



MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2022
VIDEO CONFERENCE WITH NO PHYSICAL MEETING LOCATION
10:00 A.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Baird of the Downtown Committee called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE

Present: Committee members Cliff Bryant (arrived at 10:05 a.m.), Jesse Cupp, Susi Merhar, Regina Sakols, and Tootoo Thomson (arrived at 10:05 a.m.).

Absent: Vice Chair Don Whitebread (unexcused) and Chair Toni Hsu (excused).

DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

Present: Committee members Erik Cormier, Maria Lange, Kira Pascoe, Jamil Shaikh, Merry Yen, and Vice Chair Pamela Baird.

Absent: Chair Mike Kasperzak (excused) and Raghav Gupta (unexcused).

Staff Present: John Lang, Economic Vitality Manager; and Tiffany Chew, Business Development Specialist.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Members of both committees introduced themselves along with their length of time with the Committee they serve and their role.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Jean from Red Rock Coffee would like to see a nearby utility box painted as part of the Art Box program. Jean asked that the Visual Arts Committee (VAC) consider or recommend that Public Art should be included as a component into roadway design (signs) and landscaping, especially in terms of complete street projects.

David Lin suggested making Castro Street more beautiful by reducing sign clutter as well as the flashing red signals.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 ACTIVATING VACANT STOREFRONT WINDOWS WITH ART OR ART INSTALLATIONS

Staff provided a brief verbal summary of the staff report on the recent experience with activating a vacant storefront downtown.

Kira Pascoe provided observations on Mountain View's experience as she was the main point of contact. Kira was able to connect with 8 of 10 property owners. General concerns from property owners were around liability and access to the building. One property owner, Nancy Gee, provided access to one of her spaces to activate a storefront window with Lizard Boy Costumes for the upcoming theater production. The Chamber of Commerce covered the cost of electricity during the time of the display along with covering insurance.

Committee members provided the following comments on the topic:

- Would like to see art or maps with more historical context and references to downtown throughout.
- Use more translucent prints to liven up dark windows:
 - What about projecting art in building/on building?
 - Could storefront windows be painted?
 - o Inside;
 - o Outside;
 - o Any regulations on percentage of coverage?; or
 - o Transparent film on window with art.
- Engage property owners with both occupied and unoccupied properties.
- Engage other community partners to activate windows with content:

- Engage students groups or school advisory committee to participate in activating windows.
- How can we engage schools in developing art?
- Like to see underutilized space as a phantom art gallery:
 - Hosting a reception related to phantom art gallery.
- Pop-up and holiday activations/galleries:
 - Could this program be throughout the year?
- Paint on the sidewalk and street (Wayfinding and art).
- Align several programs as a spring cleaning effort and unify as an art activation.
- Do larger activations under a unified theme (e.g., holidays, etc.).

Public Comment:

Jean from Red Rock Coffee asked if owners could be compelled to participate in programs. Also, could Mountain View's larger companies sponsor artwork?

5.2 ART BOX PROGRAM AND OTHER ART INSTALLATIONS/FURNITURE

Staff provided a brief verbal summary of the staff report on street furniture opportunities.

In response to a question from the Committee, staff can identify/inventory signal utility boxes in downtown that could be eligible in an art box program.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding future funding for all of these ideas, staff responded with a range of resources for consideration as part of implementing a public art strategy:

- Increase direct funding from the City.
- Pursue grants through the National Endowment of Arts and other art grant-making institutions.

- Establish a fund that seeks financial donations.
- Secure sponsorships.
- Better alignment of projects to the Capital Improvement Program.
- Develop an in-lieu fee or art in Private Development.

Committee members provided the following comments on the topic of expanding and evolving an art box program:

- Want more artistic bike racks and other street furniture:
 - What about crosswalk painting or murals in intersections?
- Create unified themes and consistency for benches (seating areas) bike racks and planters:
 - Can themes be more reflective of Mountain View history versus landscape concepts?
- What about multifunctional furniture/benches?
 - What about structures for children?
- Is it possible to paint private utility boxes?
- Paint bollards:
 - For safety purposes, paint bollards fluorescent.
- Santa Monica has good examples of pedestrian malls and street furniture.
- Mini-art galleries in vacant news racks.
- Pocket park within Castro Street.
- Consider creating a downtown ambiance committee.
- Develop a fundraising program that allows for the painting and auctioning of art (examples include Art in the Park-Chatham, Sharks in Downtown San Jose,

Peanuts characters in Santa Rosa, hearts in San Francisco, and bears in Los Altos).

- More planters and flowers.
- Create incentive program for downtown merchants for best storefront program.
- Use paint on side streets to connect to Castro Street downtown (i.e., wayfinding for downtown).
- Use twinkle lights throughout the year.

Public Comment: None.

5.3 MURALS ON PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Staff provided a brief verbal summary of the staff report on murals on private development.

Committee members provided the following comments on the topic:

- Murals be done on public property:
 - Murals on downtown parking garage.
 - Murals on City Hall.
- Murals on streets.
- Provide a clear and consistent mural process:
 - Create different fee structure for nonprofit organizations who are interested in murals.
 - Better understand what is prohibited and allowed.
 - Better consistency around a mural program.
- Reduce the number of designs required by City for mural consideration.
- Landscaping/vegetation mural (breezeways).

- Future considerations for murals:
 - Post Office.
 - Communications Building.
 - Building with Eureka.
 - Building with Red Rock Coffee.

Public Comment: Carol Donahue inquired about the preservation of the mural located at the Chase Bank site redevelopment on 749 West El Camino Real. The mural was initially installed when the building was developed. A Zoom community meeting on the development project is scheduled for May 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Zoom meeting number is 902 9110 867.

5.4 **OTHER PUBLIC ART CONSIDERATIONS FOR DOWNTOWN DISCUSSION**

A Committee member asked about attracting art galleries in downtown Mountain View. Staff will follow up on the inquiry.

A Committee member asked how public art could be used to improve public safety, including barriers.

A Committee member would like to see more music and entertainment in downtown.

Public Comment: None.

6. **COMMITTEE/STAFF COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A Committee member asked about interest in doing another joint committee meeting. There was concurrence from attending members.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.