

**JOINT CAMBRIDGE ARTS ADVISORY BOARD & PUBLIC ART COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 8, 2016, AT 6:00 PM**

**Advisory Board Members Present:** Lori Damon (Chair), Diane Norris (Secretary), Katherine Shozawa, Christine Lamas Weinberg, Olufolakemi Alalade, Luis Edgardo Cotto

**Public Art Commission Members Present:** Danielle Sauv , Judy Ann Goldman, Christopher Sokolowski, Hue T. Nguyen, Bertha Pantoja-Moore, Alexander van Praagh

**Staff Present:** Jason Weeks, Lillian Hsu, Hilary Zelson

**Advisory Board Members Absent:** David Daniel, Aliyah Gary, Lori Lander, Calvin Lindsay, Ann Lawson, Diana Lempel, Stella Aguirre McGregor

**Public Art Commission Members Absent:** David De Celis (Chair), Dina Deitsch, Cecily Miller

**1. Minutes:**

Minutes from previous meetings will be emailed to PAC and AB and approved at next meeting.

**2. Membership:**

PAC and AB members provided short introductions to welcome new members.

Advisory Board Members (3 new members)

- Olufolakemi Alalade (Appointed 10/2016)
- Christine Lamas (Appointed 10/2016)
- Katherine Shozawa (Appointed 10/2016)

PAC New Members (2 new members)

- Judy Ann Goldman (Appointed – September 2016)
- Cecily Miller (Appointed – September 2016)

**3. Directors Report**

Over the summer, three staff members transitioned out of Cambridge Arts (Jeremey Gaucher, Molly Akin, and Rachel Newsam). Molly will continue to work as a consultant for the Cambridge Arts Creative Marketplace Initiative. Jason thanked Hilary Zelson, Taylor Mortell, and Lisa Kootz who have been helping out and working part time during this period of transition. On Friday, November 4, the position of Public Art Administrator was posted online. PAC and AB members are encouraged to share the posting with anyone they think might be a good fit for the position. Additionally, on November 9, 2016 the position of Director of Marketing & P.R was posted online. A part time Conservation Technician job opening will be posted soon.

Jason mentioned that on Monday, November 14, at 9:30 a.m., Assistant City Manager for Finance Louis DePasquale will be sworn in as the next Cambridge City Manager in the Sullivan Chamber. All are welcome to attend this public swearing-in ceremony. Louis is a supporter of

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the arts and Jason will make arrangements to continue conversations with him about the important work of our department.

Over the last 18-24 months there have been good signs for Cambridge Arts with increased public art budgets, and a lifting of the \$100k cap on public art, although it has not reached the full 1%. This year, the Community Arts program was able to double the amount of funding available for the grant program to artists and arts organizations in the city because of an increase in the City contribution. The amount per grant ranges from around \$3000 to \$5000 in funding per project. Cambridge Arts is also thinking about new ways we can implement the money in the community (public art, temporary projects, performance, etc.). Prior to the recession total funding for the grant was about \$90k, and it has finally worked its way back up to about \$50k.

**4. Program Report by Lillian**

Percent-for-Art project updates:

- Port Infrastructure: 5-7 year project to reduce flooding in the Port (Percent-for-Art funds will be used for a one time grant program to select a number of different projects to benefit the community)
- Fern St: Due to concerns that fall leaves could stain the artwork during cure time and other issues related to the weather, the installation has been postponed to spring 2017.
- King Open Cambridge St Upper School: Large project including the creation of a new school, new library, a pool, and outdoor play area. This project forms a community center / hub with many spaces and services.
- MLK, Jr. School: Two Percent-for-Art projects were installed inside the school. This included the repainting, cleaning, and re-siting of "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Sculpture" by Vusumuzi Maduna, and the creation of "Light Shadow: MLK," a 7-foot x 32-foot "urban musical instrument" created by artist and composer Christopher Janney.

Temporary Special Projects:

- The *Common Exchange*: Planning is underway with Dina Deitsch about the *Common Exchange* Project. Dina was inspired by the new renovation of the Common and wanted to celebrate the renovation. The project will include temporary and performance artworks, an exhibition in Gallery 344, and a newspaper created in collaboration with Rick Rawlins's class at Lesley University College of Art and Design (the newspaper serves as public space in print). So far, Lillian and Dina have submitted about nine grant applications and have received approximately \$60k in funding.

Outreach and Education

- Networking with Cambridge Public Schools: Cambridge Arts is beginning to revive and develop deeper connections to the Cambridge Public Schools Visual and Performing Arts

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Staff. Mainly, we are focusing on ways to make it easier for teachers to connect to our resources. Building these relationships starts with having conversations.

Gallery 344

- "1440-Degree Landscape: Panoramic Photographs by Richard Hackel" The exhibition resulted out of a conversation Lillian had with Richard, who visited the Gallery when he moved to Cambridge. Richard spent 18 months creating panoramic photographs of sites in Cambridge where there are works in our public art collection.

**5. Other Business (Freeform Conversation)**

(Jason) Reminder that we spend a lot of time just talking with people, and that we hear lots of good ideas. We see the Arts Council as a place where people can come and talk about their ideas, a place to make connections within the community. It is important for us to be nimble enough to take an idea, engage with a person around an idea, and help people figure out the next steps.

(Lori) Now that the cap on public art has been removed, what is the ceiling? Jason and Lillian explain that the budget is worked out, and approved, on a case by case, and that the process has a lot to do with the administration. There has been no new cap set. Recently, we have noticed an increased city interest in the arts. For example, the King Open Project budget total was \$400k to include re-siting, storage, cleaning, and etc. for all the artwork existing, in addition to the creation of a new work (\$325k of the \$400k was allocated for the new commission). An additional \$150k was approved for funding a new artwork at the pool.

(Bertha) How do you come up with a number [for the artwork budget]? (Jason) We are waiting for the next move from the new city manager. We have built good relationships with project managers. (Alex) With a new City Manager, and the removal of the previous cap, it is a real opportunity to re-visit the ordinance. (Luis) A city ordinance is pretty clear, and it should be hard for it to be subject to the whims of a transitory group. As construction budgets are increasing, the scale of Cambridge Arts should also increase.

How can PAC / AB members advocate for the ordinance to be implemented fully in an objective way?

(Lillian) PAC was previously communicating with the City Manager and it would be great to continue the conversations with the new City Manager.

Full 1% funding is being used for the Grant Program in the Port. The infrastructure budget is \$35m currently, and we are getting the full \$350k. This is particularly exciting because the primary construction work is underground, and historically there have been times when underground work received no percent-for-art funding. Another example of underground percent-for-art funding is the Fern Street Sewer Separation project. The total artwork cost for Fern St. is \$500k+ because the artwork is integrated with the infrastructure of the path and the City is taking on much of the construction costs.

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There are lots of possibilities on the table for the future of percent-for-art funding in Cambridge. Previously funding for Community Preservation Act projects was never open to the arts, now this funding can be used to support public art and art in the public realm. Jason meets twice a year with the budget director to advocate for the arts. Jason plans to pick up on the momentum that we have made and welcome the new City Manager.

(Alex) Would it be possible to have one meeting where the public art budget is identified for all upcoming projects, annually if possible? (Lillian) This has been a goal. Sometimes projects are in flux and we don't know a year ahead what funding there will be. The City could consider updating the Ordinance. We will also be looking at the PAC guidelines to bring them up to date. (Lillian) We can evaluate what are we actually doing and how that matches the old documents.

Cambridge has led the charge on the creation of policy about public art for the state. (Jason) If the state could implement a public art ordinance it would strengthen Cambridge Arts argument for public art. (Lillian) Lillian has been part of a task force organized by MassCreative to look at what can be put forth in the state legislative meeting in February to create a state funding stream for the arts. There are discussions about whether we should even call it a percent-for-arts. Or is percent-for-arts, as a term, too rigid? Maybe there are other different kinds of funding streams which should be considered.

(Jason) New Mass Cultural Council (MCC) statewide process working with Future City. Future City, run by Mark Davy, is a bold agenda for public art making. It builds on the idea that there is no 1% for art but 100% for arts.

(Hue) How does all the building going on in Cambridge affect public art? (Jason) Currently, there is no track record for public-private public art partnerships. What is the potential? For example, each Google location has themes and maybe they could have public art. (Jason) There is no formal mechanism for this yet, however, Cambridge Arts is building partnerships with the three main developers in Cambridge (Boston Properties, Alexandria, and BioMed Realty). This way when there are opportunities, the relationships are already established.

**Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition:** There is money set aside for significant needs and mitigation that has not been allocated yet for the City. Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition supports a range of areas such as community development, health human services, and arts. This could be an opportunity for partnerships, or for direct funding. Currently, there is good connection and conversation between nonprofits in Cambridge.

**What else can PAC / AB members do to help advocate for the Arts?**

Go to City meetings and ask, "how about the arts?" When the City presents future projects, make sure to ask "will the arts be there?" Make sure to ask for art during participatory budgeting sessions.

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Recently, City of Cambridge conducted a survey with the top 12 items of importance to residents, and art was high on the list.

(Luis) Why is the Ordinance not working? Shouldn't 1% for the arts be 1% for the arts? Can we make updates to the code and offer ordinance changes or amendments? (Jason) Prior to the last 8 or so years we got the full 1% funding. Recently, the projects are getting more and more expensive, and as nearly every project grew above \$100m, the city was starting to clamp down on the 1%. Both PAC and AB members agreed they wanted to find ways to have the cap fully removed.

(Lori) We need to show that residents want the full 1% going toward public art. The Waterworks Project is a successful example of public art at Fresh Pond. Lori attended a meeting where someone mentioned that using public art at Fresh Pond was an example of why the City no longer wants to give 1% for public art. They felt it was just too much, and Lori was able to provide the counter argument. She explained that the project was a success, and she sees people walking around Fresh Pond and enjoying the art on a regular basis. It is important to remind people of the success of our program (and the water treatment facility is a great example of a successful public art project).

(Lori) It seems that people are afraid of a higher budget. Part of our job is to make them feel less afraid when a large budget is given to art because it makes their project more successful.

(Alex) We should talk about public art with a positive message (address the conversation with inspiration). It could be helpful to show examples of great public art installations in other cities where the budget was able to match the scale of the site. We need to help people imagine better (people are excited when they see impactful public projects).

**Future agenda item for PAC:** Plan for how to create a context for an audience to show them great examples of public projects. It can also be helpful to explain how these projects connect to other issues. For example, the Christopher Janney sculpture readily demonstrates STEAM learning. (Follow-up question: Has Christopher Janney changed the riddle since the artwork was installed?)

**Port Infrastructure**

Diane asked for further information on the Port Infrastructure project.

(Lillian) Two enormous storm water storage tanks will be installed underground. Water will be pumped out of those tanks into pipes across and along Mass Ave that feed into an existing system that drains to the Charles River. Kathy Watkins (DPW engineer) originally started the conversation with Lillian about including art. The Port has a rich history — however, over the years they have experienced many stress factors – invisibility, street violence, lack of opportunities for young people, feeling swallowed up by surrounding development. There is a lot of strength in the Port community, and they are hoping to affirm their strength and identity as the Port through multiple cultural projects. As part of the one-time grant program we are creating, we are working closely with the Community Art Center (CAC). The CAC does a lot of

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work with arts and youth, and also functions as a community hub (CAC as a living room for the neighborhood).

**The Port Grant:**

- (Luis) Suggestion to provide some grant application materials in Spanish.
- (Jason) To create the public art grant in the Port, we are building on a 40-year-old grant making program, and are able to tailor what works, and what doesn't.
- (Lillian) As part of the grant program, we are learning a lot about the community. We are meeting with the community, and conducting outreach in the area; at churches (act as community centers), youth centers, Prospect Hill Academy, artists' studios, Fletcher Maynard academy, Mobius...
- For the grant, every project will be centered on the arts, but we are also opening it up to others to create ideas that involve artists.

(Christopher) Wouldn't it be great if we could educate the new City Manager about what big effective public art projects cost? (As if we were educating the manager to be a consumer of public art.) We could create a binder with information about projects and their corresponding budgets.

**Resources to find examples of public art projects and their budgets:**

- Americans for the Arts, Public Art Network: <http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/networks-and-councils/public-art-network>
- Public Art Archive: [www.Publicartarchive.org](http://www.Publicartarchive.org)

**(Jason) STAR Community Rating System**

It stands for: Sustainability Tools for Assessing & Rating Communities (STAR)

Cambridge was one of only four 5-Star Communities (along with Baltimore, MD, Northampton, MA, and Seattle, WA) in the nation and received the highest score ever awarded to a city through this rating system. The report showed the significance of the role that the arts have on the City (and the Arts Council makes the City's robust arts programming possible).

**Possibility to use percent-for-arts funds for temporary projects:**

It seems that there are lots of one day events in Cambridge such as the River Festival and Annual Dance Party, but there is lack of temporary projects between one day and permanent.

(Lillian) The ordinance does allow for temporary and performance based work. However, it can be hard to convince a group to create a temporary project with the percent-for-art funding when, for example, the school being created will exist for 35 years, and some people want the artwork to exist for 35 years and not be an ephemeral experience for only the current students.

(Luis) It would be great to inject more temporary public art (including musicians, dance, and other type of media that are not typically part of public art).

- Plan to continue this conversation in future meetings

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- Remember to share what opportunities you see or hear, and any ideas of how we can leverage the opportunities. We can make sure arts are always at the table.
- (Bertha) Let's explore venues for more ephemeral art and save money from the 1% budget for these events. This can help bring more artwork back out into public spaces and how to draw attention in a different way. Social practice can be very low budget.
- "Participate" - socially engaged art and design initiative – different than object-based art
- The Cambridge Science Festival (11 years) is a good example of when many institutions come together to create an event. Good opportunity to bring STEAM out into the public realm, and possibly a good place to stage a temporary project.
- We can set up a moment and space for opportunity to happen
- (Christine) Maybe we could create a Public Art week?

**Is there an update on the Foundry?** (Jason) Very much in flux. The site includes 2.5 acres of open space and an historic building that has to be developed in a specific way. Jason has been working with CRA on this project. About a month ago there was a presentation that proposed a mix of development, including mixed-use office space, community culinary space to be used for cooking and education, basement as a maker space, lots of opportunities (collaboration between Cambridge Innovation Center and Graffito)

- 40,000 square/ft for community use
- interesting and bold plan (posted on Cambridge Redevelopment Authority website)
- All the options, hopes, and activities can be realized but the project is on hold because of funding issues.

**7:50pm meeting adjourned**