



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

*Economic Development Division*

### **m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** Urbana Public Arts Commission

**FROM:** Anna Hochhalter, Community Development Associate

**DATE:** January 7, 2011

**SUBJECT:** **Boneyard Creek Improvements Update**

---

### **Background**

The City recognized the potential to turn the Boneyard Creek into an amenity to the Downtown environment and began a Boneyard Creek Master Plan process in 2006. The Boneyard Creek Master Plan focuses on the portion of the Boneyard Creek that runs through Downtown Urbana, specifically between Main Street and University Avenue. The Master Plan identifies the project as an opportunity to incorporate public art within the corridor. The City has since decided to move forward with specific improvement plans as laid out in the Master Plan.

The City is working with Foth Infrastructure and Environment and WENK Associates (the landscape architecture firm that created the Boneyard Creek Master Plan) to implement the improvement plans. Staff has been meeting with Foth and WENK to discuss ways that the Public Arts Commission can be involved in the process.

### **Discussion**

During the November Public Arts Commission meeting, the Commission formed a Boneyard Creek subcommittee to work with staff and the consultants on how to proceed with the arts component of the project. Geoff Bant and Mary-Ann Winkelmes volunteered to serve on the subcommittee and met with staff in December. During this meeting, they created a list of areas in the arts that should be evaluated by WENK Associates. Attached (Exhibit A) is the response from Greg Dorolek, Landscape Architect with WENK Associates.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Commission review the attached comments from Greg Dorolek. The subcommittee should meet with staff in January to evaluate these comments and determine how to proceed.

#### Attachments:

Exhibit A: Arts Evaluation from Greg Dorolek with WENK Associates

**From:** Greg Dorolek [mailto:gdorolek@wenkla.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 10, 2010 3:57 PM  
**To:** Carrino, Tom  
**Cc:** Hochhalter, Anna; Jamison, Gale; gbant@illinois.edu; mawink@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Boneyard Public Art

Tom/ All,

I can summarize this fairly easy-- Any art that gets closer to the creek elevation is at risk of being damaged due to the frequency of flooding, or poses a risk as being a floodway impediment. Unless of course the art were integrated into the "structure" of the design.

That said, there are many possibilities for integrated or stand-alone art within the Boneyard Creek project that would not require us to change the plans at this time, but should be coordinated with the design and engineering team in the next phase of work

Below are my comments related to specific types. Please let me know if this analysis is sufficient, and/or you have any questions?

Thanks

Greg

**From:** Carrino, Tom [mailto:tcarrino@urbanailinois.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 01, 2010 3:50 PM  
**To:** Greg Dorolek  
**Subject:** Boneyard Public Art

Dear Greg:

Thank you for involving the Arts Commission and for integrating art into the design of the Boneyard Plan. Please review the below list of public arts opportunities we have assembled. Using this list, please highlight what areas of the project might be conducive to public art, and highlight what design modifications might be necessary to accommodate public art. Once you have had an opportunity to conduct this analysis, we can meet to consider how opportunities for art are already integrated in your plan, and whether there might be additional opportunities for art as the plan moves toward the final stages.

These are some types of opportunities for art and artistic expression that we hope the final design will include:

**-sculpture:**

Areas: I think all areas could be considered. However, the closer the sculpture gets to the creek elevation, the more it is a risk of impeding flood flows.

Modifications needed: None at this point. Size of sculpture could result in plan modifications

**-architecture:**

Areas: Can be integrated into: rails, walls, steps, trestle bridge, underpasses (2 of them)

Modifications needed: None at this time, but would need close coordination with artist in next phase of design

### **-furniture (seating, tables)**

Areas: The Station theater plaza is a good area for this...Much like sculpture, any furniture close to the creek elevation, would impede flood flows.

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **-murals**

Areas: The Race street underpass. And there will be several exposed walls that are be good for consideration

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **-lighting effects**

Areas: The Race street underpass and railroad underpass

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **surface treatments of pavings, steps, permanent fixtures**

Areas: Station Theater Plaza is a good candidate as it is the largest area of pavement. There are 2 sets of steps on each side of the new Race street bridge that would also be a good place.

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **maps/signage**

Areas: I think there are many areas that could be a candidate. Again the closer to the river elevation, the more risk of flood impediment

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **performance art: spaces for performers and spaces for viewers/participants**

Areas: This is currently worked into the latest iteration of the plan, in the section just west of Race Street

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **commemorative expressions**

Areas: I think there are many areas that could be a candidate. Again the closer to the river elevation, the more risk of flood impediment

Modifications needed: None at this point.

### **gardens / fountains (including the possibility of interactive fountains)**

Areas: I think these would certainly want to be kept out of the floodway. The Station Theater Plaza is a good candidate

Modifications needed: Possible modifications depending on location

### **multipurpose spaces: community gathering spaces; individual or group quiet spaces (for reading/writing/thinking)**

Areas: This is generally worked into areas of the plan. However, there are no large sections of "flat" space for groups due to the confinement of the site-- the Station Theater Plaza is the only

exception.

Modifications needed: None at this point.

**both permanent and changing/temporary art**

Areas: All areas are a possibility

Modifications needed: None at this point.

Thank you for your great thoughts about the design so far, and for inviting our questions and input. We look forward to talking with you soon.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Tom Carrino

Economic Development Manager

City of Urbana