

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

I. Attendance

Present: Emanuel Carter, Bennie Guzman, Maggie Lovas, Kelly Sickler, Takarra Smith, Blondean Young

Absent: Ellen Blalock, Elias Gwinn, Davana Robedee, Anita Welych, Tina Zagya (chair),

Staff: Anne Cofer

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

III. Introductions

Vice Chairman B. Guzman chaired the meeting due to the absence of T. Zagya.

IV. Review Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of July 16, 2024, and August 22, 2024. E. Carter made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by M. Lovas. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes as submitted.

V. Old Business

No Old Business

VI. New Business

SPAC 24-10: *This Side of Salina*, Lynne Sachs. Light Work/ Urban Video Project Program Director Aneka Herre presented the application to install an architectural projection on the northside of the Everson Museum of Art. The proposed installation will be on view October 12- December 21, 2024. *This Side of Salina*, is a short experimental documentary film that explores reproductive health through the perspectives of four black woman who are reproductive justice advocates living in Syracuse. The four woman reflect on sexuality, youthful regret, emotional vulnerability, raising a daughter, and working in the reproductive health services as they move through the city, they call home. The film was shot on location in Syracuse during the artists residency at Light Work in April 2024 and was commissioned by Light Work.

In discussion, M. Lovas asked what additional sound elements will be added to the film. A. Herre stated that additional audio would include humming sounds and background noise of the park location in which some of the scenes were filmed. B. Guzman commented on the

sensitive nature of the films subject matter. M. Lovas added to this comment by stating that as a public piece of artwork a viewing restriction could not be added to this film. A. Herre stated that a QR code, to provide a synopsis of the film, was projected in conjunction with the screening. B. Guzman asked a question about the captioning of the film as the artist used text in the film, but it was not a comprehensive transcription. A. Herre stated that during related community events, standard captioning will be used for the film screenings. B. Guzman made the request for a motion. K. Sickler motioned to approve the application. T. Smith moved to second the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

SPAC 24-11: *Unboxed Utility Box Art Project*, Downtown Committee of Syracuse. Sarah Tietje-Mietz, the Events and Marketing Manager of the Downtown Committee of Syracuse presented an application to install artwork on three utility boxes in the city of Syracuse. The project was designed as part of a larger effort by the Downtown Committee to combat graffiti. The utility boxes are located at 200-208 West Water Street, E. Fayette Street at Montgomery Street and 300 West Fayette Street. The utility box on Water St. measures 70.5' x 70' x 48' and is located outside of the Board and Bar in Clinton Square. The utility box on E. Fayette St. measures 51" x 25" x 17.5" and is located on a streetlight pole outside St. Paul's church. The utility box on W. Fayette St. measures 53.5" x 55" x 44" and is located next to the Marriott Hotel café seating area.

A call for proposals was issued and a review panel of community representatives selected three finalist designs. These finalist designs were voted on by 200 community members and three artworks were selected to be painted onto the three utility boxes. The artist Ally Walker was selected to install two designs, *Stary Night Sky* and *The Little Library Has Come to Life*. The artist Linda Nichols was selected to install *Keep Syracuse Salty*. Installation of the artwork will take place between September 14th and October 12th. Ongoing care and maintenance will be provided by the artist.

In discussion M. Lovas asked a question regarding the funding of the Utility Art Box Project. S. Tietje-Mietz explained that the project was grant funded with additional support from the Art Store who provided art materials at a discounted rate. Additionally, S. Tietje- Mietz mentioned that there were grant funds remaining to facilitate a second round of the *Unboxed Utility Box Art Project*. B. Young commented on the artist selection process and asked whether it was possible for an artist to be selected for all three utility boxes. S. Tietje- Mietz indicated in her response that the selection process may change as the project moves forward into a second phase. B. Guzman asked S. Tietje-Mietz about the preparation of the utility boxes for painting. Tietje-Mietz described the preparation process as cleaning the surfaces with a degreaser, then sanding, and priming the surfaces before painting, followed by applying an anti-graffiti sealer. B. Guzman also enquired about the perceived length of time the artwork would be featured on the utility boxes. S. Tietje-Mietz suggested 5 years but as this was a pilot project an exact timeline would be difficult to predict. B Young asked how many submissions were received for the project. Tietje-Mietz responded that there were 9 submissions, however she was aware that the timeline under which artists could apply for the project was short and when the project is repeated the timeline will be extended and more publicity will be issued. B. Guzman made the request for a motion. E. Carter motioned to approve the application. T. Smith moved to second the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Discussion

B. Guzman introduced the discussion and requested updates from the commissioners regarding their taskforces. T. Smith asked a question regarding the merchandising for the SPAC. Could existing photographs of the city's public art collection be used for merchandising? This raised the issue of copyrighting and A. Cofer offered to check into this issue and whether it pertained to the specific artworks that T. Smith decided to use. Additionally, a discussion took place regarding utilization of the SPAC logo as well as a broader question regarding whether the logo could be redesigned. T. Smith expressed a preference for an older version of the logo with its bolder appearance.

M. Lovas commented on the Watertown Massachusetts Public Art Master Plan and articulated that it was an excellent model to use for the revision of the SPAC Master Plan. Lovas would like to meet with Commissioners to discuss their input for revisions to the SPAC master plan.

A. Cofer, the Public Art coordinator presented updates for discussion. A. Cofer announced the revival of the Creek Float event to celebrate 25 years of caretaking of the Onondaga Creek by the Creek Rats. The event will take place in June 2025. A. Cofer similarly announced the implementation of City Hall as an art gallery space that can be utilized year-round. Then A. Cofer mentioned two new public art community program projects. The public artist residency in the city parks with the artist Laura Reeder and the Photography and Literacy project that is being implemented as a 6-week pilot project with Syracuse University. M. Lovas asked about the examples Laura Reeder's work including how the trails are created. B. Guzman enquired into the timeline for the public artist in residency project. B. Guzman also commented on the relationship between temporary artwork and public art. He wondered how the current Syracuse public art application process accommodates work that is temporary in nature and how could the application be amended to better suit the needs of more artists. M. Lovas asked about the funding of the four projects mentioned in the updates. A. Cofer articulated that the PAL project was financed through Syracuse University and the City Hall Art Gallery initiative would not incur any expense to the Public Art program. The artist residency would require a stipend which could be covered by the Parks and Recreation public art budget or the parks Recreation Division budget.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.