

Amherst Public Art Commission

January 17, 2018

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

December meeting minutes approved as amended.

Chairman's Report

Rene sent a letter to Town Manager Paul Bockelman informing him about the UMass XCTA project. He will schedule a meeting with Paul to discuss the installations as well as the proposed wall mural by Amherst College students and Vic Quezada's project *The Wild*.

Rene reminded the Commission that it needs to start planning the electrical box painting project (title suggestions?). The Amherst Cultural Council granted \$1,000 for the project. Rene and Amy will set the timetable, select the electrical boxes, request permissions from owners, take photographs and measurements, send out a call for artists (4), and manage other aspects of the project. It may be politic to run the artists' designs by the Design and Review Board and the Select Board.

Rene wants to meet early in the design phase of the North Square development to encourage incorporation of public art, although he admitted the project is not quite at that point. Eric and William volunteered to serve as the Commission's point people for the development.

Private Developers/Public Art

Eric noted the original design drawings for Kendrick Place included public art, although it was never incorporated. He commented there has been no consideration of public art at the new apartment complex at the carriage shops nor at the apartments proposed for Spring Street.

Eric drafted a proposed policy "Public Art Installations by Private Developers," which outlines efforts by the town to encourage public art on private property (Eric mentioned there are 100+ municipalities in the country that mandate public art for private developments). He prefers a gentler approach with flexibility. One suggestion is to request public art in exchange for a variance or modification. Eric sent the document to the Design and Review Board, who supported the policy. The Planning Board had a few changes, but conceded it is a good idea. Eric will next send the document to the Select Board, who may be hesitant to accept it as policy. A vote on the wording was postponed until the Commission's March meeting when Eric will be in attendance.

Treasurer's Report

In Daniel's absence, Rene reported a balance of \$537.28.

Percent for Art

Eric said the town has still not heard from the state legislature regarding the special act. The attorney general is also waiting.

Public Art

No update.

Fire House

Eric reported there have been no recent meetings regarding the Fire House. Without Emma, he feels the project may fall apart.

Town Hall Gallery

Amy has received 12 applications for 2018/19 Town Gallery. She shared work by an artist who incorporates Biblical quotes in his drawings. The Commission agreed these are not appropriate for display in Town Hall. Amy will inquire if the artist has other work for consideration. She mentioned that Laura's work and A3 artists were featured in today's *Gazette*.

When removing photographs, the previous artist damaged the drywall in multiple locations. It is an eyesore and needs to be repaired (Commission members are not permitted to fix it themselves). Ellen and Eric commented the art in the current exhibition is hung too high. Ellen advised giving artists a median measurement by which to display their work.

Rene will inquire again about new gallery lighting when he meets with Paul Bockelman. Eric asked if the Commission could offer to help fund the project if it would speed up the process. The estimate provided last year for the lights was \$1,000, exclusive of installation.

Rene announced that Petula Bloomfield's tapestries were removed from the Town Room and replaced with historical photographs from the town's Archives and Special Collections. Ellen expressed concern that the tapestries were de-installed without the Commission's knowledge. She asked where they are currently being stored and why the Commission wasn't informed or involved in the new exhibition.

Social Media

No update.

Other Business

Amy reported this year's chalk festival will be paired with the annual sustainability festival in the spring.

An open seat remains on the Commission.

Meeting adjourned 2:10 pm.