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DEPARTMENT *of* ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Salt Lake City Art Design Board Meeting
March 5, 2020
3:00- 5:00 pm
Finch Lane Gallery

PRESENT: Larissa Trout Nancy Rivera
Aurelio Velazquez Justin Johnson
Joe Jacoby

Staff Members

Felicia Baca, Arts Council Executive Director
Kat Nix, Public Art Program Manager
Abby Draper, Public Art Program Assistant

EXCUSED: Jann Haworth

GUESTS: Tyler Murdock, Salt Lake City Department of Parks and Public Lands

I. Call to Order/Approval of Minutes

- a. After a quorum was established at approximately 3:00 pm, Ms. Larissa Trout motioned to approve the minutes from the Board's February 6, 2020 convening. Mr. Aurelio Velazquez seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor.

II. Boat Ramp Update

- a. Project Overview
- i. Ms. Kat Nix stated that Mr. Tyler Murdock and Mr. Lewis Kogan from the Salt Lake City Department of Parks and Public Lands had led a site visit to the Jordan River Boat Ramp Capital Improvement Project for the Public Art Program and Ms. Trout. Ms. Nix reminded the Board that this is the project to which the Board allocated the percent for art funding for Fiscal Year 2019-2020, approximately \$110,000. Mr. Murdock noted that the Parks Department will be constructing three new boat ramps and improving one existing ramp. This is a subset of a larger boat ramp project that will add approximately 30 new ramps to the Jordan River within Salt Lake County, and funds for the initiative come from a variety of sources. Mr. Murdock stated the goals from Parks' standpoint for the project are to improve perceptions of the Jordan River and highlight it as a resource. He stated that he preferred that public art be visible near the boat ramp sites, in addition to being visible by river users. He then



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reviewed the boat ramp locations noting which sites may be more suitable for public art. Mr. Murdock stated that the 1700 South location was not ideal for public art at this time and the Fisher Mansion boat ramp site has a new pedestrian bridge and a carriage house renovation, so public art may be less needed at this site given the existing pieces of iconic infrastructure. He then stated that the 1800 North/Redwood Road location is heavily used by runners and bikers, and has high visibility from the street and ample space for public art; and the final boat ramp location, Gadsby, is on North Temple and is less utilized but still highly visible therefore also suitable for public art. Mr. Murdock noted that the Parks Department is open public art at all these locations, or a single location. The Parks Department prefers that the selected artist or artist team complete community engagement with relevant stakeholders including committed individual users, members of the Trails and Natural Lands Advisory Board, and the Wasatch Mountain Club.

b. Discussion

- i. Ms. Nix stated questions for the Board to consider as the scope of the project became narrowed, including: who is the intended viewing group of the work, does this call warrant a national or Utah-only call for artists, is there a role of wayfinding within the call, what is the flexibility within the timeline, the ideal selection method for the commission, and is the intended product a work of art that can be replicated? Ms. Nix also asked about narrowing the site(s) an artist could respond to. She noted that the budget of \$110,000 and distribution of other public art in the area of the ramps could inform which sites are included. Mr. Joe Jacoby noted that the ability to replicate the artwork at multiple sites was appealing, to allow for consistency from one site to the next and to efficiently use funds. He stated that an artist could design, fabricate, and install artwork at one site, but also provide plans for additional artwork at other sites. Ms. Trout compared this potential process to the creation of sidewalk medallions, a case where the City commissioned artist designs, and the City took responsibility for potential future fabrication. She noted that the river has high potential for recreation and activation. Ms. Nix noted that installing art at more than one to two ramps may require partnerships or the allocation of another fiscal year's CIP funding. Mr. Murdock noted that it may be possible that the Parks Department would be able to contribute funding, but that his initial contact with the County confirmed that their current Zoo, Arts, and Parks funding was not scoped for art. Mr. Murdock also stated that further confirmation of interest from other municipalities in replicating the artwork beyond the four ramps within the City limits would be needed. Mr. Justin Johnson suggested encouraging artists themselves to choose how many of the sites they would respond to. Board members discussed that splitting the budget among multiple sites would yield smaller-scale work, but agreed that high-visibility work could still be achieved, and Mr. Velazquez stated that having replication of works could be an effective way to mark the river in high-traffic areas. Mr. Jacoby confirmed that the artist would sell the copyright of the artwork to facilitate replication.

c. Project Scope

- i. Ms. Nix noted that the public art program could open a Call for Artists that made the City's right to replicate the pieces clear and which asked

artists to design for four sites but only fabricate for one or two sites. The Board discussed the merits of opening the call locally, regionally, or nationally. They determined that a regional call that included encouragement for Utah artists to apply could diversify the artists represented in the collection while maintaining a degree of connection to the site. Ms. Nix will follow up with the City Attorney's office to confirm that regional calls for artists are allowable. She noted that best practice for commissioning public art was to release Calls for Artists in the form of a request for qualifications. Mr. Murdock agreed that an RFQ would maximize potential for community engagement. Ms. Nix noted that selecting three finalists from an RFQ would expend some of the budget on design fees and potentially travel stipends and the Board confirmed that spending some of the budget on those costs or dipping into CIP reserve funds would both be viable options to address those expenses.

III. Three Creeks Confluence

a. Project overview

- i. Ms. Nix reminded the Board of the Three Creeks Confluence Parks public art opportunity, which had been initiated and then cancelled two years prior. She stated that the park will be completed around August of 2020, and the Public Art Program will re-release this call. Mr. Murdock stated that the project to daylight the confluence of three Salt Lake Valley streams where they converge into the Jordan River has grown into a \$3 million project, paid for by primarily park impact fees. The project is intended to connect schools, community centers, and residents to the River. Mr. Murdock noted that the Park would include a bridge over the Jordan River, a fishing pier, and a wetland. He noted that the Board could decide to open the call for artists to the original intended site within the park, or open the full area of the park to public art. Ms. Nix noted that the contractor for the site was Bio-West, who had stated that art ought not to be too close to the river bank, but various locations in the park including the fishing pier would be acceptable locations for public art. The budget is \$70,000.

b. Discussion and Project Scope

- i. Ms. Trout stated that this project could possibly be modeled after the 337 Pocket Park public art project, which allowed multiple artists to respond, and felt collaborative while still maintaining visual cohesion. She noted that the Pocket Park had allowed a wide variety of graphic and 2d artists to submit designs. Ms. Rivera noted that had been an economical project, as the City had purchased designs from 16 artists, and had separately contracted with the fabricator. Mr. Murdock noted that the bridge will be pre-fabricated and does not have design flexibility, but the fishing pier could potentially allow for artist designed panels used as siding. Ms. Trout raised the concept of a sculpture garden, and Ms. Nix replied that the budget may not be adequate to commission multiple sculptures. Ms. Trout stated that paneling on the fishing pier would be very visible from the street and park and that this multi-artist project could be less static than a single sculpture and may better activate the area. Mr. Johnson stated that the artist designed fence panels would yield varied submissions and allow for multiple voices, and could better respond to the diversity in the area. Mr. Jacoby suggested that solid, removable panels be

installed during park construction, and when designs were ready, these panels could be removed, laser cut, and re-installed. Ms. Trout noted that, like the 337 Pocket Park, the RFP process risked eliminating the community feedback process since designs would be selected directly from proposals. The Board considered ideas to ameliorate this concern, including revisiting artwork goals with community groups or requiring each applicant attend a community meeting. Mr. Velazquez noted that the Sorenson Center had substantial community involvement and could potentially be a resource to get residents involved in the project. Mr. Johnson stated that reaching out to local organizations to submit designs was also an option. Ms. Baca suggested requiring a minimum number or percentage of the selected designs be from Glendale resident applicants, or others that can demonstrate an authentic relationship to the site, community, or project. Mr. Murdock noted that a number of the panels could be reserved for designs sourced directly from community members. Ms. Nix noted that the cost for 337 panels was \$1,125 total per panel with a \$500 per artist fee and \$625 for fabrication. Ms. Rivera suggested increasing the artist fee, and Ms. Baca suggested the cost for fabrication would have gone up since 2017. She noted that design fees have been varying from project to project – as with Whimsy Walls’ very high design fee – and consistency may be needed. Ms. Nix confirmed that the program will proceed with the artist designed fencing project for Three Creeks Confluence Park.

IV. Proposal Review from Andrea Greenlees

a. Overview

- i. Ms. Nix gave an overview of Andrea Greenlees’s proposal for *Bee Dance*, stating that the Public Art Program is not often approached for direct purchases however it is a practice that is acceptable for the program and for programs across the nation. She pointed out a form completed by the artist of this piece stating the key information about the artwork, and outlined possible next steps including letting the artist know the program was not interested, attempting to partner with another city agency to find the funds to purchase it, or connecting the artist to other potential purchasing entities, like Red Butte Garden. She noted that there were \$30,000 in the Public Art Program’s budget reserves, and this piece plus shipping cost over \$180,000. Mr. Murdock noted that *Bee Dance*, could fit well into a number of Parks projects including the new 9 Line Community Orchard the Parks Department is creating.

b. Discussion

- i. Mr. Jacoby stated that this piece was appealing, but was not site specific and spending funds in this way would mean those funds could not be used to commission something original and site specific. Ms. Baca noted that other cities’ public art programs making direct purchases of this magnitude have larger total budgets, so purchases represent a smaller portion of their expenses. Ms. Trout suggested that the cost was prohibitive, and the Public Art Program rarely commissioned original work for that amount, much less paid that amount for an existing work. Ms. Nix suggested that if the Board highly valued the piece, they could allocate the upcoming fiscal year’s percent for art funding to supplement the reserve budget. Mr. Jacoby suggested negotiation, as that was the

standard process for large purchases in any other context, and Ms. Trout suggested that fund raising or partnerships with another city department may be an effective way to get the funds. Mr. Velazquez stated that the appropriate role for the Board was to support another entity interested in purchasing it. Ms. Trout noted that all public art the Board supported was in partnership with various City departments and the RDA, and their interest in various works was worth exploring. Ms. Nix will provide an update after collecting additional information.

V. Arts Council ED Update

- a. Ms. Baca suggested Board members watch the recording of Mayor Mendenhall's first State of the City address, which had been favorable for the arts. One possible outcome could be larger budgets for arts.
- b. Ms. Baca stated that the Arts Council was still speaking with City entities about increasing annual percent-for-art funding to 1.5 percent of CIP funding.
- c. Ms. Trout asked if there was a timeline for new Art Design Board member Kelsey Harrison to be confirmed by City Council for service on the Board; Ms. Nix confirmed there is not.

VI. Public Comment

- a. None.

VII. Other Business/Adjourn

- a. Ms. Nix noted that April Art Design Board meeting was scheduled for April 2, 2020 and the date of the May meeting was yet to be determined by an online poll.
- b. She alerted the Board that Ms. Sarah Hobin, the Visual Arts Program Manager, had facilitated a new program initiative, Flash Projects, for experimental and temporary installations and there was a final performance that weekend if the Board was interested in attending.
- c. Ms. Nix highlighted the Arts Council's grants, which were open for applications.
- d. Ms. Nix stated that the public art program had been approached by the RDA regarding facilitating public art at a new Trax Station. Historically the public art program has always facilitated Art in Transit projects, and this one will occur on a quick timeline during the summer and fall of 2020.
- e. Ms. Trout motioned to close the meeting and Mr. Johnson seconded, all Board members voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 pm.