

City of Saratoga Springs ARTS COMMISSION



MEETING MINUTES - MARCH 25, 2019

Location: Saratoga Arts, 320 Broadway

Present: Sue Kessler (Chair), Ian Berry, Nicole Coady, Crystal Cobert-Giddens, Devra Cohen-Tigor, Belinda Colon, Lindsey Connors, Ria Curley, Matt Hurff, Joel Reed

1. Sue convened the meeting at 5:30
2. Sue welcomed Crystal Cobert-Giddens, a new member of the Commission appointed by Saratoga Springs Commissioner of Public Works Anthony Scirocco, and invited all present to introduce themselves.
3. Ian requested clarification of current membership and membership eligibility as outlined in the Bylaws. There was some discussion about whether changes to membership eligibility that were voted on at a meeting had been incorporated into the Bylaws. Sue said she'd review past meeting minutes and report back.
4. Sue introduced discussion of the Saratoga Springs Art Plan that Lindsey, speaking for Mayor Kelly, has suggested we work on, and it's relation to the existing Public Art Policy.

Matt suggested we think about the Plan as a document that outlines "what" should be accomplished, while the Policy delineates "how" that "what" should get done.

Lindsey suggested thinking about the Plan as a vision statement that outlines goals the City should have regarding the arts - broad statements of goals and values.

The discussion that followed touched on a number of related topics that might be either fleshed out in the new Plan, or resolved with reference to the Arts Policy and / or to the Commission's Bylaws:

- the role of the Policy as a guide for a city program of acquiring art;
- reminders that discussions by the Commission or the City about removing some of the art in question along Broadway should not fall under the heading of "de-accessioning" or "de-commissioning." That language properly refers only to art that is owned (has been "accessioned" or "commissioned") by the City, whereas these objects are privately owned and were placed on public space by non-governmental organizations or their private owners; their removal would best be facilitated through reference to the original arrangements authorizing their placement or (if not authorized) through processes having more to do with the encroachment of private property on public space, rather than policies of the Arts Commission;
 - also noted in discussion was that the collection box project offers a model of how these type of projects, when accompanied by a clear contract with the City and the non-profit or independent agency responsible for the project, can clarify where the work may be placed, a time-limit on their placement, and terms for ending, revising or extending their placement. Joel offered to share Saratoga Arts' contracts for its Art and Public Places program, where artists agree to display their work at third-party locations while agreeing to not hold the location or Saratoga Arts responsible for theft or damage
- the commission's role in developing or contributing to arts programs vs. offering the City Council advice and consultation;
- the importance of the Commission's Bylaws for clarifying its purpose and purview;
- the role of the Plan in supporting not only visual arts but also performing arts, film, and the creative industries more broadly construed;
- the suggestion that the Plan might identify sites or areas in town that might be appropriate for public art projects

It was generally agreed that suggestions for city funding of the Arts and the work of the Commission - funding sources and spending - should go in the Plan, not the Policy.

Ian felt that there was language in the Public Arts Policy that expressed the “values” that might inform and be incorporated into the Plan.

Joel thought that the Plan might conclude with a statement that empowers or authorizes the Commission to assist with RFPs and public art installations in support of other City commissions and groups, and that the ArtScape project could represent an example of the type of project the Commission can support (but would not itself be included in the Plan).

5. Belinda suggested that the Arts Commission’s website include guidelines for donating art to the City.

6. Lindsey offered more information about the ArtScape project, and the group looked at a map of the trail. Discussion included:

- specific sites for sculpture and murals;
- site security and lighting;
- the importance of opening the project to other schools and artists;
- the importance of involving a landscape architect in the project, and the budget for that

Sue suggested that the next meeting take place at the trail itself.

7. At 7:13pm, Sue moved that the meeting be adjourned. Nicole seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Reed