

Amherst Public Art Commission

Meeting Minutes

August 31, 2017

Members in attendance: Eric Broudy, Amy Crawley, Daniel Grant, Ellen Keiter, and Rene Theberge. AlvildaSophia Anaya-Alegría, a candidate for the open seat on the Commission, also attended the meeting.

Meeting called to order. The July minutes were voted on and accepted (with the caveat to correct the spelling of Worcester).

Chairman's Report

Amherst Cultural District

- Eric observed that the Cultural District needs better organization and operating committees (currently it consists of the founding institutions). Peter McQuillan, who is paid through September 1 through the Cultural District grant, will stay on as an employee of the BID.
- The District has not been able to match the \$5,000 grant (it is short by \$850). Greenfield Savings Bank, which recently opened a branch in downtown Amherst, was asked for a donation to help fill the gap. The BID and the Emily Dickinson Museum agreed to pledge \$100 more each. District treasurer Jane Wald said any unmatched portion of the grant must be returned by September 1.
- Eric attended the last Cultural District meeting, which was intended to address the reorganization of its steering committee. Currently the committee is comprised of one person from each cultural venue or organization (with the exception of the BID, which has two representatives). It was proposed that the committee be made of members rather than sites, although a vote could not be taken as a quorum was not met. Jeff Kravitz and Tony Maroulis will draft operating by-laws.

Arts Plan/Arts Council

- APAC is not equipped to undertake the running of the Cultural District. Rene asked the commission to seriously consider the questions "What does Amherst really need?" and "Will an Arts Council move us forward faster?" He noted that without significant support from the town government, an Arts Council would likely be organized by a group of private citizens.

Splash Park

- No update

Poetry Windows

- Rene emailed Steve Brewer with the commission's questions. He is waiting for a reply.

Commission Opening

- There is currently an open seat on the Commission. The Town Manager, Jim Wald of the Select Board, and Eric (representing the Commission as Rene was on vacation) interviewed the two candidates. After each of the candidates meet

with the whole Commission, a recommendation will be made to the Town Manager. The Select Board must approve the final candidate.

Plaque

- The DPW installed the title plaque for Matt Johnson's sculpture *Portal* in Kendrick Park.

Town Room Art

- Rene emailed the Town Manager to tell him that the removal of the tapestries in the Town Room is less a priority than installing new lights in the Town Hall Gallery.

Treasurer's Report

- Daniel announced a balance of \$1,052.28.

Percent for Art

- Eric said the Massachusetts Attorney General has 90 days to establish the percent for art fund in Amherst; the deadline is September 6. The attorney general can, and likely will, request an extension.
- Eric and Ellen met to develop a timeline, protocols, and an approval process for the Percent for Art program. They plan to present their template at the September meeting. They want to be well-prepared for the first project. Eric will draft an email to the Town Manager and Select Board about the Percent for Art program and how it can inform private developers.

Public Art Condition

- No update

Downtown Amherst Fire House

- Eric noted that the group hasn't met recently because of summer. They recommend a trip to Natick to see its firehouse arts center.

Town Hall Gallery

- Amy announced that the current artist, Linda Jane, sold two pieces.
- Exhibitions are scheduled through June 2018. A call will go out in the fall for new artist applications.

Social Media and Website

- No update

Mapping Project

- Rene asked commission members to help with the distribution of brochures; each member volunteered to deliver to certain locations. Please pick up your brochures at the Visitor's Center.

Meeting adjourned 1:15 pm.

Next meeting: September 21, 2017 at 12 noon.