



VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022
ATRIUM CONFERENCE ROOM AT CITY HALL – 500 CASTRO STREET
6:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Jesse Cupp called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Committee members Cliff Bryant, Susi Merhar, Regina Sakols, Tootoo Thomson, Don Whitebread, and Vice Chair Toni Hsu.

Absent: None.

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

3. **MINUTES APPROVAL**

The minutes of the April 6, 2022 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting and approved as distributed.

Motion—M/S Whitebread/Bryant—Carried 7-0—Approve the April 6, 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

4. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

April Webster, a resident of Mountain View, asked for the Committee's support for an outdoor piano project. She has been in communication with City staff and the Chamber of Commerce about having a piano donated to the City in order for it to live outdoors to allow the public to use the piano. The initial site location would be to place it in Pioneer Park. These types of projects have occurred in other places, including San Francisco and Palo Alto.

5. **UPCOMING AGENDA TOPICS**

Staff identified four future items:

1. Joint Committee meeting follow-up.
2. Annual work plan review and approval for Fiscal Year 2022-23.
3. Deaccessioning policy or guideline.
4. Public art strategy parking lot items for further discussion.

Public Comment: None.

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

6.1 **CIP PUBLIC ART PROJECT UPDATES**

Staff provided updates on the following projects.

- Pyramid Park, Project 17-34, is going to have a soft opening in June with a park dedication planned for July.
- Mora Park, Project 17-46, will be completed in June with an anticipated opening the same month.
- Rengstorff Park Aquatics Center, Project 18-38, has started demolition. Existing artwork is being removed and assessed. The VAC will be apprised on the viability to reuse the existing art.
- Fayette Park, Project 20-48, has the contract in processing and will start construction in the summer.
- Rengstorff Maintenance and Tennis Buildings (21-48). The two selected artists have met with the Senior and Youth Advisory Committees to obtain input on mural concepts, and staff is working on executing contracts with both artists. At the May 10 City Council meeting, Council awarded a 2% art budget for the project. Committee member Merhar asked if a school liaison or Latino community member could provide additional feedback and input.

Public Comment: None.

6.2 PUBLIC ART STRATEGY-DONATION AND MAINTENANCE GUIDANCE

Staff provided a brief verbal update on the direction to develop guidelines for donation and maintenance instead of developing policies based upon Committee feedback received from the April 6 VAC meeting. Guidelines would provide greater flexibility for the Committee and, thus, was the more preferred approach.

Key issues for guideline development for art donations include:

- Develop a standards checklist to review art piece(s).
- Artist to provide maintenance guidance.
- Use Jury process.
- Seek artist recommendations on site location.

Key issues for guideline development for maintenance include:

- Improve registry/repository of art pieces in Mountain View.
- Future Call for Artists should include requests for information on maintenance.
- City should assume maintenance responsibility for art pieces as part of the CIP-approved projects.

Public Comment: None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 PERCENT FOR PUBLIC ART IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Staff introduced best practice research on a percent for public art in private development. Staff focused efforts on benchmarking neighboring cities for the purpose of consistency around the development process. Staff's research suggested the following five areas to focus on:

1. Intent of the policy is to create public art opportunities without adding additional steps to development review process.
2. Percent for Public Art in Private Development should apply to new commercial and multi-family development only.
3. Identify project types that are exempt from program.
4. Typical range of percent for art fees are 1% to 2% of new project construction valuation with an alternative in-lieu fee between 0.5% and 1%.

5. Clarify the role that the Visual Arts Committee plays in the implementation of process and policy.

Chair Cupp provided an overview of the ad-hoc committee research related to a percent for public art in a private development policy. The ad-hoc Committee outlined recommendations they would be interested in seeing in a policy:

1. In addition to developer options of providing publicly accessible art on-site or paying an in-lieu fee, a third option could be for a developer to provide artist studio space within a project.
2. A 2% construction valuation for market-rate housing or housing that is requiring discretionary actions by the City.
3. Artwork should be approved by the Visual Arts Committee.
4. Create a group of curated or established artists to support new art opportunities.
5. Public art needs to be truly accessible and available to the public.

Committee feedback included potential incorporation of Palo Alto's language or content to be included in a public art for private development and would need a process or a way to address an architect's or developer's interests in a vision for incorporation of public art. Committee members' comments also focused on having qualified public artists that are capable of producing public art. Several Committee members commented on the Sunnyvale art fee model as one that is flexible and an attractive option for Mountain View. Generally, there is greater support from Council when policies align with neighboring jurisdictions. Additional comments that included private development should be encouraged to provide the art, and the VAC needs to have a role in determining/approving art based upon guidelines.

Staff will come back with some specific examples from other jurisdictions on the applications of fees and to the types of projects, including various exemptions. Staff will also work up some numbers associated with different fee ranges.

Public Comment: April Webster, a resident of Mountain View, was supportive of the discussion. She spoke about Mountain View residents enhancing their neighborhoods with their own versions of art pop-ups. A policy should have an equitable distribution of art throughout Mountain View, which may have a Robin Hood approach related to

fees to support equitable distribution; for instance, a split art fee similar to Sunnyvale's approach. The City might want to think about art incubators.

7.2 REPORT OUT ON JOINT MEETING WITH THE DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

Staff provided a verbal update from the recent Joint Meeting with the Downtown Committee. Detailed meeting minutes will be forthcoming at the next regularly scheduled VAC meeting. The feedback from the joint Committees meeting will help inform next fiscal year work plans.

Visual Arts Work Plan Topics:

- Phantom galleries;
- Art in Windows;
- Projection/Wraps/Art/Functional Art;
- Mural Process Improvements (consistency); and
- Kid-friendly art.

Downtown Work Plan Topics:

- Vacant storefronts;
- Inclusive downtown;
- Spring cleaning/beautification of downtown (flowers/newsracks);
- Pedestrian Mall guidelines; and
- Music in downtown.

Mutual Interest:

- Functional Art/Pedestrian Mall;
- Art in Windows Program;
- Improved Mural Program for Downtown Walls; and
- Art in MV Program (Sharks/Peanuts/Hearts/Bears, etc.).

Public Comment: April Webster referenced America Walks as a way to use art as a traffic calming measure.

8. COMMITTEE/STAFF COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff reminded the Committee that sharing research related to the public art strategy is encouraged but to please send the information to staff and not the whole committee to ensure compliance with the Brown Act. Staff will post the information for the whole Committee to view and access.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

JL/1/CDD

819-05-11-22mn