Public Arts Commission

January 8, 2025

6:00 PM

Fridley Civic Campus, 7071 University Ave N.E.

Minutes

Call to Order

6:00 PM

Present

Josh Collins
Ryan Fugleberg
Kara Ruwart
Frank Sedzielarz
Maija Sedzielarz
Gary Swanson
Gary Osterbauer

Scott Lund, President, Fridley Creative Arts Foundation
Mike Maher, Director of Fridley Parks and Recreation

Staff Liaison:
Scott Hickok

Absent

Council Member Ann Bolkcom

Approve of Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2024

Minutes approved with the following modifications identified by Frank Sedzielarz. *By the Minnesota State Arts Board* should be added to the statement by Mayor Lund indicating that a paid staff member would be required to obtain State arts funding for the Foundation. Motion to approve minutes by Maija Sedzielarz, seconded by Ryan Fugleberg. Motion passed 5-0

New Business

1. **Commons Park Redevelopment Plan and Discussion of Public Art Placement Location**

Director of Parks and Recreation Mike Maher attended as a guest to present the plans for the Commons Park Redevelopment Plan. Mr. Maher indicated that the group that he has been working with, which is the Parks Master Plan group including architects, landscape architects, engineers, and other City staff. Mr. Maher indicated that group has taken on the term “Hub” for the area defined by the circular sidewalks. Much like a wheel this area acts as the center from which everything else radiates outward.

Mr. Maher presented a history of the Public engagement process that was extensive and defined improvements to be made throughout the park system in Fridley. Mr. Maher indicated the total cost approved for the Parks Mater Plan improvements is $30M dollars and will stretch over the next 8 years.

Mr. Maher indicated the parks that have been improved thus far and the positive public input that the City has received as a result. Mr. Maher indicated that there was some discussion generated by the suggestion of moving the ball diamonds, however the plan as it now exists has been accepted by all parties and the negotiations ended successfully.

Chair, Josh Collins, asked if there were any plans to put a trail from the parking lot at the north end to the disc golf course north of the Middle School. Mr. Maher described the irregular boundary of Commons Park. He illustrated the boundary through use of a slide in his PowerPoint and indicated that the average person will not step over the line between School District owned property and that owned by the City, however it has been purposely designed to be cohesive and work well together. He indicated that there has been talk of seeking grant funds through the Safe Routes to School Program that may allow that installation to happen, however a trail connection there is not in this plan.

Mr. Maher continued his presentation and discussed the distinct areas in the plan that allow the 4-season enjoyment of the space. The talked about the inclusive $1M play space and the City’s grant that was awarded to them by the State to help pay $500,000 of that amount due to the inclusive design of the play area. Maher continued by discussing the ball fields, pickleball courts and various other features outside of the new building also planned for the site.

As he discussed the building, he discussed the attractive materials chosen for the building’s exterior. Stating that the building is meant to blend in and have a presence both. On the interior, Maher described the various spaces, the event/classrooms that expand or can be used as separate spaces, the “warming house area that can be utilized to warm up or for rest rooms, vending in that area. And the art discussed to create a fun colorful expression. The group purposely did not have a sports theme to the art to keep it as inclusive as possible and to not become dated over time.

Gary Swanson asked if rooms will be available for rent. Mr. Maher explained that the current plans for the building are that it would be staff, on weekdays and weekends and that spaces could be rented. He imagines this will be a hit for Birthday parties with the splash pad and other features to enjoy while at a birthday party.

Going back to the building’s exterior Josh Collins asked if the soccer area shown will be striped, Maher responded no, it would not be, it is an area intended for less structured, or less formal play.

Gary Swanson Commented on the more formal yard west of the building and said he can see that being a very popular area to enjoy. He said it reminded him of the Mall at the University of Minnesota and can see people enjoying it in a similar way.

Focusing on the Art placement and potential areas, Mr. Marer pointed out the area on the east side of the building. Indicating that the sail shade structure, performance area has been illustrated, but the area between the sail shade area of the building and the building itself has been less defined. Mr. Maher pointed out the planter was where people could sit and suggested that that may be an area that the group would like to consider.

The Commission members began a general discussion of the potential for art in that area A member asked if Mike Maher knew the dimensions (Diameter) of the space, he indicated that he could get back to them and make that available. However, he did not know right off, his best estimate would be approximately 15’.

Karat Ruwart envisioned a piece of art with movement, like a mobile would be interesting. Chair Collins indicated he too thought a piece of kinetic (moving) art would be appropriate in that location. Collins was involved with the St. Paul Union Depot installation of a Kinetic Art Piece and thought that if that is the direction we were headed as a commission we should begin to talk to artists about what kind of sculpture would fit in that space and how much should a group plan to budget in that instance. Mr. Collins continued by stating that kinetic art can get expensive quickly and that in the Union Depo was well over $100k.

Gary Osterbauer mentioned that he had heard from someone who knew he is involved in this Commission and the work it is doing and suggested he look at Noblesville, Indiana. They have a Keep Noblesville Beautiful or similar program, and public art is part of their effort.

Scott Lund, President of the Fridley Creative Arts Foundation reminded the group the grant application period for the Regional Arts Council is between now and May. Having a location will help in many ways with fundraising.

Scott Hickok thanked Director Maher for his attendance and presentation at the meeting and asked the group if there was a consensus as to the location of the public Art Placement that they would like to focus on. After seeing Mr. Maher’s presentation, the group was ready to vote on the location that all believed would be most appropriate for an art installation at Commons Park, hopefully whose art completion timing would coincide with the ribbon-cutting at the park’s final redevelopment completion.

Motion by Gary Swanson, seconded by Maija Sedzielarz to approve the priority Public Art location withing the planted area with a seating wall around it, east of the new planned park building for the park. Two final comments, Kara Ruwart asked that we make sure electrical (at least conduit is run in case the art needs it. Chair Collins and Miaja Sedzielarz would begin discussing with experts in this type of installation in Minneapolis and at Silverwood Park. With no other discussion, the motion Passed unanimously.

2. **Commission Member On-Boarding Manual Discussion**

No discussion or presentation was necessary as the Commission had read the manual cover to cover in the packet and all signature sheets were filled out and handed to Liaison Hickok.

<u>Old Business</u>

Liaison Hickok reported that the County HRA approved the CDBG Application as submitted and awarded up to $350,000 with $10,000 going for Bacon oversight. A bid packet will be forthcoming, and the project expenditures can begin once the County contract is signed. That signature is awaiting proof of insurance from The League of Minnesota Cities.

The Homeowner of 5809 Arthur Street has been formally notified through a process server of the City's intent to demolish the hazardous structure at his address. The deadline for completion of improvements is Friday January 10, 2025. A motion has been made by the City Attorney, to District Court to support the City's intent of demolition. The Court must respond prior to the City moving forward. That approval is anticipated to arrive very soon.

Other Items

None reported.

Adjournment

Motion by Maija Sedzielarz, seconded by Frank Sedzielarz at 7:46 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Hickok
Recording Secretary