

## **Public Art Commission Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the City of Germantown Public Art Commission was held at the Black Box at the Germantown Performing Art Center on Tuesday, May 21, 2024

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

Chair Amanda Littlejohn called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

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

#### **Present:**

Albert Pope, Christopher Schmidt, Cara Sievers, Kevin Young, Linda Reyle, Amanda Littlejohn, Alderman Mary Anne Gibson, Mary Burrows and JD Graffam

#### **Absent:**

Mindy Fischer

#### **Staff:**

Cat Peña and Sheila Pounder

### **3. Approval of the Minutes from the March 19, 2024:**

The minutes from the March meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Kevin Young requested that wording in his Parks and Recreation Liaison report about the closure of the Municipal Park Playground be adjusted. 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. Project Updates:**

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

Cat Peña shared information about the Poetry Selection Committee and the below data collected from submitted poems:

- Adult: 48.4%
- Youth: 51.4%
- Live: 60%
- Work: 8.6%
- School: 25.7%

#### **“PLUNGING INTO POETRY” WORKSHOP DATA:**

- Adult: 3 of 4 participants submitted

- Youth: 4 of 6 participants submitted

The Winners and Runners-up of the Youth and Adult Category were:

### **YOUTH CATEGORY**

Winners:

- Mia Mittag's River Stones
- Julian Ostmann's Dropping a Wheel

Runners Up:

- Olivia French's Spring
- Fritz Ostmann's Fiddlesnake

### **ADULT CATEGORY**

Winners:

- Elaina Nicholas' Hera's Child
- Jenni Proctor's Bathed in Elegance

Runners Up:

- Chris Ferguson's Lessor Known Irish Toast
- Kathleen Whitman Plucker's Class of 2037

Cat Peña shared that the Winners and Runners-up of the Youth and Adult Category were formally recognized at the May 13, 2024 Board of Mayor and Alderman meeting. The esteemed poets were presented their awards in a packed room. Cat Peña suggested that commissioners watch the recording to see the whole recognition.

Cat Peña moved on to discuss the installation of the four winning poems. Three concrete stamps were purchased for future placement in city parks. The suggested locations are:

- Mia Mittag's *River Stones* at the new footbridge at Bob Hailey Park
- Julian Ostmann's *Dropping a Wheel* at the new inclusive playground at Municipal Park
- Elaina Nicholas's *Hera's Child* at the new footbridge at Riverdale Park and/or the Lily Walk Linear Park

Placement of the concrete stamp varies and depends on construction timelines. Cat Peña hopes that the three poems will be installed in the next 6-8 months.

Cat Peña would like to place Jenni Proctor's *Bathed in Elegance* poem at Oaklawn Garden. She proposes to add the poem and additional floral imagery to the boarded up windows and shutters of the main house on the property. She would like to hire a local muralist to conduct the work and showed examples of artwork by Kiersten Williams and Lance Turner as possible options. Cat Peña indicated there was room in the budget for a small painted mural. Commissioners discussed this idea at length.

Christopher Schmidt made a motion to proceed with the proposed project at Oaklawn Garden. Albert Pope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**ROLL CALL:**

Burrows – Yes  
Fischer – Absent  
Graffam – Yes  
Littlejohn – Yes  
Pope – Yes  
Schmidt – Yes  
Sievers – Yes  
Young – Yes  
Reyle – Yes

Cat Peña will present this idea to the Parks and Recreation Commission at their May 23, 2024 meeting for approval.

Due to the lower volume of poetry submissions this year, Cat Peña announced she will not produce a printed book with all the poems submitted. Instead she is working with the Germantown Performing Arts Center to show slides with all submitted poems on the screen at the Grove and main stage over the next year. She will work with graphic designer Shelda Edwards to create aesthetically pleasing slides that include the Word Travels and Public Art Program logo.

Mary Anne Gibson requested that Ms. Laurie Major (the family representative for the Mitch Major Memorial Fund) be informed of the results and installation of all four poems.

**b. Creative Crosswalks**

Cat Peña reintroduced the selection of Ginder, Taber and Grinder Inc. (GTG) as the contractor for upcoming creative thermoplastic crosswalks. Upon approval of the coloring for the crosswalk at the intersection of Wolf River Blvd and Farmington Blvd, the lead time on the thermoplastic is 30 days. Cat Peña anticipates the first crosswalk will be installed in July.

Cat reshared several color schemes for the geometric house design for review. The commission engaged in an extended conversation about the presented options.

JD Graffam made a motion to approve the original design. Christopher Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion was taken off of the table for further discussion. JD Graffam and Christopher Schmidt agreed to withdraw the motion.

The cool and warm color options were not favored by any of the commissioners and a Show of Support was conducted by a show of hands for the Original design and the Alternate design. Both shows of hands were relatively evenly distributed but the original design was marginally favored. Linda Reyle and Kevin Young voiced

support for honoring the color scheme the student artist chose. Mary Anne Gibson shared that, in her personal opinion, the original design may be too bold. JD Graffam asked that Cat Peña review the Pantone numbers on the final design to ensure that the colors read correctly.

A brief discussion occurred regarding the public opinion of the project and Cat Peña indicated that she would publically share the designs for the first two proposed crosswalks at Farmington Blvd. and Riverdale Rd. with information about how the designs were created during the collaboration with Houston High School art students in 2022.

JD Graffam made a motion to approve the original design. Cara Sievers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ROLL CALL:**

Burrows – Yes  
Fischer – Absent  
Graffam – Yes  
Littlejohn – Yes  
Pope – Yes  
Schmidt – Yes  
Sievers – Yes  
Young – Yes  
Reyle – Yes

**c. Artwork Donation Procedures**

Cat Peña distributed an updated draft of the Germantown Public Art Donation Policy via email for review by commissioners prior to the meeting. Comments from the March 19th meeting were incorporated in the presented draft. Once adopted, the document will be included on the public art website. Christopher Schmidt asked whether the document had been reviewed by legal counsel. Cat Pena indicated that it had not yet been reviewed.

Mary Anne Gibson made a motion to approve the Germantown Public Art Donation Policy pending city attorney approval. Linda Reyle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ROLL CALL:**

Burrows – Yes  
Fischer – Absent  
Graffam – Absent  
Littlejohn – Yes  
Pope – Yes  
Schmidt – Yes  
Sievers – Absent  
Young – Yes

Reyle – Yes

**7. Reports:**

a. Chairwoman’s Report: Amanda Littlejohn - Chairwoman Littlejohn did not have a report to share but extended appreciation to the commission for a cooperative and productive conversation during the meeting.

b. Alderman Liaison Report: Mary Anne Gibson- Alderman Gibson shared that the city’s first ever Lemon Aid Stand event was a huge success, and it would be held again. She shared information about the following events: Concerts in the Park, Blue Bird Happy Hour at the Grove, Farmers Market at Farm Park on Thursdays. Lastly, she indicated that she participated in Strategic Planning for the Community Library and was excited about the future of the library.

c. Beautification Liaison Report: Albert Pope- Beautification Commission Commissioner Pope shared that the new pole banners have been installed for 4th of July festivities. The Beautification Commission will be on a summer break and will reconvene in August.

d. Design & Review Liaison Report: Christopher Schmidt- Commissioner Schmidt shared that the Glasgow development project appeared before the DRC with minor lot modifications and the Meridian Development presented plans for phases 1 & 2.

e. Parks and Recreation Liaison Report: Kevin Young- Parks & Recreation Commissioner Young indicated that the Parks and Recreation Commission’s meeting on May 23, 2024 would be their last meeting until August. He reiterated that Cat Peña will give a presentation at that meeting that will highlight recent work of the Public Art Commission and the proposed Word Travels project at Oaklawn Garden.

**8. Announcements:**

a. The next meeting will be held at ECD on June 18th, 2024 at 5:00 PM.

**9. Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

**Minutes approved by:**

  
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Amanda Littlejohn, Chair

Date: July 14, 2024