



**MARKHAM PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL MEETING
Minutes
Wednesday, November 03, 2021
6:00 p.m.**

PRESENT

Members

Stephen Lusk, Chair
Taleen Der Haroutiounian
Dawn Kay
Bill Pickering
Ardy Reid
Ken Wightman
Councillor Reid McAlpine
Jenny Tung

REGRETS

Julie Tiefenbach
Rahul Shastri
Angelo Serrentino
Adam Keung

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 6:05 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 with the correction of 4. Advisory Committee Meeting date to June 16, 2021.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM PUBLIC ART
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JUNE 16, 2021.**

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine
Seconded by Ken Wightman

That the minutes of the Markham Public Art Advisory Committee meeting held on June 16, 2021, be approved.

CARRIED

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no updates.

6. PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN UPDATES

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

Downtown Markham Public Art Installation: *Living Lights*

The acquisition of the additional piece of land by the city has been finalized and the fabricator is working on the final details of the foundation design. The foundation will be going in in the next few weeks before the ground freezes and the installation is scheduled for 2022 Spring. The additional land required was calculated by how much footage was needed for the foundation, overhang, and encroachment. However, there is a layer of insulation outside the concrete foundation that needs to be installed, which encroaches on the 2-meter clearance that is required from York Region. The clearance requirement is due to a hypothetical sewage pipe location. A corner of the foundation, about 10-20 centimeters, crosses the 2-meter line, which is shown in the drawing, and this may cause an issue. If this is an issue, alternative solutions will need to be discussed, such as adjusting the artwork, as it is not an option to acquire more land. Yan will update the committee on York Region’s decision on this matter.

Pan Am Centre Public Art Commissions

Thank you to everyone for participating in the community engagement discussions. As everyone attended and an email about the community engagement discussion was sent to the committee, committee members should be familiar with what happened during the discussions. The 3-part community engagement, led by Art + Public UnLtd, was successful, consisting of interviews with City Staff, local BIAs, and the Pan Am Centre manager, to hear voices at the planning and governance, user and community and business levels.

A discussion was held with the inter-departmental working group, consisting of members of the engineering department, assets management, urban design and other internal stakeholders involved in the public art production. There was a workshop held with local landowners, developers, York University, and the local YMCA to discuss expectations for the area. Finally, two public workshops were held and there was great conversation during these workshops. Councilor Karen Rea suggested an evening session workshop for the public as the ones held were during lunch hour. As the public workshops were online, groups were kept at about 15-20 people so everyone could engage and contribute. There was also an online survey for those who could not participate in the workshops circulated through all the channels. Twenty-eight responses were received from the survey.

A final report was generated to capture all different aspects and scope of discussions and contributions by Art + Public UnLtd. The next steps for this commission will be based on

the community conversations and the final community engagement report. A staff report is being created and is at the editing stage with the finalized scope of the commission that will be proposed during the council meeting on November 22nd.

The Pan Am site was chosen after working with external consultants and community consultations to identify locations in Markham that would be appropriate public art sites. The Pan Am Centre was the single most voted for location, and it intersects with various other plans, for example, city gateways. The masterplan contains several commissions, and this is the first and main commission in public art. The other commissions are smaller and more temporary or seasonal. The location is significant in relation to the City of Markham, a historic neighbourhood (Unionville) and the future York University campus. There will also be buildings built around the Pan Am Centre in the upcoming years, making this Centre a busy neighbourhood. As well, this is City land and there is no other major infrastructure building happening in this area. So the Pan Am Centre commissions will involve working around the existing building.

Site visits were held along with staff consultations about all the potentially usable surfaces for public art installations. The piazza on the south side is to have a 3-dimensional structure, which is the main site for the Pan AM Centre and is Part 1 of the public art commission. The east side corner of Enterprise and Main Street Unionville, facing the future York University campus is Part 2 of the public art installation project. Part 2 will be a temporary photomural site, curated with public art projects and potentially with York university collaboration. The focus of the commission at this time will be on Part 1, which is the main site. The budget identified in the Implementation plan that was presented to Council is \$850,000. 10% of the commission is to be put aside for future maintenance and repair contingency. Once we receive approval from the Development Services Committee, then the final Council approval will be in November. As this has been an ongoing project with council and staff involvement in the implementation and masterplan and community engagement, this should not be something new to council. The ballpark numbers are in the masterplan and there was a governance process that was followed step by step.

There will be a two-stage commission process for the main Pan Am site. The first stage is about qualifications, where artists will send portfolios and letter of intent and a jury of public art professionals and community members will shortlist five artists/groups. In Stage two, the shortlisted groups will be awarded \$5,000 each to create proposals, which will then be reviewed by the inter-departmental group for technical feedback and the public for feedback. Interviews will be held with the artists/groups where they can share in detail their proposal and address any concerns and questions that arise from the jury. The jury will then select one proposal. This qualification process will be presented to Council in November, and if approved, the competition will be announced mid-December before the holidays. The deadline for stage one, for artists/groups to submit qualifications and letter of intent will be end of February. The first jury meeting will be held at the end of March to pick five artists to develop a proposal by May. Reviews, feedback and consultations will be held in September and in November, the second interviews will be held, with the winning proposal selected by December 2022. This will mean there will be 6-8 months to fabricate and completed the works by Fall 2023.

The second project at the Pan Am Centre will involve rotating and temporary artwork, with \$100,000 allotted for this Part 2. There have been discussions with York University about collaboration on this project, on curriculum and on public art in general. York University is interested to find opportunities in the area and to partner with the City of Markham. There is an opportunity to make meaningful content for both the city and York University with public art.

Bill Pickering put forward a motion: **That the Markham Public Art Committee endorses the Markham Pan Am Centre Public Art project site and commissioning process and recommends that City staff bring the project to City Council for approval.**

Moved by Bill Pickering
Seconded by Dawn Kay

CARRIED

7. PUBLIC ART UPDATES

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

The installation at the Varley courtyard will remain until November 29th and can be visited any time as it is accessible 24hours/day. More information about the project and online programs can be found here: <https://yourvoicemarkham.ca/doublegazebo>. An augmented reality version of the *Double Gazebo* and other online programs and media are available to the public. Programs developed and inspired by the gazebo involve variously movement/performance, soundscape, and astronomy. This was a project in partnership with MOCA, they had their piece installed indoors, while Varley's is outdoors. The online series was coproduced with MOCA to raise awareness of both gazebos. The work is owned by the artists, who will have it removed at the end of November. The artists are responsible for the work's fabrication, installation, and removal.

Acquisitions

Deeper the Wounded, Deeper the Roots 2019 by Esmaa Mohamoud

Esmaa Mohamoud lives and works in Markham and has a major presentation project at the Toronto waterfront. The piece acquired is 4 x 5feet. The curator is considering available locations where the work can be installed in the Civic Centre. She is searching for an area that will be an appropriate space and aesthetically fitting in the great hall area.

Dorset Fine Art prints by various Indigenous artists

Eleven prints by Indigenous artists were acquired which have already been framed and are ready to be displayed. Some have already installed in various areas of the Civic Centre that are accessible to the public. These are quite beautiful and large prints, some of which are already on display.

Discussion of how these art acquisitions can be announced to the public was held. One suggestion was, once the Civic Centre is open to the public, an artist talk series can be organized so the public can visit, and artists can explain the works. There is also the opportunity to make announcements in the Varley Newsletter about the public art

acquisitions and hold walking tours in collaboration with the Varley Art Gallery. Pictures with short blurbs about each piece, along with a map to highlight where they are located can be shared with Councilors for their newsletters, as well.

Future Public Art Programs

There are two major projects that will begin in 2022.

The first project is a community art project grant for temporary summer projects. Local community and student groups will be called upon to submit applications for the \$25,000 grant. This is an opportunity for local artists in the community to work on prototypes and gain experience. A series of temporary projects along the Markham Park trails will be curated, with 4-5 seasonal projects. The committee is working with the Parks Department on choosing an optimal park location that is logistically appropriate. Sites will be studied for the ecosystem, land, type of residency and so on, to engage the local community and highlight the trail system in Markham and develop a better understanding of the land. A lot of the work will be research oriented. There could be an opportunity to partner with Rouge National Park to activate their spaces. This project could expand geographically, adding more work to the inventory collection of public art in the city. Indigenous culture, history, and knowledge, as well as an Indigenous artists, will be incorporated into this project.

The second project is to build an Indigenous Garden on the land west of the PanAm Centre, on part of the Metropia Developer's presentation centre land. The developer has agreed to use of the land and to provide financial support. York University has expressed interest in collaborating on the project, with logistical details to be cemented in the upcoming months. The project is to create a place for Indigenous works of art and to engage students to work in the garden. The committee will work with the City of Markham Diversity Specialist as well as Indigenous residents, advisors, and other contacts to ensure visibility.

The Thornhill underpass contains a long lifespan temporary public art project. Katherine Harvey worked with four local artists to create the work on one side of the underpass and the other side was created by a high school teacher and students. This creates an inviting atmosphere and a reason for people to visit the underpass. There are many underpasses in the city, however, considerations such as engineering inspections, approvals, and the planning to have works installed need to be considered. There could be an opportunity to install similar public art in under/over passes as the City of Toronto has done. York Region has a fund for permanent improvements and beautifications, but not public art.

8. NEW BUSINESS

None Disclosed

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine
Seconded by Ken Wightman

That the Markham Public Art Advisory Committee adjourn at 7:31 pm.

CARRIED