

**MINUTES
CITY OF FORT MYERS
PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE
May 18, 2021**

The Public Art Committee of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session at Oscar M. Corbin Jr. City Hall, 2200 Second Street, its regular meeting place in the City of Fort Myers, FL, on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. Present were: Carolyn Gora, Chair, presiding, Committee Members, Bettye Middlebrooks, David Meo, William Taylor, Leila Mesdaghi, and Ava Roeder. Also present were Tom Hall, Art Consultant, Abraham Luna, Parks Senior Supervisor and Reva Daly, Public Works Fiscal Coordinator. Absent: none.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gora called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Gora led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL - Taken by Reva Daly.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jerry Miller, Vice Chair of the Academic Council spoke to the committee of a vacant parcel of land currently owned by FDOT at the corner of Martin Luther King Drive and Hough Street. It was suggested to take ownership of the land to design a small park or art hub with a welcome to Fort Myers sign. Tom Hall, Art Consultant advised running these plans by the CRA and they may be able to come up with the funding.

MOTION: Committee Member Meo moved to look supportively toward establishing an art project, on MLK Jr. Blvd. and Hough Street; seconded by Committee Member Middlebrooks; motion carried 6-0.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Approval of April 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Committee Member Meo moved to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2021 meeting; seconded by Committee Member Middlebrooks; motion carried 6-0.

2. 4:15 p.m. Forum Park Finalist Presentation By John Davis

John Davis, finalist to the Forum Park public art project, began his virtual Zoom presentation by thanking the Public Art Committee for inviting him to join in the process of finding the artwork for the park. He presented to the committee a theme he found relevant, the body in motion and how that can be conveyed in an artwork. He noted that he reviewed the video of the recorded public meeting from the fall regarding the park and that they identified physical activity as being beneficial for personal, mental and

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emotional well-being for park users. This reinforced his approach to the body in motion as a theme to address in the artwork. Mr. Davis presented slides with images of gesture drawings and pictorial symbols that supported his concept and approach to the design development of the body in motion theme. He presented two concepts. First, concept A, was a three-dimensional gesture drawing that depicted bodies in motion in a setting that was in line with evoking the activities in the park. He described the proposed artwork beginning with its concrete base and the leaf forms that billow up out of it, that support three figures to give these sort of three-D gestures of figures in motion and at the top of the central spine there was a wind vane that took shape of a kite. A detailed explanation of materials and LED backlighting were presented, along with the components of the height and the land view of the elements. Mr. Davis presented his second concept, concept B, incorporating some of the same themes from the first concept. He explained his experience with kinetic elements and his different approaches to alleviate any concerns. He presented his original submission to the committee as a reminder of who he is. He presented a breakdown of his budget, as well. He said if there were minor issues to what he was proposing that he was open to revisiting certain details to make a piece more fitting for the site. He completed his presentation with one-minute animations of circular passage around the piece to depict the experience of location in the roundabout. The committee asked Mr. Davis some questions which were mostly geared toward the kinetic element of the kite from concept A. He responded that he was open to do whatever necessary to make it a safe and an appropriate feature, with possible options of making it removable or creating a locking mechanism for the assembly. He assured that he works with structural engineers on every project. He has two art pieces in Florida. Mr. Davis had not named his art concepts yet, but eventually would. Mr. Hall thanked Mr. Davis and the Zoom call ended.

3. 5:00 p.m. Forum Park Finalist Presentation By Nathan Pierce

Nathan Pierce, finalist to the Forum Park public art project, began his virtual Zoom presentation and stated he appreciated the Public Art Committee for the opportunity. He introduced himself and gave a short background history of his work. Mr. Pierce shared pictures of sculptures he completed in Georgia, Missouri and one that is due to go in Nevada. He noted that Forum Park was full of inspiration and he reflected the information from the Call to Artist, thus, concluding that the Zipperer family and the gladiolus flower were the inspiration to the design of his piece. Mr. Pierce presented a picture of the rough model of the conceptual piece, he noted that the working title of Jennie was to pay homage to the family and the history of the flower growing in the area. He explained the materials, the height of the piece and the fact that its location in a roundabout would enhance its energy. He presented the committee with a video of a rotating small model as a way to illustrate being able to walk around the sculpture. He explained the design of the panels, the construction and the materials of the sculpture. Chair Gora asked Mr. Pierce about the budget of the sculpture. Mr. Pierce noted that site amenities, concrete footings and lighting were not included in the \$50,000 and that it would be just for the sculpture. Mr. Pierce suggested that the space would need a

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large-scale piece and taking away from the budget of the piece would reduce the size. The committee members questions were mostly geared to the cast acrylic material of Mr. Pierce's art piece. They asked about the durability of the cast acrylic color under constant UV light and the replacement procedure of the cast acrylic at the end of its life span. Mr. Pierce explained based on his research and experience with the material that it is inherently a UV stable material, its vibrant colors are free from yellowing for 10 to 20 years and it's a relatively safe material for outdoor use. He noted the industry specs of the material and that is 20 times stronger than wired glass. Mr. Pierce also explained how to replace the cast acrylic. Mr. Pierce was asked about some of his other art pieces in which he responded that he has a piece in Rosemary Beach Florida and one in Knoxville, Tennessee, that Committee Member Roeder noted she had visited. Details about different types of acrylic were discussed and the possibilities of different lighting. Mr. Hall thanked Mr. Pierce for his design and appreciated the fact that he made it site specific by paying homage to the Zipperer family.

4. 5:45 p.m. Forum Park Finalist Presentation By Mickael Broth

Mickael Broth, finalist to the Forum Park public art project, thanked the Public Art Committee for having him via Zoom and apologized for not being able to present in person, because he was committed to a job in D.C. and in a hotel room. He introduced himself, gave a brief background history of his mural work and he explained his recent transition to sculptures. Mr. Broth presented his project called Rise Above, a sculpture installation using metal, planting and lighting to create a unique work of art with inspiration from the gladiolus flower. Mr. Broth noted the project goals of making a site-specific public work of art that was captivating and inspired by the history of the site. His design inspiration came from the line drawing he did of the gladiolus that he got from the history of the Zipperer family. His goals were to connect the natural beauty with durable materials, he noted that a main concern with any public art is longevity. Mr. Broth described the scale of his piece with the tallest element roughly 20 feet tall and within the 50 foot circle of the island there would be a ring of grass and a 25 to 30-foot circle with plantings in which the vertical elements would be contained within. Mr. Broth showed some samples of his previous work relevant to this project as far as color, scale and vertical elements. He explained the materials, process and fabrication of the piece would take place in Richmond at his studio. It would be professionally transported to the site for installation and he would consult with a local engineer for the proper installation method in order to ensure they are secure. Also, Mr. Broth noted that he would want to consult with a local expert to find the exact right plantings going in a gradation from one color at one side of the ring of plantings to a different color at the other side. He presented LED up lighting that would be color changing to give it visual interest. Mr. Broth noted that he considered standards, such as durable materials for minimal maintenance, height to prevent vandalization and the ring of plantings to prevent people from wanting to come into the traffic circle. He acknowledged that part of the design was directed with lots of open space to take into account the intense weather extremes like hurricanes, so that the artwork would not become sails. Mr. Broth

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stated that the workmanship and installation is guaranteed for a one-year period. He noted he would provide a color chart, specifications, materials, powder coating colors in a pdf. care package. He provided a breakdown of the budget and an anticipated timeline assuming he is contracted. He provided his contact information, thus concluding his presentation. The committee members questions were geared towards the lighting and which part of it was going to be lite up. Mr. Broth replied that he anticipated maybe five color changing LED ground lights scattered within the circle of plantings lighting up the metal elements. Committee Member Roeder asked how many flowers he would make and the various heights of them all. Mr. Broth stated it should show eight vertical flowers in all of them except maybe his concept sketches. Describing that they range from 18, 16 and 14 feet, with the lowest flower reaching 10 feet tall. The committee went into detailed discussion with Mr. Broth in reference to the plantings that were incorporated in his design. He concluded that he would work with a local expert and Parks and Recreation for a hardy low maintenance planting. Mr. Broth reassured that the plantings really came out of a way of trying to prevent people from wanting to get to the artwork, going back to the goals for the project to create something that isn't interactive. The color rendering was an added bonus. Mr. Broth noted he did not have a public art piece in Florida. The committee discussed possible maintenance for the piece. Mr. Hall thanked Mr. Broth for his design and that he appreciated the heart and spirit he put into his work.

5. Award of Forum Park Commission

Tom Hall, Art Consultant announced that now the fun begins. He noted that the committee will debate the three artworks and then have a vote at some point. Committee Member Taylor took pictures of each of the finalist's presentations on his phone. The committee was able to go back and view his pictures of each finalist's art piece and review them. The committee deliberated the three art pieces narrowing it down between John Davis and Mickael Broth, thus eliminating Nathan Pierce. Committee Member Taylor recollected that John Davis said if you like 95% of it and its five percent then we can talk. Mr. Hall noted that we would be looking for an install in 2022. Abraham Luna, Parks Senior Supervisor noted that if there is lighting, we would want to put a conduit in the ground. Chair Gora noted that if we decided John Davis or Mickael Broth we know we will have lighting, she commented that you want it to be seen. Chair Gora asked for a vote by hand between John Davis and Mickael Broth to see where the committee stood. John Davis received three votes, Mickael Broth received two votes and one committee member was indecisive. The committee agreed that the easiest one to maintain was the last one. It was noted that Councilmember Bonk watched the presentations and liked presentation number three. The committee discussed the ring of plantings for sculpture number three. Donna Lovejoy arrived at 6:48pm and relayed a message she received from Councilmember Bonk, noting that the first one requires more maintenance and locks you into a theme. The third one is timeless, there is a possibility for more funding and it's breathtaking. Donna stated that Councilmember Bonk liked the third one with the eight flowers. The projected maintenance on the pieces

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were discussed. The possibility of vandalism to the pieces were discussed. Chair Gora noted that both artists would have to work with engineers and do research with the wind factor. Mr. Hall commented on each of the proposals with respect to the artists and some of the committee's concerns. Mr. Hall added on the third option an idea instead of having each one of the flowers completely vertical that maybe they can be angled to make it look more like a bouquet. Chair Gora noted that people would probably understand that they are flowers. Chair Gora asked for a vote again. John Davis received two votes and Mickael Broth received four votes by a show of hands. Chair Gora stated that the decision had been made and it is number three, Mickael Broth and asked for a motion.

MOTION: Committee Member Meo moved to accept finalist number three, Mickael Broth's Rise Above; seconded by Committee Member Middlebrooks; motion carried 5-1.

Committee Member Taylor asked if there was going to be anything that lets the public know that the artwork is supposed to be gladiolus flowers. Mr. Hall assured yes, it will be included on Otocast, we will have a dedication and a small quote on the signage. Chair Gora added that hopefully Mickael will be the one doing the talking on Otocast. Committee Member Roeder noted that she really liked number one and that it was the most creative, but in practicality with what we know now about maintenance and a variety of different parts in sculptures it just makes it more difficult to maintain. Mr. Hall noted the need to take into consideration of how that artwork will work in relationship to the three Carmona sculptures that are dedicated to go to Forum park. Committee Member Mesdaghi stated in that case we have a lot of people sculptures.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee Member Taylor; seconded by Committee Member Middlebrooks; to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m.