



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Urbana Public Arts Commission

FROM: Christina McClelland, Public Arts Coordinator

DATE: November 7, 2012

SUBJECT: Updates on Current Public Art Projects

Background

The Public Arts Commission has two permanent public art projects currently in progress, public art elements for the Boneyard Creek Beautification Project in downtown Urbana and a public art piece for King Park in Urbana. Seattle artist Jack Mackie was selected for the Boneyard Creek Beautification Project by the Public Arts Commission at the August 9, 2011 meeting. He has worked closely with the design team of City Staff, Foth Infrastructure and Engineers, and Wenk Associates to fully integrate the public art design into the project as a whole. Mr. Mackie created a design concept inspired by local ecology for wall liners, tile elements, and sandblasted pavers that was approved by Council on December 19, 2011. At the June 12, 2012 Public Arts Commission Meeting, Cambridge, Massachusetts-based artist Douglas Kornfeld was selected to create a permanent public art piece to commemorate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in King Park and has worked to develop a preliminary concept.

Discussion

Boneyard Creek Beautification Project:

Two construction bids were received and opened for the Boneyard Creek Beautification Project on July 9, 2012 by the Urbana Public Works department. Both of these bids were over the projected costs to build the park. The design team of Foth Infrastructure & Environment, Wenk Associates, City Staff and O'Neil Brothers and their subcontractors worked cooperatively to identify cost reduction measures to bring down project costs. As the public art segment of the project was relatively small compared to the overall budget, was a high priority, and had received outside support through a donation from the Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation (CCDC), public art elements were retained during this process. City Council approved the cost reducing measures in the project on October 1, 2012, and O'Neil Brothers were awarded the general contract. As some of the walls were changed from cast-in-place to MSE (mechanically stabilized earth) as a cost-saving measure, the wall liner motifs Mr. Mackie created required some redesign to size them appropriately to the dimensions of the MSE walls. An addendum to the current agreement with Mr. Mackie contracted an additional \$3,500 in design fees to make these changes, which was accommodated in the overall project budget. These changes have been made in collaboration with the design team of City staff, Foth

Infrastructure & Environment, and Wenk Associates so the project can proceed according to schedule into the construction phase. A groundbreaking ceremony will be held on Wednesday November 14 at 3:00 PM in the Urbana School District Parking Lot on northwest corner of Griggs Street and Race Street. The new project completion date is June 15, 2014.

King Park Public Art Project:

The Public Arts Commission approved a Public Art Design Services Agreement with Douglas Kornfeld at the August 14, 2012 meeting to guide the development process of public art for King Park. This agreement was approved by City Council at their August 20, 2012 meeting. Following the approval and execution of this agreement by both parties, Mr. Kornfeld travelled to Urbana from September 17-21, 2012. During this initial visit, Mr. Kornfeld met with City Staff, members of the Public Arts Commission, Urbana Park District Staff, and King School staff, visiting the park and school sites. There were also two community meetings held at the Urbana Park District’s Planning and Operations office on Kerr Avenue on Tuesday, September 18, 2012 and Thursday, September 20, 2012. At these meetings, Mr. Kornfeld presented his work and listened to input on the King Park neighborhood, King School, and the role of Dr. King’s legacy in the local community. The community meetings were attended by members of the Public Arts Commission, the Jettie Rhodes Day committee, the King Park Adopt-A-Park group, the UCAP neighborhood group, King School staff, a representative from 40 North | 88 West, and Urbana Park District staff, board, and advisory committee members.

Following this initial trip, Mr. Kornfeld presented a preliminary concept on November 2 to a committee comprised of the Public Arts Commission subcommittee, City staff, Urbana Park District staff, a representative from the Urbana Park District Board, City Councilman Robert Lewis, a representative from 40 North| 88 West, and a representative from the King Park neighborhood. Principal Ivory-Tatum of King School was unable to attend but sent comments via e-mail. The committee had some concerns with “Dreamers,” the preliminary concept, commenting that it did not capture the active nature of Dr. King’s legacy and ideas and would require interpretive text to articulate its intent. Upon receiving the committee’s feedback, Mr. Kornfeld agreed to assemble a reworked concept for review. While all funds for the King Park public art project must be spent by December 31, 2013, as TIF 3 expires on that date, the project schedule includes a six month contingency. Despite this slight delay, the project should still be completed on schedule.

Recommendation

No action is recommended at this time. City staff will provide further updates at Public Arts Commission meetings on both the Boneyard Creek Beautification Project and King Park Public Art project as they progress.