



RENTON MUNICIPAL ARTS COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2010
4:30 pm

Renton City Hall
Conferencing Center (7th Floor)

Municipal Arts Commissioners Present: Patricia Pepper, Dalia Amin, Jerri Everett, Doug Kyes, Fred Lund, Linda Middlebrooks, Britt McKenzie, Wesley Van Doren and Denise Zullig

Municipal Arts Commissioners Absent: Evejyn Reingold

City Staff Present: Jennifer Davis Hayes, Community & Economic Development
Vincent Orduna, Community Services
Vivienne Lietz, Administrative Secretary, Community & Economic Development

CALL TO ORDER: Commission Chair Pepper called the meeting to order at 4:34 pm.

Guests:

State Representative Zack Hudgins. Commissioner Pat Pepper introduced Representative Hudgins. Representative Hudgins stated he was elected in 2002 and is about to run for a 5th term. He's found that you can help the arts by showcasing them. His family has an art background. The district is very diverse, with over 100 languages spoken, from artists to industrial businesses. He has met many artists in the community and had Georgetown, South Park and Tukwila artists display their work in his office and in Olympia during Arts Day. He invited Renton to develop next year's display. He likes that it highlights the district. He is looking forward to the 2010 Renton FilmFrenzy. He's excited to encourage those artists working in their garages or basements to continue to grow. The 4Culture funding fight continues in Olympia; the bill passed the House twice and has died in the Senate.

Pat Pepper asked how we can better position ourselves for funding or recognition and what can we do as a City? Representative Hudgins responded to continue to apply for funding through State programs. There is still money for capital projects, through the Washington State Arts Commission and Building for the Arts funding. Britt McKenzie asked for examples of projects that received funding in our district, but there haven't been any recently. Representative Hudgins suggested looking at examples in Seattle.

Representative Hudgins said that unfortunately, the arts are constantly attacked and become secondary to math and science curriculum; you have to show how art is important to the community and push back. After two really bad financial years, people have said there should not be any funding for art. We have to show where we've invested money, how citizens appreciate the art, show the quality of life we enjoy and how art enhances it.

Wesley Van Doren asked for successful art projects in his opinion. Representative Hudgins mentioned the International Fountain and sculpture of the whale tails at Seattle Center, both which kids climb on and enjoy the art. There's an oversized chair on Yesler Way. He likes to see art that people enjoy and that involves the community help to design it. YouTube is a great tool for showcasing art. He also likes Georgetown's Super8 film festival.

Wesley Van Doren asked who the biggest advocates in Olympia were and Representative Hudgins said that Representative Lynn Kessler was a huge arts advocate.

Jennifer Davis Hayes mentioned the Renton Arts & Culture Master Plan will look over the next five years and help create strategies to position Renton in the arts. Doug Kyes mentioned arts education as a means to get people together, to learn from other cultures because everyone has art.

Vincent Orduna asked how you approach legislators to get their focus when there are many pressing issues during economic downturn. Representative Hudgins said not to be afraid of legislators. Because you are passionate about the issue and you know more about art than the legislator, be empowered by your knowledge. He suggested not to pit arts against other topics such as health care or housing and to focus on the economic drivers: the creation of things, jobs and quality of life. It's not about one or the other, it's about how do we create more so it's not about one or the other.

Kjris Lund, Lund Consulting — Arts and Culture Master Plan consultant. She asked commissioners to please come to open house this Thursday. The plan will be presented to City Council in soon.

Kjris wanted to discuss the options of who or what organization will be the keeper of the plan, who would be looking at the recommendations six months down the road and assessing where we are with the plan. The consensus was it should be the Arts Commission with assistance from other community members. This will allow the Commission to remain an integral part of the arts community. It was discussed that it would be more work for the volunteer commissioners. But with vacancies on the Commission, there is an opportunity to recruit people with the needed skillsets to help implement the plan. Jennifer Davis Hayes noted that this can be an opportunity to change some of what we are already doing. Pat Pepper noted that if the Commission was the keeper it would be an opportunity to keep the vision alive. Britt McKenzie feels it would be manageable because it's focused and has tiers of benchmarks. Vincent Orduna hears a lot of labels put on things without specific details of what "the keeper of the plan" really entails. Kjris Lund said it might not mean all commissioners doing the work rather facilitating making it happen. The question was asked – if a new artist came to the City where would they start to look for information? The Arts Commission could be that place, providing referrals and information to community arts and culture resources.

Wesley Van Doren voiced his concerns as everyone's plates are already full; maybe do some kind of assessment of current Commissioners' skills. He mentioned the grants and current arts project being worked on. Suzanne Dale Estey stated it might be other people who can bring something to the table, their expertise or funding. Vincent Orduna reiterated and cautioned not to take on a job unless you know what that job is and would like to know more details. Jennifer Davis Hayes stated the Master Plan would define the five priorities and then the Commission can work with the community to determine who would take on each specific priority area. There could be quarterly or biannual check in meetings with the Arts Commission and the larger community. It could elevate RMAC's profile and visibility and will require partnerships with various aspects of the community.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: COMMISSIONER LINDA MIDDLEBROOKS MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 5th MINUTES AS WRITTEN. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WESLEY VAN DOREN. COMMISSIONERS CONCURED, MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC ART PIECE OF THE MONTH: Vincent Orduna gave clues about the art piece. It was the **Nine Forms** by Elizabeth Mapelli. The glass tile covered seats are located on the terrace at the Community Center.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Commissioner Lund distributed mail highlighting local art events and articles of interest.

OLD BUSINESS:

Local Arts Agency: Jennifer was not able to attend but share the minutes from the meeting with the group.

ACTION ITEM LIST:

Communications:

- A draft of the poster display for the parking garage was shared with the Commission. Fred Lund explained the posters would have a special coating that would last 10 years. Wesley Van Doren suggested adding different languages to the design of the posters.
- Carco Theatre artists are booked for 2010 and more applications coming in. Brian Rasmussen is showing currently.
- Erik Korhel is installed downtown and there was good publicity from the Renton Reporter, people seem to like his work.

Resource Development:

The committee is researching grant opportunities to develop a database of criteria and application requirements. This database will be helpful in targeting funding for Master Plan and future Arts Commission public art projects.

Master Plan: Kjrj Lund has worked with a Leadership Group to ask questions, incorporate suggestions and reflect the uniqueness of Renton when developing the plan. The process requires people, ideas and discussion. Jennifer Davis Hayes reminded Commissioners about the Master Plan open house on Thursday and encouraged them to invite friends and others in the community to attend.

Renton River Days: Dalia passed examples of origami around. Dalia spoke to the Key Club and they are willing to volunteer again this year. The Renton History Museum shared statistics from the 2009 festival activities: 321 on kids day, 104 on Friday, 232 on Saturday, and 137 on Sunday. Dalia researched that 2 ¼ inch diameter stickers are \$13.00 for 50,000. The design would have a photo of "We're All in This Boat Together" with RMAC around it. Ideas for hand stamps are: RMAC and HeART of Renton. Boat, plane and hopping frog origami templates were selected as origami projects for the booth. Vincent Orduna will make two sandwich boards; Fred Lund will make the design. Designs and budget will be presented at next meeting.

Arts Grants: Pat Pepper presented two sets of funding recommendations from the Grant Review Committee. Plan A is recommendations without including the monies from the 4Culture grant, plan B includes the grant. LINDA MIDDLEBROOKS MOTIONED THAT THE GRANT AMOUNT TO ARTS UNLIMITED BE REDUCED TO \$150 IN OPTION A AND GIVE THE OTHER \$150 TO ALLIED ARTS. DOUG KYES SECONDED.

Pat Pepper clarified that the grants that asked for higher amounts were not considered during the selection process. Wesley Van Doren also stated he felt we need to encourage new blood as well as sustain long time organizations. MOTION MADE THAT OPTION A BE ACCEPTED AS AMENDED. EIGHT COMMISSIONERS VOTED FOR, ONE COMMISSIONER OPPOSED, MOTION CARRIED. During the application process it was determined the grant application document needs more clarification. WESLEY VAN DOREN MOTIONED WE ACCEPT PLAN B UPON RECEIPT OF 4CULTURE GRANT. SECONDED BY LINDA MIDDLEBROOKS. COMMISSIONERS CONCURED, MOTION CARRIED.

Partnership with Renton School District. Six teachers attended along with Evelyn Reingold, Denise Zullig and Jennifer Davis Hayes. Good conversations, one of them knew Harold Balazs personally and might be able to connect us for a Balazs Days in Renton. The idea was to utilize a private collection to be showcased at the Renton History Museum.

Artist Trust EDGE program. Britt spoke with Nermala and decided to explore other options. They already serve King County and the program costs \$17,500 to host in Renton. The artist's pay \$400 each for 80 hours of instruction, materials, etc. Another program is a weekend workshop where Artist Trust members pay \$50, \$95 to nonmembers, \$1650 cost to organization. We could find a partner or ask Renton Technical College to donate space. Maximum number of artists is 40. The conversation made Artist Trust more aware about the number of artists in Renton and South King County. It would be an opportunity for artists to move to the next level. We could enlist Barbara McMichael from SoCo Culture for her connections to put the word out to artists.

Commission Budget: As presented.

Adjournment: The April 6, 2010, meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at 4:30 pm.


Patricia Pepper, Chair

5-4-10