March 23, 2022 at 2:00 P.M. Meeting called to order by President Moss

In Attendance
Moss
Leach (first three agenda items)
Loftness
Parsakian
Quintanilla
Young
Lucas (DOMI)

Staff Present
Dash
Minnaert
Cavalline

Agenda Items Covered in These Minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Art in Parks: OOA Designs in Emerald View Park</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Art in Parks: Hutabut LLC in Frick Park</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The Porch at Schenley Patio Roof &amp; Greenhouse</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. Approval of Minutes

Moss asks Commissioners to review and comment on minutes from February 2022. Parsakian motions to approve the minutes, seconded by Quintanilla. All ayes. Motion carries.

B. Items for Review

1. Art in Parks: OOA Designs in Emerald View Park – Public Art & Civic Design Division Final Review

Oreen Cohen & Alison Zapata of OOA Designs present their proposal for a sculptural installation at Anchor Green Garden in Emerald View Park as part of the City’s Art in Parks program.

Moss thanks them and says the transformation of the project has been wonderful and its evident they’ve put a lot of thought into it. He says the integration of the themes is very well done.

Loftness agrees and says the story that the project tells is very compelling. She asks how this background information will be communicated to the public, and asks if there will be lighting. Cohen says they’d like to do a QR code or signage to link to additional information. She says that they have explored
options for lighting but the expenses are very high for tapping into existing power, and solar power would require large equipment. She says that they think there is enough light from the streetlights.

Parsakian says that he appreciates their research and comments about the empowering nature of their theme of bread and roses.

Moss says that the City should consider how to protect the artwork from possible accidents due to the sharp curve of the street nearby, although they would not want a guardrail to block the view of the artwork. Cavalline says that they have discussed this with DOMI, who are poised to implement a ‘slow curve’ program at this location, which includes raised thermoplastic on the roadway to alert drivers to slow down while approaching the curve.

**MOTION: Final Approval**

MOVED BY: Loftness  
SECONDED BY: Quintanilla  
IN FAVOR: All  
OPPOSED: None

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2. **Art in Parks: Ali Ruffner & Gwen Sadler in Emerald View Park – Public Art & Civic Design Division**  
**Final Review**

Ali Ruffner & Gwen Sadler present their proposal for a sculptural installation in Emerald View Park as part of the City’s Art in Parks program.

Loftness asks what the bench is made of, and whether the pedestals are boulder-like or have a flat table-like top. She asks whether the concrete pad is more of a tiled surface or mostly concrete with spots of color. She also asks if a person in a wheelchair can access it.

Ruffner says that wheelchairs, strollers, and bikes can access the space because there will be a graduated slope to access the concrete area. She says the bench is fiberglass finished in concrete, with a steel base. She says the pad is mostly mosaic tile rather than predominantly concrete. She says the color of the tiles, which will be signed by the students involved, will match the colors on the bench and the powder coating of the pedestals. Ruffner says the pedestals are more boulder-like and modular. She says the hands have been placed only on the tops since when placed on the sides they appeared too disembodied.

Moss asks if the tops of the pedestals are sloped to allow for drainage, and Ruffner says they are.

Young asks if there was consideration for how people experiencing homelessness would interact with the bench, and also asks if the hands will have diverse aspects such as varying fingernail length. Ruffner says they discussed with the students the possibility of using specific skin colors for the hands, and together with the students they decided on all gold. She says that the hands are all different in terms of features such as nails and jewelry, so this is an exciting element of the project when viewed up close. Ruffner says they have discussed how to make sure this wasn’t anti-homeless architecture, and she expanded the bench three inches to be inclusive of bigger-bodied people or those who want to use the bench for a longer time. She says that the area is visited mostly by people using the trail so this will provide a place of rest. Ruffner also says there will be four solar lights around the base.

Parsakian asks if the bench will have drainage as it appears to have an inward slope. Ruffner says yes, and that it is a catalogue item that they are building the finishing treatment onto. She says she is working with a concrete company who is providing expertise for those aspects. Parsakian asks if the concrete pad will include expansion joints. Ruffner says yes, and that the shape will be organic and not square. Parsakian says that the concrete should not be one solid piece, so as to avoid problems in the future. Parsakian says he loves the colors and the thought they put into reimagining their original design. He thanks them for engaging the community.
MOTION: Final Approval

MOVED BY: Parsakian
SECONDED BY: Young
IN FAVOR: All
OPPOSED: None

3. Art in Parks: Hutabut LLC in Frick Park – Public Art & Civic Design Division
Final Review

Matthew Geller of Hutabut LLC presents his proposal for a sculptural work in Frick Park as part of the City’s Art in Parks program.

Moss thanks Geller and says he appreciates the evolution of the project. He says the proposed siting is a positive change, and creates a great place to view the park landscape. He says the scale of the canopy is a lot more interesting and is more playful and abstract.

Moss asks about the colors mentioned in the presentation. Geller clarifies that he was referring to the negative spaces created in the canopy, through which different colors would be viewed at various times. Moss says he thinks the shadows of the sculpture will be a delightful element. Moss asks about the canopy measurement of 8’ from the ground, and asks if this is concerning as being too low. Geller says that in the end he thinks it will be moved up a bit higher so that anyone standing on the bench can’t reach it.

Loftness agrees that the revised canopy is much more whimsical and compelling. She asks if the yellow on the canopy interior is specular or the same yellow as the bench. She asks if it could be dangerous if someone stands on the benches and if signage is needed. Geller says the seat is only 18” off the ground, and the rotation isn’t able to create a spin. He says that there will be a glow from the yellow interior, which will be painted instead of powder coated.

Joe Martin speaks from the audience and says the crown reminds him of blood. He says he doesn’t understand the theme of a carousel if it doesn’t function as a carousel.

Geller says that the red is a more brown-red, as opposed to bright red. He says he does not see the blood connection, and says the piece more references landscape. He says that the shape references a merry-go-round and does move in the wind. Moss says that he understands it as referencing the idea of a carousel but it isn’t a literal carousel.

Moss asks how he arrived at the color choices. Geller says he looked for colors that worked well together and would work in different seasons. He says that he took into consideration that green and blue are filled in by nature through the negative spaces of the work.

Parsakian asks if the colors will be matte or reflective. Geller says he usually goes with semi-gloss, but may use high-gloss for inside the canopy.

MOTION: Final Approval

MOVED BY: Loftness
SECONDED BY: Parsakian
IN FAVOR: Moss, Leach, Young
OPPOSED: None
ABSENT: Quintanilla

Conceptual/Final Review
Chris Kingsland of Gordon US, LLC, representing GSA, presents the proposal for security improvements in the right-of-way in compliance with regulations for federal buildings. Also presenting are Gabrielle Trout of GSA and Charles Enos of the Onyx Group. The proposal represents a revision following the project being tabled at the February 2022 Art Commission hearing.

Moss asks for clarification on what size bollard is being proposed. Trout explains that they are proposing 48” bollards due to this being the only option that was able to be certified as well as being ADA-accessible.

Loftness asks how much excavation must occur at the edge of the street for these to be installed, and says there should be a significant planting plan to go along with the bollards. Kingsland says they do need to dig into the concrete but they are shallow foundations. Loftness asks if they will be working around the existing tree wells. Kingsland says they will be working around them by putting in the post-and-beam foundations. Loftness says that she is concerned that this creates a fortress quality to the urban street. Enos explains that there is no room for landscaping due to the amount of solid concrete necessary around the foundation. He says similar bollards are being installed around the country. Loftness asks if the bollards in one of the images are stainless steel or painted. Enos says they are painted. Loftness says that stainless steel would be better. Trout says they looked into that but the posts and beams are not available in stainless steel, so the colors would be mixed. It is also fairly cost-prohibitive. The building management has also said that they have had issues with stainless steel in other applications due to staining or denting. She says there is flexibility in the color for the painted bollards. Moss clarifies that they could specify a lighter grey color, and Trout says yes.

Moss says that he feels this is not a great solution for the city, but in understanding the need for the security improvement they do not seem to be presented with any other options. He says that in the question of the three different options for Grant Street, he would lean toward the top option (same style painted to match existing bollards), but does not feel strongly. Trout says that this was their recommendation. Parsakian says that he agrees, and that he understands that the need for security has to take precedence in this case over the aesthetics.

Loftness asks if there will be striping on the Grant Street bollards. Enos says they will not be striped. Trout says the striping was not intended as an aesthetic but was for the safety of drivers, and although it is recommended, they will remove it if necessary. Loftness says that if it is a reflective tape that goes on after installation, she would use one that matches the paint. Enos says it is painted, as the purpose is contrast. Loftness says this would draw attention to the bollards and they are trying to get people’s attention away from them. Enos says that this is true for pedestrians, but they want drivers to see them.

Loftness says that Commissioner Quintanilla previously raised a concern that wheelchairs would not be able to get around the bollards on the walkway. Enos says there is 54” between each bollard, so a wheelchair would fit through. Loftness says it looks like someone in a wheelchair would have to go around one that is in the middle of the pathway. Enos says that they are not obstructing the pathway. Loftness says she doesn’t see how a wheelchair could go by without going over the cobblestones. Enos says they will ensure there is not a bollard in the middle of the sidewalk so there will be a direct path. Kingsland says the plans show a bollard in the center of the 8’ wide sidewalk. Loftness says it would be better to change the spacing so a wheelchair would not have to swerve. Enos asks if Kingsland can change the spacing to accommodate that, and Kingsland says yes.

Parsakian notes that they are coordinating with DOMI. Trout says that they have worked with DOMI, who has approved and supported the new design. Cavalline confirms that they have received DOMI’s support for the project.

Quintanilla says that pedestrians should be the first consideration and the bollards should allow someone in a wheelchair to access the middle of the sidewalk. Enos says they can make that accommodation.

MOTION: Conceptual/Final Approval, with the conditions that 1) the bollards use the light grey finish; 2) the Grant Street bollards utilize the dark finish to match the existing ones, without striping; and 3) a clear path of travel for wheelchairs is maintained on the existing sidewalk by the garage.
5. **The Porch at Schenley Patio Roof & Greenhouse – Axis Architecture**

Craig Collins of Axis Architecture and Andrew Dunmire of Eat’n Park Hospitality Group present the proposal for a new roof and shade system over existing patio, as well as a small greenhouse to be used by the restaurant.

Moss appreciates that they have revisited the greenhouse plans. He asks for clarification on the placement and alignment of the greenhouse. He asks about the stone base shown in the images and if that will actually be implemented. Dunmire says that with the landscaping around the building they did not see that as necessary and so plan to go with a shallow foundation.

Loftness says she appreciates the roof being pulled back a bit and asks if they will put in a column to support it. Dunmire says yes. Loftness asks if this could have been done without a new column. Dunmire says they considered that but felt that the column was not an impediment. Moss says they need the columns to attach the roll-down screens to. Dunmire says yes. Loftness says she felt the column could be an impediment to the use of the space but that is more of an issue for the client.

Loftness asks about their plan to drain water from the roof into the tree. Dunmire says there is specialized soil around the trees, and the water will reach this soil. Loftness asks how the water gets there. Dunmire says ¼” per foot drains right from the roof edge. Moss asks if there is a gutter. Dunmire says no.

Loftness asks if the rolling shades fit inside the vertical column. Dunmire says no, they fit right outside of the beam. Loftness asks if a box will be seen in front of the beam. Dunmire says it is the same depth as the structure and will go from column to column. He says that it is a tube column as opposed to an I-beam. Loftness says this will have a different aesthetic than their original renderings. Moss asks if the screen will be on the inside or the outside. Dunmire says the outside. Moss asks if they could be mounted on the opposite side of the beam. Dunmire says that was their initial thought but that is more difficult to attach on the inside corners. Loftness suggests they do a scale model so they are sure it looks the way they intend.

Parsakian thanks the applicant for revisiting the greenhouse and says the new structure is very light and replicates the nearby cathedral.

**MOTION: Final Approval**

MOVED BY: Parsakian
SECONDED BY: Loftness
IN FAVOR: All
OPPOSED: None

C. **Correspondence**

Minnaert notes that the Commission has received the following correspondence: 1) Report from the [XXX DATE] Development Activities Meeting held by Mount Washington Community Development Corporation for both Emerald View Park Art in Parks projects; 2) letter of support from Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy for OOA Designs’ Art in Parks project; 3) letter of support from Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy for Ali Ruffner & Gwen Sadler’s Art in Parks project; 4) letter of support from Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy for Hutabut LLC’s Art in Parks project; 5) letter of comment from Tony Indovina
regarding Hutabut LLC’s Art in Parks project; 6) letter of comment from Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition regarding Hutabut LLC’s Art in Parks project.

D. Public Comment

None.

E. Director & Staff Report

Minnaert thanks Commissioner Young for her service. Moss also thanks her.

Minnaert notes that they have received no new information on the administration’s filling of vacant Commissioner seats.

Minnaert says that they have many new art projects currently being planned through the Percent For Art program and are looking forward to their upcoming Art Commission reviews.

Parsakian says he was contacted by an artist who received Conceptual Approval regarding a possible site visit. Minnaert says that those kind of inquiries can be directed to PACD staff and they will help the artist navigate the next steps of the process.

Moss asks if there is any update to the Cantini mosaic. Minnaert says they are waiting for a draft of a lease agreement between Port Authority and the City in order to have enough information to bring the proposed location to the Art Commission for review.

Loftness asks if they should discuss the Fern Hollow Bridge. Moss says it is not an item for review, but the Art Commission has issued a letter to the Mayor and the Governor. He says they did not get a specific response to the letter. He says that he and the Planning Commission chair met with the staff of the Mayor’s office for an update.

Loftness asks if a bridge project would normally come to the Commission, and if that is tied to funding. Moss says that it would come to the Commission if it is on City property, but that the Fern Hollow Bridge is unique due to the Emergency Order. Parsakian asks if the bridge will be owned by the state. Moss says it will be completed by PennDOT and transferred to the City. He says that the intent is for the historic gate houses to be maintained.

Loftness notes that the Commission has limited leeway for items such as the Moorhead bollards which are matters of security. Moss says he thinks they can push PennDOT to engage with the Commission on minor elements of the bridge such as the guardrails and lighting. Quintanilla says it appears there is little impact they are able to make. He says that even if this is a PennDOT project, if it is using public money it should be reviewed more extensively. Moss says if this had been a planned reconstruction of the bridge there would have been more public discourse and Art Commission review, but because of the Emergency Order and the need for a quick reconstruction this case is different. Moss says they should continue to push PennDOT to engage with the Commission on the details. Parsakian says this will come up a lot with future planned infrastructure reconstructions. Loftness says there should be a standard Art Commission review process for the details of bridges and in some cases for their engineering options.

Moss says that he suggested to the Mayor’s staff that there could be an artistic intervention on the eventual concrete bridge supports. He notes there used to be a time when the Art Commission had a budget and instigated projects.

Parsakian says they all know guerilla artists who have created work that is now coming to the Art Commission.
Quintanilla says that they are allowing a highway bridge into their City, and even if they include art, this is not a bridge designed for people to walk on.

Loftness says there are still choices that can be impacted, such as the rails and lighting. She asks how they can intervene with the engineers in the decisions they are able to make.

Moss says they can possibly send a letter to PennDOT from the Art Commission requesting their involvement.

Minnaert says that PACD staff is not involved in the Fern Hollow Bridge discussions, but Dir Hornstein and Dir Lucas, who are both ex-officio Art Commission members, are involved. She notes that the review of municipal design and the integration of artwork are two related but distinct topics.

F. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:26 P.M.