Visual Arts Commission Minutes  
Thursday, October 11, 2018 | 3:30 – 4:30 pm  
City Hall - Kranse Conference Room (Second Floor)  
101 1st Street SE, Cedar Rapids IA

Commissioners Present: Bill Stamats - Chair  
Lynn Ocken - arrived 4:03 p.m.  
Anne Johnson  
Karla Scriven  
David Van Allen  
Alexis Dagit  
Kayt Conrad - arrived 3:40 p.m.  
Jonathan Berger

Commissioners Absent: Ashley Glassberg

Community Development Staff Present: Bill Micheel  
Jillane Shultz

1. Public Input  
There was no public input.

2. Discussion & Possible Action Items  
a. Public Art Project Proposed by the Downtown Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (Downtown SSMID) – Jesse Thoeming  
This agenda item will be postponed until the November 8, 2018 meeting.

b. City Hall Public Art  
Mr. Micheel shared an update on the City Hall Public Art project. The subcommittee met on August 1, 2018, and drafted a list of considerations to make for the piece, along with work preference and process for the Request for Qualifications (RFQ):

Considerations:
- Lawn mowing  
- Location of utility lines and vault (depth)  
- FCS-Construction location  
- Future tree canopy/root system  
- Electrical hook-up (location/accessibility/cost)  
- Footing inspections  
- Setbacks  
- Stormwater Management (none)
• SHPO

Preference for work that:
  • Utilizes colorful and eco-friendly lighting.
  • Encourages audience engagement and interaction.

$60,000 budget including:
  • Creation/fabrication, transportation, & installation

Process:
  • Submit desired approach with suggested materials and colors
  • 3 finalists selected (Purchasing will facilitate) and awarded $ to create a maquette for review by the selection committee (transportation costs will come out of this amount)
  • One artist selected and meet with selection committee to refine work.

Commissioner Dagit motioned to change wording in the RFQ to include giving artists who have kinetic and/or lighting elements to their public art pieces preferential consideration. Commissioner Conrad opposed. The motion passed seven to one.

Commissioner Stamats motioned that the $60,000 budget include costs for the creation of a physical or digital model and other costs associated with being the chosen artist for the piece, as well as removing the wording that set a definite number of finalists from the RFQ. Commissioner Ocken seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. UFG Pocket Park Sculpture
Bill Micheel, Community Development Assistant Director, shared a presentation to provide background on the UFG Pocket Park Sculpture. The site of the park is located on 2nd Street SE next to Cobble Hill. The budget for the project is $10,000, and the sub-committee has been working with Black Earth Gallery to identify artists and pieces.

Cara Briggs Farmer, local artist, presented two, to-scale ideas to the Commission. Ms. Briggs Farmer shared her first concept, which included a 9’ x 9’ pad replicating the landing spot for the sculpture, as well as a model of the sculpture itself. The sculpture can be positioned in a number of different ways, and up to the Commissioners to determine their preference. The second concept includes the entire pocket park; however, it would not fit within the allotted budget of $10,000 unless further conversations develop about potential for the latter idea. Mr. Micheel shared that the City would be seeking quotes the following week, with construction expected later this fall.

Commissioner Stamats asked Ms. Briggs Farmer if there would be any transportation challenges to overcome moving the sculpture from her studio in Marion. Ms. Briggs Farmer shared that typically, the artist is responsible for hiring contractors and taking out an
additional insurance certificate to cover the individuals installing. Paying contractor fees, as well as taking out additional insurance, tends to consume a healthy portion of the budget. Ms. Briggs Farmer stated that in the past when she has worked with surrounding cities, their staff help transport and install the piece. In turn, it is better stewardship of the funds and staff take ownership and pride in a project on City property.

Commissioner Statmats shared that the sub-committee decided not to paint the piece or use limestone for the base. Rather, the concrete material used will be a gun metal blue color. Ms. Briggs Farmer shared that the sculpture is made from weathering steel and develops a rust patina that is self-sealing. The height of the sculpture maxes out at approximately eight feet. The carbon element to the piece will keep the bright patina since it is stainless material.

Commissioner Dagit asked if there is concern with people climbing the piece. Ms. Briggs Farmer suggested presenting it to the public as a sculpture; most times people will respect public art and refrain from climbing. This particular piece is not necessarily easy to climb but will be inspected before installation for any sharp edges in the event someone does attempt to climb.

Mr. Micheel shared that the park will be ready by mid-November when Cara is ready to begin making the piece. She can work with the City on anchors and plates, if they wish to pour the concrete and have the bolts to affix the sculpture to ready for installation.

Commissioner Stamats made a motion to hire Cara Briggs Farmer for the UFG Sculpture project. Seconded by Commissioner Ocken. The motion passed unanimously.

d. UFG Pocket Park Wall Mural
Mr. Micheel shared an update on the UFG Pocket Park Wall Mural. The City has been in conversation with the building owner, Steve Emerson, Cobble Hill, VAC, and Murals & More. Murals and More contacted six local/regional artists, and are considering work by Ely Sotillo or Sirus Fountain. Additional information will be gathered to help answer why the paint is peeling on the newly painted wall before moving forward. The artists will be informed that the project will be on hold until the suitability of the surface can be determined.

1. **Adjournment**
The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

*Next Meeting: November 8, 2018*