

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

December 17, 2018

City Hall – City Council Chambers
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Manna called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

B. PLEDGE TO FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Matsumoto, May, Ryan (6:10 p.m.), Taner, Rubino, Chairperson Manna

Absent: None

Others present: Martin Betz, Cultural Arts Manager, and Cultural Arts Division staff: Lorenzo Baker, Erick Brinkman, Genna Muzingo, Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 24, 2018

It was moved and seconded (Rubino/May) that the minutes September 24, 2018 be approved as submitted.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Matsumoto, May, Rubino, Taner, Chairperson Manna

Noes: None

Absent: Ryan (arrival 6:10 pm),

Abstain: None

November 19, 2018

It was moved and seconded (May/Matsumoto) that the minutes of November 19, 2018 be approved as submitted.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Matsumoto, May, Taner, Vice-Chair Rubino

Noes: None

Absent: Ryan (arrival 6:10 pm),

Abstain: Chairperson Manna

E. CEREMONIAL

Manager Betz introduced the Cultural Arts Division project team: Eric Brinkman, Genna Muzingo and Lorenzo Baker and each gave a brief background.

- Eric Brinkman: is Acting Arts Supervisor (while Eilen Stewart on family leave): is a ceramic artist with a degree in Art History, started at the City as a studio technician, has been promoted to teacher, pottery coordinator and now is stepping in for Eilen, and helping out at the Art Center. Things he envisions: improvements to class curriculum, and to the ceramics studio.

- Genna Muzingo is a career civil servant, is from Morro Bay, last worked for the City of Torrance, is a gallery associate at the Art Center.
- Lorenzo Baker, a recent MFA graduate from Otis Art Institute, previously worked at the Armory Museum, Pasadena, originally from Sacramento, is working with Mr. Betz on Commission projects.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)

Charlotte Marshall, President, Manhattan Beach Botanic Gardens, thanked Mr. Betz for the recent art fair at Metlox and complimented staff; she especially liked that there was a body painter. Manager Betz thanked her and noted there will be another fair in the spring

Manager Betz pointed out the order of the agenda has been changed so that action items (Commission Business) will be higher in the order, following audience participation.

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

18/1119.1 Utility Box Beautification Project

Manager Betz noted that this item is only a review of the staff decisions on the proposals (artists and box locations) and will be presented to the City Council tomorrow night. Tonight the Commission can make any final comments which Staff can verbally provide to the Council tomorrow night in the staff presentation.

Eric Brinkman presented powerpoint slides “Artist and Location Selection”, with Genna assisting. In response to Commissioner **Rubino**, who noted she had some comments, Mr. Betz noted he will note such and incorporate tomorrow in his oral remarks to the City Council.

Eric Brinkman reminded that this is Phase I of the project (13 approved locations, one has 2 boxes) and explained the parameters for curating the program: wanted diversity (local and international), consideration for available box locations (business area? park? school? touristy?) and also a desire to spread out images throughout the City.

Going through the slide presentation, informing of staff recommendations for each location, the Commission commented as follows on individual locations and murals, with particular issues as follows:

- Rosecrans & Village Drive / dolphins: Rubino: can the panel with 3 dolphins face Rosecrans? Staff commented that in the final phase of implementing, can be worked out with the installation contractor for final design.
- Rosecrans & Aviation / postcard image: May: concerned that this image is not appropriate since it conceptually originated in New York, not Manhattan Beach. Staff commented that there is another similar image planned at Metlox – staff can raise the issue of the duplication and offer a replacement image.
- Redondo Avenue & MBB near Meadows School: done by elementary school student: Ryan: should this image, due to content, be switched to near Mira Costa and, conversely, the image near Mira Costa, installed near the park? Staff comment: this makes sense.

- MBB /Sepulveda: Rubino/Ryan: would this be better in an area with more foot traffic? This doesn't seem to work well: Staff input: will ask Council when giving feedback - for authority to change locations if it turns out that as approved doesn't work well.

The Commission briefly discussed the maintenance of the utility box murals and the promotion of the project; Mr. Betz informed that the mural coverings can last 10 years and once fitted on a specific box, they can be redone easily, and the execution is expected to be completed in six months. A press release may be in order, and a marketing strategy will be determined. The Commission suggested that in promoting, the "story" is that generally the murals are from local artists, many from Manhattan Beach.

18/1217.1 Public Sculpture *Egrets in Flight* donation

Manager Betz gave a brief overview, that this is a donation from artists Margaret Lazzari and Lauren Evans that came to the City as it is gearing up for its 6th iteration of the sculpture garden project. The sculpture, and the sculpture will be moved from behind the Civic Center Library to the Botanic Garden at Polliwog Park and then be maintained as part of the garden agreement with the City. He proceeded with a slide presentation, showing the sculpture and the garden which is used for events and also as an educational resource. A positive benefit is that the sculpture will activate the space and fits in. Staff is recommending appropriation of \$500 which is believed to cover the cost by Public Works to move and install the piece.

Artists Evans and Lazzari made a brief presentation. They are thrilled to be part of the rotating art program, and this piece was conceived with Manhattan Beach specifically in mind. Ms. **Lazzari** noted it is very meaningful location in that the garden is a good place to de-stress and the sculpture will be a good link with the native plants as well as water birds in Polliwog Point.

In a question and answer discussion, **Lauren Evans** noted that "golden paint" was used and graffiti is not a big problem because with this, the art can very simply and with little cost, be restored without affecting the underlying paint. The aluminum used for the pole and other parts has proven to be very durable. **Mr. Betz** noted that the City will assume responsibility of maintenance (as is typical with gifts) for its durable life and, responding to Commissioner Rubino's question, he is not sure if the public art fund will cover its maintenance – that is undecided at this point. **Lorenzo Baker** will be looking at all of the City's sculptures to see if an overall schedule for maintenance is needed.

In discussion, **Commissioner Taner** emphasized he felt that again the story is that this sculpture comes from a Manhattan Beach artist and he hopes that they can both be personally involved with writing the story which could be memorialized on a panel at the site. Also, when publicized, this can be a big motivation for other local artists to come forward. **Chair Manna** stated he thought this is a tremendous offer, perfect location, and described and contrasted this donation positively compared to the LOVE sculpture.

Chair Manna invited other input.

Charlotte Marshall, speaking for the Botanic Garden, is thrilled to have the sculpture and informed that the garden is undergoing renovation with some changes. She wants everyone to be aware that

the landscaped designer for the garden may suggest another location as the renovation progresses because as is known in similar venues, when art is added to a public garden, the attendance can significantly increase, and this may affect the sculpture location. The Garden may also open up to performing arts events.

The Commission thanked the artists and it was subsequently **moved and seconded** (Rubino/Ryan) that the Commission accept the offer of the Flying Egrets for placement in the Botanic Garden in Poliwog Park as per letter from artists dated December 10, 2019 to the Commission.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Matsumoto, May, Ryan, Taner, Vice-Chair Rubino, Chairperson Manna
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

Closing comments and ideas followed expressed by the Commission included: could the sculpture be placed at the pedestrian entrance on Peck Avenue to act as a sort of sign post?; the art in the park should incorporate the Garden's sustainability philosophy and be able to assist in demonstrating solar, rainwater and greywater; it is hoped that there are opportunities to incorporate more art into the overall garden sign program.

18/1217.2 MB Mural Ordinance

Manager Betz introduced the project background, noting there was a significant uptake in mural installs in the city without much review of content and this is the concern. Tonight the Commission is asked to review a very draft Ordinance that is intended to address this issue of content. In addition to an ordinance, a registry would be created and maintenance would be addressed, and as drafted this would involve the Cultural Arts Commission. He proceeded with a slide presentation.

Mr. Betz responded to Commissioners questions stating it would apply to both residential and commercial private properties and there are similar ordinances in other cities (e.g. LA as the draft is modelled on); and the Department of Community Development will also comment, and there would be a fee to cover the cost of the registry.

The Commission raised concerns: (May) objects to Section C. (Eligibility) in that she doesn't believe they should be getting into personal homes; (Manna) inquired as to whether the program would start with a huge backlog; (Rubino) objects to the concept especially in that it converts residential property - perhaps this can be struck? (Taner) inquired as to the time frame for developing an ordinance.

Manager Betz noted that there will be further information coming from the Community Development as to zoning regulations relating to murals and he believes that the City Council wants to put this on an agenda in January.

Chair Manna invited public comment.

Charlotte Marshall stated she is concerned with such strong regulation over personal property and recounted a past situation in which she had installed a vintage sign on a wall in her backyard and a city building inspector required it to be removed based on a neighbor complaint.

Mr. Best advised that after tonight he will meet with Community Development to discuss possible edits based on the Commission's input. The Commission continued to discuss the draft ordinance with the following points made:

Commissioner Taner suggested under Eligibility strike A., B, C, and E. and leave only D. He noted the rationale for the CAC involvement is because the CAC reviews murals on public property; however is opposed to the Commission getting involved in reviewing private property murals, as he does not believe this is within its stated charter and jurisdiction and one solution would be for the CAC to provide a framework and ideas regarding art for reviewing the private murals, and possibly the CAC can assist with researching other city ordinances. Commissioner Rubino suggested that the mural ordinance apply and establish CAC jurisdiction, if an ordinance is to be adopted, only to public and commercial property and buildings. She understands the Council's concern and suggested that having a requirement to have a permit may cause people to stop and think a lot more about what the art they are considering doing on their property. She agrees that the involvement of the CAC should be limited and restricted only to public buildings. Commissioner Manna stated his agreement with keeping public murals to the CAC and private murals to the Community Development Department.

Manager Betz stated he is hearing a general consensus that the Commission recommends that the mural ordinance should stay away from applying to any type of residential buildings on private property and apply only to commercial and/or public buildings if the CAC is to be involved. He pointed that Section D. is standard for any mural ordinance and he reminded of the Skechers mosaic which came to the CAC as advisory matter and wound up being much nicer ultimately than as initially proposed.

Commissioner Rubino suggested an approach whereby the Commission would suggest that restrictions or regulations for murals, be covering only private businesses and public buildings under the jurisdiction of the CAC.

Commissioner Taner feels caution should be taken and the CAC should not get involved in the permit and application process, and pointed out that the vast majority of murals are produced by businesses, either for aesthetic improvement or advertisement. He also believes that there is an "Instagram factor" that art in public view becomes well known on social media and can be broadcasted across the globe. He feels the CAC involvement should only be at a philosophical level, acting only as advisors. To Commissioner May Mr. Betz noted that the draft ordinance is modelled after one applicable to the Venice community (Los Angeles).

Commissioner Rubino summed up the consensus of the Commission and Mr. Betz expressed this as three pronged: 1) not be involved in residential murals; 2) not be involved in approving specific murals; and 3) want to be advisory only for commercial building murals and public building/space murals. This is what Mr. Betz will pass on to the Community Development Department.

It was moved and seconded (Rubino/May) that the Cultural Arts Commission recommend and pass on to the Community Development Department two basic elements for developing a mural regulation ordinance: 1) would not apply to residential property and 2) not involve the Cultural Arts Commission except as advisory for privately owned business/commercial related murals.

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Matsumoto, May, Ryan, Taner, Vice-Chair Rubino, Chairperson Manna
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

H. STAFF ITEMS

- a. Cultural Arts Division report: Mr. Betz suggested skipping and moving on to Ann Pitt's presentation but first quickly noted some Commission related items that have gone or are going to the City Council. Eric Brinkman reported on the 4th annual 2-day holiday ceramics sale, recently held. The number of artists and income earned has doubled. The event was moved to Josyn Center this year from the Art Center and caught a lot of street traffic and marketing was early. Commissioner Rubino commented that the sandwich board sign was too small. Eric explained the sale is now 3 times a year (Hometown Fair, Holiday and Mothers Day). Commissioner Rubino suggested that a street banner be used for advertisement.
- b. City Council updates: Manager Betz reported: In November the Council acted on the Assessment and Cataloguing of Historical Archives. Tomorrow the Council will act on the Catalina Classic proposal, the new Sculpture Garden and utility box murals. In January the Council will consider if ready, the mural ordinance and Community Grant Program.
- c. City Hall lobby public art RFQ: The RFQ has gone out and some submissins have already been received (deadline = Feb 13) including some international artists. All information is on the City website.
- d. Presentation on Local Artist Eva Goldsheid – Ann Pitts. Ms. Pitts thanked the Commission and requested that due to time contraits, that she be allowed to present at the next meeting; it was so ordered.

I. COMMISSION ITEMS - None

J. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:04 P.M, Chair Manna moved adjournment, to the regular meeting of January 21st, at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue. However the Chair noted that this date coincides with Martin Luther Kings birthday holiday; Mr. Betz will confirm the next meeting date and location. There being no objections, it was so ordered.