

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION MEETING

A regular meeting of the Public Art Commission took place on Wednesday, January 20, 2010, at 5:30 P.M. at the Cambridge Arts Council.

The following members were present:

Mags Harries
Cynthia Smith
T.K. McClintock
Miriam Stewart

Staff present:

Lillian Hsu, Director of Public Art
Jeremy Gaucher, Public Art Administrator

1) Approval of November Minutes

Motion to approve - TK; Vote: All in Favor

2) Cambridge Street Project Update

The Art Jury (Beth Kantrowitz, John Arroyo, Michelle Cohen, Matthew Weinberg) reviewed 110 artists using the digital Slideroom Artist Registry. Ten finalists were selected:

John Ewing (new media)
Catherine D'Ignazio (new media, performance, installation)
Hannah Verlin (installation)
Dirk Adams (sound artist, new media)
Carolina Aragon (installation, architecture)
Halsey Burgund (sound artist, musician)
Lisa Greenfield (installation)
Yuna Kim (installation, architecture)
Bea Camacho (installation, fiber)
Nick Rodrigues (installation, civic engagement)

CAC Staff conducted an orientation meeting for all 10 finalists in January. Introductions to the process and questions were answered by Rika Smith-McNally, Lillian Hsu, Jeremy Gaucher, and Chris Basler (community development).

PAC asked if there's a way to document via video for educational purposes. Staff will look into documentation.

PAC asked about Site Committee in-person artist interviews once proposals are in the gallery. Suggested 15-minute presentations and Q&A scheduled on a single day for Site Committee review, potentially on the same day as selection (Saturday May 22 or June 12 as possible dates).

PAC discussed size of Site Committee and decided that 7-9 would be ideal (4 current art jurors plus 3-5 community members).

PAC likes staff idea of having a feedback/comment box for community responses. Comments could be typed and provided to Jurors before deliberation.

3) Ongoing & Upcoming Projects

Handout: See PDF of “Current & Recent Projects” attached.

Lillian Hsu stated that it does not seem that there will be any “Percent” projects in the upcoming fiscal year.

Handout: City “5-year Action Plan” (2004-2009). A new plan is being created for 2009-2017. Staff will distribute when it is final.

PAC Question: Are Community Gardens eligible for % funds?

PAC Question: Why has nothing been integrated into North Point Development?

PAC Comment: Would like to discuss and consider use of small amounts of funding through % programs – perhaps pooling these funds and using together to create projects that would be more effective. Perhaps continuing the Cambridge Street Model. PAC will review effectiveness of model as project progresses.

Other upcoming:

Glacken Field may be a small upcoming project that Rob Stone may integrate art or an artist into the design process.

Kendall Square will another small project that will be seeing some street repairs, designers are discussing integrating artist-designed bike racks.

A temporary project has been proposed by artist Matt Mazota using dog waste to fuel methane burning engines to power things – the idea is to install these units at dog parks and have the methane power lights, or a café, or food stand (popcorn) or some sort. Lillian has met with him, he is talking with other city depts (parks), and seeking grants through MIT.

Figment at Riverfest: CAC staff has been working with local representatives of a 1-day interactive art experience that will likely take place in conjunction with Riverfest. It would be located in a typically underutilized stretch of the festival (east end).

CAC Gallery: CAC staff is currently planning and actively fundraising to present: “Public Art, Public Dialogue” consists of two interactive exhibitions and related programs that will take place in the CAC Gallery and throughout the streets of Cambridge, organized by independent curator Liz Kelton Sheehan. Collectively, these projects will pose several questions: *Who contributes to the life of a community? How are we heard? What actions can we take to improve our community? What defines a public, a community, and its leaders, and how can art facilitate the dialogue between those groups?*

Exhibition 1 (Sept-Dec 2010): *Of, By and For* brings together the work of **Paul Notzold** and **Daniel Peltz**, new media artists who share an interest in community engagement through performance and intervention. Both artists employ various technologies – film, projected video, and cell phone texting – to examine our social fabric and behaviors. Notzold will present a new work from *TXtual Healing*, an ongoing series of projects that uses the cell phone as a medium to interact with and explore our shared public space. The artist projects images onto walls and invites audience members to contribute a narrative, or respond to questions, via cell phone text messages. With input from the CAC and City residents,

Notzold will create a new piece that integrates concerns specific to Cambridge.

Daniel Peltz will conduct a short-term residency with the Cambridge Traffic and Parking Department, which is located together with the CAC in the City Hall Annex building. His project “Control Devices: Crossing Non Signalized Locations” (the title comes from the City’s parking regulations) will investigate the structure of authority in the municipal system, and study the interactions between workers and other members of the public. Peltz has begun to consider ways in which his residency could address communication barriers that City management has identified in the Department. Together, they will create an audio archive for the exhibition, as well as an interactive, sculpture-based installation that will bridge the City Hall Annex lobby, CAC Gallery, and the streets of Cambridge.

Exhibition 2 (Jan-March 2011): *Drawing in Public* – Often a solitary and intimate exercise, in this exhibition drawing is presented as a shared event, an activist project, a site-specific installation, and a community mural initiative. Public events will include artist talks, open drawing sessions, and art workshops.

Artists include: **The Beehive Design Collective** - Headquartered in northern Maine, this activist group travels internationally with their large-scale graphic posters to educate communities about trade issues, agriculture, and development. **Cassie Jones**, a painter from Maine, will create a temporary mural for the exhibition. **Astrid Bowlby**, an artist and educator from Philadelphia, will create a large-scale drawing installation. **Alex Rheault**, also from Maine, will set up “drawing room” in the CAC Gallery, with materials and supplies for drawing and hanging work. A nomadic project, drawing room’s mission is to provide inclusive opportunities to expand experiences, perceptions, and definitions of drawing, art, and collaboration.

4) New Riverside Park

Mags feels unimpressed by the results of the project and feels that there is a problem with scale for the size of the park. Staff: As the park is not yet open and lit, it may be hard to judge results as of yet.

PAC suggestion: that perhaps small solar foot lights would enhance the visual effect of the project at night.

Staff recommendation: perhaps PAC should look through upcoming projects and determine if the % funds are large enough to be impactful for a permanent piece, or if the funds would be better used for temporary programming or pooling with other smaller funds.

5) Suggestions for Long-Range Thinking

- Feedback about Projects (digital and paper)
- Outreach (public art presentation ‘on the road’ at community meetings)
- Corporate Outreach (public art partnerships)
- Advocacy (against Cap on 1%)
- consider PAC active level of participation

6) Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.