

# CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

## Cultural Arts Commission Minutes

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Members Present: Karen Askin (chair), Cristin Cash, Frances Bevington, Therese Capal, Patricia Dubroof, Lydia Tyburski, Brian Rogers, Howard Jung

Members Absent: Spencer Knoll, Liz Ortuzar

Councilmember: Mark Pierzchala

Staff Present: Karyn Miller, Betty Wisda

### Call to Order

Chairperson Karen Askin called the virtual online meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

### Approval of Minutes

Therese made a motion to approve August 9, 2023 minutes. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

### Chairperson Report

- Karen did not have a report but thanked everybody who went to the volunteer appreciation event and representing the CAC.

### Staff Report

- Karyn Miller gave the staff report and reviewed high-level items from the report. Karyn discussed the good work that Betty and the civic groups and resident companies are doing at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre.
- Rockville Art League held a meet the artist event recently and ten artworks sold that afternoon. Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg installed a series of sculptures in Rockville Town Square as part of Rockville Goes Purple.
- Betty discussed her evolving role with the CAC as well as the Meet the Artist on October 15 and Meet the Muralists events on October 2.
- Karyn shared that both CAC subcommittees met in September and gave an update on the Art in Public Places Implementation Plan and shared that it is with the City Attorney. Karyn will share the document with CAC again.
- Karyn said she was able to attend the transportation and Mobility Committee meeting on August 22 and that she has been attending different boards and commissions meetings to figure out ways that arts and culture can be a part of things.
- The Arts community roundtable meeting for the Rockville Town Center Master Plan was held on August 23 and several CAC Commissioners were able to attend. Karen and others discussed this

meeting and the planning process. Karyn shared that she plans to continue to track this project and its progress.

- Cristin shared that she has sat in on many similar meetings and she has been impressed with the amount of good intention and the desire to make things better when it comes to arts and culture. It comes down to money and people and space.
- Howie thought it was good that they are listening and getting new perspectives and hopes it turns into actions.
- Karen said that she is happy to see Karyn getting out of the arts and culture bubble and has insinuated herself and made herself known to other departments.
- Karen stated that at the October 2 Mayor and Council Meeting, there will be a proclamation made to designate October as National Arts and Humanities Month. Karen has agreed to be there to accept the proclamation. Others are invited to attend.
- Karen said that artist qualifications for the Lincoln Park mural are due soon. That is the Maryland State Arts Council project that VisArts received a grant for.
- Karyn reminded CAC Commissioners that the City has a new volunteer coordinator for the city, Julie Beevers. Julie sent an email last week with a couple of reminders. Commissioners are asked to do Maryland's Open Meetings Act Certification Program. There is an orientation packet that is being developed for onboarding new commissioners and Karyn sent it to the CAC for review. There will also be a time next year for each board and commission to schedule a time to meet with the Mayor and Council to do a work session.

## Art in Public Places Subcommittees

### Permanent Art Subcommittee

- The CAC agreed to call the subcommittee the “Permanent Art Subcommittee” rather than “Significant Works.”
- Therese gave the update on the Permanent Art Subcommittee Meeting. The group went over what projects are in the works, which is the Woodly Gardens sculpture and the Swim Center project. The committee also discussed budget planning briefly for FY25 and what is in the pipeline including Potomac Woods Park and David Scull Park.
- The Woodley Gardens Park project is nearer-term and the group will do a site visit later this to look at possible locations for a new piece.
- Therese reported that the Swim Center is further off and Karyn said that she and Betty have an internal meeting to discuss the project. Betty reported that the budget is \$89,000 but likely to go up to \$100,000 given the total project budget.

### Temporary Art Subcommittee

- Frances reported on the Temporary Art Subcommittee meeting and said that they talked about the two mural locations for this year and looked at the call for artists for College Gardens and shared some hardware options for the Twinbrook Annex that looks terrific. Karyn is doing some more work on figuring out the logistics of that location.
- The group also talked about the preference for the event-based artwork to be at Pride next year so that is the subcommittees recommendation that we move forward with the Pride festival.

- For College Gardens, Karyn had put together a survey to collect information from the public regarding that location and preferences and Cristin helped to review.
- Frances said that the committee talked about planning for FY25 and the two locations – one may be Dogwood Park and possibly the second location is King Farm, but they are still not sure of the logistics for that or what the scope or the size of the project there might be. There was also discussion of doing something at Redgate and having something that is debuted during Hometown Holidays. The subcommittee has not gotten to the point where that is an official recommendation, but that's just a summary of the discussion.
- Karen shared that the Twinbrook installation will be very expensive. Frances explained that the hardware for the banners will be somewhat pricy but a one-time cost. Karyn said it's a way of investing in permanent infrastructure to create a temporary outdoor exhibition space that can rotate artworks every three years or so.
- The subcommittee also reported on work that they are doing around the Pride Festival collaboration. Karyn shared that she has had a couple of preliminary conversations with Tyree Davis IV about it already and they are meeting again to discuss more.

## Human Right Commission Liaison Report

- Brian gave report on the Human Rights Commission. The main thing they did were the elections. So. Andrew Lin and Amina Shafi Rogers are no longer going to be co-chairs. So they elected Molly Cullen and Gabrielle Zwi as co-chairs. Rebecca Murphy is vice-chair and they just elected all their subcommittee members.

## OLD BUSINESS

- Karen reported that there have been discussions about how committees are structured.
- Karyn recommended that they keep the size of three members per subcommittee as it is now. The committee discussed the subcommittee structure and whether to keep the two groups or add a third.
- Frances recommended the creation of an Ad Hoc Working Group which commissioners liked. Karyn agreed to develop descriptions of each group.

## Councilmember Report

- Councilmember Pierzchala joined the meeting towards the end and did not have a report. The Councilmember shared that he loves this Commission and tries never to miss it and that he is happy that there is a new staff person.
- Karen talked to CM Pierzchala about the timing of the budget cycle. The Councilmember explained that typically in election year, the budget process does not really get started for the elected until late November or early December.
- Karen said she would like CAC members to be comfortable meeting with Councilmembers to discuss the work that the CAC does.

## New Business

- Karen shared information about VisArts event called Empty Bowls, which is where students and faculty make bowls and it brings attention to food insecurity. The recipient of all of the proceeds will be the Stepping Stones shelter. It will be on November 14 and the students at Richard Montgomery will be participating.
- Also, through VisArts some high school students want to start a safe art space for teenagers to work. It will start in November and it'll be with students from Churchill High School.
- Cindy Rivarde from REDI approached VisArts about doing murals on the cement silos along Gude Drive. They have scaled back and are proposing a new building along East Gude for the mural. REDI and VisArts are meeting on site soon with the developers and Karyn.
- Karen reported that she and Karyn are talking more about the Art in Private Development Program. Karyn shared that she is getting up to speed on the Art in Private Development program and transitioning that program from Chris Henry, the Deputy Director of Recreation and Parks Division.
- Karen asked Karyn to talk about the website and community input. Karyn said there is interest in doing more robust community input for projects. The CAC discussed creating a module or input on the website for community members and groups can make suggestions and give input.

## Announcements:

### **F. Scott Fitzgerald Festival**

- Patricia shared that she just received the flyers for the F. Scott Fitzgerald Festival. Montgomery College is confirmed for the festival this year. This will be a return venue after many years of not being there.
- The festival is Saturday, October, 21<sup>st</sup> with an event Friday night at the Writer's Center. There will be readings in honor of Jonathan Franzen, who is the honorary this year. Patricia shared other events and programs around the festival and that the subject is mental illness in fiction
- Councilmember Pierzchala thanked everyone who showed up at the volunteer appreciation evening.

## Next Meeting:

Karen asked for a motion to adjourn and a second. Patricia moved to adjourn. Therese seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.