

Minutes of the Amherst Public Arts Commission, September 1, 2011

First floor meeting room in the Amherst Town Hall, 3:00 p.m.

Present: Terry Rooney (Chair), Diane Westfall, Bonnie Isman, Randa Nachbar, Rosario Gaddier

Absent: Trish Smallman, Rachel Hankinson, Jim Wald (Select Board liaison)

1) **Chair's report.** Terry Rooney reported on plans for the 2012 Biennial (October – November). Amherst College and Umass have agreed to participate as venues for exhibits. Amherst College will host an installation outdoors in front of the Mead Art Museum. Terry also talked with Town Manager John Musante on various issues. She requested that Town Hall be open on a Saturday for the kick-off of the Biennial. He seems willing to support an Amherst Arts Center at the old East Street School and will call a meeting of arts groups and community leaders to help develop the concept.

Bonnie Isman reported on the possibility of using Community Development Block Grant monies for the Arts Center. Associate Planner Nate Malloy explained that the Town receives \$600,000 for capital projects and \$200,000 for social services (plus \$200,000 for administration) under this program. All funds must be used to benefit low income residents in designated areas of the town, one of which is East Amherst. No action will be taken on town buildings until the Town Manager completes a survey of all town buildings and establishes priorities for their use. At that point and with the support of the Town Manager, we could approach the Community Development Committee with a grant application to rehabilitate the East Street School.

Randa Nachbar reviewed questions from the next Town Hall artist. The next exhibit will go up on October 3 and come down December 31. The artist should forward biographic information, an artist's statement and jpeg images to Terry for use in publicity.

2) **Lantern workshop.** Rachel Hankinson emailed additional information on plans for the fall Lantern Workshop, as approved at the meeting May 18. Rosario Gaddier has photos of the lanterns ready to use in publicity. APAC does not have the funds to cover the entire cost of a free workshop for 25 people, so it was decided to request a \$5.00 donation for each lantern. Diane will request the funds for the workshop supplies. All commission members agreed to help with the workshop. After much discussion it was decided to reschedule the workshop for later in October so that details of location and registration could be worked out.

3) **Grant applications.** Terry would like to submit Cultural Council grant applications to surrounding towns to support the Biennial. Funding is needed to market the event, unfurl a banner across Pleasant Street, print an attractive catalogue, and develop an online presence. Terry plans to seek out media sponsors in advance, especially Preview Magazine and the Daily Hampshire Gazette. Bonnie agreed to help work on grants.

4) **Clarifying the role of APAC.** Terry Rooney met with Selectman Jim Wald who is the Select Board's liaison with APAC. Jim was appointed liaison last fall, but APAC was not notified. Terry informed him of today's meeting, hoping he could clarify the role of APAC regarding other public art projects in Amherst. The topic was tabled.

5) **ACTV.** Rachel submitted a written report on contacts with Amherst Media. There is great potential for collaborations, after ACTV has a new site.

6) **Public arts sites.** Members of APAC are concerned that all public arts sites need periodic review, including the YAC murals recently approved by the Select Board. **Motion:** APAC recommends that the Town reutilize the public arts sites located 1) in a pocket park near Kendrick Park and 2) on the street level of the Boltwood Garage. (Moved by Bonnie Isman, second by Randa Nachbar) Approved unanimously. The recommendation needs to go to the Select Board which is in charge of the public ways.

Alan Snow, tree manager for DPW, asked Terry if APAC would approve the removal of shrubs planted in site 1) to be replaced by trees. No approval was given, pending research into the reuse of this area for public art. Terry also pointed out the potential for public art in the traffic circles at Atkins Corner.

7) **Website.** Rosario offered to design a website for APAC, if other members provide the content. Terry is very happy to work on this. They will consult with Town IT personnel on where to host the site: on Rosario's computer or on the Town's server. Everyone agreed that a website would be a great asset to promote arts events in Amherst.

The **minutes** for the meeting of May 18, 2010 were approved unanimously.

The band arrived for the Gallery Walk artist's reception.

Adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Submitted by Bonnie Isman

Next meeting— Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 3 p.m. (*which was cancelled*)