



SYRACUSE PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

February 14, 2012 5:30 pm Syra-Stat Office, 215 City Hall

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Present: Chris Capella-Peters, Karen Convertino, George Curry, Bob Doucette, Corky Goss, Nancy Keefe Rhodes, London Ladd, Dan Ward, Bahar Zaker

Absent: Rick Destito, Joanna Spitzner

Staff: Kate Auwaerter

I. Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.  
The Commission reviewed the minutes from the January 11, 2012 meeting. D. Ward moved to approve the minutes and G. Curry seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

II. Old Business  
*No Old Business*

III. **New Business**  
*No New Business*

IV. **Discussion**  
*Brendan Rose: Syracuse Artist in Residence, second installation.* Brendan Rose discussed the refined concepts and locations for the four proposed installations. He reported that he had discussed the installations with and received positive responses from the St. Paul's Cathedral (building and grounds committee); Cathedral Square Association, and the Onondaga Historical Association. He will submit a separate application for each piece so that pieces that are ready can move forward. Each piece is proposed as temporary with the option after a probationary period of becoming permanent.

The Commission discussed each piece separately, starting with the *Here Viewer* proposed for the corner of E. Fayette and Montgomery Streets. K. Auwaerter noted that Peter Muserlian, owner of the Hills Building, was okay with the placement outside of his building as long as it doesn't conflict with the vault located beneath the sidewalk.

Regarding *Wish Way*, Commission members again expressed their concern regarding the location of the piece in Columbus Circle generally and on the Powelson lot specifically, noting that the site is a development site which may require the removal of the piece at a later date. K. Convertino noted that if the intent was for the objects to become landmarks, then moving it would negate that potential. Some commissioners suggested other locations within Columbus Circle, however, B. Doucette noted that Columbus Circle is an iconic site and that the

Commission needed to be cautious installing any works in this area. In discussion of alternate sites, B. Rose stated that the piece was designed specifically for the Powelson lot. If the site is not suitable, then he would have to reconsider the entire piece.

Regarding *Bells of Abandon*, the Commission members noted that they were not as concerned about these two pieces as with the *Wish Way*, although B. Doucette reiterated his concern regarding placing artwork in Columbus Circle. They are to be located on the sidewalk, one adjacent to the Carnegie Building and one next the Powelson lot.

In summary, C. Capella Peters stated that the commission was satisfied in concept with *Here Viewer*, *Bells of Abandon*, and *Wish Way* but continued to have serious reservations regarding location. (The *Lover's Bench* is proposed for private property and does not require the Commission's approval.) She noted that the next step was for B. Rose to complete the applications with final materials, colors, scale drawings, etc.

*John Goot: Westside mural project.* John Goot introduced for discussion a proposal to paint a mural on a large, 25' long wall on Coleridge Avenue close to the entrance of Burnet Park. He proposed a mural that depicts historical references to Tipp Hill. His plan is to involve Fowler high school students in the design process though an artist would be responsible for final composition and installation. The Commission encouraged J. Goot and offered its assistance as he worked through the project.

*The Other New York 2012.* Deborah Ryan and Pam McLaughlin from the Everson Museum introduced the Commission to TONY 2012, a community-wide exhibition that will involve 12 venues and 64 artists. The main opening for the show will be September 21, 2012 though some of the venues will be opening earlier in August. They spoke specifically regarding the 4 artists/collaboratives who will be proposing temporary public art pieces for the show. At least two will be proposing works located in 20ft freight containers that will maximize interaction with the public and encourage connections between the venues.

The *DS Collaborative* is proposing a mobile sauna project. It will open at the Everson and then travel to different locations and venues throughout the show. D. Ryan stated that the artists are acquiring all the appropriate licensing and liability insurance necessary.

*Misha Rabinovich* is also proposing a freight container that will be a reflection on eco-systems and sustainability. Part of the installation will be a toilet with fish living in the bowl. The fishes' waste will feed the plants that will be living in the tank of the toilet. The artist has not finalized a location, but is interested in Billings Park across from the new Centro bus hub on S. Salina Street because of the possibility for social interaction and engagement. Another potential location is "Lemp Park".

*Michael Bosworth* has proposed to install a camera obscura tower across from the Erie Canal Museum. The tower will include QR codes that will allow viewers to see video shot at earlier times from the location.

*Timothy Frerichs* has proposed a container installation near to the Erie Canal Museum, which will feature an installation of suspended "sails" that reference historic boat types common to the Finger Lakes/Great Lakes region.

The final work is proposed by *John Wesley Mannion* and *Sean Hovendick*, and is performance based art that will take in various locations and times throughout the TONY exhibition. It involves one of the artists walking in a Hazmat suit and a photographer documenting the experience.

K. Auwaerter noted the ways in which the city may be able to assist. The full proposals will be presented to the Public Art Commission as the plans are finalized.

*NEA Our Town grant application.* K. Auwaerter reported that she is working with the Connective Corridor and the Downtown Committee on an application for a design competition for the west side of the 200 block of South Salina and Fayette Streets, vacated by the departure of Centro's Common Center. The Connective Corridor has agreed to provide \$100,000 in match for the competition that will involve an open competition for design firms to develop a redesign for the plaza/park area with public art at the core of the design. The Commission discussed the application at length. C. Goss recommended strongly that the competition and design be built around the installation of public art, so that the public art is central to the design not an afterthought. B. Doucette and K. Convertino expressed their concern that the implementation dollars were not in place. C. Capella-Peters noted that the winning design could be used as a major fundraising tool.

B. Doucette expanded the discussion beyond the application to discuss the Connective Corridor and the public art funding. He recommended strongly that no more of the Connective Corridor's public art dollars, which are public funds, be spent without a competition or competitive process. He noted that site selection should not be done on an ad hoc basis because of the limited amount of city-owned property and that the city should have greater control over what public art is installed. He expressed his frustration, which was echoed by other commission members, that the Commission has no ability to select artists or artwork, only to vote on what is brought before it.

C. Capella-Peters noted that the city has no prioritized inventory of sites and that this would be a vital part of the public art master plan. K. Convertino agreed noting that the city should be able to identify, which sites are important and where only artwork that has gone through a competitive process would be selected. She also noted her frustration that the City wants a public art program, but there is no funding for installation in the annual budget.

VII. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.