

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item 2-1
July 9, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Jorge Fors

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain
Arts and Culture Specialist, Catherine Cathers

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item 2-1 [2:09:11 p.m.]

A Resolution approving artist Ivan Toth Depeña to design public artwork in conjunction with the new Public Safety Building project. (unanimously recommended by the Public Safety Building Public Art Selection Panel approval/denial vote: 10 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 6 to 0).

Vice Mayor Lago: Go ahead. You have quorum.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: 2-1, a resolution approving artist Ivan Toth Depeña to design public artwork in conjunction with the new Public Safety Building.

Vice Mayor Lago: 2-1, the art -- the art portion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anybody to make a presentation?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Good afternoon, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners. Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Department. So, we have a presentation for you. The City allows for various methods of acquiring works of public art and they are in open competition, which allows artists who meet eligibility requirements to apply for consideration, a limited competition, contacting the short-listed qualified artists, a direct selection of an artist or developing a pre-qualified roster of artists for a limited competition or direct selection. For this particular opportunity, we chose to use an open competition allowing artists who meet eligibility requirements to apply for consideration. This process involved releasing a national request for qualifications, to which 92 applications were received. Four artists were approved by the City Commission to submit proposals. They were Jose Bedia, Martin Dawe, Ivan Toth Depeña and Robert Lazzarini. Proposals were posted on the City's webpage, inviting comments. And also, an announcement was sent to businesses and private residences within a 1,000-foot radius of the project site. Over 150 comments were received and forwarded to the selection panel, which was comprised of members of the Arts Advisory Panel, Police Chief Hudak, Fire Chief De La Rosa, Fire Chief Barger, and an appointee of the Cultural Development Board. Two artists were invited to submit revised proposals. They were Martin Dawe and Ivan Toth Depeña. The selection panel recommended Ivan Toth Depeña to the Cultural Development Board. And the Cultural Development Board is recommending Ivan Toth Depeña to the City Commission today as the artist to work with for the Public Safety Building public art. Ivan Toth Depeña has a master's degree in Architecture from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Depeña has been working increasingly in the public realm and maintains a rigorous and experimental studio practice. He has over ten years' experience in designing,

coordinating and installing large-scale artwork. Depeña has exhibited extensively nationally and internationally in both solo and group exhibitions and recently completed large-scale public commissions in New York, Denver, Albuquerque, Gainesville and Miami. His work is held in numerous public and private collections. In early 2014, he was awarded a prestigious Knight Arts Challenge Miami Grant and is a three-time recipient of the Americans for the Arts Public Art Year-in-Review Award, most recently in 2018, and just recently in 2019. This is a competitive award with an average of over 300 submittals per year. We're here today to show the latest revised concept by Ivan Toth Depeña and to recommend approving this artist to design public artwork in conjunction with the new Public Safety Building. The site location is the courtyard space that is adjacent to the entrance of the new building on the corner of Salzedo Street and Minorca Avenue. And the artist selected this location as a unique opportunity to create a memorable and experiential and memorial installation. It's understood that the form and overall coverage may evolve during design development based on budget, safety requirements and aesthetic iterations and feedback. The concept recommended for further development is a grouping of large, fused glass panels with saturated color that transitions skyward into clear glass. The piece is set on a reflecting pool of dark gray and are surrounded by seating. An explanation of the artwork and possible literal representation of public safety professionals and the public will be incorporated either within the artwork or as a separate, stand-alone element. It is the recommendation of the Cultural Development Board that the artist meet with public safety professionals to further explore the capacity to inform the work. Above all, the artwork concept responds to memorializing fallen officers and firefighters while honoring current public safety professionals. Taking inspiration from nature and the surrounding materials, the artist is seeking to create an original artwork that transforms the courtyard into a meditative experience while being a pedestrian and useful space. Each panel is a gradated, thick, colored glass plane that connects and transitions from the earth through the viewer into the surrounding environment, and subsequently, the sky. The color variations of blue, red and yellow represent police officers, firefighters, emergency service operators and families. The grid they're attached to symbolizes the collective connectivity, and at night, the installation is intended to self-illuminate with imbedded LED components. The addition of a reflecting pool and seating further enhances the contemplative and experiential environment.

After discussion of both the selection panel and Cultural Development Board meetings, it was agreed that the names of the fallen and perhaps a recognizable iconic feature, such as a figure, could be incorporated within the artwork itself or as a separate stand-alone piece. The Cultural Development Board further recommended that our safety professionals be more involved in the conceptual process of further revisions. And for this reason, the Cultural Development Board is recommending that the artist conduct workshops with our safety professionals and return to the Commission with a revised proposal.

Vice Mayor Lago: That's it?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: That's it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead. I have no comment now.

Commissioner Mena: I had a couple questions. You said -- so, I guess my question is maintenance and sort of -- this is obviously outdoor, it's glass. We've had, I know, some issues with the fountains, so how are we sort of protected here...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: You know, we asked -- they asked...

Commissioner Mena: If there's some sort of issue?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: The artist about that specifically because it was glass and...

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Apparently -- and you're going to remember better than I -- there is two different types of glass that could be used as far as the color goes. And his

recommendation would be actually to have it imbedded in the glass itself and not have it be laminated and have the color in between.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: So, it would be one piece of glass.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: So, it would be one piece of glass.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: It's a fused glass treatment and it will be thick. And he has worked with this material before in South Florida before. He did address this in the initial proposal, and he stated that the materials will be selected based on the ability to withstand the prolonged operation in the varying outdoor conditions. So, he...

Vice Mayor Lago: When you say outdoor conditions, you're talking about exposure to sun. So, fading wouldn't be an issue?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Correct.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: That was one of the reasons...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Right.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: To also recommend the fused glass rather than the laminated process.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That's right. And it was also...

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Because it resists fading.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: One of the reasons that they wanted to have that length, so it was removed from the public so there wouldn't be an ability necessarily to damage it. And so, they -- he did think about that, and the Board thought about that.

Commissioner Mena: But -- so, I have multiple questions about this. What about like, I mean, obviously, water and like water spots and stuff like that? Like does this thing need to be like maintained in terms of like -- does it need to be cleaned regularly? Is it kind of like resistant to that?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: And part of...

Commissioner Mena: And more fundamentally...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: The proposal...

Commissioner Mena: More fundamentally, I guess my question is like how do we protect ourselves with these sort of Art in Public Places so that in the worst case scenario, where whatever piece of art, this one or any other, doesn't hold up to the elements, are we just sort of SOL or...

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Part of the final proposal that we'll be coming back to the Commission with would include a maintenance plan. That's part of our requirement. So, we'll have those types of details. I guess the artist is experienced -- he's worked on this area before in public art projects. The pool itself as a reflecting pool is meant to be, you know, like the infinity pools. The idea is for the water to go over the edge, not necessarily be a pool where you dip your hand in...

Commissioner Mena: Sure.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Necessarily. So, yes, there will be a maintenance that will be addressed, and we'll have further information on what that is as he develops the proposal.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: And as far as if something happens in the future, we do include it in the insurance -- underneath the insurance policy, you know. We meet with the Risk Management. They do an assessment. I'm not sure, you know...

Commissioner Mena: Worst case scenario, the truck drives into the thing, you know, or whatever...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: That'll be covered by some sort of insurance policy (INAUDIBLE).

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I'm not an expert on insurance, but the intent is to have...

Commissioner Mena: (INAUDIBLE).

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Insurance for that, yes.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: And it will be on the plaza, so I believe there will be protective bollards.

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Vice Mayor Lago: May I add just...

Commissioner Mena: Sure.

Vice Mayor Lago: A little bit more color to your comments, which I think are very important. You know, you look at Alice Aycock, either you love it, you're not fond of the sculpture, whatever your opinion is. But we've had so many issues with the lighting. We've had so many issues with the water feature, the fading which is going on now...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: The fading is the...

Vice Mayor Lago: Which is the major issue.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Biggest issue because the...

Vice Mayor Lago: And the misters...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Lighting we're handling. The misters were actually getting a maintenance agreement...

Vice Mayor Lago: I feel like we're...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: With the manufacturing people so they will be able to maintain it every year, so that's been an issue.

Commissioner Mena: We're in a constant stage of...

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah, we're in a constant stage of waiting for something else to happen and it's -- you know, it's just tough to see that sculpture -- I think it's deteriorating, in my opinion. But that's -- let me tell you why I'm not going to support this today -- and it should come as no surprise to you because I met with you and I told you.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I know that.

Vice Mayor Lago: I met with both of you. I asked you very clearly, I go, I want to see more options. This is hundreds of thousands of dollars and I know this is a very difficult task to weave a theme on a building that means so much when you talk about public safety. It's very difficult and I don't envy the artist for having to do that. Very difficult to find that because someone's going to always say how does that relate to the purpose of the building. I even mentioned to you before -- I know it's not allowed; you educated me on that fact -- that maybe we use that money somewhere else, we incorporate into some other sculpture or we incorporate into some other maybe, you know, temporary event or temporary -- you told me that was not possible, that we have to use that money just for this Public Safety Building. I see a few things here that concern me. You know, one, the sculpture, the cleaning, the water feature. We haven't been able to get it right yet. It's not our fault. Maybe it's just we haven't found the appropriate opportunity to really incorporate a water feature into it.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: You know, could I just -- because I'll forget if I don't

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Say it now.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah, of course.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: As far as it being a water feature, it doesn't necessarily need to be a water feature.

Vice Mayor Lago: But, I actually like the water feature.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I believe...

Vice Mayor Lago: I think the water feature is nice.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I mean, I think the water feature is cool, but as far as the artist is -- he doesn't care whether it's an actual water -- it was brought up by the Police Chief and the Fire Chief that were...

Vice Mayor Lago: But I like the water...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Part of that discussion.

Vice Mayor Lago: I like the water feature.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: You know, they're going to be -- have events. They're going to be talking. They don't want to have loud water that would be distracting, so that could be just a black...

Vice Mayor Lago: What I would love to see is some sort of...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Marble surface.

Vice Mayor Lago: Shade element, maybe some -- you know, that was -- my last and final point was, you know, you see a lot of hardscape. You see landscaping. Who's going to pay for that? Is that encompassed in the budget for the sculpture or is that additional work that needs to be done?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: You mean like the bench around it?

Vice Mayor Lago: The bench...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That would be incorporated in the sculpture.

Vice Mayor Lago: Hardscape.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: The bench would be incorporated. The landscape would not be because it's not...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: But the bench itself, the hardscape, that would be part of the artwork.

Vice Mayor Lago: And what is the budget for this sculpture?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Well, initially, we thought that we had \$250,000 and we have more.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: We have more than that now because the cost of the building has gone up.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay. And you -- so -- of my requests that I made to you and I said if we go back to the public and we try to see if we can find -- I mean, would -- I'm in no hurry. I don't think we are, and I had a conversation with the City Manager that we don't have to deliver this now. This building is not going to be delivered to, you know, our police and firefighters for another year.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That's totally up to the City Commission.

Vice Mayor Lago: No, but what I'm saying is that am I off -- you know, am I off on that assessment or is that still...

City Manager Iglesias: No. That's correct, Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Lago: No, I just want to make sure that my colleagues know that there's always an opportunity to go back on the street, look for artists. This is a pretty significant budget. I don't feel -- we don't have to vote on this today. We can always say no. And that comes to my final point. I asked, and I told you I know some of my colleagues like to see the artist up here, but I'd like to see maybe a prepared statement from the artist. Because sometimes it's very tough to make a decision and say no to somebody to their face and being critical on their work when I think we need to be a little bit more critical because this is something that's going to be there -- stand the test of time. And the last thing I want to see is another situation where it's fading, where it doesn't pay justice or homage to what we're...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I understand that.

Vice Mayor Lago: Trying to do.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Quite possibly, we could have that at the final because this is not the final design, so if you all allow us to go forward with this artist, we can make sure that he has that artist statement with the final design.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: We thought it was important to work with police and firemen directly, although, you know -- and the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I respect the selection process. And you know, you went through the invitations and the submissions. I think it's an extremely pedestrian piece of glass. I don't see the creativity in it. I will vote for it because of respecting the selection process, but precisely, I have a problem with the selection process and with the committees that chose that because I doubt any serious collector would have chosen that to put in his or her building and fine. You know, we'll

take that. This is a bunch of, you know, people that I don't know what the criteria they use, but I don't like it. I think it's pedestrian. I think it's there, and I won't vote for it. Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I have concerns about the glass itself. You know, it's -- I'm...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think it's ugly.

Commissioner Keon: Assuming it's like some sort of impact-resistant glass.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Yes. It would be impact resistant.

Commissioner Keon: So, it's not going to break?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: No.

Commissioner Keon: And where else has he used it in Florida?

City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I'd have to...

City Manager Iglesias: It cannot be impact-resistant. If you put a laminate -- laminates don't work exposed.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: It's not a...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: It's not a laminate.

City Manager Iglesias: It'd have to be...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: It's not a laminate.

Commissioner Keon: It's not a laminate.

City Manager Iglesias: No. Then it would not be impact resistant. What you would have is it would be a tempered glass so that it would not fade...

Commissioner Keon: But that's what I mean.

City Manager Iglesias: Right.

Commissioner Keon: So, it's a tempered glass.

City Manager Iglesias: So, the idea is that if it does break, it breaks into shards...

Commissioner Keon: Pieces, right.

City Manager Iglesias: And not large...

Commissioner Keon: Not into big...

City Manager Iglesias: Large pieces.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: But if you use laminated glass, what would happen to the...

Commissioner Keon: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: Impact resistant, it would filter -- the water eventually filters between the laminate and it would not work.

Commissioner Keon: Right, okay.

City Manager Iglesias: So, it would have to be some type of tempered glass.

Commissioner Keon: Right. Where -- can you go look at where he has worked in Florida with this glass and...

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Absolutely.

Commissioner Keon: And see how the glass has stood up?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Yeah, I can look that up for you.

Commissioner Keon: You know, I know that they...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Do you know where that is?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: The piece?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Yeah.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Not off the top of my head, no.

Commissioner Keon: I don't know if it's in South Florida, I hope. I hope it's not in North Florida.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Yeah, where it's installed.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Yeah. I've worked on other projects with artists that have used these large-scale glass pieces and there are glass...

Commissioner Keon: I mean, I like glass. I like...

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Studios and they usually are over in Europe that specialize in art glass, you know, specifically for outdoor environments.

Commissioner Keon: Outdoors, right.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: So, that's not an unusual medium for artists to work in public art.

Commissioner Keon: But -- now, who chose this artist over the other -- all the other artists, the Arts Advisory Panel?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: There was a selections committee.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The Arts Advisory Panel.

Commissioner Keon: That -- is it the Arts Advisory Panel? Who is selection committee?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: They are members of the Arts Advisory Panel and then the Police Chief, Fire Chief and then we had one appointee from the Cultural Development Board.

Vice Mayor Lago: Was it unanimous?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: So, they reviewed...

Vice Mayor Lago: Both boards?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Both boards were unanimous?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Yes. It was...

Commissioner Keon: From the...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Actually shocking.

Commissioner Keon: Right. Can we ask the Chief, and...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Sure. Come on up here, gentlemen.

Commissioner Keon: The Chief and Fire Chief.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: They were a...

Commissioner Keon: You know, because maybe there's something that you see...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Welcome addition.

Commissioner Keon: In that work of art that, you know, inspires you or...

Police Chief Hudak: We know better. We're not going to argue with Dona. Whatever she wants, we're good with it.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: You see.

Commissioner Keon: Could you tell them to get my car off the ramp at the Biltmore?

Police Chief Hudak: Yes. (INAUDIBLE)

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: This is like way too cozy.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I know.

Commissioner Keon: So, tell me about, you know, what it was that, you know, of all the other works, why this work.

Police Chief Hudak: And again, I think the last comments that we made back to the artist was there some things that we wanted from a memorial standpoint in keeping with the art. The reflecting pool and the design was big for me from a CPTED type of situation, having come from overseas and they had artwork outside...

Commissioner Mena: What do you think about -- why didn't we do this? We should have done this.

Police Chief Hudak: I'll just go like this.

Unidentified Speaker: That's art.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: That's (INAUDIBLE). (INAUDIBLE) knew this conversation was going south.

Commissioner Mena: Alright. Go ahead.

Police Chief Hudak: It's kind of hard to follow that up. So, some of the concerns that I had was if we're going to put something that is going to honor our fallen, that subject to vandalism and such that may happen. Coming back from overseas, there was some artwork outside some police stations that were covered with excrement and things like that. So, the idea of putting something closer into a pond or water-type body would actually kind of diffuse that where somebody could walk up to it. So, some of the issues that you see in the glass was how do we -- and you heard us mention the red, the yellow, the blue, to be specific to some kind of a statuesque type of monument in the middle of the water that would honor the officers. Some of the things that I struggled with was the less we have to explain of what it is -- and there's a lot of -- there was a lot of symbolic meaning in some of the others, but the Board had actually explained to us and the artist explained to us what it was. If it's taking us that long to try and figure out what the message is, the memorial part of this artwork would get lost, and that's what my concern was. So, that's -- I think what you've seen in front of you is not what we kind of last directed the artist to kind of come back to us at. To the shade part of it, that was something else that we took in account. I know the committee went back and forth about how to make this a shade -- we kind of got away from that because that seating area is something that we believe is going to invite some pedestrians. But the way the building is built and the streetscape, we need some kind of a buffer that would protect the building itself from anybody driving into it. Similar to what we did here, when we did this building and we did the sculpture outside, there is a built-in buffer that somebody can't run right into this building. Keeping in that, the CPTED type of design, is what we're looking at with the elevated area, the seating. We talked about some people wanted to put the names of the officers on the

bench. I did not like that idea. I don't want -- you know, that's -- it has to be kind of a sacred type of thing and then the ability to add to it. So, there's been a lot of variations from this artist and other ones and so I don't think we're at the final stage yet of what our last direction back to the artist was trying to incorporate something in the middle of the water with the colored glass, but almost to accentuate what's in the middle.

Commissioner Keon: What is the concept of the colored glass, representing the blue red and yellow?

Police Chief Hudak: That's what...

Commissioner Keon: That is very attractive...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Police Chief Hudak: That's what we came up with, instead of the multi rainbow type of...

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, no.

Police Chief Hudak: It was just...

Commissioner Keon: It was those colors. The water element is very peaceful and reflective and meditative...

Police Chief Hudak: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: For a memorial. That's appropriate. I mean, I could see that. But you're going to continue to work with him on what the actual -- the final design of that is.

Police Chief Hudak: Right. I mean, that's why -- to use a police metaphor -- the jury's still out on this because we really haven't seen what they brought back.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: The original design was like seats and we had the same concerns. In perpetuity, you know, God forbid, we ever have to add another name, and we need to do it where we can just add to it without adding another piece of the sculpture and how is it going to be maintained. So...

Commissioner Mena: Was that the idea here, for that to be like one pane per fallen officer or not really?

Police Chief Hudak: Originally, that was the design and that was kind of balked at. We didn't want to have to add something. We also didn't want a name of an officer or firefighter, which was like essentially a stool, where somebody could sit on it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: Taking into account the lighting of it as well, up lighting...

Commissioner Keon: Would it be...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Are there any other questions?

Commissioner Keon: On the base of the...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: It can be.

Commissioner Keon: It could be added on the base of the glass -- I mean, on the metal part that is...

Police Chief Hudak: On the metal part -- or if they come back with a rendition of some type of sculpture that would -- you know, and both the Fire Chief and I were talking about this. Kind of the most pronounced part of our museum is the busts of the firefighters that overlook where the original driveway was for the firetrucks. So, that a child -- the firefighters -- and we were kind of going along that historic line of how do we incorporate those busts of firefighters, police officers and families that we protect in the middle to kind of bring that all together. And then we can put even a pedestal to add the names in bronze later on.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I...

Commissioner Keon: Is that really what you would rather have? Is that sort of a sculpture of that, of...

Commissioner Mena: This is never going to be...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We're not -- let's not discuss...

Commissioner Keon: (INAUDIBLE) not.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The content of the art. I mean, this is the artist -- the artist is the one who came up with the idea and we're not going to change his mindset or his art. Let's talk about the appropriateness of this. And I would like to hear a motion to accept or not.

Commissioner Keon: What I think the appropriateness of it is is what they're talking about with the firefighter and a police officer and a family is more of a -- is that more of a sculpture that belongs...

Police Chief Hudak: That's where we sent...

Commissioner Keon: In that place?

Police Chief Hudak: Back to the artist. This artist was selected. We all agreed on that.

Commissioner Keon: But this artist is a...

Police Chief Hudak: We sent back those recommendations and we haven't seen those.

Commissioner Keon: But this artist is a glass artist.

Commissioner Mena: Right. He's not going to...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That was something that was important to the Police and Fire and the art committee. And the selections committee wanted it to remain iconic and less representational. However, that's -- something like that, we talked to the artist about it and he's going to work on something that could be in addition to this, but not in place of it.

Vice Mayor Lago: Conceptual sculpture.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, right.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: You...

Vice Mayor Lago: This is conceptual -- this is a conceptual idea...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Right.

Vice Mayor Lago: Versus a figurative drawing or a sculpture...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That's right.

Vice Mayor Lago: Where you see, you know, a landscape...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: So, it may be a combination...

Vice Mayor Lago: Or whatever that may be.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: At the end because -- yeah. When we get through with these workshops with the rank and file of the police and firemen, there may be some type of figurative piece that could be added.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: No. I...

Commissioner Mena: No. I'm...

Commissioner Keon: I have a problem.

Commissioner Mena: I'm like...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I have...

Commissioner Keon: I have a real problem now.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I have a real problem too.

Commissioner Keon: I really do. I have a real problem.

Commissioner Mena: I do too.

Commissioner Keon: Because I don't want it to be...

Commissioner Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah. I think...

Commissioner Keon: The Arts Advisory Committee

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It's pedestrian.

Commissioner Keon: Wants an...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I think it doesn't...

Commissioner Keon: Iconic...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: Piece of public art.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And this is not it.

Commissioner Keon: And the people that are occupying the building that want a memorial type of, you know, piece, you know, that you may regard as a more pedestrian than iconic, but you know, I...

Commissioner Mena: I'm with you.

Commissioner Keon: I'd rather have you build, you know...

Commissioner Mena: I agree.

Commissioner Keon: I mean, come on.

Commissioner Mena: I agree.

Commissioner Keon: You know, and so if it's a sculpture -- if it's a bronze sculpture you want, you know, and you want a water element to it, I mean, go find that artist. I mean, don't -- but don't ask this artist that you don't know that that's -- I mean, I don't know. Is that that artist's specialty? Do they do...

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: This artist works in multimedia, so he works in a variety of media. What you could do -- what we're asking the Commission for today is permission to work with the artist to work with the public safety professionals. Now, this artist could also act as a design artist and work and recommend somebody, you know, that would do that more sculptural piece that you're talking about and incorporate it within the design of the plaza.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Commissioner Mena: But that's not what he does, right?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: That's an option.

Commissioner Keon: That's not what he does.

Commissioner Mena: I mean, I don't under...

Commissioner Keon: You know, I would sit down with them and get a really clear picture of what they want, what they want for that building and go find the best artist that does that kind of work and not take another artist and have him do something else and whatever. And if you want -- the elements you want are a water feature because it is meditative and it's like the 9/11, it's that gorgeous fountain, you know, if that's the kind of thing you want or even if you just want, you know, a large piece like that that has the names in marble in scripted in it, I mean...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That part of it, he's comfortable with.

Commissioner Keon: You know, but...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Keon: But you know -- but if you want the other -- you know, I think you need to go back. I don't think you...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Keon: It's like -- I don't think -- I think you have more to say on this subject that you're not going to say right here. So, I'm more comfortable with them going back and having that conversation.

Vice Mayor Lago: If we go back to when I first started talking about this, it's exactly what Commissioner Keon said. This is a discussion that sometimes is not better had on the dais like it is today. That's why I told you don't bring the artist. Let's have a discussion. We can have a workshop. We can be here for hours talking about conceptual art versus figurative art. What I -- I don't think it hurts anybody to go back to the drawing board and maybe look at different artists that have different, you know...

Commissioner Keon: Different formats.

Vice Mayor Lago: That work in different mediums.

Commissioner Keon: And maybe...

Vice Mayor Lago: Maybe you want a beautiful marble sculpture, which is easy to maintain, which you know, doesn't have issues with cleaning and all those kind of things, or fading, you know, over the lifetime of that sculpture. So, maybe we go back, and we look at different sculptors who can provide something which is maybe in the same conceptual vein but it's not as difficult to maintain as...

Commissioner Mena: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Lago: The glass.

Commissioner Keon: If it's bronze or whatever it is, but that it's a good bronze artist.

Vice Mayor Lago: If you want to buy...

Commissioner Keon: Because we've seen some examples...

Vice Mayor Lago: If you want to buy a Henry Moore...

Commissioner Keon: Of not very good.

Vice Mayor Lago: If you want to buy a Henry Moore, it's only a few million dollars...

Commissioner Keon: There you go.

Vice Mayor Lago: And then you could put it out there, you know.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Let's continue and this will be deferred.

Commissioner Keon: Well...

Vice Mayor Lago: It's not deferred.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I was going to...

Commissioner Mena: Well, it's not deferred.

Commissioner Keon: Discuss it first.

Commissioner Mena: Going to have a heart attack with Henry Moore.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It will be rejected. Do I hear a motion to...

City Attorney Ramos: If it's going to be rejected, there should be a motion taken.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah, I'll make the motion.

Unidentified Speaker: Second it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, to reject. There's a motion and a second. Will you call the roll?

City Clerk Urquia: Vice Mayor Lago?

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Commissioner Mena?

Commissioner Mena: No -- we're voting no, right?

Vice Mayor Lago: We're voting to defer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: To reject.

Commissioner Mena: No, no, no.

Commissioner Keon: No, no.

Commissioner Mena: We're not.

City Attorney Ramos: You're voting to...

Commissioner Mena: We're voting no.

City Attorney Ramos: Reject it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, we're voting no.

Vice Mayor Lago: I said...

Commissioner Keon: Rejecting this and ask them to go back and have a conversation.

Vice Mayor Lago: I said no. I said no from the beginning.

Commissioner Mena: I thought you were saying to...

Vice Mayor Lago: This is to reject, right?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We're saying no.

Commissioner Mena: Alright.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you for catching that.

Commissioner Mena: No. And I -- but I want to make clear -- because I didn't get an opportunity to say anything. I think it's a very nice piece of art, but that's not my issue.

Commissioner Keon: No.

Commissioner Mena: My issue -- I'm with Commissioner Keon -- is it's your building, as far as I'm concerned, and I want it to be something that you guys are happy with.

Commissioner Keon: That you're proud of.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Mena: And I don't want to ask an artist to do something outside of his...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wait, Commissioner. Make an explanation after the vote is taken.

Commissioner Mena: I will.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Commissioner Mena: If you had let me make it before, I would have loved to, but I didn't get a chance to.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Commissioner Mena: So, yeah, it's a no vote for me.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay. Miriam, just for clarification, they're voting to reject?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

City Attorney Ramos: Correct.

City Clerk Urquia: So, the vote should be yes?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's right.

Commissioner Keon: But it's to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We're voting to reject.

Commissioner Keon: We're voting to not accept, I guess.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

City Attorney Ramos: It was a motion to reject. Everyone who wishes...

Vice Mayor Lago: That's what I said.

City Attorney Ramos: To move to reject...

Vice Mayor Lago: That's why I said yes from the beginning.

City Attorney Ramos: Say yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Fors.

Vice Mayor Lago: And now...

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: I was voting on the resolution approving...

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: That's what's on the agenda.

Vice Mayor Lago: A hundred percent.