

ERIN MENDENHALL
MAYOR



BEN KOLENDAR
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Salt Lake City Art Design Board Meeting
June 3, 2021
4:00 – 6:30 pm
Webex Online

PRESENT:

Nancy Rivera
Larissa Trout
Justin Johnson

Joe Jacoby
Aurelio Velazquez

Staff Members

Renato Olmedo-Gonzalez, Public Art Program Manager
Abby Draper, Public Art Program Assistant
Felicia Baca, Arts Council Executive Director

EXCUSED:

GUESTS:

Aaron Benzon, Natural Lands Supervisor
Aimee Horman, Jordan River Commission
Stephanie Toombs, Salt Lake City Engineering
Christopher Norlem, Salt Lake City Engineering
Taylor Thurman, Glendale Community Council
Dorothy Owen, Westpointe Community Council
Chris Sands, Biowest
Colette Hosmer, Jordan River Boat Ramp Finalist
Samantha Ferguson, Assistant to Colette Hosmer
Christopher Weed, Jordan River Boat Ramp Finalist
Joshua Weiner, Jordan River Boat Ramp Finalist

I. Call to Order

- a. After a quorum was established at approximately 4:00pm, Mr. Justin Johnson called the meeting to order.

II. Arts Council Update

- a. Arts Council update moved to beginning due to Ms. Felicia Baca needing to attend the City Council meeting. Ms. Baca updated the Board on the budget process that is moving along slowly because of the restrictions related to American Recovery Act the City has received. Everything looks supportive for the Arts Council from the Mayor's Office. The process is expected to be complete on June 18th and the Arts Council Board Meeting has been moved to June 30th to accommodate this change and they will approve the annual budget at that meeting. There were over 900 preliminary responses from the Seven Canyons Fountain survey. Ms. Baca reported that the majority of people would like it to stay a dry fountain if the other option is removing the sculpture. People did mention that it could be a skateboard park feature, but this is unlikely to happen. More options were suggested in the survey and they will be explored. The next step is to regroup with the Parks Department on the final responses from the survey.

III. Introductions

- a. Members of the Board, staff and community introduced themselves.

IV. Approval of Minutes

- a. Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the minutes from the Board's April 1, 2021 convening. Ms. Larissa Trout seconded and all Board members voted in favor. Mr. Johnson read a statement concerning the need for remote meetings due to the pandemic.

V. Jordan River Boat Ramps Finalist Presentations

- a. Ms. Abby Draper welcomed the board, staff and community members. She reminded everyone that this is a public meeting and will be recorded and posted for the public to view. She stated that after the presentations the Arts Council hoped to have a broad conversation to hear the reactions to the proposal, but it is especially meaningful for the board to hear from individuals from their area of expertise, whether that is a parks, engineering or community perspective. Ms. Draper gave a short history of the Jordan River project. The project was run as a Request for Qualifications over the winter and during the March Board meeting the Board reviewed twenty-six applicants and selected these three finalists: Ms. Colette Hosmer, Mr. Christopher Weed, and Mr. Joshua Weiner. The process was a bit longer than the normal process, but this allowed the program to talk to their community partners and make sure the artists had all the information they needed for each of the sites. The call was regional, and the three finalists are all out of state. The budget for this opportunity is \$144,000 and that is to cover the installation of artwork at all four boat ramp sites, which stretch from 1800 North to 1700 South. Each finalist participated in a session with community partners and stakeholders to learn more about the site. The Arts Council provided the finalists with maps and photos to assist in their designs. Each finalist had twenty-five minutes to present and respond to questions. After all three presented there was discussion on all the presentations.
- b. Ms. Colette Hosmer presented with Ms. Samantha Ferguson, assistant to Ms. Hosmer. Ms. Ferguson and Ms. Hosmer have worked together for over 3 decades. They stated that the work of Ms. Hosmer is very well suited to this project. They are using the working title, *Jordan River Flow* for this project, but they are very interested in having the community name the piece itself. If awarded the commission, they have discussed shipping the models to a location where the community can view them to better understand the project and then vote on a name. Ms. Hosmer presented on her concept for the works. She has long used fish as a metaphor in her works. She is intrigued by the theory "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," and this concept provides the basis of her proposal. The separate components of this artwork represent the individual elements that merge to create a complex river system and vital thriving community. With this artwork, she wants to encourage viewers to engage with the work, walk among the schools of fish to experience being a part of the whole. At each boat ramp there is a school of fish and all four schools of fish unite to create one installation. Each school has one brightly colored fish serving as a landmark or signpost to the boat ramp. In the actual sculpture, the fish will emerge seamlessly from the ground as they would from water. All structural support of the sculptures is underneath the ground. The installation of a concrete tube, below the frost line, will make them immobile, and they are made such that they are not climbable. There are twenty-five fish total. The fish are made of twelve-inch steel fabricated into a three-dimensional fish. The sculptures are four inches deep by eight feet tall by thirty inches wide each.
In her presentation, Ms. Hosmer expressed that the fish represent the movement of the community: forward, fluid and flowing. The fish are a marker of the ecological health of the river because they are affected by the water conditions and nutrient cycle. Ms. Hosmer's aim is to coalesce the four unique boat ramp sites into one integrated whole. Each installation will be uniquely site specific and self-contained, but each will connect to the next as one sculpture just as the Jordan River is one body of water changing and evolving as it flows. The fish colors represent Earth, Wind, Fire, and Water and also offer a historical reference to the Goshute, Eastern Shoshone, and Denai' people who continue to have physical, cultural, and spiritual connections to the Jordan River. The installations are designed to prevent accidents, these sculptures inhibit climbing and are engineered to be secure and stable. Mr. Joe Jacoby responded that the wayfinding and color element was a great addition. He asked

what thickness of steel and what kind of paint would be used on the colored fish. Ms. Ferguson answered that the steel is fabricated 12-gauge steel which equals 1/8-inch steel. Paint is a UV rated outdoor paint. The seams and eyeholes of the fish will be rusted patina. The paint can be repaired easily by just patching without needing to remove the fish from the ground. Mr. Jacoby asked if the fish will be the same profile for all 25 or if they will be varied. Ms. Hosmer responded that they will be the exact same fish but positioned differently. This is purposeful in that the repetition of the same fish works to create one larger work. Ms. Larissa Trout asked if the position of the fish will be adjusted at the time of installation and if the artist will be at the installation to place the fish. Ms. Hosmer responded that the models were her interpretation based on the photos, but she will be present for the installation and will make adjustments based on the site. The model is a representation of what is possible. Mr. Aaron Benzon asked if the spacing between the fish in the model is to scale. Ms. Hosmer responded that it will be similar. She wants them positioned so strollers and wheelchairs can be pushed through them. Mr. Christopher Norlem mentioned that Salt Lake City would need to see a layout in order to confirm that they are not going to pierce a utility prior to installation. Ms. Hosmer said they are very used to that and they can be modified based on the utilities. Mr. Norlem mentioned that they may need to get permits from the body that controls the waterway, but the City would help them with that process. Mr. Aurelio Velazquez inquired why the artist decided to only use color on one of the fish. Ms. Hosmer responded that she always thinks about the cost of upkeep for outdoor installations. Natural rust only continues to get better and better over time. The color also acts as a signpost and it is more cost efficient to have one colored fish, to have more painted fish would mean there would be less fish in total. Mr. Benzon asked about graffiti resistance. Ms. Hosmer responded that the rust would be very simple to repair. The colored fish may be able to be cleaned or patch painted.

- c. Mr. Christopher Weed presented his proposal which is called *Crossing* and is comprised of larger than life oar sculptures. Mr. Weed expressed that it is a representation of recreation, the importance of our waterways for recreation and as a fresh source of water. These vertical rising sculptures create archways that create strength, support, and openness. The design is intended to lift the eye and spirit up to a higher plain and ideal. People can walk through the arch. There is a mirror finish on the sculpture, and this can reflect the surrounding landscapes, river, and the people. The pieces are easily identifiable from the river, so you can see where the next landing is. The sculptures are larger than life and the color helps them to pop; depending on placement one should be able to see them from the water. The exact placement of the sculptures will be confirmed at the time of installation, so the initial placement plan was tentative. The second sculpture is painted with fleet truck paint that is extremely durable. The pieces tie together, but placement is still up in the air on where to place the last piece at Fisher Mansion or turn it into a bench. Mr. Jacoby asked about the positioning of the oars in the sculptures. The paddle portion up high is very recognizable as an oar, but when the paddle is towards the ground it may just look like an X from a distance. Mr. Weed responded that he did not want to duplicate the design for all four locations, so he varied the size of the oars and the positions to add variety. Ms. Trout asked about location of the oar on the bridge near Fisher Mansion. Mr. Weed said that it may be possible, but more research will need to go into it. Ms. Draper mentioned that they have run the application by many people within the City and the bridge will be a challenge, so it may be a possibility, but it may need to be moved. Mr. Weed said that the structure will be welded onto two plates that will be set in concrete. Mr. Benzon asked if the two oars are connected where they cross. Mr. Weed confirmed that they are and need that extra point for structure integrity. Ms. Rivera asked how Mr. Weed is addressing site specificity in the project in consideration to the historical aspects of the site. Mr. Weed said that he is addressing the river and the importance of a tributary, not only as a fresh water source, but as recreational. They are addressing the river itself and the goings on in the river, not the surrounding area. Ms. Dorothy Owen asked if Mr. Weed took seismic considerations into account. Mr. Weed responded that he did not because they are minimal in size and weight. Ms. Taylor Thurman asked about the resistance to graffiti on the sculptures. Mr. Weed responded that most times they can use a remover to take it off and buff it out. The areas are minimal, so they are not as likely to be tagged. Mr. Weed elaborated that he would have liked to have both a day and

night presence with lighting, but with this budget they could not so they went with scale and color to accent the wayfinding elements.

- d. Mr. Joshua Weiner presented his proposal. He had visited the Boat Ramps site with Salt Lake City staff and received input on how the area is developing and what the area means to residents. He spent time looking at the site lines and how the residents use the area. He stated that he designed four unique pieces because he wanted to have a different feel that relates to each space. Way finding was addressed by strong unique imagery related to the surroundings. Mr. Weiner is a national artist and certified structural welder. The proposed installation for 1700 South was large, suggestive of pathways, playful, colorful and allowed for the cityscape view. The proposal was ten feet tall, ten feet wide, and two feet deep with the base hidden in the grade. It is viewable from the road at a clearing in the trees and is structurally engineered for high wind. Mr. Weiner stated that the design included a durable powder coat. Because of graffiti, he leans towards small surfaces to make the target less attractive. If the public art program did need to repair the work, the parts are designed to be easily removed so one would not need to take the whole work down. The second proposed piece was near Fisher Mansion. Mr. Weiner stated that the imagery connected to the river and the industrial space. He noted that the proposal was a heavy stout steel structure with stainless highlights. The piece is narrow; it can go on the corner or be moved down to the river. This third piece is at the most active location and can be a photo op. It is a play on the “boat launch” and meant to be fun and interactive. Mr. Weiner mentioned that he is able to create own engineering documents, so he is able to create larger works since he saves on this cost. Mr. Weiner presented his fourth piece at the Riverview boat ramp. The proposal entailed large boulders with rings like a ring toss. It is engineered following playground guidelines and kids can play on it without entrapment. The artworks are intended to create a destination and are inspired by a sense of nature and location. Mr. Weiner described plans for a community outreach element, entailing inviting participants ahead of time to create art out in nature. Mr. Weiner would share his process of creating the works for this project and have the community participate in what they would create for the space. Mr. Jacoby asked if Mr. Weiner’s would consider adapting just one of the pieces to the four different sites. Mr. Weiner responded that he is open to changes. He wants to engage with the community and refine his thoughts on the artwork through this process. There could be four variations of one sculpture if that is desired. His thoughts are that the variation in the artwork creates a destination at each sculpture because each spot is very different. Ms. Trout asked if the kayaks are real or fabricated. She stated that she was concerned about maintenance of real kayaks and whether they could stand sun, temperature, and exposure. Mr. Weiner stated that he could fabricate them so that the art is more resistant to those natural elements. Ms. Trout asked about the “strap” on the catapult boat launch. Mr. Weiner said it will be solid square bars or cables pulled tight, something that could stand someone hanging on it without distorting. Ms. Trout asked about the budget and whether he felt confident that he would be able to do four large scale works at this budget. Mr. Weiner stated that he feels confident that he can work with the budget he presented because he is able to fabricate the works along with many of the other steps, so there is not much outsourcing of labor. The scale of the work is directly related to the budget.
- e. The Art Design Board Discussed the proposals. Artwork goals and selection criteria from the Request for Qualifications were recapped by Mr. Renato Olmedo-Gonzalez. Ms. Owen pointed out that wayfinding is a very important aspect for her community on the west side. Mr. Jacoby stated that Mr. Weed’s and Ms. Hosmer’s proposals had better wayfinding aspects than Mr. Weiner’s proposal, where the artworks were different at each location. Mr. Benzon agreed that the cohesiveness of the works creates more wayfinding. Ms. Trout asked is wayfinding is the first goal or does that come second after having site-specific works. Ms. Aimee Horman presented a counterargument that the river and the trailheads act as the cohesion for the works as the Trax Station act as cohesion for the artwork at the different TRAX stops. Thus, the varied artworks presented by Mr. Weiner do offer a wayfinding element. Ms. Nancy Rivera pointed out that the original decision was to have one artist address all four pieces rather than having four different artists address each site, so the cohesion element should be considered in the review. Ms. Rivera stated that she felt the first

proposal addressed all the goals provided quite well. They also addressed each question they were asked well. Mr. Benzon stated that he liked that the first presentation by Ms. Hosmer addressed the ecological aspect best by focusing on fish rather than human elements. Mr. Jacoby liked the large scope of the work and the number of fish they can place at each location. Ms. Trout liked that the fish would age and become integrated with the site over time. Mr. Benzon stated that the fish did seem like easier maintenance from his perspective. Mr. Jacoby stated that he felt like Mr. Weed's proposal would be lost visually because the oar sculptures are so thin. He noted that he thought the other presentation could have more impact. Ms. Trout stated that the oars were a little simplistic. Mr. Johnson noted appreciation for the scale of oars but stated that the decision falls between the other two. He stated that Ms. Hosmer's proposal is very consistent and achieves the wayfinding element of the project extremely well. The colors the artist chose are very site specific and focus on the environmental aspect. Mr. Johnson appreciates the depth that Mr. Weiner went to, to make very site-specific pieces. Mr. Velazquez stated that he found the artwork from Mr. Weiner more inviting and intriguing. He stated that not a lot of people in his neighborhood, which is where one or more of the boat ramps is located, kayak, canoe or paddleboard. They are more likely to use the trail to bike or run. Mr. Velazquez liked Ms. Hosmer's presentation as well, but he would like to see more color on the fish.

f. **Recommendation to the Mayor**

Ms. Rivera stated that if the alternate recommendation is awarded the contract; the Board would like to request revisions to their designs to make a more cohesive installation. Ms. Trout motioned that the Art Design Board recommend Ms. Hosmer's presentation to the Mayor for the Jordan River Boat Ramps with Mr. Weiner's presentation as an alternate. Mr. Jacoby seconded. All Board members voted in favor. Ms. Trout clarified that there are no revisions requested from Ms. Hosmer. Mr. Velazquez agreed, stating that he would not want the number of fish decreased just to add more color.

VI. Other Business/Adjourn

- a. Mr. Jacoby motioned to adjourn; Ms. Trout seconded. All Board members voted in favor and meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30pm.