

## **Public Art Commission Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the City of Germantown Public Art Commission was held at ECD on  
Tuesday, March 19, 2024

### **1. Call to Order:**

Chair Amanda Littlejohn called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

### **2. Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum:**

#### **Present:**

Albert Pope, Christopher Schmidt, Cara Sievers, Kevin Young, Linda Reyle, Mindy Fischer, and Amanda Littlejohn

#### **Absent:**

Alderman Mary Anne Gibson, Mary Burrows and JD Graffam

#### **Staff:**

Cat Peña and Sheila Pounder

### **3. Approval of the Minutes from the February 20, 2023:**

The minutes from the February meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Several misspellings were pointed out by Chairwoman Littlejohn and Kevin Young requested that last names be included for staff members throughout the minutes. A motion was made by Christopher Schmidt to accept the minutes with the discussed changes. The motion was seconded by Kevin Young and passed unanimously.

### **4. Citizens to be Heard:**

There were no citizens in attendance.

### **5. New Business:**

- a. Cancellation of the April 16, 2024 meeting was announced. Cat Peña will be attending the national American Planning Association's annual conference in Minneapolis and will be traveling on the 16th.
  
- b. Artwork Donation Policies and Procedures  
Cat Peña distributed a copy of the Artwork Donation Procedures that were outlined in the Public Art Master Plan prior to the meeting as a framework to generate a draft policy that the commission can formally adopt at the next commission meeting. Once adopted, it would be included on the public art website and

provide a method for individuals or organizations to donate artwork to the City of Germantown for public enjoyment while supporting the mission and vision of the Public Art Master Plan.

Cat Peña shared an example from Sandy Springs, GA to start the conversation.

The following sections of that document were discussed for refinement:

- Missing definition of “Public Art”. We should pull from the definition listed in the SmartCode Public Art Ordinance for Private Development.
- Should 2D artwork be included in this donation policy for display on the walls of public buildings?
  - A brief discussion took place regarding public access to city buildings and whether murals should be considered 2D artwork. Cat Peña shared that UrbanArt Commission in Memphis has a program called “Movable Art” in which they purchase artwork from local artists for the City of Memphis’ Art Collection which is dispersed throughout the city in public buildings such as libraries, offices, community centers, etc.
  - Linda Reyle spoke on behalf of including 2D Artwork within the policy because there is a greater volume of artists that work in that format. Cat Peña included that there is a lack of opportunities for citizens to view 2D art (outside of GPAC’s lobby art) and that by including more artwork in city buildings we can start the conversation about the value of art.
  - Cat Peña explained that the insurance and maintenance costs of the City’s Art Collection would be something to consider and that there is an existing insurance policy for GPAC’s art collection and art exhibitions.
- Should we keep the requirement that the person being honored has been deceased for a min. of 5 yrs?
  - The commission had a brief discussion regarding situations when this requirement has been overwritten and that 5 years would allow for any “skeletons in the closet” of the individual being remembered to be revealed. It was decided that in this section, we should insert wording saying, “unless otherwise determined by the Public Art Commission.”
- Should we allow donors to determine or recommend the placement of the artwork to a specific location?
  - The commission had a brief discussion that donors can make recommendations on the placement of their donation, but the city and the Public Art Commission would make the ultimate decision.

- Cut section regarding Art on Loan or Temporary Display on City-owned Property from the donation policy
  - Cat Peña believes that this section should have been cut during the editing of the final document as it seems out of place and refers to numbered steps that don't appear in the Germantown Public Art Master Plan. Sheila Pounder recommended that we pull this section and use it in a different policy specifically for Art on Loan or Temporary Display on City-owned Property.

Chairwoman Littlejohn inquired whether a formalized Artwork Donation Policy would retroactively include any artwork that is currently owned by the city. Cat Peña indicated that two artworks in the collection would be *Rise*, the suspended artwork in City Hall, and *Ocean Slice*, the artwork near the entry of the library. Chairwoman Littlejohn requested that information about artwork collection policies be available to the public for purposes of transparency. Cat Peña indicated that a section could be added to the website but currently the information is available on the website in the Master Plan Document.

In addition, Chairwoman Littlejohn requested that the Ownership section include verbiage regarding Artists Rights and indicate the use of images of artwork.

Cat Peña will prepare a draft Artwork Donation Policy that accounts for comments made during the meeting for review at the next commission meeting.

c. Proposal for temporary artwork display at the community library

Cat Peña introduced a proposal for the temporary display of an artwork to hang from the rafters of the children's section from Memphis artist Sharon Havelka. Proposal details below:

**Artist:** Sharon and Charles Havelka

**Title of Project:** Dragon Centipede Kite

**Proposed Location:** Children's reading area in the Community Library

**Project Description:** The Dragon Centipede Kite is a quilt sculpture measuring roughly 15 ft x 3 ft. It is based on a traditional Chinese centipede kite but with the anatomy of the human vertebra. The outer quilt is structured with a wooden spine and ribs.

**Materials:** The quilt is made from recycled cloth and other scrap materials. The wooden spine and ribs are cypress.

**Weight:** 30 lbs.

**Installation needs or site preparation needs:** the sculpture will hang from the ceiling by wire attached to the wooden spine to the rafters.

**Possible Community Engagement:**

Workshop/presentation for children about either centipede kites or quilts after the installation of the artwork

**Sample timeline:**

- March-July: Fabrication of wooden spine and ribs
- August: Installation
- September: possible reception/ teaching to coincide with the MidAutumn Festival
- Loan for 1 year with potential for renewal up to 3 years
- Deinstallation as agreed

Cat Peña shared that she was introduced to this artist's work several years ago and at that time encouraged the artist to consider showing her work in public settings. Early this year, the artist reached out indicating that she had a piece she would be interested in showing. Based on the scale and type of artwork, Cat Peña determined that, if approved by the commission, the Germantown Library would be an ideal location.

Prior to the Public Art Commission meeting, Cat Peña shared the proposal with Library leadership and programming staff and they gave her a thumbs up and indicated how the inclusion of this artwork supported some of their dragon theme reading programs. In addition, Cat Peña reached out to General Services to discuss support during the installation and Reynold Douglas indicated they would assist in a similar capacity as they assisted in hanging the suspended artwork in city hall.

Research is still needed to determine insurance needs for this particular proposal, but staff would likely utilize one of the two models used by the city:

1. The value of the artwork would be added to an existing inventory list of artwork hanging in city buildings. This would follow GPAC's model for temporary art exhibitions in their lobby.
2. Follow the 2012-2013 *Public Art Promenade* artist contract in which the artist is responsible for any damages or harm while on display

Cat Peña stated this proposal would be a great way to contribute to programming and general aesthetics of the library while giving citizens and city leadership a glimpse of how public art can function inside public buildings on a small budget. It would be a good way to open the door to commissioning a larger artwork in the library in the future. Per the FY25 Public Art Budget she recommended the following expenditure:

- a yearly loan for \$1,500
- \$500 stipend for community engagement
- \$100 for materials associated with a community engagement activity

A motion was made by Mindy Fischer to approve the proposal of the Dragon Centipede Kite to be hung in the children's section of the Germantown Community Library. The motion was seconded by Christopher Schmidt and passed unanimously.

## **6. Project Updates:**

### **a. 2024 Word Travels Sidewalk Poetry Contest**

Cat Peña re-shared the timeline for the 2024 Word Travels: Sidewalk Poetry Contest as well as the planned promotion of the remaining *Plunging into Poetry* workshop and the approaching deadline to submit poems by the City's Communications team and Public Art staff. She shared images from the youth *Plunging into Poetry* workshop and shared the below project data with the commission:

- The library shared the name of a staff member that will serve on the selection committee.
- 6 participants attended the Youth Plunging into Poetry workshop on 3/9
- 4 participants are signed up for the adult Plunging into Poetry workshop this Saturday
- 12 Days left to submit poems
- 11 poems have been submitted thus far
- Reverse Engineering meeting next week with various city departments to explore possible locations for the selected poems.

### **b. Creative Crosswalks**

Cat Peña has been working with Procurement to produce an open bid to select a contractor to fabricate and install Thermoplastic Creative Crosswalks. The contract duration is one year with two (2) 12-month extensions. The issue date of the bid was 2/16/24, and the bid opening occurred on 3/4/24.

She shared the scope of work and the bid analysis with the commission. Two bids were received, and Ginder, Taber and Grinder Inc. (GTG) had the lowest bid. Based on bid price, staff will be recommending a contract with GTG to complete one crosswalk at the intersection of Wolf River Blvd. and Farmington in FY24 at the April 8th Board of Mayor and Alderman meeting.

The Public Art Division will only be able to complete one crosswalk this fiscal year due to delayed mill work on Wolf River Blvd at Riverdale, and bid pricing was higher than expected. Staff will request that remaining budgeted funds for crosswalks in FY24 be extended into FY25.

Cat shared several recoloring examples of the catfish design and the geometric house design for review. The commission engaged in a conversation. A vote will be held at the next committee meeting with the hopes that there will be better attendance.

## **7. Reports:**

- a. Chairwoman's Report: Amanda Littlejohn - No report
- b. Alderman Liaison Report: Mary Anne Gibson- No report
- c. Beautification Liaison Report: Albert Pope, Beautification Commission  
Commissioner Pope shared information about the Arbor Day event in which 800 trees were given away. In addition, he announced that the Beautification Commission selected new pole banners as their next special project. He explained that MLGW has requested the city to no longer hang banners from poles due to hang ups in power lines. The new banners will be up in time for the 4th of July festivities, and the banner brackets can be reused for holiday banners.
- d. Design & Review Liaison Report: Christopher Schmidt  
Commissioner Schmidt shared with the Design & Review commission that the subcommittee meeting has been postponed this month. During that last DRC meeting two items came up for discussion; the signage for Germantown Aesthetics and Lily Walk Park. Christopher Schmidt shared where the new park will be located and its features of benches and a crosswalk near the entrance of GPAC and GAC on Exeter Road. Commissioner Young asked whether a crosswalk had been approved because in a previous Parks meeting, a midway crosswalk was voted against due to safety concerns.
- e. Parks and Recreation Liaison Report: Kevin Young, Parks & Recreation  
Commissioner Young shared that construction on the new playground at Municipal Park will begin soon, and the parking lot and construction site will be not accessible for several months.


**8. Announcements:**

- a. The next meeting will be held at ECD on May 21th, 2024 at 5:00 PM.

**9. Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

**Minutes approved by:**

  
Amanda Littlejohn, Chair

Date: 5/21/24