

ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES
October 24, 2017

Attendees: Jennifer Drake, Tina Johnson, John Bruning, Deanna Goodlander, Trudy Elliott, David Groth, Mark Johnstone, Roberta Larsen, Hannah Daniels, Amy Ferguson, Kristen Lahner,

Guests: Phil Boyd, Welch Comer Engineers

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Drake called the meeting to order.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION: There were none.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS: There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ann Melbourn, 210 N. Forest Drive commented regarding the proposed public art piece in the Fort Grounds Drive traffic circle. She noted that the neighborhood calls the location “Park & Garden” and said that because it is such a treacherous roundabout, anything larger than a flag pole in the center would be a problem for vision and snow plowing.

Terry Godbout, a Fort Grounds resident, said that he is concerned about the roundabout itself. There is an almost universal hatred of it in the Fort Grounds. He noted that it is difficult on a nice day, but with a hard rainstorm or snow berms, it is even worse.

Bruce Wally, 603 W. Garden, said that the artwork that has been proposed seems too big to work and be appreciated in the proposed location. The traffic circle itself tends to be more of an obstacle than a help when traveling in that location.

MINUTES: Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bruning, to approve the September 12, 2017 minutes. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Motion by Commissioner Johnstone, seconded by Commissioner Lahner, to approve the September financial report. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Chairman Drake said that “The Idaho Farmer” will be dedicated on Monday. It will be installed next to the “American Worker.” She encouraged the commission members to attend the dedication and tell their friends. Commissioner Larsen said that all of the commissioners should be in attendance as it is an important piece and because the artist is local and needs everyone’s support. Chairman Drake clarified that “The Idaho Farmer” is a donated piece that was financed by an outside source so the art did not have to go through the normal call process.

Commissioner Goodlander said that she believes that the artist, Terry Lee, will be working on the other pieces in the series this winter.

Chairman Drake said that the Emerge “Day of the Dead Fiesta” will be next Thursday, November 2nd. It celebrates Hispanic heritage and they are tying it in to the Human Rights Education Institute this year with a series of lectures and art by Hispanic/Latino artists. She highly recommends the event and noted that it is a fun and unique way to celebrate a different style of art and heritage in this area. Commissioner Johnstone said that there will be 70 related Hispanic exhibitions.

Commissioner Larsen asked about the status of the ArtCurrents pieces. Chairman Drake said that Mr. Taylor is just coming back from an extended absence and is trying to catch up. She will email him regarding the status of the Jacob Novinger pieces.

MAYOR’S AWARDS IN THE ARTS DEBRIEF:

Commissioner Elliott said that she thought the event went very smoothly and that the Resort did a phenomenal job. She also noted that they had great people serving, which was a plus. The Arts & Culture Alliance volunteers came and helped to set up. A idea for next year would be doing a better job of identifying who is on the Arts Commission (i.e., the commissioners would wear an identification badge). Commissioner Elliott noted that Commissioner Lahner designed the table centerpieces and they came in under budget. She thinks it would be nice for the commission members to take part in the greeting of the guests. In regard to the awards, Commissioner Elliott thought they were individualized and great. Commissioner Goodlander asked about some kind of a printed statement about the Arts Commission and the things that they are involved in. She also heard comments about putting a time limit on the acceptance speeches.

Commissioner Elliott commented that she thought it was wonderful to see the young people there as greeters. She is also thankful for Emerge’s art display and said that she didn’t realize what a tremendous job it was for Jeni to set up the displays. Commissioner Elliott said that the display boards that were used this year were free, but are actually the property of the Coeur d’Alene Arts Association. Next year the word is that the commission will have to pay to use them. She suggested that next year it should be included as a line item in the budget, and they will need to have people lined up to help Emerge set up and take down the displays. She also suggested name badges for the award recipients. Another thought was that the music was a little loud, but the emcee (Chairman Drake) did a great job.

FORT GROUNDS ROUNDABOUT SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Chairman Drake said that the selection committee met and unanimously selected “Coeur” by Jason Sanchez. She noted that the difference between the quality of the maquettes was striking, and she thinks that it was one of the reasons why Mr. Sanchez’s piece was so successful. Everyone liked the art and the fact that Mr. Sanchez put a lot of effort into it, and the fact that he is a local artist. Chairman Drake noted that there has been quite a bit of discussion between the City, Welch Comer, and the Fort Grounds residents about the traffic circle itself and how it is performing. She commented that this is not the venue to discuss the pros and cons of traffic

circles. The commission is tasked to look at the art that was selected by the selection committee and either approve it or not approve it to go in front of the city council. She further commented that they always want to listen to public input and want to use their knowledge as arts commissioners in choosing public art and the lessons they have learned.

Chairman Drake reviewed an email that was sent to the commissioners by Sam Taylor, Arts Commission liaison. She noted that Mr. Taylor has primarily been the one at the City who has been taking information in and has been the “go between” between the commission, residents, Welch Comer, the Streets Department, etc. The email summarized the concerns that have been raised.

In response to the concern that the traffic circle is too small for art, Mr. Taylor said that they had the exact dimensions and put those in the call, and the piece of art was drafted and designed specifically to fit within those parameters.

In response to the concern that motorists can't see the other side of the traffic circle, Mr. Taylor said: “Traffic circles and roundabouts are specifically designed so that motorists are not supposed to look to the other side. Their view should be on a ‘site triangle’ that is to their left, so they are focusing toward oncoming traffic. We purposely obstruct the view inside of roundabouts for this reason, and it is intended to slow motorists down because they can't see the other side, and so they become more defensive in their driving. That's an important public safety measure. The site triangle and obstructing the view of the other side of the circle or roundabout is called for in the federal design guidelines on these intersection facilities. The City of Coeur d'Alene has art in most of our roundabouts and traffic circles in the community. They are there both for that additional safety measure and for amazing aesthetic beauty and enhancement.”

Chairman Drake said that they have art in a number of roundabouts and traffic circles around town and she doesn't remember any conversations regarding the safety of those pieces. She noted that it is a very common thing to do and actually improves safety. Commissioner Larsen said that the concerned comments about the roundabout near the high school were about the ages of the drivers, but it has worked out and there have been no problems.

In response to the concern that the traffic circle is not designed well, Phil Boyd of Welch Comer Engineers said that when the traffic circle was originally put in they encountered budget constraints. At the time the City Engineer said to leave it for now, and they will rebuild it whenever whatever is going to be in that section of property is built. He noted that the contractor will be cutting out curbing on the Park side which will slow people down, and push it into more of a traffic circle pattern. Ms. Melbourn commented that the fire trucks, UPS, Fed Ex, etc. still can't get around it. Mr. Boyd said that there are alternate routes. Chairman Drake said that this is not the venue for that specific discussion and that it may lead to a bigger discussion if the art is approved and it goes before the city council.

In response to the concern that the roundabout needs to not have anything large on the inside because the intersection is the only way to get large vehicles, such as those hauling boats and trailers, into the Fort Grounds area, Mr. Taylor noted in his email that, “based on an in person assessment and discussions with Welch Comer's engineers, staff respectfully disagrees with this.

There are other entry points to the neighborhood, including along River, that provide adequate large vehicle access.”

In response to the concern the Call to Artists called it the “Fort Ground Drive” roundabout and the traffic circle is on Park Drive, Chairman Drake said that based on the maps and drawings and the Welch Comer public meetings that happened on behalf of the Fort Grounds redesign area, Mr. Taylor believes that notification was appropriate. The traffic circle is on Fort Ground Drive, and Chairman Drake said that they are doing the best that they can to make it as clear as they can for everybody.

Chairman Drake also shared the following from Mr. Taylor’s email: “I should note that we are aware of no formal vote of this neighborhood stating they are opposed. There are absolutely some residents that do not want the art there. They deserve to have input and we have worked to provide opportunities for a few years during planning and design for that to occur as well as the meeting today. City Councilmember Dan Gookin, also a resident of Fort Grounds, also shared input with me on this issue as he had heard the concerns, too. He specifically noted to me that a majority have not shared feedback one way or the other. Councilmember Gookin has also kept in touch with the neighborhood about the revitalization of this area and has noted for them that artwork was planned for this traffic circle.”

Commissioner Johnson asked about the other two traffic circles in that area. Mr. Boyd said that the pillars that were installed were actually centered so that they can have public art on the top of them. Chairman Drake commented that they look finished as they are. Commissioner Johnson commented that she does not like the proposed art piece. Chairman Drake said that art is subjective and she hopes that everyone continues to share their opinions.

Commissioner Lahner said that she drove around the area today and one thing that struck her is that the roundabout is really embedded in the residential corner. She wondered if there was some way that the art piece can be moved to a more public roundabout. If the residents are up in arms about the piece, she is wondering if the piece could be moved closer to the carousel or closer to the park. Chairman Drake asked if the piece would fit in the other two traffic circles. Mr. Boyd said they would have to remove the pillar that is there, which would require a substantial effort.

Ms. Melbourn said that the Fort Grounds is a designated historic neighborhood and the art piece selected in most everyone’s opinion in the neighborhood is not compatible with the historic nature of the neighborhood. She noted that there has never been an address change for any of the homes that front Fort Ground Drive and they still have Park Drive addresses. She noted that they have no objection to the art being moved to Memorial Field or the park, but the neighborhood has a strong attachment to the flag pole. Commissioner Goodlander said that the issues that the Fort Grounds neighborhood has are with the city council, and not the Arts Commission. She thinks that anyone who objects to the piece should look at the maquette and that Jason Sanchez is a really talented artist.

Commissioner Johnstone said that he agrees with Commissioner Goodlander that the issues should be separated. He personally believes that there should be art on traffic circles and thinks

that is a city council issue that is much larger than what they charged with discussing. Having been involved as a volunteer or employee at city level administration since 1982, this is not a new conversation that he has heard. Coeur d'Alene, from his perspective is going through growing pains. The city and the people who live here are learning the process of what happens in a city with greater need. He likes the art but doesn't think it is appropriate for the site and commented that Mr. Sanchez has mentioned that he wanted to create a piece that is emblematic and which comes to stand for Coeur d'Alene. Commissioner Johnstone's suggestion is that the art piece is not appropriate for its surrounds and location and the historic nature of the neighborhood. He also commented that the conversation regarding the flag pole that is dedicated in memory of a veteran is a conversation that is happening all over the country in a lot of different communities. He calls that kind of art "plop art" and it doesn't really integrate into the location as well. There are a lot of issues that the commission needs to talk about.

Commissioner Johnson asked if they could amend the proposal for something that is historical that would match the neighborhood. Chairman Drake commented that the problem she has with that is that she really wants to respect the process. The process included the selection committee narrowing the submissions down to the top 30, and then using their due diligence of going through them and narrowing them down further. The public comment was overwhelmingly in favor of this piece and the selection committee unanimously selected the piece. The reason it comes before the Arts Commission is to make sure they are doing the best they can with the city's money and are being responsible. In her opinion, the job of the commission is to make sure they are following through on the details, while also respecting the process. She noted that they do have the flexibility to move the art to another location.

Mark Faulkner, Vice President of the Fort Ground Homeowners Association, said that the call to artists specifically said that the art piece should reflect the nature of the environment and this piece does not do that. He thinks it might be appropriate in another location. He suggested a piece of property that is closer to the merry-go-round. He further commented that he is not opposed to the piece at all, but just thinks that it doesn't belong there. He discussed his concerns with the roundabout. Chairman Drake said that the expert testimony says that art helps and makes it safer when installed in a traffic circle. She commented that the commission can decide if they want the art in that traffic circle, or if they like the art and want to put it somewhere else, or if they want to reject the art.

Commissioner Groth said that he appreciates the process and thinks it is important to also say we screwed up. For him, it is the size of the traffic circle and issues with the traffic circle which affect putting art there.

Commissioner Goodlander said that she thinks it is a really interesting piece of art and thinks it would be fun to have in our collection, but maybe not in this exact site. Chairman Drake asked Mr. Boyd if there are more possible places where the art might fit. Mr. Boyd said they have identified a spot where the old NIC sign used to be, and the spot has been reserved for art. The two poles that are currently in that location are going away. There might also be another location in the plaza area near the picnic area that is part of the new Memorial Park, where folks could get closer to the art piece. Chairman Drake said that she really hesitates to change anything once it has gone through the process but understands that there are other options. She noted that one of

the topics of conversation during the selection process is that they loved the piece of art and it was almost too bad to put it where people couldn't walk up to it – especially because wording from the Idaho Constitution will be etched on the heart. If they did move the piece to a spot that was more pedestrian friendly, she believes that the selection committee would be happy that the process was respected but also that some of their comments played into a new position. Commissioner Goodlander suggested making a motion to accept the art with the caveat that they would look at a different location, and then run it by legal and Mr. Taylor.

Commissioner Lahner said that she is excited about Jason's piece but feels like it doesn't belong in the proposed location. There are so many places and public spaces where it would be beautiful. Commissioner Johnson said that she would like to not be restricted to the Four Corners area. Chairman Drake said that it would have to be located in the Lake District, but the Arts Commission would also have to approve the new location.

Carolyn Gunlock, Fort Grounds resident, said that she doesn't want any art down there, and the roundabout is a pain. Chairman Drake recommend that she take her comments to the city council and the Streets Department.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Goodlander, seconded by Commissioner Larsen, to accept “Coeur” by artist Jason Sanchez, with the caveat that the Arts Commission will be pursuing a different location, and that the decision would be reviewed with the Legal Department.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Bruning said that another possible location for the art piece would be the corner by the Bridge Academy as there is green space there. Chairman Drake said that she would let Mr. Taylor know and then make a list of possible locations and make sure that everyone who needs to be involved is involved. She noted that they would definitely want to talk to Mr. Sanchez about it also.

Motion carried, with Commissioner Johnson voting no.

Chairman Drake commented that she feels like this was a very productive and respectful conversation and noted that sometimes they run into hiccups that they don't expect.

Commissioner Johnson suggested that the Centennial Trail Foundation railbike might be a suggestion. Mr. Bruning said that they are still looking for funding on that. Commissioner Groth said that he spoke to Tom Smart's son recently and there are some shaky feelings as to whether they want to pursue it or not.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) VS. REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
DISCUSSION:**

Chairman Drake said that an artist who submitted a proposal for the Fort Grounds call submitted a suggestion. The artists feels that the calls for artists are unfair to artists and make them do too much work and that other places use a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process where the artists send in their resume and samples of work, and the commission narrows it down.

Chairman Drake said that she doesn't like that idea and feels that it is doing a disservice to the people of Coeur d'Alene deciding on art without actually seeing what the art would be. Commissioner Johnstone said that he disagrees and thinks that the commission needs to review its master plan, which is now two years out of the date. The other issue is the way the commission functions in terms of public art. He wonders how much the commissioners either go back and review the public art policy, or if they ever read it when they join the commission. He noted that ten years ago the Idaho Commission for the Arts sent out regional arts advisers to the entire state. The gentleman covering this area was from Sandpoint. Commissioner Johnstone said that he knows that the gentleman met with the Arts Commission but is not sure who he met with in the city, which is a real disservice for the continuity of information. He knows that at the time Coeur d'Alene was given a binder on how to implement the budget, artist selection, contracts, fabrication, installation, dedication, maintenance, conversation, education and promotion. Examples from everywhere were provided and Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) were clearly discussed. He noted that RFPs have been used in public arts programs for over 30 years and that it costs the artists a lot to prepare a proposal. You have to be at a certain level before you start building models. He thinks that all of our projects over a certain level should go through an RFQ process. The artists that we want to attract are used to that and are building their career around it. He is a firm believer in RFQs because it lessens the work load on the applicant and at the same time it requires the committee who is reviewing those qualifications to know exactly what it is they are seeing on the resumes. It gets very tricky because of what the application process has come to, which is frequently all online and a lot of it is computer-generated. He thinks it is a much bigger issue that needs to be addressed.

Councilmember Goodlander said that she was the city council liaison for the Arts Commission for approximately 16 years when they didn't have any money. She thinks that one of the things that our Arts Commission decided at that time was they wanted to encourage local artists and they don't invest the kind of dollars that it takes to bring in big name artists. They wanted more art and more local involvement. She thinks that the process is relatively well done, but it could be simplified a bit and it wouldn't hurt the commission to look at that process again. She feels that the RFQ process doesn't give the type of information that they need. Commissioner Johnstone said that you need people who know how to read a resume and application and know what it is. Commissioner Goodlander responded that people with that process have a curator who knows art. Commissioner Johnstone said that the arts commissions in many cities are like our commission, where the members are citizens who have no background in art, but have a vested interest. He noted that he has given probably about a hundred lectures in different cities around the state, including non-profits, to try to get the local communities to understand the art process. There are ways to learn.

Chairman Drake suggested that the commission read the information provided to her by Commissioner Johnstone (she will forward it to the commission via email) so that they are prepared for a more informed discussion at the next meeting.

UPDATE OF ARTS COMMISSION BROCHURE:

Commissioner Elliott said that when they were doing the Mayor's Awards, she thought it would be a good to display a brochure that says what the commission does. She noted that the brochure

needs to be updated and that Commissioner Shute said that she would be willing to update it. It was agreed that Commissioner Shute should be tasked with updating the public art brochure. Commissioner Johnstone said that he thinks that it should be done in a “hip” way so that they are not reinventing the wheel every time. He suggested putting a QR code on the art plaques so that all that would be needed would be a piece of paper that would tell people in a general way about the art. That way you don’t end up with a lot of discarded guides. Chairman Drake suggested using the Art in Motion brochures as an example.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Arts Commission Applicant Review

Teresa Runge’s application was reviewed and discussed. Chairman Drake said that the selection committee is in agreement that she would be a great addition to the commission.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Lahner, to recommend the appointment of Teresa Runge to the Arts Commission. Motion carried with Commissioner Johnstone voting no.

Commissioner Johnstone said that he thinks it is problematic to have someone working in the field that they are performing a volunteer service for in the city. Chairman Drake said that she encourages it and noted that they have a conflict of interest agenda item at the beginning of every meeting.

Riverstone Public Art

Commissioner Larsen said that Mr. Spiering said that the art would probably not be ready until after the winter. She noted that Mr. Spiering works at Ferguson High School where the recent shooting was and it has been devastating emotionally.

Library Bike Racks

Commissioner Goodlander said she is working with Amy to have Mr. Taylor contact her to define whether the city will do the concrete pad for the lower level rack. The other issue is with the size of the rack. She noted that Mr. McCully talked to Mr. Taylor about having some portable bike racks that they have used in the streets for different events put into the library location to get a feel for what a rack would look like before they ask for qualifications. Commissioner Johnstone said that he has a Powerpoint on artist-designed bike racks all over the country and will send it to Commissioner Goodlander. Commissioner Goodlander said they are very close to issuing the call and that everything is written and the selection committee is picked. They are just waiting to get some of the city issues defined.

Murals Project

Chairman Drake said that she hasn’t had a chance to sit down with Mr. Taylor to see if they are moving forward and if the money has been returned. Hopefully within the next month she will be able to sit down with him and discuss it as she would like to move forward.

Public Art Conference 2018 Exploration Committee

Commissioner Johnston said that he attended the conference in Olympia recently. There were probably about 80 people in attendance, mostly from the coast. The program started with a meet and greet on Thursday night and then began at 9:00 a.m. the next morning. Quite a few of the presentations that he attended were very good. A lot of the discussions were related to what is going on in the world in a very contemporary fashion. There were a lot of young people between 25 and 40 at the conference who were quite knowledgeable about what is going on in the field. He noted that this type of conference would have been equally as helpful for artists. He thinks that Olympia could have done a little better job generating local interest. The organizer fell under the public art division of the Washington State Commission of the Arts and the Olympia public art program. They had at least four full time staff members and probably two or three other part-time people working on the conference. Based on what he saw and experienced, Commissioner Johnstone said that he doesn't think that the CDA Arts Commission is ready to host the conference for the reason that we don't have within the community the proper resources (people) to help with it. They are talking about Moscow and Pullman partnering for the conference next year. Chairman Drake thanked Commissioner Johnstone for attending the conference and updating the commission.

Art on the Islands

Commissioner Elliott said that she sent out an email about having a meeting and noted that there are three items that Mr. Taylor was going to check with Legal on first. She noted that Mr. Roberge has some very specific ideas on how he wants the program to go. Chairman Drake said that they need to mesh his vision with what the city is allowed to do since it is on public property. Commissioner Elliott said that she thinks the subcommittee needs to meet with Mr. Taylor and get the answers to the questions before Mr. Roberge is involved in the process. She noted that Mr. Taylor suggested that Bill Greenwood, Parks & Recreation Director, also be a part of the conversation. Commissioner Elliott will send out a meeting invite to the subcommittee.

It was noted that Commissioner Larsen's second term on the Arts Commission ended on October 1st.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION by Commissioner Larsen, seconded by Commissioner Elliott, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Ferguson
Executive Assistant