



**MINUTES
ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 16, 2008**

7 P.M. REGULAR MEETING

The Sunnyvale Arts Commission met in regular session on July 16, 2008, in City Hall Council Chambers, 456 W. Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA at 7 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER/SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Obrey called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Robert Obrey
Vice Chair Tara Martin-Milius
Commissioner Dixie Carney
Commissioner Dennis (Jay) Shinseki

Absent: Commissioner Amber Estrada

Staff Present: Assistant to the Director Cathy Merrill
Superintendent of Recreation Nancy Bolgard Steward
Kristin Dance, Visual Arts Coordinator

CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCES

MOTION: Chair Obrey moved to defer consideration of Commissioner Estrada's absence until the next meeting after the Commission has an opportunity to hear from her.

VOTE: Motion passed 4-0. (Commissioner Estrada was absent.)

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

CONSENT CALENDAR

1.A. Approval of Draft Minutes from Regular Meeting of Arts Commission on May 21, 2008

1.B. Approval of Revised Minutes from Regular Meeting of Arts Commission on February 20, 2008.

MOTION: Vice Chair Martin-Milius moved to approve both sets of minutes on the Consent Calendar, Chair Obrey seconded.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously 3-0. (Commissioner Shinseki abstained because he was absent from the February 20, 2008, meeting. Commissioner Estrada was absent.)

STAFF RESPONSES TO PRIOR PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2. Art in Private Development (AIPD): 525 Almanor Avenue, Menrock Almanor Associates, LLC (Menlo Equities)

Nancy Bolgard Steward, Superintendent of Recreation, introduced Kristin Dance, Visual Arts Coordinator, who presented the staff report regarding the proposed artwork. There were no questions of staff.

Chair Obrey opened the public hearing.

Laura Grigsby, Menlo Equities, gave a more detailed description of the property. Grigsby said the building style is contemporary with clean lines; the sculpture would be lighted and complimentary to the building in a contrasting way. Grigsby said the selected artist for this project is Matt Gil. She said the quality of the artwork will remain over time. She also said the artwork is curved and bold, leaves an impression, and new aspects will continue to be discovered. Grigsby introduced the artist, Matt Gil.

Commissioner Shinseki clarified the orientation of the artwork.

Chair Obrey invited artist Matt Gil to come forward. Gil described his artwork and how he worked with the circle to create spaces which change as the observer moves around the sculpture. He said he has a series of artwork located in front of the Yahoo! building at Mathilda Avenue and Java Drive.

Chair Obrey closed the public hearing.

MOTION: Commissioner Shinseki moved, Commissioner Carney seconded, to approve the proposed artwork as presented.

Vice Chair Martin-Milius noted she appreciates how the sculpture fits into the site and within the trees. She visited the site and believes the artwork will bring it to a more human scale.

VOTE: Motion passed 4-0. (Commissioner Estrada was absent.)

3. Art in Private Development (AIPD): Java Metro Center, 111 Java Drive (Phase I), SCM Properties, LLC (Exterra Realty Partners)

Recreation Superintendent Steward said Visual Arts Coordinator Dance will be spending more time reviewing the criteria used to evaluate the project because staff is recommending against approval on this project as it is proposed because staff believes it does not meet the criteria outlined in the Art in Private Development (AIPD) regulation.

Visual Arts Coordinator Dance gave an overview of the project. She then reviewed some of the criteria used to evaluate the project, such as location, view from the street, size of artwork in contrast to size of buildings and overall development, companion pieces, and other elements that are taken into consideration. Superintendent Steward distributed packets of information showing Sunnyvale AIPD projects that have been approved and installed.

Coordinator Dance said staff recommends that the Commission deny the approval on this project as it is proposed and encourage the developer to reconsider the art requirement in one of the two following ways:

1. Continue working with Mr. Dill to design two artworks for the project, one located at the main vehicular entrance on Java Drive and one located at the entrance from Borregas Drive. Eliminating the plaza area as a location for the artwork and concentrating on these two alternate locations would allow the developer to allocate a larger portion of the art budget to each of the sculptures, thus increasing the scale of the artwork.
2. Contract with Mr. Dill or another artist to design site-specific works of arts for the project. The works of art could be either functional, two-dimensional, or a series of three-dimensional works of art, or a combination of these suggestions. A variety of artistic media could be considered, such as painted metal, bronze or other metals, tile, or glass elements.

By selecting a concept that utilizes many elements of artwork, as opposed to a single, large sculpture, the artwork could be “spread” throughout the project creating more of an artwork presence, while not encouraging a direct competition with the building’s features. This

approach could be used to enhance a combination of all three buildings in the project, the plaza area adjacent to building #1, and the larger, centrally located amphitheater plaza.

Coordinator Dance concluded the staff report.

Commissioner Carney asked if color were introduced into the project, would staff change their recommendation. Coordinator Dance replied color might make a difference, but the scale of the artwork was a big factor.

Commissioner Shinseki asked if staff's recommendation would be different if all three phases of the project were known. Coordinator Dance said that it might make a difference if other pieces are larger and higher in scale. Superintendent Steward added that staff can only view the project based on information received and, so far, only the first phase is available. Staff cannot evaluate what the other two phases will be.

In response to Vice Chair Martin-Milius, Coordinator Dance replied that staff did take the opportunity to walk the site.

Chair Obrey opened the public hearing.

Clifford Chang, Chang Architects, reviewed in more detail the plans for the artwork, accessibility, and how it fits in the site plan that is integrated with the building. He said the artwork is light bronze and will hold its own against the building. He passed out samples of the artwork material and precast material used for the building upon which the bronze piece will lean. Chang said the piece would stand out and compliment the building and, since the building is close to the street, the location of the artwork will be highly visible to the public.

In response to questions from Commissioners, Chang described the scale of the artwork to the building. He said the building is designed with rails which bring the scale of the building lower. Change said the sculpture is 12' 8" high and, including pedestal and base, is a total of 18' 5" above ground level.

Chair Obrey invited artist Guy Dill to come forward. Dill said that there are many views one can consider when viewing artwork. He said his artwork, set near the building, was intended to blend, not compete, with the architecture. It works well in the space which the architect designed especially for this piece. Dill said while ordinances provide a terrific guideline, the artwork against the building fills its own niche. It does not push away the people but invites them in. Dill referenced his work at Moffett Park and how bronze goes through stages as it sets outside in the elements and also changes with age and lighting, while the building concrete will be consistent in color.

Vice Chair Martin-Milius confirmed that the degree of location, size and display place, etc. would enhance the artwork. Dill said art needs to bring the viewer into the form. He said he likes the different vantage points that the site provides.

Commissioner Shinseki asked about the artist's inspiration related to this perspective and what he hopes people will be inspired by when looking at the artwork. Dill said it is not a statement regarding history of art or how art fits as a specific scale or size, but it has to do with drawing the viewer into the artwork.

Commissioner Carney asked if this is a completely site specific piece or if it could be moved to another space. Dill responded that if the other site met certain requirements, then the artwork could be moved elsewhere. Commissioner Carney asked if the artwork was moved to a different location, would it still draw people in. Dill responded that he cannot answer for all people, but he uses his tools related to placement of the art and believes it works on this site.

Chair Obrey closed the public hearing.

MOTION: Vice Chair Martin-Milius moved, Commissioner Shinseki seconded, to recommend approval of the artwork as it is proposed.

Vice Chair Martin-Milius said she never thought she would disagree with staff since staff researches so thoroughly. She disclosed she met with the artist and architect in advance. She revisited the site after receiving staff's report. She believes the darkness of the bronze and the lines of the building and proposed site would work very well and be visible from the street. She believes the artwork will show well and curves on the piece will draw the eye. She said the scale and placement are right and she supports the project.

Chair Obrey said he also visited the site with Vice Chair Martin-Milius and the developer.

Commissioner Carney said the artwork is beautiful, but she will vote against the motion. She said she would support staff's recommendation to deny the approval of this project as it is proposed because staff has repeatedly demonstrated how thoroughly they do their research.

VOTE: Motion passed 3-1 (Commissioner Carney dissented. Commissioner Estrada was absent.)

4. Work Plan Calendar Review

Assistant to the Director Merrill reviewed the work plan calendar. She noted the July 23, 2008, special joint meeting to be held in the Library Program

Room with the Parks and Recreation Commission to review the Study Issue to Consider Options for Use of Raynor Activity Center. All Commissioners present indicated that they would attend.

5. Election of Officers for FY 08/09

Commissioner Obrey opened the floor for nominations for FY08/09 Chairperson.

Commissioner Martin-Milius nominated Commissioner Obrey who accepted the nomination.

There were no other nominations.

VOTE: Passed 4-0. (Commissioner Estrada was absent.)

Commissioner Obrey is FY08/09 Chairperson.

Chair Obrey opened the floor for nominations for FY08/09 Vice Chairperson.

Chair Obrey nominated Commissioner Martin-Milius. Commissioner Martin-Milius accepted the nomination and asked if anyone else was interested. Commissioners Carney and Shinseki confirmed they were not interested at this time.

There were no other nominations.

VOTE: Passed 4-0. (Commissioner Estrada was absent)

Commissioner Martin-Milius is FY08/09 Vice Chairperson.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

COMMISSION

Chair Obrey said that during his interview for reappointment to the Commission, Council asked him how the Commissioners have been activists for the arts. While Chair Obrey was at the Hands on the Arts event, a citizen asked about problems in regard to the theatre ticket office. Chair Obrey would like to revisit this item as a study issue.

Assistant to the Director Merrill pointed out that Arts Commissioners can agendize consideration of ways to serve as arts advocates in the community, and this topic would be added to the August meeting agenda.

Chair Obrey asked what could be done specifically about the citizen's concern. Recreation Superintendent Steward clarified the difference between operations and policy. She noted one way the Arts Commissioners could be more active is

to attend the City's art related events. Chair Obrey thanked her for the clarification and agreed he would like to agendaize how the Commissioners can serve as arts advocates.

STAFF

No comments.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

- Staff Liaison Report
- Recreation Division Quarterly Report, 12/07 – 4/08, dated 6/13/08
- Roster of Elected and Appointed Officials, July 2008
- P&R Employee Newsletter
- Miscellaneous Items of Interest

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commissioner Shinseki moved, Commissioner Carney seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Motion passed 4-0 (Commissioner Estrada was absent.)

Chair Obrey adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy E. Merrill
Assistant to the Director
Parks and Recreation Department

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