

ERIN MENDENHALL
MAYOR



BEN KOLENDAR
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Salt Lake City Art Design Board Meeting
July 1, 2021
4:00 – 6:00 pm
Webex Online

PRESENT:

Nancy Rivera	Joe Jacoby
Larissa Trout	Aurelio Velazquez
Justin Johnson	Tiffini Porter
Maggie Troilli	

Staff Members

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

EXCUSED:

GUESTS:

Lorena Rizzo Jenson, Deputy Director of Economic Development
Tom Millar, Salt Lake City Transportation Planner
Jason Stevenson, Co-Chair East Liberty Park Association

I. Call to Order/Approval of Minutes

After a quorum was established at approximately 4:00pm, Mr. Justin Johnson called the meeting to order. Board and guests introduced themselves. Mr. Aurelio Velazquez moved to approve the minutes from June 3, 2021, Ms. Larissa Trout seconded, and all board members voted in favor.

II. 9th South Roundabout Mural Proposals

Ms. Felicia Baca introduced this mural project and the community feedback that the Arts Council received related to Stephen Kesler's *Out of the Blue* sculpture, which was commissioned earlier this year. The sculpture will be in a roundabout on the intersection of 900 South, 1100 East, and Gilmer Avenue. There was a substantial increase in community response to this project in comparison to others. Ms. Baca recapped the most critical artwork goals to keep in mind as the board reviews the proposals.

One point that Ms. Baca wanted to stress is that the Arts Council staff had looked at vinyl wrap as an option to cover the sculpture and it was found to be cost prohibitive and extremely complex.

Mr. Renato Olmedo-Gonzalez asked the community and city partners to be the first to comment on their thoughts regarding the proposals. Mr. Tom Millar responded that from the City's Transportation Department, he did not see any proposals that would be automatically disqualified; colors or shapes that are common among street designs were not present and the designs themselves were not overly distracting. Mr. Millar mentioned that the Roots Art Collective submission, which included text in its design, could be considered more of a way-finding element. If this is the selected proposal, there is likely a way this can be done by working with businesses and the Transportation Department.

Mr. Jason Stevenson, a community and stakeholder partner, discussed the desires of the community to have a mural on the large-scale work that was not too distracting and told a story about the community. He pointed out that the mural is a temporary work and it will be replaced, and he hopes that this will increase the input for future murals.

Ms. Abby Draper read Mr. Steven Kesler responses to the proposals. Mr. Kesler's input mentioned the vinyl wrap proposed by one artist in the shortlist and the challenges of painting some of the more detailed designs on the texture of the whale sculpture.

The Design Board went on to discuss the highest ranked proposals that were included on a shortlist. Discussion began by discussing the proposal received from the Roots Art Kollektive and attention was placed on the text included in their proposal. The original call for artists of this proposal stated that designs should not include text. Ms. Tiffini Porter asked about the process of adjudicating the proposals based on how well these followed the guidelines. Ms. Baca responded that she would highly discourage the board from approving a proposal that does not follow the guidelines because it decreases the integrity of the process. The board discussed the text on the Roots Art Kollektive's proposal and some categorized it as a way-finding element. Although the artwork itself is part of the 9th & 9th district, the fact that it is not at that intersection of 9th and 9th may cause confusion.

The next mural discussed was by Ms. Liz Kuzmowski and it involved a vinyl wrap around the surface of the sculpture. Ms. Kuzmowski did not research the process of doing a vinyl wrap and does not have experience painting a mural this size. Another issue pointed out during the discussion was related to the proposed vinyl wrap: it would need to come off for the next mural to be painted and would add more cost to the already cost-prohibitive process of applying the wrap.

Mr. Michael Murdock's proposal was discussed next. Ms. Maggie Troilli thought the proposed design showed a strong connection to place. Mr. Stevenson commented on the fact that the connection with the community was strong with the artist, who works in the neighborhood. Members mentioned that the color palette was more muted. Mr. Olmedo-Gonzalez did suggest that this may have been intentional as the request for proposals did say that the mural should not compete with the sculpture.

Ms. Traci O'Very Covey's proposal was discussed briefly by the board. The board mentioned that the mural is very iconic of Ms. O'Very Covey's work, but it did not speak to the neighborhood. The next two murals proposals discussed were designed by Mr. Bill Louis. His first design was a tribal design connected to his Polynesian heritage. Mr. Jacoby commented on how busy the design is and that it would compete with the sculpture.

Mr. Louis' second proposal design is a blue cacti flower which Mr. Louis said represent a flourishing neighborhood. Both of Mr. Louis' designs connect the Polynesian culture to the community; East High School has a large population of students of Polynesian heritage and the East-West corridor that connects the city through 900 South was also discussed. Mr. Stevenson thought this was another great connection to the community and story to tell through the mural. The final proposal on the short list was by Ms. Liz Lambson. This design contained a gnome and local flora. Mr. Trout commented on the significant portion of the sculpture that would be left unpainted. Mr. Johnson mentioned that the white space probably leaves it open to graffiti. Ms. Lambson's connection to the community is strongly felt through her design, as she is a resident of the neighborhood as well. Additionally, the gnome included in her proposal embrace the community response that has taken place at the site of the roundabout throughout the past few months. In her proposal letter, Ms. Lambson noted that the flowers, tomatoes, and other plants included in her design are found in neighboring yards and help ground the non-native whale to the neighborhood.

Ms. Draper invited the board to suggest discussion of any proposals that did not make the short list. None were suggested.

Ms. Baca asked Mr. Stevenson to share his thoughts on the potential community impact in regards to Mr. Bill Louis' *Blue Cacti Flower* and Mr. Michael Murdock's "landscape" murals. Mr. Stevenson said that he felt they both told good stories and connected to the neighborhood. They are unique and colorful and will be appreciated by the community.

The board narrowed the decision to three murals and performed a straw poll on these. Further discussion of these took place in order narrow a decision. Ms. Lorena Rizzo Jenson added that Utah has the largest Polynesian population outside of Polynesia.

Ms. Baca mentioned the comments Mr. Kesler, the designer of the sculpture, made about the difficulty of painting geometric shapes on the whale's surface. The tribal patterns of Mr. Louis' mural may be challenging and create distortion when painted on the surface.

Mr. Jacoby motioned to recommend to the mayor Mr. Louis's mural of the Blue Cacti Flower as the selected artist and Mr. Murdock's mural as an alternative. Ms. Trout seconded the motion. Mr. Johnson asked for a vote: Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Velazquez, Ms. Trout, and Ms. Porter voted in favor, Ms. Troilli and Ms. Rivera voted against. Motion passed.

III. Public Comment

No public was present.

IV. Other Business/Adjourn

a. Three Creeks Confluence Park Opening Celebration

On Wednesday, July 7th, 11:30am there is a press event where City Officials will be officially opening the park to the public and laying the last of the sod. Members of the press have been invited to attend. On Friday, July 9th there is a community celebration, organized by Seven Canyons Trust, to commemorate the opening of this park. Jordan River Commission is giving canoe rides, there is a beer tent, and cultural performances are lined up. The event is from 5pm-9pm with an artist spotlight at 7pm. The Public Art Program completed a public art project that involved 20 different artists at the site. The Art Design Board is invited to attend.

b. Board member recruitment update

Mr. Olmedo-Gonzalez informed the Board that the interview process has been postponed so that the equity and diversity of the board members can be increased. This was informed from feedback from the Board and an internal review. The staff will focus on recruiting a member from District 1 or 4. At the next board meeting on August 5, 2021 there will be a tentative recommendation to the board for them to recommend a new member that will be to the Mayor and City Council for approval.

c. Next meeting August 5, 2021 meeting, 4:00 pm

Mr. Jacoby motioned to close the meeting; Ms. Trout seconded. All members voted in favor.