

Enlivening Public Spaces Electrify Amherst! The Electrical Box Makeover Project

Call for Proposals and Application

Project Summary

This project is designed to further the presence of public art in downtown Amherst and the Amherst Center Cultural District by inviting local artists to create unique and colorful paintings on three designated utility boxes on North Pleasant Street. This event will take place on Saturday, September 15, 2018.

How to Submit

Artists may submit applications online or by mail. Please review the project guidelines first (see link below.) Whether you apply online or by mail, your application must include:

1. Your contact information.
2. A short description of your concept for a box design.
3. A color drawing of your concept for a box design.
4. 4 photographs of your past work in .jpeg format OR a link to an online portfolio/website.

All materials must be submitted by July 15, 2018 for consideration by the project jury. If applying by mail, please send your completed application to

Amherst Public Art Commission
Electrical Box Makeover Project
c/o The Jones Library
43 Amity Street
Amherst, MA 01002

Please be aware that not all surfaces of the utility boxes can be painted per DPW guidelines. In addition, artists must use light color bases for their designs to prevent overheating of the utility boxes. Please refer to the specific guidelines provided below.

This project is open to all artists but Amherst applicants may be given preference.

Artists' Design Review

A 5-person jury will assess each artist's submitted work and design proposal. The board will consist of two members of the Amherst Public Art Commission, one or two utility box property abutters, and one or two local artists

The review board will assess each artist's submissions based on the following criteria:

1. Creativity
2. Concept
3. Proposed Appearance

The review board will select the three best designs and three alternative designs. All artists will be notified of the board's final decision via email. If one of the selected artists is no longer able to paint their box, then one of three alternative artists will be selected to fill the vacancy.

Guidelines for Images on Utility Boxes

1. No obscene images or profanity.
2. No copyrighted images or advertising. All work must be your own original design.
3. Only two-dimensional designs permitted. Nothing may protrude from the boxes.
4. Designs may be representational or abstract and must be appropriate for public space.
5. The artist should be prepared to adjust artwork as the size of the box may vary slightly from dimensions included in the application.

Selection of Utility Boxes

To ensure fairness, each artist will be randomly assigned to a box located on North Pleasant Street in Amherst. No one may choose their own box and no changes or swaps are permitted.

Artist Stipend

Selected artists will receive a \$350 stipend from the Amherst Public Art Commission (APAC), funded through the Amherst Cultural Council, upon completion of their box. The stipend will be paid via invoice to APAC upon completion of the work. Please allow 4-6 weeks for payment.

Each selected artist will also receive a \$50 gift certificate donated by Cowls Building Supply to use toward the purchase of materials.

Painting and Materials

- Selected artists are responsible for cleaning, sanding and priming the utility boxes, as needed. DPW guidelines must be followed. (See painting guidelines below.)

- Artists must be careful to keep the area around the utility box clean. Drop cloths must be used at all times while painting.
- Artists must use light color bases for their designs to prevent overheating of the utility boxes.
- Passage on the sidewalk for pedestrians and wheelchairs must be maintained at all times.
- Leader Home Centers has generously donated an assortment of exterior paints for the selected artists to use in this project.
- Artists should apply a clear coat sealant or varnish over their completed painting.

Cleaning Guidelines

- Use coarse hand sanding sponges (80-100 grit) to prepare the box for painting.
- Use a damp cloth or sponge to remove dust and residue.
- Please make sure water does not drip inside the vents while cleaning the box.

Painting Guidelines

- Be careful with all liquids. There are exposed electrical components inside the boxes.
- Do not paint over any identification numbers or codes on the box. Please paint around them.
- Piping, conduit, and the electric meter (glass cover and aluminum retaining ring that holds the meter in the box) cannot be painted. The silver meter box and black surface behind the meter may be painted.
- Do not paint the keyholes, keyhole covers, or handles.
- Vents
 - Do not paint the vents under the top lip of the utility box. If you paint under the top lip, you will disrupt the vent fan.
 - Vents lower on the door should not be covered up (i.e. taped) even temporarily.
 - Vents lower on the door can be painted but in a way that will not restrict airflow due to sensitive electronic components inside the box.
 - Please make sure the paint does not drip inside the vents.
- Door hinges should not be painted as this may prevent the door from locking in place.
- Do not paint the rubber gasket around the door.
- The very top surface of the utility box should remain as is. If you choose to paint the top of the box, paint it only in white to prevent overheating.
- All other paint colors should be light colors.