

Amherst Public Art Commission Meeting – May 26, 2016 – Town Hall

Present: Eric Broudy, Bonnie Isman, Rene Theberge, Amy Crawley, Daniel Grant, Tea **Musketaquid**, Richard Morse

Rene Theberge called the meeting to order at noon.

1. The April meeting minutes were accepted.

2. Chairman's Report. Rene has selected 35 -40 Town-owned properties throughout town which might be possible sites for public art. Dan confirmed that the Women's Club is willing to be a temporary site for public art. Eric asked for a map of these locations to **begin the process of learning and prioritizing the spaces available for future public art installations.**

Eric, Rene, Amy, and Bonnie will meet with the Amherst Cultural Council regarding a joint project.

Eric talked with UMass Arts Extension Service staff about the Intro to Public Art workshops being developed for the fall. AES workshops will be given in Amherst, Easthampton, Holyoke and Pittsfield. APAC will be a co-sponsor.

Tea **Musketaquid** from Fire and Water Yoga presented sketches of artwork (sculpture and paintings on sandwich boards) that he hopes to display outside his yoga studio. APAC was generally supportive. However, his location is private property, and he will need to work with the property owner. We discussed the need to contact the Design Review Board about anything that might look like a sign and to contact the Select Board regarding use of sidewalk space.

3. Treasurer's Report – Dan reported a current fund balance of \$878.97.

4. Projects/Priorities for 2016. Rene asked us to review the Natural and Cultural Resources chapter of the Town's Master Plan before the next meeting. The Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Board in 2010 after extensive public involvement. Objective NC.2 reads as follows: Provide support for a rich variety of cultural opportunities, and activities for all groups and individuals in the community. Rene would like to bring together the Mission of the Public Art Commission, the goals of the Master Plan, and our plan for this year's projects.

5. Mapping project. Bonnie finished re-stocking the Amherst Art Walking Tour Map at hotels/motels, museums, and campuses. One box of 750 maps remains for distribution in the fall. Eric suggested taking maps to local Bed and Breakfasts.

6. Percent for Art. At Amherst Town Meeting, the proposed Percent for Art Bylaw was referred back to APAC for re-consideration. Eric did a great job presenting the bylaw to Town Meeting, as did Jim Wald who spoke for the Select Board. The Finance Committee was against the bylaw. We discussed the controversial points with Town Meeting member Richard Morse who provided excellent feedback. Objections included elimination of performing arts at a category of public art, the role of the Town Manager in the selection of art, the financial impact on taxpayers of funding four major capital projects, and potential private support for public art. Bonnie moved that APAC modify the Percent for Art Bylaw and bring it back to Town Meeting, which was seconded by Amy and passed unanimously.

7. Cultural District. The Mass. Cultural Council approved the Amherst Center Cultural District, following a small reduction in the proposed district area and a name change. The district's northern end will be the south boundary of Kendrick Park, instead of reaching the edge of the University campus. The new district is already in action! Rene, Eric, and Sarah la Cour learned about state government promotional resources for cultural districts at a meeting hosted by the Mass. Office of Travel and Tourism. They discussed ideas for joint projects with cultural districts in Easthampton, Northampton and Amherst. There will be a meeting of the Cultural District partners with MCC staff next month to set up the district's governing body.

8. Town Hall Gallery & Social media. Amy started a wait list for future exhibits. APAC's Facebook page is linked to other Amherst art sites.

9. Brown Bear project. No report. We are hoping that Ellen can help other artists identify and use the locations lined up for Brown Bear banners for future public art projects.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.  
Submitted by Bonnie Isman

Next meeting: Thursday, June 23 at noon.