



TOWN HALL  
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**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
Minutes of April 10, 2018  
Amherst Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room  
4 Boltwood Avenue**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members:

PRESENT: Catherine Porter Michael Birtwistle Jan Marquardt

ALSO PRESENT: Applicants and Maureen Pollock, Associate Planner

ABSENT: Lindsay Schnarr

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

**MOTION: Moved by Mr. Birtwistle, seconded by Ms. Porter, and voted 3-0 to approve the meeting minutes from February 13, 2018.**

**Applications:**

- 1. DRB 2018-16, Town of Amherst - To install a bicycle share stations on 5 town right-of-way locations, including on Main Street, East Pleasant Street, North Pleasant, East Hadley, and University Drive.**

***Recommend approval.***

Chris Curtis, planner from Pioneer Valley Pioneer Commission (PVPC) presented the application.

Mr. Curtis showed the Board the final five bike share station locations within the Town of Amherst. The bike share station installations are begin in May and the launch date will occur in mid-June. Each station will have a concrete pad, bike docks, a kiosk, and electrical connection for the electric assist for each bike. The main kiosk will be at the Main Street station location. The stations are located on the public right-of-way on Main Street, East Pleasant Street, North Pleasant, East Hadley, and University Drive. Stated the project team is working out the speed limit for the bike. The bike speed limit can be controlled. Stated there are 5 other bike stations on the UMass Amherst campus. The

bike share program may expand in the future to install additional station locations with Amherst.

The Board had no issues with the bike share station locations, as presented.

**MOTION: Moved by Ms. Marquardt, seconded by Ms. Porter, and voted 3-0 to recommend approval for the Town of Amherst application to install the bicycle share stations on 5 town right-of-way locations, including: Main Street, East Pleasant Street, North Pleasant, East Hadley, and University Drive.**

**2. DRB 2018-17, Sandy Litchfield & Loretta Yarlow – To install 4 temporary sculptural installations at Kendrick Park.**

***Recommend approval***

Sandy Litchfield, Assistant Professor Architecture at UMass Amherst and Loretta Yarlow, Director of the University Museum of Contemporary Art, and Adjunct Professor Art History were present to explain the project. The 4 temporary sculptural installations at Kendrick Park of part of an overall temporary exhibit, named Cross Town Contemporary Art. Cross Town Contemporary Art is an Open Air Exhibition that seeks to reveal our interconnectedness as citizens as it works to transform the gateway district between downtown Amherst and the University of Massachusetts.

The goals of the project are:

- To create an art and culture bridge connecting Amherst residents with UMass students, faculty, and staff;
- To activate the overlooked areas in the gateway district, between the town and campus;
- To encourage people to walk and use bicycles on the North Pleasant Street corridor between the campus and downtown;
- To generate public dialogue about the value of art and culture in forging community relations;
- To provide the university and town planners with evidence and incentive for investment in future projects that support the arts as a connector and community builder.

There will be 12 total projects. The following sites have been identified for the exhibition:

- Kendrick Park – at the intersection of North Pleasant Street, East Pleasant Street, and Triangle Street;
- “Frat Green” – the empty space along North Pleasant Street, across from Phillips Street;
- Haigis Mall – located in front of the Fine Arts Center, between Isenberg and Whitmore buildings;

The timeline for the project is the following:

- May-June 2018 - artists install projects
- July 1, 2018 - exhibition officially opens
- September 21, 2018 - reception from 4:30pm - 6:30pm at University Museum of Contemporary Art;
- September 22, 2018 symposium and parade from 10:00am – 5:00pm
- November 1, 2018 - exhibition officially closes
- November 1-15, 2018 - artists de-install

Four of the installations will occur at Kendrick Park:

#### Common Sounding by Erika Zekos

This will create a space for both making music and building community. This project will use the trees of Kendrick Park to support a light framework from which will suspend a series of musical chimes. These chimes will be lit from inside by LED lights and activated by human engagement to involve both active participants and passers-by in their sound, light, and motion. The site, a literal cross roads of university students, Amherst residents, and visitors to the town, is chosen to illuminate issues of place and community identity.

Materials to be used: Cast iron Schedule 40 tube (nominal 1 ½” outside diameter, hollow). The longest chime is 6’ and the shortest is 10”. Hanging attachment will be made with 1/8” braided steel cable. LED Lights.

Notification: Artist agrees to notify adjacent neighbors of project two weeks prior to installation. Flyers containing the artists contact information will be placed in each neighbors’ mail box addressing potential questions or concerns about the piece. Chimes won’t sound unless they are reactivated by touch. Artist is fabricating prototype for approval.

Installation: Artist will secure harmless attachment to the three trees needed for support, and limit the motion of the hanging chimes.

News: Artist consultation with arborist Alan Snow determined that the tree would suffer less damage if cable was bolted directly into the tree.

#### Untitled installation by Sarah Braman

Materials: Precast concrete; Glass panels from LTI Glass in Pittsfield, MA (dual layers of annealed 3/16 in glass with Vanceva Color system)

#### Bocce Ball Court by Gary Orlinsky

This project proposes to build a temporary Bocce Ball Court. It would link UMass with the community, specifically the under-represented senior population and would encourage outdoor activity. Artist is partnering with Nancy Pagano from Amherst Senior

Center. This dramatic piece of performative sculpture will link the campus to the community visually, physically and socially.

The design incorporated two sweeping diagonal forms will reach up from the sides and from a distance appear to crossing the middle. Each long edge of the court will also have a built-in bench. Each corner post will be capped with a bocce ball that will be not only decorative but can also be used as a support to aid stepping into the shallow court. The structure will be made of sustainable wood, and the bed is surfaced with gravel, and can be topped with sand, crushed oyster shell, or turf. Bocce ball courts are extremely low maintenance.

Materials: Wood, Bench, gravel, sand, and shells

Scale: 8-feet by 40-feet by 6-feet

Installation: Re-seed grass after de-installation

#### Family Reunion by Harold Grinspoon

Scale: 25-feet by 25-feet by 15-feet

Materials: Oak Tree Branches

This pieces will be installed and insured by Grinspoon.

Each tree segment is inserted into a barrel or 2-feet by 2-feet by 4-feet wood box recessed into the ground. Hole to be dug by a backhoe. Box is filled with cracked stone. Pebble stone is used near the surface to finish off the site.

Ms. Marquardt asked if any of the installation become permanent. Ms. Yarlow responded no as the pieces are not designed to be permanent. Ms. Yarlow stated that she hopes this project could start a conversation for proposing permanent art installations in the future.

Ms. Porter asked if the applicants spoke to event organizers that have events in Kendrick Park to make sure they are ok with the installations. Ms. Yarlow responded she spoke with the Amherst BID and they said the installations would not interfere with their summer concert series and in fact, may be complimentary to the summer events.

Ms. Porter asked about if the applicants have liability insurance for the installations. Ms. Yarlow responded she is currently working with UMass lawyers to obtain liability insurance for the installations.

The board has no issues with the installations and are in support of the overall exhibition.

**MOTION: Moved by Ms. Marquardt, seconded by Ms. Porter, and voted 3-0 to recommend approval for the DRB 2018-17 application submitted by Sandy Litchfield and Loretta Yarlow to install 4 temporary sculptures at Kendrick.**

3. **DRB 2018-18, Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst – To install two (2) 4-foot x 5-foot signs on the building wall.**

***Recommend approval***

Robert Romer, friend of the Church was present to explain the project. Two years ago the Church voted to put up a Black Lives Matter and a LGBT pride banner on the side building wall. The banners have been removed a few times and the Church would like to install a more permanent signage that cannot be easily removed. The Church proposes to install two (2) 4-foot x 5-foot PVC sheets with images that are screwed to the building wall and locked.

The Board provided a suggestion for the Church to consider installing both signs to the right of the window on the building wall, instead of one of each side. The Board also suggested the signs could be staggered a few feet down from one of other to mimic the building roof.

**MOTION: Moved by Ms. Marquardt, seconded by Ms. Porter, and voted 3-0 to recommend approval for the application submitted by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst to install two (2) 4-foot x 5-foot signs on the building wall.**

**New Business**

1. **Public Art Commission presentation on painting 3-4 utility boxes in Amherst Center**

Rene Theberge, Public Art Commission member was present to informally discuss this future project. The Public Art Commission has received a grant from the Amherst Local Cultural Council to commission painting 3-4 utility boxes in downtown Amherst. The Commission is in the very beginning stages of implementing this grant and they thought it might be a good time to give the DRB a brief overview and to get input. The Commission will do a Call to Artists for the project, likely in fall 2018. The Commission needs to raise more money for the 4<sup>th</sup> utility box. Design specifications will be included with the Call to Artists. The Commission is working with the Amherst DPW. The paint will be oil based and weather proofed.

Mr. Birtwistle stated that he doesn't think the Design Review Board should overthink the Public Art Commission's project and they should give them full support for this project.

2. **Discussion: Role of the Design Review Board**

The Board discussed their role. Ms. Pollock handed out copies of the Amherst Zoning Bylaw, 3.201 Design Review Board for members to review. The DRB is an advisory

board, who provide design review and recommendations to applicants and permit granting boards. The recommendations are reviewed but the permit granting boards have discretion to include the recommendation or not in their decision making. Ms. Pollock suggested that if they would like to propose changes to Board's roles and responsibilities, that they should meet with Christine Brestrup, Planning Director and/or attend a Zoning Subcommittee meeting. The Zoning Subcommittee is a subcommittee of the Amherst Planning Board and is responsible for drafting and reviewing proposed changes to the Town's Zoning Bylaw. The Zoning Subcommittee typically meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, from 5-6:30 p.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall.

**Adjournment:**

**The Board adjourned at 7:37 p.m.**