

**EXCERPT**

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
ARTS ADVISORY PANEL MEETING  
Wednesday, March 30, 2016 11:30 a.m.  
Historical Resources & Cultural Arts, Conference Room  
2327 Salzedo St., Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>
	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
Silvia Karman Cubiñá*											E
Dr. Carol Damian	P	-	-	-	P	P	-	-	-	P	P
Dr. Jill Deupi	P	-	-	-	E	P	-	-	-	E	P
Marijean Miyar	P	-	-	-	P	P	-	-	-	P	P
Juan Roselione-Valadez*											P
John Stuart	P	-	-		P	E	-	-	-	P	P
Freda Tschumy	E	-	-	-	P	E	-	-	-	P	E

LEGEND: A = Absent; P = Present; E = Excused; \* = New Member; ^= Resigned Member; - = No Meeting  
+ = Special Meeting

STAFF:

Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts

GUESTS:

Maria C. Longo; Fernando E. Menoyo; Maria de la Guardia; Rosario Marquardt, R & R Studios; Roberto Behar, R & R Studios; Jenny Ducret; Jorge Ortiz; Cesar Molina

MEETING RECORD / MINUTES PREPARATION: Catherine Cathers, Arts & Culture Specialist, Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Department

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Ms. Miyar called the Arts Advisory Panel meeting to order at 11:44 a.m.

DEVELOPER PROPOSAL FOR DONATED ART PLACED AT BALBOA PLAZA, WITH ARTIST (ACTION):

Ms. Cathers gave a brief background of the Panel's previous recommendation and City Commission approval to combine Art Acquisition fees from the two development projects of Beatrice Row and Valencia Townhouses, combining those monies to be used toward a proposed waiver of the Art in Public Places fee in lieu of donation of an artwork to be placed within Balboa Plaza. She further explained that the proposal being presented will require review from additional City departments and Boards.

Artists Rosario Marquardt and Roberto Behar with R & R Studios thanked the Panel and architects for the opportunity and began their presentation to the Panel. Mr. Behar led the presentation, noting the artist's history of bringing art and architecture together through previous work and discussed the relationship of their work to each site, its community, and their own personal aesthetics.

Mr. Behar continued with his introduction of the proposed donation installation titled "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and showed images, including inspirations that led to the proposal. A map was presented with the proposed location within Balboa Plaza. Mr. Behar described the artwork as what appears to be an over-sized sofa, thirty (30) feet long, over four (4) feet high, designed in scale to the existing banyan tree behind it and with two large scale lamps on either side of the sofa, also designed by the artists, aligned with the fountain located in the plaza and made of oolite stone, furthering a connection to Coral Gables. The artists are proposing to include trees planted along the east and west edges of the plaza to give a sense of enclosure.

Mr. Behar described the artist's work as "social sculpture" driven by concepts of participation in everyday life. The sofa takes the shape of a conventional sofa, symbolizing a shift of indoor to outdoor, using the sofa as place of encounters, meetings, a place for photographs, a stage. The artists went on to say that while the sofa appears gigantic, using details to make it look oversized, it is designed to human scale and is easy to interact with.

Dr. Damian asked for clarification of the materials. Ms. Marquardt stated that Josh Billig with Rockers Stone will be the contractor in charge of the artwork's fabrication. The artists clarified that they are in the process of determining the method used for the construction and went on to say that it will not be solid; it will be pieced together, possibly with blocks of stone. At this time, the artists stated, the proposed method is to fabricate the bench using a thick stone veneer, filling it with another stone rather than concrete, which is not suitable for this project.

Dr. Deupi asked about the site and its current use. She mentioned the wide streets surrounding the site and questioned how people get to the space. The artists responded that the area is fairly large and the boundaries (of the plaza) are being expanded as part of the architecture of the project. At this time, there is no seating within the plaza.

Mr. Menoyo stated that affected residents have maintained a priority to increase the area's green space, feeling that the plaza is currently too small. In response to that intent, the present boundaries are being increased.

Ms. Miyar commented on the relationship of the plaza to downtown Coral Gables and the area becoming increasingly more pedestrian. She shared her observation of people walking along the golf course and noted the compelling interaction between the urban and residential areas.

Mr. Stuart added that the proposal welcomes families and activates the space in an interesting way. He asked how infrastructure within the space could be further developed, suggesting the addition of electrical plug-ins for computer use, Wi-Fi access, and consideration of trash receptacle placement so as not to make the space appear cluttered.

The artists and Panel members discussed how the space will appear at night and the possibility of illuminating the trees.

Mr. Roselione-Valadez asked about sofa surface pitch, allowing for run-off, and encouraged the artists to include this within the engineering. The artists concurred.

Discussion continued amongst the Panel, artists, and developers regarding the types of trees, with the Panel stating an interest to incorporate native plants within the design.

Ms. de la Guardia provided further information regarding pedestrian traffic in the area. She stated that due to the difficulty of crossing Biltmore Way, pedestrians currently use the plaza as their crossing point. She noted significant features of the site, including: a natural transition between the urban/commercial and residential areas; the introduction from multi-family residences to single-family homes; a great meeting and stopping place; the banyan tree within the plaza acting as an end point of Biltmore Way and introducing the greenery of the neighborhood. Ms. de la Guardia spoke about the consideration and decision to place the sofa framing a green view, including the mushroom topped banyan trees on the golf course.

The Panel continued its discussion, appreciating the sense of permanence and balance between nature and man-made elements. Further discussion revisited the issue of technology availability, park furniture placement so as not to conflict with the artwork, and how best to keep the site clean and well kept.

A brief discussion included the Panel's concern about how the cross walks will be addressed, with a recommendation to use safety methods other than a traffic light.

Discussion concluded and the following motion was made:

**Mr. Stuart made a motion to approve the artwork as proposed, moving it forward with a recommendation to consider (street, sidewalk, and on site) lighting, electrical, and infrastructure (concepts discussed) as the City considers appropriate. Dr. Deupi seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

The Panel thanked the developers and artists, who thanked the Panel and left the meeting.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dona M. Spain  
Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director