

Syracuse Public Art Commission
Regular Meeting
June 11, 2024
Common Council Chambers
5:30 p.m.

I. Attendance

Present: Ellen Blalock, Emanuel Carter, Bennie Guzman, Elias Gwinn, Davana Robedee, Kelly Sickler, Anita Welych, Tina Zagyva

Absent: Lauren Boldon, Blondean Young

Staff: Anne Cofer

II. Regular Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

III. Review Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of May 14, 2024. A. Welych made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by D. Robedee. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes as submitted.

IV. Old Business

No Old Business

V. New Business

SPAC 24-05: *Pillars, Torches*, Tony Washington. Artist Tony Washington presented the application for the eighth *City as Canvas* mural. The mural will be painted on a series of five concrete pillars measuring 10' x 4' that are located adjacent to the Syracuse Parks and Recreation offices at 412 Spencer Street. The mural was selected through ranked choice voting by residents and business owners of the Lakefront neighborhood.

The artist explained that the design of the mural was created around the idea that Syracuse is experiencing a cultural renaissance akin to a phoenix rising from the ashes. The colors blue and orange predominate in the design to represent fire and sky as well as draw on the city's strong association with the colors blue and orange. The mural will include representational objects within the overall abstract design to draw the viewer in and encourage passers-by to take a closer look at the imagery.

In discussion A. Welych asked about the significance of the colors in the mural design. The artist responded by making a connection between the colors featured in the mural design and the Syracuse University flag as well as to the representation of fire and sky. E. Blalock asked how large the concrete pillars were and the artist responded that they were 10ft tall. D. Robedee added that the scale was hard to see from the site plan. B. Guzman asked whether

the mural was going to have a uniform design across the 5 pillars. The artist explained that the design would include different elements across the span of the 5 pillars.

The motion passed unanimously. T. Zagyva abstained due to her relationship with the *City as Canvas* project.

SPAC 24-06: *Lodi Triangle Street Mural*, Nicole Watts and Daniela Nikolavsky. Nicole Watts presented the mural project as the president and CEO of Hopeprint. Daniela Nikolavsky presented the mural project as the lead artist.

Nicole Watts explained that the Lodi Triangle Street Mural will be installed on a portion of North McBride Street in part of the West Pond Microneighborhood. The mural project is one of three projects sponsored by the Community Streets Program through SMTC. The portion of North McBride Street that features the mural will be closed off to street traffic for 6 to 8 weeks and will be painted with yellow stripes to indicate that the road is closed to vehicular traffic. Nicole added that the series of white squares positioned around the mural will be used for chalk drawing by the public. She stressed that the chalk drawings will be monitored for appropriateness.

Daniela Nikolavsky spoke specifically about the street mural and explained that the design for the mural was created by 10 to 15 woman who participated in an art therapy group. The design began as a random series of lines and then was painted with colors, patterns and imagery by the woman.

In discussion E. Blalock asked about the size of the painted mural design. Daniela Nikolavsky estimated that the artwork was 5'x 6'. A. Welych asked why the mural was not going to be permanent. Nicole Watts responded by stating the area where the road is to be blocked off may become a permanent plaza in the future as the area is scheduled for repaving in the spring of 2025. A. Welych then asked about the possibility of seating around the street mural. Nicole Watts confirmed that the area would have seating and mentioned additional activities that would be organized during the 6-to-8-week period that the road would be closed. D.

Robedee asked if the woman who had designed the mural would be involved in painting the mural on the roadway. Nicole Watts explained that this may be difficult because many of the woman were mothers.

The motion was passed unanimously.

SPAC 24-07: *Greetings From Syracuse*, Tommy Lincoln. The artist Tommy Lincoln presented the application for a mural at Lipe Art Park that would be located on a concrete wall known as 'the shark wall'. The artist introduced himself and provided a brief outline of his resume. The artist explained that the mural is going to be part of Syracuse Arts Week and titled 'Greetings From Syracuse'. The mural is comprised of the words 'Greetings From Syracuse', and the word 'Syracuse' will be represented in a midcentury modern font. The artist continued to explain that the letters of the word 'Syracuse' would be filled with imagery by different artists. The artist introduced each artist who will participate in the painting of the mural and examples were shown of their work.

In discussion A. Welch asked if each artist is going to decide what they will paint on the mural. The artist indicated that specific decisions about what was going to be painted would be made as the work was being created on the 'shark wall'. In addition, it was stated by the artist that the painting of the mural would be facilitated throughout the course of Syracuse Arts Week. D. Robedee asked a question regarding publicity for the Lipe Art Park Mural Project.

The artist commented that CNY Arts were handling the publicity for the project and that the Downtown Committee also publish most events for the city of Syracuse. Guzman asked the artist about community involvement in the mural project. The artist stated that the work was being created by a community of artists and connecting artists to the community. The motion was passed unanimously.

VI. Discussion

After the vote to approve the application, additional discussion emerged regarding the nature of the *Greetings From Syracuse* mural as a group project that would develop on-site as it is created. Members of the commission suggested that the concept of this mural fell outside of the traditional parameters of the current application form and that the commission might consider revisions to the application process to better support this type of project.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.