

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: December 9, 2008

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: City Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

MEMBERS PRESENT: Geoffrey Bant, Robin Hall, Katherine Lamb, Robert Lewis, Michele Plante, Sarah Ross, Patricia Samman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Barbara Hedlund

STAFF PRESENT: Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator; Lisa Bralts, Economic Development Specialist/Market Director; Tony Weck, Recording Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Strang, Brenda Koenig, Ed Hawkes, Frances Harris, Christine Breen, Rob Krumm

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

The Urbana Public Arts Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Robin Hall. Anna Hochhalter took roll and a quorum was declared.

2. CHANGES TO AGENDA

Regarding items b. (Discussion of Public Art Action Plan including program prioritization) and c. (Discussion of Plaques and Markers) 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 November 12, 2008 meeting were reviewed by the Commission. With no changes proposed, Ms. Ross made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Lamb seconded the motion. All Commission members present were in favor of approval and thus the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Brenda Koenig, Christine Breen, Frances Harris and Rob Krumm, members of the Champaign-Urbana Folk & Roots Festival Steering Committee addressed the Commission. Each gave details as they stood at the time of this meeting regarding the planned festival and asked for the Commission's support, which the Commission gave unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- **Guest Presentation: Susan Toalson, Executive Director, Urbana Business Association**

Susan Toalson, Executive Director of the Urbana Business Association (UBA) addressed the Commission. She presented information regarding the ways in which the UBA is involved in the arts. Additionally she presented on a recent UBA initiative to partner with the Commission on public arts related projects and events which also promote economic development, entitled the *Business Backs the Arts Initiative*. She stated that the UBA would offer the amount of \$15,000 as "seed money" for projects/events in 2009 with the goal of adding a further \$5,000 over the next three years. The Commission would then take stewardship of said projects/events with the financial and logistical backing of the UBA. A general discussion of the proposal among members of the Commission ensued and the proposal received general support from the same.

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

Ms. Hochhalter presented City staff's monthly progress report to the Commission, outlining ongoing projects in process, requests and recommendations from the public, staff activities, as well as an upcoming grant opportunity. For ongoing projects in process, she reported the following in regards to Art in Infrastructure projects: an update on the Philo Road Beautification Project, which was in progress; that the Cunningham Avenue Beautification Study had been reviewed and accepted by City Council; that the Boneyard Creek Master Plan had been reviewed and accepted by City Council; that the Downtown Newspaper Rack Design Project was in progress at the County level.

In regards to projects with partners, Ms. Hochhalter reported on the following: progress with the Krannert Center District; the planning stages of the 2009 Boneyard Arts Festival; the progress of the Joseph W. Royer Arts and Architecture District; and the Gallery District Incentive program.

In regards to projects pending approval, Ms. Hochhalter reported the following: that the Art in Public Places Kickoff Project was pending NEA grant approval; that the City Hall Art Exhibition Space Program proposal was in process; and that the Urbana Public Arts Grant Program proposal was in process and pending approval.

For requests and recommendations from the public, Ms. Hochhalter reported on the following: that staff had received a request for support from the Commission from Rodney Peacock for the production of his three-part drama, *Noontide Trilogy*, to be performed at the Foellinger Auditorium in July 2010. She noted that a letter of request and supporting materials had been received of Mr. Peacock and had been included in the Commission's packet item relating to the Public Arts Action Plan. She also reported the following: that staff had received an inquiry from Chris Starkey to show his portfolio of artwork; that the Champaign-Urbana Folk and Roots Festival Steering Committee had requested support for a folk festival in downtown Urbana in September of 2009. She noted that a letter of request and supporting documentation had been included in the Commission's packet item relating to the Public Arts Action Plan.

For staff activities, Ms. Hochhalter reported that staff had been working on the following: Public Arts Commission meeting item research and preparation; economic development business retention visits to Calico Jewelry and Heartland Gallery. She also reported that she had attended the following meetings since the last Commission meeting: 40 North Board of Directors, Roots Music Festival meeting; Boneyard Arts Festival meeting; Boneyard Arts Festival Urbana Committee meeting, Urbana 175th Birthday Celebration Planning meeting; *Come Alive: Urbana 175th Celebration*. In addition, she reported that she had participated in an Americans for the Arts Webinar entitled *Election Impact on the Arts*.

Lastly, Ms. Hochhalter reported to the Commission on an upcoming grant opportunity. It was reported that there was a Multi-Arts Production Fund which offered support for new work in the performing arts. She noted that the deadline for application was January 20, 2009 and that a grant description sheet was included in the Commission's meeting packet.

6. OLD BUSINESS

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

Ms. Hochhalter began this discussion. She presented on locations identified in the Philo Road Beautification Plan as suitable for public art. Additionally, she provided examples of public art located in Urbana and other cities, as well as potential locations for public arts projects on city-owned property. She introduced a presentation by Commissioner Sarah Ross regarding examples of public arts projects in other communities. Following Ms. Ross's presentation there was a brief general discussion among members of the Commission. In a related matter, Commissioner Geoffrey Bant gave a presentation regarding art in the Philo Road Corridor. A general discussion among members of the Commission ensued.

- **Discussion of Plaques and Markers**

Commissioner Geoffrey Bant led this discussion. During the discussion, he presented examples of plaques and markers by making use of visual aids in the form of miniatures made by students in an art class in which he assisted in teaching. Following a general

discussion of the matter of plaques and markers by the Commission, a motion was made by Ms. Ross to recommend to City Council the plaque/marker design proposed by Mr. Bant. The motion also stipulated that it is not in the purview of the Commission to make policy with regards to the design and placement of plaques and markers. The motion was seconded by Ms. Plante. With no further discussion roll was taken and the votes were as follows:

Bant – yes	Plante – yes
Hall – yes	Ross – yes
Lamb – yes	Sammann – yes
Lewis – yes	

With seven (7) “yes” votes and zero (0) “no” votes, the motion carried unanimously.

- **Discussion of Public Art Action Plan including program prioritization**

This discussion was led by Ms. Hochhalter. During the course of the discussion, members of the Commission gave ideas for activities, which were written on large Post-It Notes, and placed on the wall of the Council Chambers. In the course of this exercise, it was decided by Commissioners that a special meeting was necessary to set forth program priorities. A special meeting date of January 5, 2009 was proposed and met with general agreement among members of the Commission.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Bant made a brief announcement in regards to recent letters to the editor in the News-Gazette regarding public arts.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Without motion or second thereto with regards to adjournment, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Hall at 9:32 p.m.

Submitted,

Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator