, location at the south end of the lower pier parking lot and limited PATF funding to cover only future maintenance. Using slides, architect **Lee** emphasized that the design and footprint has been greatly diminished and simplified (e.g., plaza and stairs eliminated) but based on public input, one palm tree would need to be relocated 10-feet to the south/east.

For discussion purposes, **CAM Stewart** noted Attachment 3 to the staff report, a list of issues discussed by the APPC, and added that the APPC had concern that PTAF funding may be requested. She stated that the SBBC has since withdrawn its request for public trust funding and the preferred option is “C” a downsized proposal which has the smallest footprint and cost. The CAC proceeded to discuss that list of issues including: location (including palm tree relocation), design, permanence, the artwork being of a specific event, directionality of the sculpture figures, risk management, and public noticing.

Architect Lee responded to APPC and CAC concerns regarding palm tree and lighting, design, and permanence. Responses from **Architect Lee** and staff input were:

- Palm tree and lighting: **Mr. Lee** believes the change in the tree location will be insignificant the distance moved is minor, lighting will be subtle, low level, and while the sculpture should be visible for safety, there are no adjoining paved areas that he feels should require a higher safety level of lighting. Some neighbors have been contacted but there will be a formal notification for their input.

CAM Stewart explained that staff will conduct a mailed survey to property owners within 1,000 feet. Regarding maintenance costs, **Mr. Lee** pointed out: 1) the estimated maintenance cost, needed for the statue’s life, was generated by Public Works and will be eligible for funding through the PATF. 2) The location is out of range of skateboarders (10-feet away from a paved area); 3) Bronze is naturally graffiti resistant due to the patina that develops but bird droppings will need ongoing removal.

- Design: **Mr. Lee** responded to concern that there may be inappropriate photos taken with the sculpture and whether figures will be gender or ethnically specific, noting there has been discussion as to whether a prone or kneeling positions. The three figures will be two males (one standing, one kneeling), one female (prone) to show three separate but typical paddling positions.
- Permanence: The APPC had a concern that representations of figures will commit the artwork to a point in time, and may look dated in the future. Discussion/feedback included comment that this may be a positive point – that this becomes part of our history and gives perspective for years to come. **CAM Stewart** indicated that currently there is no formal plan for maintaining existing public art; that is something, going forward needs to be considered and impacts on PATF balance for new projects; it is anticipated that future increases in maintenance costs will be able to be approved administratively. The estimate for maintenance is more of a placeholder figure, and will be looked at in developing the MOU with the SBBC.

Discussion

Commissioner Ryan noted that she needs to leave the meeting; she fully supports this project. **Commissioner Spackman**: to APCC, inquired about possibly blending sports within the sculpture narrative: **Mr. Lee** noted that there was discussion about other sports but feels there are opportunities to recognize other sports and this location is a perfect location for paddleboarding. **Commissioner Rubino** noted this was supported in 2018 as its history is specific to Manhattan Beach and this location is particularly fitting for this sport. **Brian Kingston** (Boardrider club): paddleboarding is linked to surfing – in that, in the summer, swells are blocked and it is a way to stay in shape for winter wave riding. **Commissioner Manna** noted this sculpture recognizes a specific historic event and volleyball already has recognition on the pier. Surfing does not have a specific event in Manhattan Beach and is recognized in Hermosa Beach. This sculpture is not really standing alone – it is next to the volleyball walk of fame on the pier. **Chair Marcy** noted his concern still that the artwork may be attractive for people to take inappropriate photos and asked whether access to it can be discouraged, e.g., can it be raised off the ground?

7:07 p.m. **Commissioner Ryan** left the meeting.

Architect Lee responded to a concern from **Chair Marcy** that the figures will be frontally facing north as

such the view from the bike path/beach will be the statues' back. He noted the figures are facing the Strand for two good reasons: this orientation is consistent with the trajectory of the race and it is meant to invite those walking on the Strand to stop and notice it; in short, he doesn't think it will be a problem.

CAM Stewart noted the city Risk Management will review the proposal and the public will be able to provide input in the survey and also at the Council meeting when the proposal is being reviewed. **Mr. Lee** noted that the lifted leg of the prone female figure is an authentic paddling posture and believes will be an effective deterrent to unwanted activity. **Ms. Stewart** emphasized that this will be a permanent installation and there should be much thought and a commitment on behalf of the SBBC and the city. To assist the SBBC, staff will forward to them, public opinion from the survey.

Action

The CAC concluded its review. It was moved and seconded (**Tokashiki/Rubino**) to support as presented with minor revision, Option "C" including location, in that this revised proposal had the smallest footprint and estimated cost.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Manna, Spackman, Tokashiki, Rubino

Noes: None

Absent: Ryan

Abstain: Marcy

Chair Marcy noted the votes: 4 (aye) – 0 (no) – 1 (absent) – 1 (abstain).

CAM Stewart announced the motion has passed and advised that this recommendation will be forwarded to city council with discussion highlights.

7:34 p.m. **Chair Marcy** declared a brief recess.

7:40 p.m. **Chair Marcy** reconvened the Commission meeting.

2. 21/0920.2 Discussion of John Van Hamersveld Frieze Repair

Chair Marcy announced the item and invited a staff presentation.

CAM Stewart noted that the staff recommendation is to discuss this matter and provide direction on a request that the City Council allocate \$40k from the Public Arts Trust Fund to repair the subject artwork at MBAC which is in a state of escalating disrepair. She gave a brief overview with the aid of PowerPoint slides. She went over the artists importance being the designer of the Endless Summer poster many years ago but achieving great recognition since and especially recently a resurgence of interest and renaissance of his work now has he is approaching elderly age. She noted that this frieze is remarkable in that the artist named and designed it as *Corbu*, custom for the Art Center, installed in 2016, and giving homage to a great influence, the Swiss/French architect /painter Le Corbusier. **CAM Stewart** described the original installation method and the fact that the wrap has not worn well over time. Having looked at options, staff is recommending that the existing piece not be repaired in place, but that the vinyl wrap can be used as a template and be repainted on the building at the same location. Permission to do so has been obtained from the artist. Staff estimates a \$40k cost for a reputable mural restoration company to do the work and PATF money is appropriate and available.

As described by the artist, the art of this *Corbu* wrap is a set of forms in juxtaposition to themselves in a full circle, 360 degrees fitting the circumference of the building. The cream and black pattern creates a visual

game as the shapes meet in a harmonious space. The artwork is congruent with the New Formalism architectural style of the MBAC building.

CAM Stewart played a video showing the process and techniques that is being proposed for the repair.

There was considerable discussion by the Commission. **CAM Stewart** emphasized that this project is highly regarded by staff and the Commission's support would be desired. In particular, options that would add color to the frieze artwork were considered which were felt desirable to make the frieze more inviting. Implications such as artists and city ownership rights, the process of decommissioning, etc. were also discussed.

Action

The **CAC** concluded its discussion, and it was moved and seconded (**Rubino/Manna**) to accept the staff recommendation for the restoration of the Cultural Arts Center frieze mural with an option open to make other enhancements to the building.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Manna, Spackman, Tokashiki, Rubino, Chair Marcy

Noes: None

Absent: Ryan

Abstain: None

Chair Marcy noted the vote: 5 (aye) – 0 (no) – 1 (absent) – 0 (abstain).

CAM Stewart announced the motion has passed and thanked the Commission, noting that she will work towards getting the repair completed as soon as possible. **CAM Stewart** clarified that the entire existing vinyl will be removed and only used as a stencil for a new frieze that will be painted on, but will replicate the current artwork. As such the maintenance will be fairly straightforward and should not get in such a state again. The city owns the art and sought permission from the artist (was granted) as a precaution.

3. Discussion of Work Plan Items

a) MBAC (Art Center) revamp: Manna, Rubino, Spackman

Commissioner Manna reported: he is trying to get parameters for cost of a new sign for the Art Center and mentioned that it would not be a potentially distracting flashing sign. He and **Commissioner Rubino** met with a sign contractor and a very rough estimate is \$35k for a 2-sided digital sign component, small to medium in size that will be used for announcing exhibitions at the site. There will also be an artistic component - the contractor had some ideas he feels are elegant that will blend with the frieze by incorporating its elements. It was suggested to look to the city-wide wayfinding consultant for a design. The contractor will put something together to show and the committee will continue looking for information on costs.

b) PR and marketing campaign: Manna, Spackman

Commissioner Manna stated there was nothing significant to report.

c) Rainbow crosswalk: Marcy, Rubino, Ryan

No significant progress; **CAM Stewart** advised that staff will be taking the Commission recommendation to the City Council on October 19th, 2021.

d) Arts grants – General Guidelines: Marcy, Tokashiki, Spackman

Commissioner Marcy stated there was nothing significant to report; **CAM Stewart** reminded everyone to research their projects for cost etc.

e) **Murals:**

Commissioner Tokashiki requested info on amounts allocated on past projects, committee will schedule meeting with **CAM Stewart**. **Commissioner Spackman** suggested that the Commission might want to look at establishing an across the board (all projects) funding allocations, not just budget for a category so that the commission can have an expectation as to how much to spend annually. **Commissioner Manna** agreed, and **Commissioner Rubino** agreed in concept but only as pertaining to the grants as the others do not really lend themselves to being included in a spending “budget”. The **Chair** suggested that can be discussed in October and noted that the annual work plan discussion with council is coming up in January.

f) **Utility Infrastructure Beautification:** There were no updates for the remaining work plan projects (f through k).

G. STAFF ITEMS

- Roles of Staff/CAC: **CAM Stewart** clarified that her work plan is determined by the Director of Parks and Recreation (Mark Leyman) and his work plan, is in turn is set by the City Council through the. The CAC has ownership of the Cultural Arts Commission Work Plan and her role as CAM is to assist the Commission in implementing the plan.
- PATF (trust fund) status: no significant changes have occurred since last meeting. **CAM Stewart** will send out a worksheet showing what allocations have been approved.
- Cultural Arts Division: The new exhibition – Time4Art’s *Beyond Shapes* will host its opening on October 15th. COVID protocols will be in place including a mask requirement and maximum (25 persons) indoor in the exhibition.
- The Division is re-staffing to backfill vacancies.
- Upcoming events include the Home Town Fair in early October (ceramics open house and sale at fair) and the Halloween pumpkin race.
- City Council: requested allocations for four projects will go to council in October.
- The Historical Society collection assessment will move forward as a contract has cleared with the consultant.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS - None

I. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:16 P.M, **Chair Marcy**, seeing no objection, adjourned the meeting to October 18, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.