

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**

**URBANA PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION**

**APPROVED**

**DATE:** November 12, 2008

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Geoffrey Bant, Robin Hall, Barbara Hedlund, Katherine Lamb, Sarah Ross, Patricia Samman

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Robert Lewis, Michele Plante

**STAFF PRESENT:** Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator; Tom Carrino, Economic Development Manager; Tony Weck, Recording Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Anna V. Epelbaum, Debra Lissak, Amy Podlasek, Tom Turino, Mark McKnight, Dennis Roberts, Ilona Matkovszki

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**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

The Urbana Public Arts Commission was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chair Robin Hall. Anna Hochhalter took roll and a quorum was declared.

**2. CHANGES TO AGENDA**

Regarding items a. (Discussion of Philo Road Beautification Plan including staff presentation of public art) and b. (Discussion of Program Goals and Priorities) under the heading of "Old Business" on the agenda, Mr. Bant proposed that the order of these be reversed. There being no objections from the other members of the Commission, this change was officially made to the agenda. There were no further changes.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the October 22, 2008 meeting were reviewed by the Commission. With no changes proposed, Mr. Bant made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Samman seconded the motion. All Commission members present were in favor of approval and thus the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

#### 4. PUBLIC INPUT

Dennis Roberts and Iona Matkovszki addressed the Commission regarding the impending demolition of the old armory building on West Main Street in Urbana. They shared their thoughts that this building would have made an excellent space for a community arts center focusing on African-American arts. Though they noted the building had been condemned by the City and felt that it was perhaps too late to save it, they encouraged the Commission to look into the creation of a community African-American arts center.

Tom Turino addressed the Commission, stating that a Roots Music Festival was in the planning stages for 2009. Mr. Hall requested that Mr. Turino bring something to the Commission in writing as soon as such was available so that the festival could be formally discussed by the Commission.

#### 5. COMMUNICATIONS

- **Guest Presentation by Debra Lissak, Executive Director of the Urbana Free Library**

Debra Lissak, Executive Director of the Urbana Free Library, addressed the Commission and audience on the important role the arts play in the function and aesthetics of the Library. She noted that there are a number of visual art installations at the library, especially since the completion of renovation and addition work. She also made note of the numerous performances that take place in the Library which draw large audiences from all across the community. Following Ms. Lissak's presentation, the Commission thanked her for her time and offered its support for the Library's efforts towards the arts in the community.

- **Presentation by Staff: Monthly Progress Report**

Ms. Hochhalter presented City staff's first monthly progress report to the Commission, outlining City projects that were in process, recent requests and recommendations from members of the public and staff activities. She reported the following in regards to Art in Infrastructure projects: the implementation of the Philo Road Beautification Plan was in process; that the Cunningham Avenue Beautification Study was awaiting final approval by City Council; that the Boneyard Creek Master Plan had been approved by City Council; that negotiations were pending with the County regarding the Downtown Newspaper Rack Design Project. In regards to projects with partners, she reported the following: the Krannert Center District was in process; that the Boneyard Arts Festival was in process; that the Joseph W. Royer Arts & Architecture District had been approved by City Council. She further reported the following: that the Gallery District Incentive Program was active; that grant approval by the NEA was pending in regards to the Art in Public Places Kickoff Project; that a proposal was in process for a City Hall Art Exhibition Space Program; that a proposal was also in process and pending regarding the Urbana Public Arts Grant Program.

In regards to requests and recommendations from the public, Ms. Hochhalter reported the following: that an inquiry had been received on opportunities for additional promotion of the

Craft League of Champaign-Urbana Annual Craft Fair; that Rodney Peacock had provided an artist statement and background information on his drama, *Noontide Trilogy*; that a request for support of a workshop by the Beehive Collective, to take place in November, had been received; that an inquiry on available land for a community garden and art project in north Urbana had been received; that an inquiry had been received regarding funding for an American folk and roots music festival, to occur in September 2009; that there had been a recommendation received regarding additional street festivals in downtown Urbana as a quick and effective way to bring crowds to that area; that a request of grant funding had been received of playwright Anna Epelbaum. In addition, Ms. Hochhalter reported on recent staff activities, arts-related meetings attended, staff training attended, and upcoming events.

## 6. OLD BUSINESS

- **Discussion of Program Goals and Priorities**

Mr. Bant led this discussion. He had outlined each of the Commission's goals and priorities as set forth by City Council and in the Public Arts Task Force. Each of the objectives related to the arts from the City Council's Common Goal to Create a Public Arts Program was discussed and questions from the Commission answered. Further, Mr. Bant reviewed the ordinance establishing Urbana's Public Arts Commission, the general duties and functions contained therein, and the list of duties/roles/responsibilities contained therein.

The Commission discussed possible ways to carry out its duties and agreed to bring two or three specific program ideas to the next Commission meeting for discussion. It was suggested that the Commission set priorities from this list of ideas and create a one-to-two year Action Plan or Program of Work.

- **Discussion of Philo Road Beautification Plan including a staff presentation on public art**

Ms. Hochhalter gave a presentation to the Commission on the status of the Philo Road Beautification Plan as it relates to the placement of public art installations. She noted that the Plan had identified three locations on Philo Road between Florida Avenue and Colorado Avenue where such installations could be placed. She noted that these three locations were on private property and as such, negotiations and permissions would be necessary from pertinent property owners. She reported that City staff was seeking direction from the Commission on the types of art to be used in the identified corridor. The Commission discussed the matter briefly, during which Ms. Hochhalter presented portions of the slide-show presentation she had prepared for the same. The Commission requested that this item be further discussed at the next meeting.

- **Discussion of Plaques and Markers**

Ms. Hochhalter gave a brief presentation to the Commission on the different types of plaques and markers available from various sources for public art installations and historic

sites throughout the City. The placement of such markers was discussed briefly by the Commission.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

- **Discussion of Rescheduling the Regular Meeting to the Second Tuesday of the Month**

Whereas the regular meeting day of the fourth Wednesday of the month had been set at a previous Commission meeting, the need had arisen since that meeting to change the aforesaid schedule. That being the case, it was proposed that the Commission's regular meeting schedule be changed such that meetings would occur on the second Tuesday of the month. There was no objection from the Commission, however Mr. Hall suggested that all members check their calendars to ensure that this meeting day would be feasible and return to the next meeting with their responses. His suggestion met with general agreement and the Commission's regular meeting schedule was tentatively reset to the second Tuesday of the month, with the December meeting scheduled tentatively for Tuesday, December 9.

**8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Hedlund announced that there were free musical performances being offered at the Mills Breast Cancer Institute at Carle Foundation Hospital on Thursdays.

Mr. Bant announced the upcoming Craft League of Champaign-Urbana Art Fair on November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Without motion or second thereto with regards to adjournment, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Hall at 9:24 p.m.

Submitted,

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Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator