

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 06/24/2020)

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

Logistics	Stakeholders
Project Name/Address: South Side Park Public Art (Phase 1 Renovations)	Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):
Parcel Number(s): 13-B-48, 13-B-49, 13-B-55, 13-B-56, 13-B-58, 13-B-61, 13-B-63, 12-P-150, 12-P-210, 12-P-154, 12-P-152, 13-B-101, 13-E-160 (exact location may fall within one of these)	South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association (SSSNA) Board and members Area residents
ZDR Application Number: N/A	Artist
Meeting Location: Zoom	PACD staff DCP Neighborhood Planner
Date: 4/5/22	
Meeting Start Time: 6:30pm	
Applicant: Carin Mincemoyer (artist), Sarah Minnaert (PACD)	Approx. Number of Attendees: 7
Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Art Commission	

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

PACD staff shared background that in Fall of 2020, City of Pittsburgh issued a call for artists as a Percent for Art project implemented as part of the City's South Side Park redesign. "Percent for art" is how most public art is realized, in which a percentage of total project costs are earmarked to fund and install public art. In Pittsburgh this program was introduced into City Code in 1977. Among a group of national artist applicants, Pittsburgh artist Carin Mincemeyer was selected in Fall 2020 by a panel that included community representation as well as artists and city stakeholders. PACD shared background on the 60-acre South Side Park. Artwork by Carin will be within the Phase 1 renovation area and within the northwest side of the park. Construction and permitting schedules are in flux and may impact timeline for this project to be installed, but the art piece might go in as soon as late 2022 or early to mid 2023. Carin has spent much of the past year talking to surrounding communities and park users and learning about the park to inform her design concept.

Carin shared about her community engagement process to date, gathering input on Engage PGH and holding/attending in-person and virtual meetings/activities, including meetings by Friends of South Side Park (FoSSP), the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association, South Side Community Council and Arlington Civic Council, and the GOATfest of 2021. She held individual meetings with many South Side Park Master Plan-related project staff and consultants. Carin also presented at the FoSSP annual meeting a few weeks ago.

Carin's work involved a lot of research, including reviewing the Master Plan for South Side Park, the South Side Park construction drawings, and historical materials from FoSSP. Carin did multiple site visits and photographed Phase 1

area. While there was low participation for the survey on Engage PGH, the Master Plan documented the summary of their community engagement, which indicated there was community interest in showcasing water at the park.

Carin showed slides of the Phase 1 area of the Park and described expected improvements, within which the project would be located. Carin showed an 1872 map indicating the historic location of a stream, which is now the location of a sewer, and showed visuals of annotated construction drawings and an annotation of the sewer line. Carin described how the park project will create surface streams and stormwater pools near the sewer line. Carin was intrigued by how the sewer line replaced the historic stream (believed to be called Quarry Run) and that there will be two levels of water -- a new surface stream that will be above the sewer line, and also the historic stream replaced by the sewer. When considering the full water cycle, water is present at three levels: the underground water, surface water, and water in the sky/clouds. Carin wanted to mark the presence of the sewer and the former stream. Carin looked at images for inspiration about marking an important location. One tactic people have used over years is making stone cairns (Carin showed example images on the slides), which could be a stack of rough or smooth stones. Another option is wells, which mark the presence of underground water (slides of well images shown on screen). Wells are often cylindrical. A cross-section of brick sewer in middle is similar to a brick cylindrical well shape. To bring the clouds into the design, Carin remembered garden gazing balls as a child of 1970s and 1980s, and so was intrigued by the idea of using a mirrored dome or mirrored ball to reflect the clouds and bring movement into the piece.

Carin showed a visual of a rough concept sketch / Styrofoam model under the working title "Cloud Well." This references the water cycle, and brings together water in the sky, surface, and underground (clouds, streams, sewer). At the top, one can see a shallow mirrored dome reflecting the clouds. The circular shape and 6' diameter of well will be similar to the underground sewer. Dimensions were shown. The well will be about 3' high and 6' in diameter.

Carin is working on several questions: is it feasible to fabricate within the budget? She believes yes. It will be located in an ADA accessible area but she is seeing if a step or ramp necessary for kids and shorter folks to get up and see it, or a ramp to make it wheel chair accessible, but it's possible a walking deck can take care of that. Varying steepness of the dome is another question, as this would result in a varying level of reflecting the clouds more or the trees and people more. If steeper, that would discourage people from standing or sitting on it. There also is a need to design for drainage.

She is not sure if it will be made of stone or brick. If stone, it would match what is found in the park. But there also used to be a factory on the site so brick could be appropriate. There is a lot of old brick buried in the park that could be dug up. Given the many glass factories that used to be in the South Side, there could be glass blocks, though that is likely not in the budget.

Carin's slides showed two tiny red dots that are ideas for locations, which were suggested by Andrea Ketzler, the Project Manager from DPW. Carin was looking for a location where the surface stream converges with the underground sewer and that is also by the walking path and is ADA accessible. These two potential locations meet those criteria.

Location Option 1: at lower boardwalk. Allows for ADA access, views from above from the nearby steps. Avoids being in the stepped pools but is near the surface channel (highlighted in blue on the slides). There is also a bench in the area that could be moved to accommodate the art piece as needed. Since have boardwalk nearby, hopefully a step or wheelchair ramp would not be necessary.

Location Option 2: at upper boardwalk, which allows for ADA access. There would be views from above from the observation platform (approx. 4' above the artwork location). It's near the surface channel and there is also a bench in this area that could be moved to accommodate the artwork.

PACD will have more information about timing of installation as we move forward. Carin showed where Phase 1A and Phase 1B renovations will happen. Phase 1B may be wrapped up by 2024, and the art piece would be one of the last things to put in -- likely in 2024.

Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>Thank you. While this is subjective, I think this is a really cool idea. I love the rendering and the stone and the glasswork. I didn't think of people standing on it, but that's very smart to consider and maybe sacrifice some of the cloud reflection to extend the art piece for much more time that way. I'm eager to hear from others here.</p>	
<p>I love it. The glass bubble on top – is that a true mirrored glass that you will create? A 6 inch diameter true piece of mirrored glass?</p>	<p>It will actually probably be stainless steel or metal of some kind. Sorry if that wasn't clear. To do mirror finish, there are a few ways to go about it. The stainless steel could be polished to a mirror finish and then put a clear coat on it. A clear coat is important given it is likely to get tagged or marked, so that precludes having to scrub directly on metal when scrubbing paint off. Or perhaps could be a powder coat with a chrome finish powder coat, or actual chroming it.</p> <p>It will definitely be steel and will be thick enough so people could stand on it without dent or damage since we know that will happen.</p>
<p>Exactly. I wanted to get an idea since someone is going to try to tag that and stand on.</p>	<p>Yes. They're not going to try, they will do it. It will be in the park, and nobody will be keeping an eye on it. It needs to be built to withstand interaction with the public and I can't dictate that interaction.</p>
<p>I'm very relieved to hear that you thought of that ahead of the project. I think it's lovely. I really like it. You brought in all those elements of the area. So little thanks is given to the sewer.</p>	<p>Thank you. We don't think about it, but exactly, where would we be without the sewer?</p>
<p>It sounds like someone whose day job is gathering sewer fees.</p>	
<p>Everyone complains about the sewer system and what they have to pay until they hit lever and it doesn't work and then they'll pay anything so it leaves the house.</p>	
<p>It's true. Storm sewers are important too. As you've seen, the stormwater aspect to this project is probably first and foremost and a big part of phase 1 is trying to get this water where it needs to be and into the system. So it's a cool way to highlight that. The underground sewers are</p>	

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
not something that people usually focus on, so this is very neat way to tie it all together.	
We have a person who just joined us. Could you go through this slide rendering and give a brief explanation?	Yeah, so as I was studying the park and learning about it, I learned there used to be a stream that ran through the park, which is no longer there. Looking at construction drawings, I saw a 6-foot wide sewer line where stream used to be. I realized there will be some surface streams in the park and part of phase 1 renovation is recreating surface streams and stormwater pools in the park, some of which will cross over the sewer line. I wanted to honor the former stream that is now the sewer, and honor the water on the surface and the water in the sky through clouds and therefore the whole water cycle. I'm doing that through my concept called a cloud well. This is a rough sketch model. It takes the form of a stone or brick cylindrical well about 3 feet high and 6 feet in diameter. It will be a stainless steel mirrored dome at the top that reflects the clouds. The diameter will be 6ft, so the size and shape reference the sewer line. It will be located over the top of where the sewer line and surface stream converge.
Yeah, at first glance it looks like water, which is your intent, right? Is it stainless steel?	Yes. And yeah, the dome will be made of stainless steel so that it won't rust. And mirror will be polished and then clear coated or powder coated with a chrome finish. We will go with whatever is the most cheap and durable option.
So there is no plan to capture the water and then send it into the sewer? There is definitely water running up along the hill.	Yes, there is water running. The red dots show the two potential locations. It will be located be near the surface stream and also where the sewer line runs underneath and then there will be a walkway nearby as well.
There will be a surface stream?	Yes, the blue area in the slide shows that. One of major features of phase 1 renovations is highlighting the storm water in the park.
Great. Yeah I know it's one of the purposes as well.	Yeah they're turning it into a feature.
[SSSNA contact:] We also accept email comments if people watch at a later time or come up with questions at a later time.	
The original stream was called Coal Stream. [To other resident,] do you remember Coal Stream?	
I'm not that old. I don't know.	So you're saying the original stream was called Coal Stream?

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
I'm not sure, but I came across an old map. And you said there was a name on the old map?	On one of the old maps, the street that runs next to it is called Quarry Run Road. So the best I could figure out is that maybe the stream was called Quarry Run, but the stream is not labeled in any map I've found.
There is an old coal mine just above/below Quarry Street. I wonder if that's mine drainage?	
Well, I'm glad it's not accumulating underground. But that's very interesting, it's a great project. Thank you Carin for your time and effort on this.	Thanks for having me.
Thank you everyone.	
[Opportunities for sending written public testimony to Art Commission were shared] [SSSNA also offered to pass along information to fellow board members.]	

Other Notes

Community members showed support for the art project.

Planner completing report: Thomas Scharff