

Amherst Public Art Commission

December 21, 2017

Members Present: Eric Broudy, Amy Crawley, William Kaizen, Ellen Keiter, and Rene Theberge

November meeting minutes approved as amended.

Chairman's Report

Rene read Emma Ayres's resignation letter from the Amherst Public Art Commission.

Vic Quezada, a third-year graduate student at UMASS, presented the project *The Wild* as part of their MFA thesis. The installation is a freestanding wall (measuring 6' x 6' x 4") constructed from old bricks to be erected on the south Town Common. The wall will be painted white and, for three nights this spring, will serve as a "screen" for projected Western films. With this work, Vic is addressing issues of identity and the erasures of indigenous people.

Rene recommended Vic incorporate footing or bracing to keep the wall upright. Eric commented that a 2 x 3' projection space is small (and low) for more than a few people to view the movies. The installation will need signage to explain its presence to the public; Vic will provide a written statement. William suggested Vic consider *The Wild* as a public art project, not just as a project for the UMass art department. Rene advised Vic to reach out to local indigenous communities.

APAC recommended an alternate site possibility: the front lawn of the Amherst Historical Museum. The Commission also noted it would be good to have the project installed by the first week in April to take advantage of Arts Night Plus. Rene reminded Vic that both the Select Board and the Town Manager must give final approval (APAC only recommends or not) if the project is on public property.

Signs for Amherst Center Cultural District

Eric reported the BID is preparing a list of all committees the Cultural District must go through for sign approval (Design and Review, etc.). APAC unanimously approved the motion to place a sign in Realignment Park (the other three Cultural District signs are on private property). Rene will write to Peter McQuillan and inform him of the vote.

XCTA Update

Rene attended a meeting at UMCA about the proposed public art project. The organizers have run into some university concerns about maintenance, but Rene anticipates the project will move forward. There are currently three installations planned for Kendrick Park (one may be relocated to Sweetser Park). APAC will be asked to endorse and give an opinion to the Town Manager regarding the three projects.

William reported a visiting professor at Amherst College is hoping to create, with the aid of her students, a public mural addressing indigenous issues. She is looking for an appropriate wall in town. Sarah La Cour at BID suggested the wall by Oriental Flavor or CVS (could be complicated).

William requested clarification on how APAC projects are coordinated. Rene replied that traditionally they've been handled in an informal way; Commission members assume various

roles of interest (e.g. Eric for Percent for Art, Bonnie with the public art brochure and map).
General inquiries go to Rene.

APAC's role is to advise on cultural issues and provide endorsement to use public land for public art projects.

Treasurer's Report

Daniel reported a balance of \$572.28.

Percent for Art

Nothing new to report.

Public Art Site Condition Report

Nothing new to report.

Amherst Fire House

With Emma's resignation, the Commission may want to designate a new liaison. Eric was invited to join the Fire House group and has attended some meetings. He noted the group needs to conduct a feasibility study to determine if Amherst can support a performing arts center. John Kuhn made some preliminary drawings, but little else has been done. Eric said Natick is a good model, but noted it was an established arts organization generating revenue before the firehouse was converted. Unlike Northampton, Amherst does not have established music venues already in existence. If a new parking garage is built behind CVS, Eric and Rene have proposed an attached performing arts center. Parking is a big concern with the current Fire House.

Town Hall Gallery

To date Amy has received six applications for the 2018/19 gallery slots. There are three weeks remaining before the deadline.

Web/Social Media Presence

The Commission reached 100 friends on its Facebook page. It has 195 followers on Instagram.

Other Business

With Emma's resignation, there is now an opening on the Commission. Rene will complete his term in June; he expressed hope that someone will volunteer to serve as chairperson. He wants to ensure a smooth transition.

Dates of next meetings:

January 18 at 1 pm

February 15 at 12

March 15 at 12 pm

All in the 1st Floor Meeting Room at Town Hall

Meeting adjourned 1:30 pm.

