

**City of Fort Worth
Art Commission
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

**Monday, December 14, 2020, 5:00 p.m. CDT
Webex Videoconference**

COMMISSION MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Commissioner Maggie Adler
Commissioner Bill Campbell
Commissioner Carol Hendrix
Commissioner Sheila Hill
VACANCY

Commissioner Raul Pena
Commissioner James Talambas, Vice Chair
Commissioner Leslie Thompson
Commissioner Estrus Tucker, Chair

ABSENT:

None

CITY STAFF

Fernando Costa, Assistant City Manager
Mark McAvoy, Planning & Data Analytics Department
Royce Hansen, Assistant City Attorney
Dot Kent, Community Engagement Office

SENIOR ARTS COUNCIL STAFF

Karen Wiley, President & CEO
Martha Peters, Director of Public Art,
Anne Allen, Public Art Project Manager
Alida Labbe, Public Art Project Manager
Jenny Conn, Public Art Collection Manager
Michael Asbill, Public Art Community
Engagement Coord.

MINUTES

- I. Roll Call – Anne Allen, Public Art Project Manager
Roll Call confirmed a quorum of six (6) Art Commissioners in attendance. *Note: Commissioners Campbell and Talambas joined after roll call making a quorum of eight (8).*
- II. Call to Order – Chairman Tucker called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.
 - a. Reading of COVID-19 Statement – Anne Allen
Allen read the statement regarding City’s use of teleconference format due to public safety concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- III. Approval of Minutes – Chairman Tucker
 - a. Regular Meeting of November 16, 2020

A motion was made by Commissioner Pena and seconded by Commissioner Hendrix to approve the Art Commission Minutes of November 16, 2020. The motion passed (8-0-0).

- IV. Report of Chair – Chairman Lee
 - a. Current Art Commission Vacancy – Position 4 (Design Professional)
 - b. Appointments of Art Commissioners to Projects
 - i. Estrus Tucker to Heritage Park Public Art Project
 - ii. Leslie Thompson to Heritage Park Public Art Project
 - c. Chairman’s Comments on Current Agenda Items
Chairman Tucker stated the Art Commission will review three (3) Public Art Project designs. Commissioner Tucker reviewed the Design Review Process outlined in the *Fort Worth Public Art Master Plan Update, Appendix 4e.*

- V. Citizens' Presentations - General (3 minutes per speaker)
- a. Brenda Sanders Wise – Upcoming Virtual Juried Art Exhibition titled, The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity, February 1 - March 31, 2021
Wise announced that the exhibition will be held virtually on their website under a dedicated tab titled, “Juried Art Show”. They invited 128 artists to submit their work by January 4, 2021. Submitted artwork will be judged the week of January 11th and the week of January 18th. Categories include painting, drawing, digital, and mixed media. Winner categories include “Best in Show” and “Best in Show Theme Related”. First place winners will be invited to have an exhibition of their work at the Lenora Rolla Heritage Center Museum located at 1020 E. Humble Street. Student artist will receive ribbons or medals along with a gift bag full of art supplies. The jurors include professionals from a variety of local cultural organizations. There are also various sponsorship opportunities available. For more information or to sponsor this exhibition contact Brenda Sanders Wise at bsanders5539@hotmail.com.

VI. Presentation

- a. Heritage Park Project Update
 - i. Presentation - Andy Taft, President, Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc.
Taft presented the “Heritage & Paddock Parks and Courthouse Pedestrian Improvement Projects”, which was identified in the *Strategic Action Plan for Downtown*. The geographic area includes Tarrant County Courthouse area, Paddock Park and Heritage Plaza down to the Trinity River.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Safety Improvements (in the amount of \$8 million funded by Tarrant County and the North Central Texas Council of Governments)
The four (4) intersections around the courthouse will be addressed and the radius of the northbound lane of Commerce Street will be eased.

Paddock Park (north of the Courthouse where the Charles Tandy sculpture once stood) - The “bailout lane” will be removed and will incorporate the triangular traffic island into the park will increase the land area by 25%. \$3 million for this portion of the project is pending.

Heritage Plaza Area - The plans to improve the Lawrence Halprin water park are almost shovel-ready; however, additional funds are required for implementation. To connect the plaza with the river, a set of river stairs (like the “Spanish Steps” in Rome) going down the bluff to the River and the future River Road is proposed. There would also be an elevated winding trail along the bluff that intersects the stairs called the “Canopy Walk”, providing ADA access. The staff of the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTGOG) scored the Canopy Walk very high and believe \$5.3 million in federal funds for the project may be approved by the RTC. There will be multiple zig-zags (or switchbacks) that will provide multiple locations to tell stories about Fort Worth’s history, the geology of the bluff, the river, etc., making is an exciting educational opportunity. A “Water” theme could tie the Trinity River to the Water Gardens and Lancaster Avenue along the Houston Street axis, which is the primary downtown shopping street.

Funding - \$40 million is needed for the entire project. DFWI is the City’s fundraising partner. Taft listed other likely public entities partners and will ask the City to include \$10 - \$14 million in the 2022 Bond Program’s Park Proposition (or another City funding source).

Schedule – Plaza planning and restoration design is complete. Design of Park/Transportation improvements is the next step. The 2022 Bond Program will be voted on in May 2022. Construction anticipated late 2022 – early 2024; The

plan is to dedicate all improvements on 175th anniversary of the founding of Fort Worth.

- ii. Report of Staff – Martha Peters, Director of Public Art
The Fort Worth Public Art program has set aside \$100,400 from the 2014 Bond Program for Heritage Park. Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc., will soon contract with a design firm to further develop the park concept and provide construction documents. FWPA has an opportunity to get an artist involved with the design team early next year so that public art will be integrated into the fabric of the park. For a big project like this with many public art opportunities (e.g., Chisholm Trail Parkway), an experienced public artist can put on their “public art master planning hat” to look at what could public art be, what it could contribute to the overall project and how could it blend seamlessly with the improvements Taft described.

Staff proposes a hybrid approach that allows the Professional Services Team to short-list artists from the *Pre-Qualified List of Established Public Artists* who would be interviewed by the Design Team Artist Selection Panel (see *Fort Worth Public Art Master Plan Update*, Appendix IV.6).

The Design Team will select approximately 8-10 artists from the *Fort Worth Public Art Pre-Qualified List of Established Public Artists*, with experience collaborating with a design team to be vetting through an informal process, including to ascertaining their interest and availability. The Design Team will select 3 - 5 artist finalists which will be presented to the Fort Worth Art Commission (FWAC) for approval.

The artist finalists will participate in a virtual orientation and at a later date interviewed by Design Team Artist Selection Panel consisting of two (2) Design Team Members, a Heritage Park Steering Committee Representative, a Downtown Fort Worth, Inc. Board Member, and the Fort Worth Art Commission Chairman. The Design Team Artist Selection Panel will recommend to the Art Commission one (1) artist and one (1) alternate for the project.

Peters clarified that the selected artist would have the opportunity to be commissioned but will also look for opportunities to involve local artists in the project. The \$100,400 currently available will cover the design team artist's work and will leave funds available for preliminary design. The City's contribution to the park construction budget in the 2022 Bond Program would provide approximately \$200,000 - \$240,000 in additional 2% public art funds.

- iii. Discussion
Commissioner Hill asked if the “Spanish Steps” would lead to Heritage Park. Taft replied that the steps would come up immediately west of Heritage Plaza and not touch the Halprin piece. Taft noted that the concrete landing at the edge of the river depicted in the rendering is preliminary and gives the opportunity to add a pedestrian bridge to connect the Northside of the Trinity River.

Commissioner Pena asked at what point will the final budget be determined. Martha Peters replied that % of the amount included in the 2022 Bond Program would be set aside for public art. It is anticipated that \$10 - \$14 million may be included in the 2022 Bond Program, which would yield \$200,000 - \$280,000 (2%) for public art.

VII. Items to be Removed from Consent Agenda – Chairman Tucker
None.

VIII. Action Items – CONSENT

- a. Approve Project Outline for the Heritage Park Public Art Project, 300 N. Main Street, 78102 (Council District 9)
- b. Approve Project Outline for the Riverside Park Public Art Project, 501 Oakhurst Scenic Drive, 76111 (Council District 9)
- c. Approve Project Outline for the Universal Playground Public Art Project in North Park, 9000 North Beach Street, 76244 (Council District 4)
- d. Approve Selection Panel’s Recommendation of Artist Karla Garcia and Alternate Artist Benjamin Munoz for the Trail Drivers Park Public Art Project, 2502 Guenther Avenue, 76106 (Council District 2)
- e. Approve Selection Panel’s Recommendation of Artist Merge Conceptual Design and Alternate Artist RE:site for the 820 Underpass Public Art Project, Located at the Intersection of N. Beach Street and Interstate Loop 820, 76137 (Council District 4)

A motion was made by Commissioner Hill and seconded by Commissioner Adler to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed (7-0-0). *NOTE: Commissioner Talambas was not present for the vote.*

IX. Action Items – NON-CONSENT

- a. Approve Final Design for East Regional Library Public Art Project (631 Bridge Street, 76112) (Council District 4)

- i. Report of Staff – Alida Labbe

Labbe presented the final design on the artists’ behalf. The artists noted that the library is the first civic building on encounters when entering into the from the east on I-30 and saw the opportunity for this piece to be a landmark/gateway. The location is surrounded by neutral TXDOT landscape, which is primarily grass.

The library has an iconic clock tower, so this design gradually builds height to lead your eye toward it. Inspired by a field of wildflowers, the goal of the piece is to foster community identity and encourage people to visit the sculpture and the library.

The design proposal was approved in 2018. The proposed design included 90 vertical elements in shades of fuchsias, oranges, and pinks. In late 2018, cost increases and other unexpected costs resulted in a value engineering study on the project. An irrigation line was also discovered while planting the several crape myrtles donated by Eastside Blossoms. Rather than requesting the artists to make changes to the design, the Art Commission recommended to City Council to appropriate additional funds to the project on May 13, 2019. As part of the FY2020 Reprogramming effort, City Council added \$30,000 to the project budget.

The updated final design now includes 86 vertical elements with heights varying from 6-12 feet in height. The color of the verticals are now various shades of warm reds, orange, and gold. Eight (8) verticals will have selected quotes laser or water jet cut into the steel. The quotes are related to reading and learning.

The verticals will be coated with an industrial paint from Sherwin Williams that has a UV protectant. The bases will be wrapped with a transparent film to protect them from lawn equipment.

ii. Project Core Team

Kara Chaney complimented the new warm color choices. Chaney shared that earlier in the project she received an email from an individual who commented that the original yellow originally proposed looked like a gas line warning post. Chaney asked that the artist keep that in mind when finalizing colors for this project.

iii. Citizens' Presentations

Clairita Porter commended the artist for taking their suggestions, adding that the revised design was strikingly improved from the original proposal. Porter is excited to see everything is in place for people to read the inscriptions.

Daniel Haase asked if grass will surround all elements of this piece, as he is fearful that landscaping equipment may damage the piece. Haase suggests decomposed granite as an alternative to grass. Labbe replied that the artists have considered durability. The artists' vision is that the verticals appear to be a field of wildflowers that springs directly from the ground. They did look at other options; however, they decided that the natural grass can grow around the verticals and the grass can be trimmed as needed. There is an irrigation plan with this proposal that waters the trees but does not broadcast spray so that the grass around the piece matches the surrounding landscape.

Manya Shorr, Director of the Library Department, thanked the artists and Public Art staff for listening to the community, and feels the second round of design was more productive than the first round. Shorr added that she likes the addition of the trees and is excited to move forward with this project.

Former Art Commissioner Jennifer Casler-Price echoed Shorr and Porters' comments. She is excited to see this come into fruition and thanked everyone involved. Casler-Price said she thinks all the changes are right and loves the addition of the trees.

Porter added she believes the artwork now reflects the community's desire for the piece to be "intriguing from afar and engaging when near".

iv. Art Commission Discussion

When Commissioner Adler asked if individuals with strollers or wheelchairs could access in between the verticals, Labbe replied that some will be accessible but not all due to their spacing.

Commissioner Thompson commented the changes are great and is excited to see this go forward.

A motion was made by Commissioner Campbell and seconded by Commissioner Thompson to approve the Final Design for East Regional Library Public Art Project (631 Bridge Street, 76112) (Council District 4). The motion passed (7-0-0). *NOTE: Commissioner Talambas was not present for the vote.*

b. Approve Revised Preliminary Design by Artist Dixie Friend Gay for North Z Boaz Park, 3200 Lackland Road, 76116 (Council District 3)

i. Report of Staff – Anne Allen

A budget of \$245,000 from the 2018 Bond Program was included in the *Fort*

Worth Public Art Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Work Plan. On August 18, 2020, artist Dixie Friend Gay presented her original Preliminary Design for a sculpture titled, *One with the Bee*, to the Project Core Team. They discussed the design and the location of this piece in the north part of the park, which is currently undergoing improvements. The artist is working closely with Park & Recreation Department staff and City consultants on appropriate siting for the artwork. The artist has slightly revised the design and is presenting it this evening for approval. Upon Commission approval this will move on to a combined Final Design and Artwork Commission contract upon City Council authorization.

- ii. Presentation -- Artist Dixie Friend Gay
This original concept was planned for another location but will now be located at the northern end of North Z Boaz Park where it will be easily accessible, highly visible and have the greatest impact.

Gay proposes *One with the Bee*, a 20-foot-high sculpture in a flower form in Corten steel. From a 30-inch diameter base, it flares to a diameter of 10 feet toward the top. A 160-degree opening on one side of the piece allows the viewer to see the center pollinator of the flower, crafted in stainless steel. The project timeline is dependent upon park development project.
- iii. Project Core Team
None.
- iv. Citizens' Presentations
Sandra Youngblood, Assistant Director of the Park & Recreation Department, commented she is excited when we encourage people to take advantage of our park areas and have artwork that enhances the experience. Youngblood added that this piece is ideal for North Z Boaz Park.
- v. Art Commission Discussion
Commissioner Tucker commented he loves the symmetry and the message of *One with the Bee*. He expressed his gratitude for the artist's creativity, passion, and vision.

A motion was made by Commissioner Thompson and seconded by Commissioner Adler to approve the Revised Preliminary Design by Artist Dixie Friend Gay for North Z Boaz Park, 3200 Lackland Road, 76116 (Council District 3). The motion passed (7-0-0). *NOTE: Commissioner Talambas was not present for the vote.*

- c. Approve Preliminary Design by Artist Gordon Huether Studio for the South Patrol Division, Southwest Corner of McCart Avenue and West Risinger Road, 76123 (Council District 6)
 - i. Report of Staff – Alida Labbe (acting project manager)
This action item was postponed at the Art Commission's Regular Meeting on November 16, 2020. After the November meeting, Gordon Huether indicated his interest in presenting options for a revised Preliminary Design. He also met with the City's project consultants to discuss options for the placement of the building's monument sign relative to the proposed location of the sculpture.

Labbe presented a summary of the artist's Preliminary Design as presented at the Art Commission's November meeting. The project goals and objectives include a piece that is commanding yet welcoming and timeless but not boring.

Huether's design for a sculpture is a blue "hand" holding a mirror-finished, stainless steel sphere. The hand represents the Police and the sphere represents the community. The proposed sculpture is intended to be a metaphor for the officers reaching out to the community, while the sphere literally and symbolically reflects that community and the officers as a part of it.

Prior to creating the design, Huether participated in a virtual micro-residency in which he spent time with police officers and he also spoke with community members.

Painted steel plates spaced apart form the "hand" holding the sphere (in between the thumb and first two fingers), which will be fabricated in mirror-finished stainless steel.

At the November Art Commission meeting there was discussion regarding the concrete pillars that hold the "hand" off the ground, as well as the position of the building's monument sign in relation to the proposed location for the sculpture. Also discussed was the gesture of the hand and the manner the sphere is held, which to some indicated police control over the community, while others did not perceive that intent.

- ii. Project Core Team member Lu Moskowitz stated she has no problem with the design and loves the concept of the hand reaching out to the community. She is very happy with the design.

Labbe read a comment emailed by Ivvana Wiesepape stating that she supported the project and did not see a hand in control of the community. To her, it is a hand reaching out to the community, which is what the police officers want to convey to its neighborhoods and all citizens. It is a strong statement that is not harsh. With the varied input the Project Core Team gave the artist he designed a beautiful, well thought out piece of art. She added that it is impressive and something the FWPD South Division and citizens of Fort Worth will be proud of. Wiesepape had said she would share his presentation with other neighborhoods.

- iii. Citizens' Presentations (*Commented prior to the Project Core Team Members*)
Chuck Freeman of Freeman Callahan Architects, the City's architect for the South Patrol Division building, stated that he is excited about this piece and thinks that it is compatible with the building. The blue color of the hand is compatible with the color as the metal panels on the building.

- iv. Art Commission Discussion

Chairman Tucker commented that this design has been challenging to reflect upon individually and as an Art Commissioner and as Chair. He stated that the Art Commission's role is to listen to the public, and to seek to be fair, equitable, and inclusive of the public, recognizing that we will not all see things the same way. The challenge is when someone sees something different and how we hold that space. One of the most critical tensions we are holding around our country and in Fort Worth is around police and community relations and particularly community trust. We are going to have different views and need to be respectful of both reviews. At the last meeting, he did not see members of the community who would have different view reflected but that does not mean those views are not legitimate. In addition, he was concerned that the artist called the project "perfect" after hearing the comments he and the Vice Chairman voicing about the design.

Tucker stated that he works closely with the Police Department in Fort Worth and in other communities and believes we can be supportive of our police and also supportive of racial equity and justice. We must have a trustworthy engagement with members of our community who do not feel that way and this piece compromises that balance. He hopes that public art would find a different way to elevate above the kind of tensions raised in the recent peaceful protests for equity and de-escalation.

Commissioner Shelia Hill stated that she likes the description of what the hope is for this piece; however, she stated that the Chairman's words hold weight. She likes to listen to all and vote for what is best for the community. She asked why the artist's new ideas were not presented tonight.

In response to Commissioner's procedural questions, Assistant City Attorney Royce Hansen stated that the Action Item is the same as on the agenda last month is because the item was postponed and there was no vote on the Preliminary Design. If the Art Commission disapproves the design as presented, the City may request the artist to make revisions to the design, in accordance with the contract.

Commissioner Pena remarked that the artist is talented; however, he was disappointed with his reaction the Art Commission's comments about the design last month. He asked what the difference is between a revised design and "going back to the drawing board". Martha Peters stated at a revision to the design that was presented, which might mean a change to the hand gesture, for instance, but does not mean a completely new design, which would require a new contract.

Commissioner Adler finds it problematic when an artist is dismissive of an opportunity, but she hopes he is willing to revise his design.

Vice Chair Talambus stated that the Art Commission should support artists who care about the entire community and who speak with intention, gratitude, respect for the Art Commission and community. He added that the blue color has negative connotations for certain communities.

Commissioner Hill stated she will vote "no" but would like to give the artist a chance to revise his design.

Chairman Tucker reiterated that the City's process to request revisions will be initiated if the Art Commission disapproves the preliminary design tonight.

Peters clarified that the Motion and Second must be made to approve the design to bring the item to the floor for a vote. The commissioners who move and second may vote any way they wish just like the rest of the commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hill and seconded by Commissioner Campbell to Approve the Preliminary Design by Artist Gordon Huether Studio for the South Patrol Division, Southwest Corner of McCart Avenue and West Risinger Road, 76123 (Council District 6). The motion failed (8-0-0). *PROCEDURAL NOTE: Commissioners Bill Campbell and Carol Hendrix abstained; however, according to the Art Commission's Rule of Procedure, an abstention is regarded as a "no" vote unless taken due to a conflict of interest.*

- X. Staff Report and Announcements – Martha Peters
- a. Upcoming City Council Actions:
 - i. January 12, 2021
 1. Authorize Artwork Commission Contract with Jill Bedgood for Chisholm Trail Park Phase 2 (Council District 6)
 2. Authorize Artwork Commission Contract with Laura Walters for Rockwood Clubhouse (Council District 2)
 - b. Project Reports
 - i. Reby Cary Youth Library – Alida Labbe
Labbe showed a video of the artwork in the “idle” program as set up in the artist’s studio. When a person pushes a button hidden in the library, the programmed lights cycle will change. The tentative installation date is set for early January. The team must install the artwork before the floors are installed. Labbe hopes to provide the Commissioners photos of the artwork at the next Art Commission meeting.
 - ii. Hemphill Connector – Martha Peters
On December 4, 2020, GST Manufacturing, the local metal fabricator on the project, tested a clamp that will hold the longhorn/birds suspended under the I-30 bridge. The attachment method was approved by TXDOT. The LED lighting strips for the longhorn/birds have been shipped to Displays Fine Art Services in Arlington who will assemble and install the longhorns. Installation will take one week and may start in January depending on the weather.
 - c. Collection Management Update – Jenny Conn
 - i. Installation of Buster Welch Sculpture at Gate 42 on Trail Drive, Will Rogers Memorial Center, 3401 West Lancaster Avenue, 76107 (Council District 7)
The sculpture, funded by the National Cutting Horse Association Foundation, was installed on November 13, 2020. Minor changes to the site design were approved by staff at installation. The bronze plaque originally planned to be behind the sculpture near a bench is now in front of the sculpture and is more accessible to the general public, including those who are mobility impaired. A bench will be installed at a later date. Portions of the decomposed granite plaza were eliminated to accommodate easier maintenance as requested by the City’s Public Events Department staff.
 - ii. Wind Roundabout Landscaping, 901 North Henderson Street, 76107 (Council Districts 2/9)
The roundabout has been landscaped in preparation for the opening of the first of the Panther Island bridges.
 - iii. Fort Worth Community Arts Center Courtyard Gallery Temporary Sculpture Installation, 1300 Gendy Street, 76107 (Council District 7)
The first rotation of temporary sculptures by Ben Munoz and Jihye Han has been installed in the *Shelia and Houston Hill Courtyard Gallery* and will remain through July 31, 2021. The installation was curated by Arts Center staff.
 - d. Community Engagement Update – Michael Asbill
 - i. Refik Anadol’s Pioneer Tower Dreams “Call for Memories” Deadline: December 31, 2020 (<https://pioneertowerdreams.org>)
Through the end of December, Fort Worth residents have the opportunity to participate in Refik Anadol’s artwork titled, *Pioneer Tower Dreams*. Visit <https://pioneertowerdreams.org> to submit a memory or contact fwpublicart.org.

The artist has received images from the University of Texas at Arlington Library, Fort Worth Public Library, Fox Photographs, Jackson Family Album, Shrines Photo Collection, Tarrant County Black Genealogical Foundation, and the Amon Carter Museum Library for the project.

Martha Peters added that the University of Texas at Austin is considering a request to access the Calvin Littlejohn photography collection.

- ii. Fort Worth Public Art Collection featured in Texas Highways Magazine (<https://texashighways.com>).

The article is titled "Find Serenity on a Tour of Fort Worth Public Art Works" by June Naylor. The article features artworks by Sean Smith, Jim Hirschfield/Sonia Ishii, Animalis Works and others. It is available at: <https://texashighways.com>.

- e. Announcements of Staff

Martha Peters announced that on November 19, 2020 Public Art Project Manager, Michelle Richardson gave birth to twin boys.

XI. Announcements of Commissioners

Commissioner Adler announced that the Amon Carter Museum has a new exhibit, *Mythmakers: The Art of Winslow Homer and Frederic Remington*. This exhibit is a collaboration between the Denver Art Museum, Portland Main Art Museum, and the Amon Carter. The exhibit opens Friday to members and Tuesday to the public.

Commissioner Adler also attended the Center for Curatorial Leadership which is a collaboration with Columbia Business School. This program trains curators to take on larger roles within their organizations.

Commissioner Pena asked if the artwork going up along the Trinity Trails is a Water Department project or a Fort Worth Public Art Project. Anne Allen responded that is a Tarrant Regional Water District is managing that mural project.

XII. Future Agenda Items

None.

XIII. Next Meeting - Chairman Lee

- a. Monday, January 11, 2020, 5:00 p.m. via Webex (see agenda for details)

XIV. Adjournment – Chairman Tucker adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.