



MARKHAM PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE

VIRTUAL MEETING

Minutes

Meeting No. 1

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Members

Stephen Lusk, Chair
Taleen Der Haroutiounian
Dawn Kay
Adam Keung
Bill Pickering
Ardy Reid
Angelo Serrentino
Ken Wightman
Councillor Reid McAlpine

REGRETS

Julie Tiefenbach
Rahul Shastri
Jenny Tung

Staff

Christina Kakaflikas, Acting Director, Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship
Niamh O'Laoghaire, Manager, Varley Art Gallery
Yan Wu, Public Art Curator
Anna Lee, Committee Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Public Art Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:02 pm with Stephen Lusk presiding as Chair.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None was declared.

3. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM PUBLIC ART
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 22, 2021**

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine

Seconded by Bill Pickering

That the minutes of the Markham Public Art Advisory Committee meeting held on January 22, 2021, be approved with the correction of the dated year to 2021.

CARRIED

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Niamh O’Laoghaire reported on the presentation to Council on February 24, 2020. She was pleased to announce that at that time Council approved the final version of the Markham Public Art Master Plan and the five year Public Art Implementation Plan. As part of the Master Plan Yan Wu was therefore promoted to Public Art Curator from Public Art Coordinator. Niamh O’Laoghaire thanked all those members of the Committee who attended the February 24 Council meeting in support, also Councillor McAlpine who spoke in favour of the Master Plan and Implementation Plan at that time.

Yan Wu provided updates on the status of several projects in progress.

Aaniin Community Centre: *Top Garden*

Yan Wu advised that the city went through the process of procuring a new fabricator, Streamliner, to continue the Top Garden project. All the parts arrived at the Streamliner studio recently and the plan is to have the work completed and installed early next year in the spring.

Downtown Markham Public Art Installation: *Living Lights*

Significant progress has been made and the City has negotiated to receive the additional piece of land from the developer that is required in order to install the work. The footing of the work will be installed in the fall and the work is to be completed and installed this spring in April/May.

Henderson Street Bridge Mural

A panel of the mural had fallen off and the original artist completed a new panel, and it was installed before the pandemic. The lifecycle of the entire mural is 2-3 years further and will be replaced with a new commission. This project to work on a new commission for the location will begin in 2023. There are two wall spaces at this location and it would therefore provide a good opportunity to have professional artists collaborate with and mentor the community/local students and artists to create two murals.

6. PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN UPDATES

Niamh O’Laoghaire and Yan Wu reported on the following public art projects:

Delimit: An Online Competition for Speculative Public Art Proposals

Due to the pandemic, in 2020 community outreach was shifted to online platforms. The first was Delimit, an open competition that invited artists to submit public art concepts for sites chosen by the public and project production team. These were speculative, not burdened by budget, structural engineering, fabrication, and maintenance concerns, but addressing materiality and scale. We received many interesting proposals, with a total of forty-nine

anonymous proposals being submitted. A jury composed of leading professionals in the field selected ten shortlisted projects. This was a wonderful way to announce the Public Art program to the community and it remains available on the Varley's Instagram page.

Homework

This was a 3-part webinar series exploring practical knowledge to conceptualize and produce public art projects. The series was co-produced by Markham Public Art, the Varley Art Gallery of Markham, and public art consulting firm ART+PUBLIC UnLtd. The three parts were *Forms of Rendering*, which explored conceptualizing public art work, *Proposal Design*, which was about taking concept, scale, material and budget into consideration, and *Materiality and Fabrication*, which examined the complexities of material choices and fabrication processes. Many professionals participated as guest speakers during the series, and it was well received.

Markham's Virtual Public Art Summit: *Becoming Public Art: Working Models & Case Studies for Art in Public*

This was a nine-week virtual summit presented by the City of Markham, in partnership with ART+PUBLIC UnLtd. The nine webinar sessions presented the broad range of perspectives that shape public art making today. The summit featured working models and case studies that address the challenges and opportunities of public art. This was an educational summit on how to approach and develop proposals. There were many guest speakers, and the summit was very well received with great feedback and reviews. There were 1400 attendants and 3900 people registered. Quite a few councillors, as well as the mayor, presented and gave welcoming speeches throughout the summit. There was a biweekly newsletter, with a total of 5 newsletters sent to 800 contacts via email. The newsletters had a great track record of 50% opening the email. All the webinars were recorded and are available online, as well as Q&A's, on the YourVoice Markham site. The seminar and related research materials were used by at least 6 third level institutions as teaching and research tools in Canada, the USA and Germany.

Artist duo Native Art Department International's upcoming installation at Varley courtyard

This is a project mounted in partnership with MOCA Toronto. The Varley Art Gallery and MOCA will both have gazebos by the artists created in their respective locations, which will act as sibling pavilions/installations. The gazebo at Varley Art Gallery will be outdoors in the courtyard, and MOCA will have theirs installed indoors. *Double Gazebo* is a temporary public art installation and will be installed this weekend until end of November. There will be five activation programs to this art installation: July 1st - AR (Augmented Reality), August 1st -artists, September 1st -with movement, October 1st -with sound and November 1st -star knowledge. This work will launch July 1st and the official announcement will be made on July 6th. 2021 is the City of Toronto's Year of Public Art. Through this partnership with MOCA Toronto we plan to leverage attention as much as possible. There is hope to organize an in-person bus tour of both gazebos in October.

Pan Am Centre Public Art Commissions

There were meetings with internal groups, including the builder and the Pan Am Centre manager to understand the location, learn about its future development, and local communities. Most important is the objective to identify potential opportunities and how best to maximize the project's potential, as a city gateway, as part of the downtown Markham

east-west corridor, the southern end of historic Unionville, and a neighbour of the new York University campus. There are to be two parts that need to be activated which will address two sides of the building and create a visual impact, on the Enterprise side as well as a functional gathering space for the community in the piazza on the south side by the building's main entrance. The next step is to meet with internal and external consultant teams over the summer to work on the scope of the work. This is a downtown Markham project with both commercial and historical attachments. Community engagement will be needed and there will be opportunity for communication strategy development. The plan is to present the design brief to Council in the fall. The estimated overall budget is \$850K, from the Public Art reserve, for the piazza ground piece and wall mural. This amount includes maintenance plans. The Master Plan and Implementation Plan have both been approved. The Master Plan governance model dictates that after consultation with the Interdepartmental Working Group and MPAAC endorsement, that Council be approached to approve the project and budget. Yan and Niamh look forward to receiving MPAAC members input as part of the consultation process.

Metrolinx's underpasses at Kennedy and Denison

Markham City internal teams are working together on a process to make a request to Metrolinx to include lighting infrastructure so digital artwork can be commissioned in these two locations. Possible digital projects could be digital work that is interactive with human movement, lighting that responds to wind movement, or urban screens for temporary projects and video works. Mulvey & Banani Lighting Inc. were the lighting consultants that collaborated with us on the feasibility study. They presented four possibilities for different light options along with projected budgets for each possibility. The consultants gave presentations to city teams and two Councillors. A meeting was also recently held with the Metrolinx design review group for any feedback. This process has been a great learning opportunity and will be useful going forward when taking on similar projects.

Acquisitions

Markham, Ontario, 2010 -by Geoffrey James

Naturally Natural, 2016-2019 -by Xiaojing Yan

Looking at how to incorporate new mediums and establish connections to Markham in indoor collections inventory, two acquisitions were made in 2020. The image by Geoffrey James of Markham will be installed in the Commissioner of Development Services' office and a piece by Markham artist Xiaojing Yan will be installed in the Ontario Room. This year, we are looking at acquiring work from new Markham resident, Esmaa Mohamoud as an addition to the collection. Next year we would like to acquire work from Will Kwan's *If All You Have is a Hammer, Everything Looks Like a Nail*. Hopefully, acquisitions are completed next year, and artists will be invited to come in for artist talks.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A central space to store Public Artwork and projects is needed to make it accessible for the public. YourVoice is a workable choice in the interim.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Markham Public Art Advisory Committee

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Moved by Taleen Der Haroutiounian

Seconded by Adam Keung

That the Markham Public Art Advisory Committee adjourn at 7:16 pm.

CARRIED