

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE**  
**CITY OF ALAMEDA PUBLIC ART COMMISSION**

**Wednesday, February 15, 2017**

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0. CONVENE  
Staff Member Allen Tai called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
1. ROLL CALL  
Present: Commissioners Hoy, Gillitt, Lewis, Carter, Graham.
2. MINUTES  
None.
3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS  
None.
4. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

**4-A 2017-3925**

City of Alameda Amendment Updating the Public Art Ordinance. The Public Art Commission will consider modifications to update and improve the regulations governing the Public Art Ordinance. The proposed amendment is categorically exempt from further environmental review pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines 15305 Minor Alterations to Land Use Limitations.

and

**4-B 2017-3926**

Public Art Request for Proposals. The Public Art Commission will hold a public hearing to consider staff recommendations related to the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for physical public art, and cultural arts and arts programming in the City of Alameda. Release of a RFP is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Mr. Allen Tai, Planning Services Manager and Secretary to the Public Art Commission, explained that Items 4-A and 4-B are related, and therefore will be heard together.

Ms. Amanda Gehrke, Economic Development staff, gave a presentation on the proposed changes to the Public Art Ordinance and the draft Public Art Request for proposals.

Commissioner Gillitt asked if the proposal that maintenance costs be removed as an allowable use of the Fund would be applied retroactively.

Ms. Gehrke explained that there has not yet been any off-site public art funded by the Fund. For on-site public art, there is already a requirement that property owners sign an agreement to do the maintenance.

## Public Speakers:

Rachel Campos, Alameda Coalition for the Arts, stated that they fully support the changes proposed by City staff. Ms. Campos shared images of public art from other cities and specifically stated support for removing the requirement for public art to have historic or maritime themes.

Elaine Fong, Rhythmix Cultural Works, stated that she supports staff's recommendations, and wants to challenge the way public art is thought of in Alameda. She said the Commission should consider supporting festivals and events, like Rhythmix's Island City Waterways, that can support economic development in the City.

Julie Baron, Julie's Coffee and Tea Garden, Board of Directors of Downtown Alameda Business Association & Community Advisory Board of Rhythmix, stated that she supports city staff recommendations.

Helen Sause, stated that she supports using the money for a large notable piece of art, giving the Public Art Commission final say on locations for public art, and giving artists that live or work in Alameda a local preference.

Chair Hoy closed public testimony.

Chair Hoy stated that he supports removing the historic and maritime requirement, but is concerned that the City might end up with art that has no relationship to Alameda. He wonders if the evaluation of placemaking could incorporate a relationship to Alameda. Commissioner Gillitt stated that he shared the concerns.

Ms. Gehrke replied that the Commission could recommend changing the placemaking criteria in the RFP to include an evaluation of how the piece reflects Alameda.

Lois Butler, Economic Development Manager, suggested that Alameda relevance could become a separate criteria in the evaluation process.

Commissioner Carter said that she thinks 5% is low for a local preference, and the City need to do better to inform local artists that these funds are available. The Commission discussed resources to perform public outreach.

Ms. Gehrke stated that we have a mailing list of artists and arts organizations within the City of Alameda, and that the RFP will be released through "Call for Entry," a website that will also advertise our RFP at the national and regional level. Ms. Gehrke stated that the City has a mailing list of 100 email addresses, some of which are arts organizations and business groups that are sharing the information with a wider audience.

Commissioner Gillitt stated that he supports adding a page to the City's website including the RFP, a map of existing public art in Alameda, and other resources.

Ms. Gehrke responded that, in response to public comment at the previous meeting, staff has updated the website to include a list of public art in Alameda, as well as the presentation from the January community meeting. She stated that the RFP will also be posted there when it is released.

Commissioner Graham suggested that social media would also be a good way to advertise the RFP.

Mr. Tai noted that the City has been soliciting updates to the City's artist directory, and that staff has been receiving a lot of updates via email.

Commissioner Graham asked, in regards to maintenance, how the City will ensure that property owners understand the maintenance requirements associated with their artwork.

Ms. Gehrke responded that, as part of the artist's final product, they will have to produce a maintenance plan detailing the specific steps necessary to maintain the artwork. The property owner would then have to sign an agreement to take care of the artwork according to the maintenance plan.

Commissioner Graham asked if artists would be required to specify costs in the maintenance plan.

Ms. Gehrke said they would. Mr. Tai added that, for on-site public art, durability of materials and ease of maintenance is one of the evaluation criteria, and maintenance costs are often included in the budget.

Ms. Gehrke stated that the draft RFP is open to both temporary and permanent artwork.

Commissioner Gillitt asked if there are any additional contributions anticipated for the Public Art Fund.

Ms. Gehrke replied that, historically, most developers have decided to do their artwork on-site. Over the 14 year lifetime of the fund, the average balance of the Fund has been around \$62,000.

Chair Hoy asked how the evaluation criteria could be modified to add more weight to local preference.

Ms. Gehrke replied that it could come out of budget or placemaking.

Chair Hoy stated that 5% is very low for a local preference.

Commissioner Gillitt asked for clarification of how the evaluation process would take place.

Ms. Gehrke stated that the Commission would review and discuss proposals at a Public Art Commission meeting, and assign evaluation scores based on the criteria in the RFP, and then rank the proposals based on those scores.

Chair Hoy asked if local preference would therefore be a tiebreaker.

Ms. Gehrke stated that it could.

Commissioner Gillitt asked for clarification on how the locations would be chosen – would locations be evaluated against each other as a batch, or would it be piecemeal as locations were available.

Ms. Gehrke responded if the PAC chooses to determine the locations for artwork prior to the release of an RFP, then locations would be evaluated as a group. If the PAC decides to let the artists submit locations – as recommended by staff – then artists would suggest locations as part of the proposal process. The PAC would then evaluate their proposals as a batch, based on both the artwork and the location they've chosen.

Commissioner Hoy asked if recommendations could be given tonight.

Ms. Gehrke responded that they could, or if the PAC needs more time they could meet again next month to give recommendations.

The Commissioners asked staff what would be the best way to summarize the PAC's recommendations to the City Council.

Mr. Tai summarized the Commission's comments. He stated that there was consensus on removing the requirement that art be tied to the City's historic or maritime traditions, but also concern that we don't want art that's totally unrelated to the City. So, the recommendation would be to add some requirement in the placemaking category that the art be related to Alameda.

Ms. Butler suggested that relationship to Alameda be broken out as an individual criteria, with its own points.

Commissioner Gillitt suggested that placemaking be reduced to 10%, local preference increased to 10%, and a new criteria added relating the artwork to Alameda, including historic or maritime themes, at 5%.

Other Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Tai stated that the next point was a question about maintenance, and how to ensure that maintenance needs and costs are brought to light. He suggested using the same criteria we currently have for on-site art to evaluate durability and maintenance needs.

Mr. Tai also noted that the proposed changes to the Ordinance include a recommendation that staff costs are no longer charged to the Fund, and therefore would require City Council to approve funding from the General Fund or another Fund to cover staff administrative costs. He also noted that, as the Commission and members of the public have voiced a desire to find sources of funding for the public art

program beyond developer contributions, that the Commission can also use this opportunity to ask City Council to explore additional avenues of funding the public art program.

Chair Hoy asked for clarification on the mix of funding amounts and whether there would be potential to have a catalyst project.

Ms. Gehrke responded that the draft RFP includes suggested budget categories for proposals to encourage artists to submit at different levels, but the exact award amounts would be determined by the PAC, based on the quality of proposals received.

Commissioner Gillitt asked if the location at Jean Sweeney Park was a requirement.

Ms. Gehrke responded that staff are no longer asking to allocate funding for Jean Sweeney Park, but that artists can still propose art at the site, and it would be evaluated alongside other proposals.

Chair Hoy asked for clarification on how to ensure there will be sufficient art proposals for the funding available.

Ms. Gehrke responded that the PAC is not obligated to distribute any amount of the available funds at this time. If needed, they can just approve the best projects, and then issue an RFP for the remaining funding.

Commissioner Gillitt asked about the difference between temporary physical art and cultural arts and arts programming.

Ms. Gehrke responded that this will be defined in the RFP, and confirmed that all temporary artwork will go through the RFP process and be evaluated by the PAC. She also clarified that artists would be required to plan and budget for the removal of any temporary artwork as part of their proposal.

Commissioner Graham suggested having one location that could hold rotating displays of temporary artwork.

Chair Hoy made a motion to recommend that City Council approve the ordinance changes as recommended by staff, with a request that the Council support the public art fund with General Funds or other available funding. Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Gillitt made a motion to recommend that the Council approve the proposed RFP as recommended by staff, with the following modifications:

- a. Increase the 5% local preference weight to 10%
- b. Add a new criterion "Alameda relevance" with an evaluation weight of 5%
- c. Reduce the weight of the placemaking criterion to 10%
- d. Include an evaluation of durability and maintenance requirements as appropriate to the lifetime of the proposed artwork

Commissioner Carter seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

5. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

None

6. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Tai noted one written communication: an email from the League of Women Voters inviting PAC members to their annual mixer and fundraiser on Thursday 3/13

7. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Gillitt noted his show at the Alameda Museum.

The Commission thanked staff for their hard work on the ordinance update effort.

Commissioner Lewis asked if the PAC would start to have more regular meetings.

Mr. Tai said that there would likely be more meetings when the art proposals are received, and clarified that the regular meeting time would continue to be on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT