

Amherst Public Art Commission

July 19, 2018

In attendance: Eric Broudy, Amy Crawley, William Kaizen, Ellen Keiter, Jim Wald, and guest Shoshona King

June 2018 minutes approved.

Chairman's Report

Eric attended the recent Design Review Board and Planning Board meetings; he wants to stay on Archipelago's radar about public art at its Spring Street development. While the company is committed to replacing the Amherst history mural at One North Pleasant, nothing has been proposed for the Spring Street apartment complex. APAC's proposed town policy encouraging private developers to consider public art is on hold until the new Town Council is seated. Eric will keep making his voice heard.

Sarah La Cour is president of the Amherst Cultural District. The Cultural District steering committee has split into two subcommittees. The "internal" group, concerned with fundraising and data collection, proposes a silent auction between Thanksgiving and Christmas to raise money for events and programs. The "external" group suggests a town-wide thematic initiative, perhaps organized around the 100-year anniversary of the Jones Library. The next external group meeting is in early August. Only two of the four Cultural District signs are currently on display; the committee is still waiting for owners of the Amherst Coffee building and the Collective Copies building to hang the remaining two signs.

Eric has twice emailed Darcy Jamison at Beacon Development about its project in North Amherst. He has yet to receive a response to his request for a phone conversation.

Amy suggested compiling a list of public art supporters, perhaps even establish a Friends of the Arts group. Eric will ask Sarah La Cour for the list of artists who gave contact information at the past Cultural District events.

Sarah La Cour will issue a call for artists and architects, and assemble a jury of seven individuals, to vote for a band shell to be constructed on the east side of the Amherst Common near the Lord Jeff. Eric asked for interested persons as possible jury members. Ellen volunteered, depending on time constraints.

Poetry Windows artist Ritsuko Taho emailed Eric; she is interested in reactivating the installation (although she currently resides in Tokyo, she is moving back to the area). Ritsuko sent an electrician to examine the project and, while the iPads are still operational, he said the installation would not work. Eric asked Ritsuko to send him a copy of her original contract since he cannot find one.

Eric shared schematics of Groff Park renovations and redesign of the spray area. Construction will begin in the fall with a grand reopening next spring. Funding for the project came from the Community Preservation Act, the town, and the state.

Ellen will upload past APAC meeting minutes to the town website.

Treasurer's Report

Bill reported a balance of \$632.28.

XCTA

The exhibition is now open through November 1. Eric asked Town Manager Paul Bockelman if Howard Grinspoon's sculpture could remain up longer, perhaps until next summer. Paul said there is no public process to keep the work on a permanent basis, and raised concerns about insurance, condition, and abandonment. Paul and Eric agreed that Eric can readdress the question in October.

Percent for Art

Eric spoke to Representative Solomon Goldstein Rose, who reported the Percent for Art bill is currently in its "third reading," after which it will go to the house and senate for vote. If approved, it then goes to the governor for signing. There is no guarantee he'll sign, but it is likely.

Utility Box Project

Amy extended the submission deadline to July 29; she has received only two applications to date. Eric suggests moving forward even if the project encompasses just two electrical boxes. Dave Henion of Henion Bakery agreed to serve as a juror, as well as Nate from Amherst Books. Amy also asked Terri Rooney to be a juror.

Town Hall Gallery

Kara K. Bigda, the current gallery artist, sold two pieces. She is an alumna of Amherst College and had a nice turnout for the reception.

Web/Social Media

Amy updated APAC's page on the town website. APAC currently has 120 followers on Facebook and 339 followers on Instagram. Commission members discussed cross postings with other arts organizations to increase numbers and visibility. Bill suggested he could write a blog about public art when he returns from Europe.

Other Business

Eric wants to do something visible to promote public art in town. He proposed an exhibition of temporary sculptures on the East Commons (across from Fort River Elementary School) or an exhibition of sculptures sited around town (North Common, Sweetser Park, Kendrick Park, Realignment Park, Atkins' roundabouts, etc.). Such projects require fundraising, permitting, and other issues to work through.

Select Board member Jim Wald serves on the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP), which will hold its international conference in Amherst next July, 2019. The goal is to promote the Pioneer Valley as a book destination.

Meeting adjourned 1:00 pm