Public Arts Commission of Oxford
Virtual Meeting
Tuesday, May 12, 2020, 4:30PM

Minutes of the meeting

Present: Steve Sullivan, Chair; Edna Southard, Vice-Chair; Robert Benson, Recording Secretary, Carole Katz, Stefanie Hilles, Norm Krumpe
Absent: Joe Prescher

1. The virtual meeting of the Public Arts Commission of Oxford (PACO) was called to order by Chair Steve Sullivan at 4:32PM.

2. The Agenda was approved.

3. The Minutes of the March 10, 2019 PACO meeting were approved.

4. Old Business

   A. Insurance for Art Displayed at the Municipal Building

      Steve Sullivan noted that the meeting with Caroline Crosswell (OCAC Director) and Jessica Greene (Assistant City Manager) to explore in detail the creation of a rider on OCAC’s insurance policy for displaying art in the Municipal Building had not happened due to the corona virus quarantine. A new date will be set for the meeting.

   B. Update on moving Ella Cope’s Mural

      Carole Katz presented PACO with the draft of a document that would, with necessary revisions, be presented to the Oxford City Council, requesting that Ella’s mural be accepted by the city and hung on either of two sites on the exterior of the Municipal Building.

      Fortunately, Jessica Greene, who facilitated the zoom format of PACO’s virtual was in attendance and could offer comments and suggestions about the process of approaching the city with this request. In addition to some line editing, suggested that it is important to address several issues that would undoubtedly be raised by council members and perhaps others in the city administration.

      She also suggested that the cost of the installation should come from the $5,000 allotted to PACO in this year’s budget.

      Among other things, Jessica suggested that the city council and city staff are very protective of the newly remodeled building they now occupy and would doubtless want to know exactly how as well as where the mural would be hung.
Edna Southard suggested that some unspecified political issues could be raised by other artists. Steve Sullivan noted that PACO should be prepared to field questions from the city about costs, possible damage to the Municipal Building, as well as maintenance costs and expected life of the mural. He suggested that Joe Prescher would likely be able to answer some of these questions. PACO also agreed that approximate (or exact) measurements should be taken.

After some discussion, the consideration of possible alternative sites emerged. Carole Katz suggested the possibility of placing the mural on the TRI building. Bob Benson questioned whether the original notion of placing the mural inside the new Talawanda High School building should be revisited. It was decided that making a strong case for the Municipal Building was the best strategy at this point. Jessica said that a strong proposal letter should be addressed to the Council.

One of the important justifications is the plan of Enjoy Oxford to give tours focused on the history of Civil Rights in Oxford, tours that will begin at the Municipal Building. It is also important that the mural be very visible to visitors and Oxonians alike and that it represents important dimensions of Oxford’s history in both the 19th and 20th centuries.

Steve Sullivan and Carole Katz agreed to further study the proposal document that Carole had drafted in order to finalize a letter requesting the city to accept and mount the mural. As a corollary activity, Steve suggested that PACO members begin building a coalition of Council members who they know and who would support the acceptance and placement of the mural.

Carole agreed to edit the draft she had written for the letter to the Council and that Bob would further tweak and “wordsmith” it.

C. Procedures and policy issues

1. On-boarding documents:
   Carole Katz agreed to enumerate and assemble them.
   Steve said he would place the mission statement and by-laws on Google Drive for access.

2. The Process Flowchart:
   Norm has revised finalized this document. It will be located in Google Drive. PACO has not yet voted it into existence. Norm said he would send it out as an e-mail so the PACO commissioners could read it and vote on it at the June meeting. The document is actually on the PACO Oxford to see now.

5. New Business

A. Accept Proposals for Bike Rack(s)
   1. Police Station and Black Covered Bridge sites
Since the Black Covered Bridge site is outside the city in Oxford Township, PACO cannot place a bike rack there. However, Leonard Howell Park, which is on the bicycle trail is part of Oxford. The Oxford Community Foundation has an “Oxford Area Trail Fund” and could provide funding for the Leonard Howell site.

Norm Krumpe moved that the Black Covered Bridge site be removed from the list of available sites. Stefanie seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. The Police Station site remains problematic. The Chief of Police wants a bench to be part of the bike rack design. PACO may not have enough money at the moment to fund that large a project along with money already committed to other projects.

[N.B. at the March meeting, PACO agreed to set aside $1000k per bike rack for fabricators (total of $2000), leaving $1000 per bike rack (total of $2000) for honoraria.]

Bob urged PACO to add up the costs of the various commitments it wishes to make before committing money to any other project(s).

Stefanie and Steve agreed to do some on-site research to determine the amount of space available for a bike rack (with or without a bench) in front of the Police Station on High Street.

B. Survey for bicyclists (usefulness of bike rack at the Black Covered Bridge)

Since the Black Covered Bridge site was taken off the list of possible sites for bike racks earlier at this meeting, Jessica said she would help PACO do a simple survey of other sites along the Oxford Area Trail.

C. Platform for bike rack at the Black Covered Bridge

The Black Covered Bridge site was removed from the list of possible sites by motion of the Commission (above).

D. Grant funding for public art

Bob had agreed to look into this and was unable to do so before this meeting. He agreed to return to that issue with the OAC and other agencies.

Other Business (not on the agenda)

PACO was made aware that Jim McWilliams, who created the sculpture in the Community Park, had emailed the City during the meeting. He noted that the sculpture needs to be re-painted and wondering what happened to the plaque that was supposed to be attached to it.

The suggestion was raised that the City could provide the materials and allow Mr. McWilliams to re-paint his sculpture. The City could also search for the plaque that Mr. McWilliams said was missing.
Steve Sullivan agreed to reply to Mr. McWilliams and will copy City Manager Doug Elliott on the e-mail.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:54pm

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Benson, Recording Secretary