

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION MEETING

A regular meeting of the Public Art Commission took place on Wednesday, June 15, 2011, at 5:30 P.M. at the Cambridge Arts Council.

The following members were present:

Miriam Stewart
Julie Graham
Stephanie Boye

Staff present:

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

Public Present:

Jillian Berkowitz (UMass student studying community groups for thesis)

1) Laura Baring-Gould / Fresh Pond

The Site Committee for the public art commission for the North East Sector met Monday, June 6, and approved a final concept. In attendance were: Laura Baring Gould, Sam Corda, Chip Norton Paul Ryder, Karen Kosko, Joan Sawyer, and Jeremy Gaucher.

For those that could not attend, Jeremy Gaucher e-mailed an overview of the meeting and a visual presentation of the proposal.

Since the last Committee meeting prior to June, the concept of the “Boulder with Basin” has changed. Laura presented a number of valid reasons for why she believes it would not have resulted in a successful artwork. Through a series of subsequent meetings with Sam, Chip, and Lillian, she has come to a final concept that was presented to the Committee.

The final concept modifies two existing water fountains (1. Maher Park and 2. the fountain on the perimeter trail closest to Little Fresh Pond) by replacing the existing basin components with bronze or stainless steel sculptural basins made in a low-relief technique.

Those in attendance had very positive reactions to the final concept – sighting that the strength of the final proposal lies in the fact that it stays true to the idea of highlighting the environs of Fresh Pond that were inherent throughout this process, adds a level of direct participation and engagement through use of the fountains, while also negating the addition of a built structure on the Fresh Pond grounds.

Sam presented this final concept to the Water Board on Monday evening, where it was also approved unanimously. Laura will present her final designs to the Public Art Commission in July. If approved at that meeting, the timeline is such that the fabrication of the sculptural basins, and re-painting of the existing fountains, will take place over the fall/winter. The new, augmented fountains will be replaced at the beginning of Spring 2012 when the water is turned back on.

Possible PAC Review of final designs, timeline, and budget for July 20, 2011.

2) Project Updates (with Public Art Task Spreadsheet Handout):

Demonstration Playground/Let the Public Play:

Let the Public Play is a project to promote the mission of the Healthy Parks and Playgrounds Initiative, which was a committee that met for 2 years to develop recommendations for changing the streetscape and the parks of Cambridge to incorporate a broader definition of play for all generations and abilities. Its goal is also to change public perception of what our parks, playgrounds, and public spaces should look like if we can remember that play is essential throughout life and in its best manifestation an open-ended activity centered on the player rather than the equipment. The Arts Council offered the concept to the Healthy Parks and Playgrounds Initiative that a demonstration play space that celebrates these concepts would allow the public to experience these ideas first-hand. The play space could be temporary, freeing the public from a commitment to a single idea and serving to expand people's imaginations to consider possibilities of how play could be integrated into our urban spaces for everyone, and how playgrounds can be freed from catalogue equipment. A year ago Lillian gathered a team to brainstorm this project, and then wrote a grant to the National Endowment for the Arts. The Arts Council have received notice that the NEA is granting us \$45,000 for Let the Public Play. Lillian will work with the committee to move this project forward with the award.

Destination Riverbank: The Arts Council was invited to submit a full proposal for \$10,000 in funding to the NLT Foundation following a successful introductory letter. Full proposal due mid-July.

Flocks: installed over Patriot's Day weekend (4/16-4/18). The installation was successful. We are receiving very positive feedback through e-mails and phone calls. The installation is up through July 8, 2011.

CAC Gallery: Next Exhibition, Breathe Cambridge opens June 20 and runs through August 12.

Breathe Cambridge is a multi-media gallery installation created by youth from the Gately Youth Center. The installation provides an authentic public art-making experience for Cambridge youth that promotes the positive contributions of young people and connects them to community through creativity. The installation is an immersive and interactive experience that invites visitors learn about and participate in this multi-year public art project. Visitors will experience a soundscape that was created by Cambridge teenagers who collaborated with artists, elders, and other community members to collect diverse voices reading original poetry created with a poem template entitled "I Breathe." Visitors are encouraged to learn more about the artistic process, to record their own voices to be added to the sound collage, and to bring the "I Breathe" template back to their workplaces, classrooms, and social gatherings so that the project can change and grow along with the community.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 20, 5:30
Wednesday, August 17, 5:30

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