



DRAFT

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES
ARTS ADVISORY PANEL MEETING
Wednesday, June 25, 2020 9:00 a.m.**

**Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Department
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

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| MEMBERS | A | S | O | N | D | J | F | M | A | M | J | J + |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Nelson de León* | | | P | - | P | P | P | - | - | - | P | P |
| Dr. Jill Deupi | E | - | E | - | P | E | E | - | - | - | P | P |
| Emily MacDonald-Korth | P | - | P | - | P | E | P | - | - | - | P | P |
| Jacek Kolasiński | P | - | P | - | P | P | E | - | - | - | P | P |
| Marijean Miyar* | | - | P | - | P | P | P | - | - | - | P | P |
| Juan Roselione-Valadez | P | - | E | - | P | P | P | - | - | - | P | P |
| Manny Mato* | | | | | P | P | P | - | - | - | P | P |

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

STAFF:

Kara Kautz, Interim Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director
Catherine Cathers, Arts & Culture Specialist
Carlos Mindreau, City Architect

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

Dr. Deupi called the Arts Advisory Panel meeting to order at 9:14 a.m.

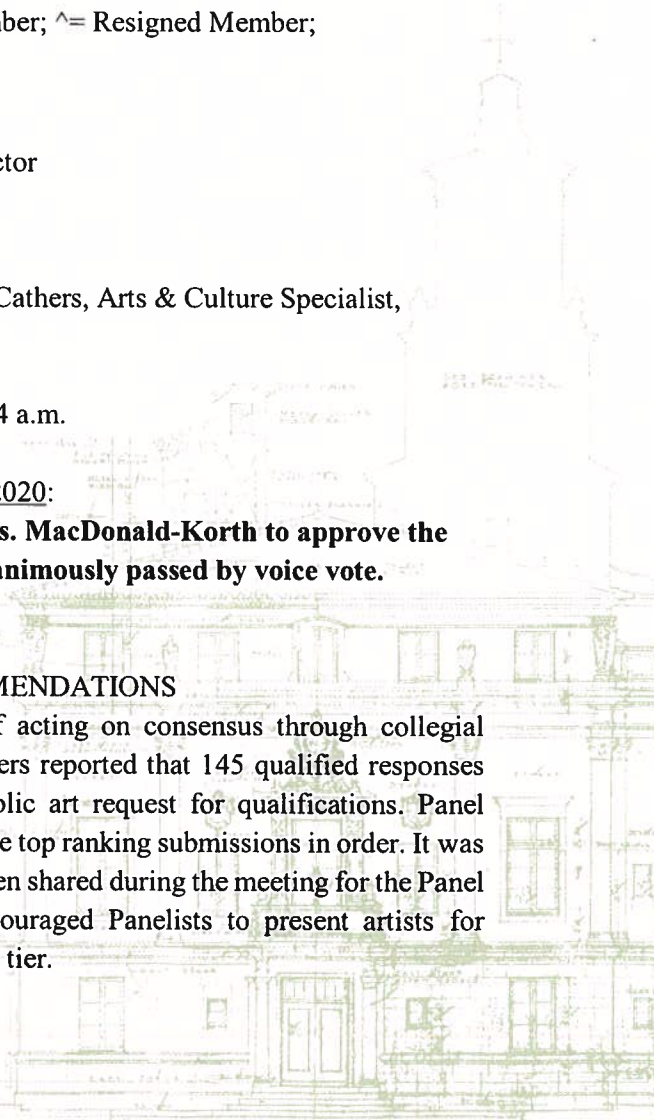
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS FEBRUARY 26, 2020:

A motion was made by Mr. Mato and seconded by Ms. MacDonald-Korth to approve the meeting minutes of February 26, 2020, which was unanimously passed by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING – RFQ REVIEW & RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff reviewed the format typically followed by this Panel of acting on consensus through collegial discussion for review of qualifications and proposals. Ms. Cathers reported that 145 qualified responses were submitted in response to the Public Safety Building public art request for qualifications. Panel members submitted individual scores in advance and discussed the top ranking submissions in order. It was noted that the Submittable online platform was used and was screen shared during the meeting for the Panel to see submissions throughout the discussion. Dr. Deupi encouraged Panelists to present artists for discussion that they felt strongly about, but fell outside of the top tier.



Dr. Deupi opened the discussion, asking Panel members to weigh in on the caliber of artist they wish to recommend moving forward. It was noted that many artists submitted who work in the public realm that may not meet the standard sought by the City. Staff commented on the Commission's commitment to bringing in the highest level of artist; however, some of those artists may or may not be the best fit for working together with the police and fire public safety officials, which is what is wanted for this opportunity. Staff continued, saying they spoke with the police and fire chiefs who agreed with the intent to provide a narrowed list of artists to interview. Ms. Cathers said the desire is to have an artist that can work on a deep level with public safety officials prior to creating a proposal that remains artist driven and reflects the heart of the public safety profession. Having said that, she said it needs to be an artist that can work at the level and of the quality the City strives for.

Ms. Kautz shared her screen to present the artists submissions and the Panel's scores.

The Panel briefly discussed figurative work. Staff stated that a discussion was had with the chiefs about whether to consider figurative work and they appeared receptive to considering other forms.

The Panel began with the top ranked artist, Ivan Toth Depena. The Panel was reminded that the Commission voted against a previous proposal by this artist for the same opportunity and decided not to include him in the final recommended list.

Rosario Marquadt was next and although already represented in the City, the panel agreed that the artist's work meets the request of police and fire for an artist that creates work that is easily understood, easy to relate to, and easy to access. Dr. Deupi commented on the whimsy of the artist's work with serious subjects.

Ms. Cathers stated that the names of the fallen officers are to be included within the work and there is a preference for a water feature. Mr. Kolasiński asked about the use of the plaza and staff stated that it is too small for large ceremonial rituals; however, it will be used when addressing the media; the artwork may be visible in the background.

The artwork of Rob Ley was discussed and the Panel agreed that if the artwork is not figurative, it needs to be allegorical, beautiful, and interesting. While this artist's work was thought of as more decorative than desired, the Panel felt there was enough potential to consider him.

Norman Lee was noted as having previously completed first responder monuments of note and was approved.

While the Panel appreciated the work of Xavier Cortada, they did not feel he was a good fit for this project.

The Panel continued with Adam Kuby and agreed that he has the potential to create work that is expressive without being literal and his work has a high aesthetic quality.

Prometheus Foundry was discussed and did not move forward.

The work of Margo Sawyer was thought to be best for another opportunity.

The Panel agreed that the work of Jephson Robb was elegant, refined, and poetic.

Mark Reigelman was noted for approaching projects based on their own merit and could work well with the public safety professionals. Ms. Cathers commented that he spoke at a conference she attended last year and agreed.

Members of the Panel agreed on recommending Matthew Mazzotta.

The high quality of Nick Ervnick's work was discussed and he was approved.

The Panel discussed the merits of working with Resa Blatman, who primarily works in 2D. It was agreed that her work could transfer easily to laser cut material. It was also noted that the list, up to this point, is lacking in representation by women.

Jim Hirschfield was reviewed and approved.

The Panel discussed John K. Melvin, who also approaches projects individually, but typically works with recycled materials.

The Panel discussed the merits of a diverse list and took a deeper look at the remaining top ranked artists. MIIM + JW was noted as a team of landscape architect artists and was approved.

Additional artists were reviewed but not added. With no further discussion, Ms. Cathers read the approved recommended artist names to forward to the police and fire chiefs and the following motion was made:

Mr. Mato made a motion recommending the following artists for Police and Fire to consider for the Public Safety Building public art project: Rosario Marquardt, Rob Ley, Norman Lee, Adam Kuby, Jephson Robb, Mark Reigelman, Matthew Mazzotta, Nick Ervnick, Resa Blatman, Jim Hirschfield, John K. Melvin, MIIM + JW. Ms. Miyar seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

b. MURALS ON THE MILE – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Members of the Economic Development department joined the meeting to present a project proposal for "Murals on the Mile." Ms. Cathers introduced staff members: Julian Perez, director; Belkys Perez, assistant director; and Francesca Valdes, business development coordinator. Solanch Lopez, assistant to the city manager, was also on the call. Ms. Perez introduced Mr. Perez, who thanked the Panel for the opportunity to present this project. He stated that the project is an economic development initiative that is identified with several other projects to help businesses bring people to the downtown area and re-activate it.

Ms. Perez continued with the presentation and described the project as “Murals on the Mile”, meant to drive economic development in a safe, effective, and socially distant manner. She said that Ms. Valdes participated in an international downtown association webinar recently and the president and CEO made the statement that “public spaces are the new anchor tenants downtown.” What that means, she said, is that (downtowns) are no longer looking at big box stores to be the drivers to downtowns and are looking to open spaces where people can be outdoors and feel safer.

The program goal, Ms. Perez continued, is to bring safe and socially distant activations to downtown and to generate pedestrian traffic and economic growth. These murals, she said, are meant to be uplifting; they’re supposed to be very bright, and really put a smile on your face, with a focus on attracting our residents back to downtown. Ms. Perez said this is a sensitive time and although businesses are open, (the City) isn’t seeing the amount of traffic back to restart our economy. She said that as a commuter area, when people drive by, when people see all the murals, it will bring them back and have the effect of wanting to come back and spend time here. In addition, she said, the subject matter of the murals will resonate with residents and visitors and rekindle the pride of place of community that residents are used to. Ms. Perez mentioned the benefits of having wide sidewalks, a safe city, and a clean city where we can provide a pedestrian experience in a safe and socially distanced manner.

Ms. Perez introduced Ms. Valdes who continued with the presentation. Ms. Valdes stated that (the City) is primed for the right kind of downtown experience with a streetscape that is perfect for dining and the pedestrian experience. She said the well-placed murals can serve as a perfect marketing strategy not only because it can promote the City’s brand but will provide our community with a colorful and uplifting experience that people will remember and share. That means, she continued, we have an opportunity to have a viral moment on social media; people will want to take their pictures in front of the murals and want to share them and will make the movement grow. It will bring people from outside our residents and downtown workers into the community, she said, because they don’t want to feel like they’re missing out, they’ll want to feel a part of it.

Ms. Valdes gave examples of other cities that are well known for this type of activation, including the Cuban coffee theme “Greetings from Key West,” postcard mural outside a small establishment in Key West FL. She said this mural is so widely synonymous with the City that people don’t leave town without taking their picture with this mural; it has become a community moment with people having their holiday pictures, wedding pictures, baby announcements, etc. for residents and visitors alike. Ms. Valdes then showed a mural collection from Austin, TX which is, she said, so well known for their murals that tours are conducted bringing people through the local businesses as an economic driver for their downtown. The last group Ms. Valdes presented was from Nashville, TN where they have (a wall with painted) angel wings. She commented that people do not go to Nashville without waiting in line to have their picture taken in front of these wings.

Four different sites were presented and Ms. Valdes spoke in detail about each one. The first location, she said, is in the middle of Miracle Mile where the current Starbucks is located; the second one is at the old Starbucks at Miracle Mile and Ponce de Leon; and the third and fourth walls located at McBride Plaza.

The design concept and traffic counts were given for each location. Wall #1 was presented with the phrase “Smile You’re in Coral Gables” at Salzedo Street and Miracle Mile. Ms. Valdes said the focal point of this mural is a positive phrase featuring the name of the City as a prominent part of the design and has daily vehicular traffic of 35,000 cars. Monthly pedestrian counts for November/December were close to 270,000 per day, she said, and in April went down to 98,000 and in May up to 140,000. Ms. Valdes emphasized trying to bring these numbers back up again and bring people back into the downtown. Wall #2 was presented with the phrase “Life is Sweeter in the Gables” at one of the most used streets in Coral Gables, also used as a commuter road. She said there are currently 49,000 cars per day with pedestrian traffic for November/December in the 250,000 range, down to 87,000 per day in April, now back up to about 139,000. Wall #3 at McBride Plaza, Ms. Valdes said, is an iconic hometown destination mural “Greetings from Coral Gables.” This larger than life postcard is meant to be an anchoring mural, giving the opportunity for the community to pose with the mural and share it on social media. Ms. Valdes said the traffic counts here are about 32,500 vehicles with pedestrian counts at 230-240,000 in November/December, down to 85,000 in April and back up to 110,000. She specified that it’s important to note that these are inspiration images, not necessarily the final images, and it’s about the flora and fauna of Coral Gables, not promoting any other city than the Gables. She said Wall #4 is (designed) as the “Gallery of the Gables.” The wall has delineations through it. Ms. Valdes said that rather than trying to cover it as one mural moment, it will be segmented into 6 mini murals which will be a visual companion to the larger one of the postcard-like setting. She continued, saying these will describe the City Beautiful’s heritage through local flora and fauna and recognizable landmarks. She provided examples such as Coral Gables’ beginning as a grapefruit plantation in one area; the beautiful banyan trees that are known for our coverage in another area; elements of the Biltmore Hotel, the Venetian Pool, and the fun and lovely colorful Umbrella Sky project in yet another. She described the project as allowing a feeling of a sense of place, a sense of community, and an understanding of who we are.

Lastly, Ms. Valdes spoke about the project vendor, Chalk and Brush. She said the company does a lot of work in South Florida and are Coral Gables residents. The husband and wife team, she said, has an understanding and love of Coral Gables, knows the aesthetic, and are dedicated to making sure Coral Gables shines through this project without it emulating any other community.

Dr. Deupi thanked the staff for their presentation and asked for direction so the Panel could be as helpful as possible. Mr. Perez responded that the purpose of the presentation was to inform the Panel and bring them up to speed with the project, the goals of the project, and the intent, which is to activate the business community during this difficult time and promote economic development. She welcomed any input the Panel could give.

Dr. Deupi thanked her and said she acknowledged that (the Panel and the Economic Development department) speak different languages, stating the charge of the Panel is to identify and evaluate fine art, this being something very different. She continued, sharing her opinion that it’s a bit optimistic to think that these will be drivers to bring people back to Coral Gables. She clarified, saying if someone goes to Barnes & Noble, they may stop and take a photo. Dr. Deupi suggested considering a top, iconic artist to create a work that urges people to get in their car to drive to Coral Gables during this very difficult moment. Ms. Perez said the project is not intended to be art driven but wanted to bring it to the Panel as one that also looks at pieces and activations in downtown.

Discussion continued and Wynwood was mentioned, with a recommendation to speak to the Museum of Graffiti. It was understood that the project is not trying to re-create Wynwood, but that the Museum has an understanding of the public's interaction with murals and could be helpful.

Ms. MacDonald-Korth asked if the murals are permanent or will change. Mr. Perez responded that they would not stay for a long time. He said they wanted to look at what Coral Gables is, what the best murals are that reflect Coral Gables, reflect the history of Coral Gables, and reflects who we are.

Due to the strong views of art in the City, the Panel asked if the project had been presented to the Commission yet and if so, what the feedback was. Mr. Perez said it has not gone forward yet.

Ms. Miyar commented that they're reminiscent of 1940s/50s postcards and agreed that it may get people's attention to take a selfie on their way somewhere else, but not necessarily have a lot of impact of people coming to visit the businesses on Miracle Mile, noting that it's still a very difficult moment. Mr. Mato agreed that there is an opportunity, but the amount of traffic this would draw would be little, and didn't see it as having a broad reach, which is important right now, saying people want to venture out for a purpose. Ms. Perez stated that (the City is able to) measure traffic on the street and will be able tell if it is successful or not. She said it's a good thing that we have metrics and can go back and analyze whether this made a difference or not.

Mr. Kolasinski stated another thing to consider is that murals have a position as a medium often connected to a discourse, (such as) ideas of dissent of some kind. Whatever is put up, he said, will be evaluated within the context of what it means politically, whatever that statement is that is attached to the agenda of the City and needs to be very carefully thought out. Dr. Deupi agreed, also noting Ms. Miyar's comment of the difficult moment we are still in, and whether (staff) has reflected on wanting to acknowledge or thank or honor frontline heroes. She reflected that it may come off as a tone deaf to have bright, sunny, business as usual messaging rather than something that acknowledges where we are and uplifts the community in a different way.

Another aspect of murals, Mr. Kolasinski said, is that they set a precedent and may bring uninvited "artwork" afterward. He cautioned that they need to understand that it will open a door for some other activities. Ms. MacDonald-Korth agreed that graffiti will be a problem and as a conservator, there are a lot of considerations that need to be made when putting up murals, especially those that are meant to be clean, pretty, and, convey happy messages. She suggested a strong graffiti mitigation plan. Dr. Deupi offered to put staff in touch with the founding directors of the Museum of Graffiti in Wynwood, saying that while this is something very different, they may have very helpful insights in terms of messaging and public interaction.

The Panel thanked Mr. Perez and the staff of the Economic Development department for sharing their project with the Panel. Staff thanked the Panel and left the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. ART BASEL 2020 ARTIST & PROPOSAL

The Panel discussed the proposal presented on June 24th for this year's temporary exhibition by artist Kiki Smith and in association with Art Basel Miami Beach. Ms. Cathers reported that Art Basel confirmed their support of working with Ms. Smith. Ms. Cathers continued, saying Ms. Smith would not travel at this time; however, an effort would be made to include her presence with the exhibition and event.

The Panel strongly supported the proposal and with no further discussion the following motion was made:

A motion was made by Mr. Kolasiński to recommend Kiki Smith and the proposal as presented for a 2020-2021 exhibition and as the 2020 Miami Art Week/Art Basel project. Mr. de Leon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

b. AIPP WAIVER REQUEST, THE PLAZA – MICHELE OKA DONER

The Panel discussed The Plaza development Art in Public Places waiver request of a proposal by artist Michele Oka Doner as presented on June 24, 2020.

Dr. Deupi asked if there was further discussion from remarks made on the previous day. Mr. Roselione-Valadez stated that although he was disappointed, he was willing to move the request forward. Ms. Miyar asked about the relationship of the different proposed artworks to each other. Staff responded that the intent is for the development to have an art corridor. With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

Ms. Miyar made a motion recommending approval of the waiver request to incorporate artwork as presented by artist Michele Oka Doner into The Plaza development project. Mr. Kolasiński seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

c. PRE-QUALIFIED ARTIST REQUESTS – THOMAS HOUSEAGO

The Panel received pre-qualification materials for artist Thomas Houseago. Panel members reviewed the materials prior to the meeting and agreed that the artist presented met the criteria. With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

Mr. Roselione-Valadez made a motion to accept Thomas Houseago as pre-qualified artists. Ms. Miyar seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

d. AIPP WAIVER REQUEST, THE PLAZA – JEAN MICHEL OTHONIEL

The Panel continued their discussion from June 24 regarding the proposal submitted by The Plaza for a work of art by artist Jean Michel Othoniel.

Ms. Miyar commented that she has seen the artist's fountains and found this one (less inspired), saying it didn't seem to have a lot of movement and the same repeating pieces. Mr. Kolasiński agreed, noting the symmetry of the piece while his other works have more unique elements.

Mr. Mato responded to the tiles saying they look dated. Ms. Cathers said the original treatment had a mirrored finish but was eliminated as an option due to maintenance concerns.

Mr. Kolasiński expressed concerns about water spraying onto the patio from the piece itself and wind.

Summarizing the Panel's thoughts, Dr. Deupi asked that comments be sent asking the artist to further consider the design of the beaded elements, making them distinct for this project and to further consider the tile treatment, encouraging use of the artist's signature tiles or a mirrored surface. The Panel agreed they would like to see other options.

e. AIPP WAIVER REQUEST, JAGUAR LAND ROVER – FABIO VIALE

The Panel continued their discussion from June 24 regarding the proposal submitted by Jaguar Land Rover for a work of art by artist Fabio Viale.

The Panel expressed comments including feeling a lack of relevance to the area, whether it's a suitable public art project, the commercial relationship to the development project, and material concerns regarding maintenance in this climate and location. Mr. Kolasiński wondered about the Gothic interior structure and its connection to Jaguar.

While understanding the site specificity and vernacular setting, it was agreed that the artwork should not read as advertising. Panel members referred to the large tooth on Coral Way indicating a dentist office. Mr. de León mentioned that Carrera marble and tires are a recurrent theme and material of the artist.

Discussion continued about the material. The Panel discussed the high maintenance of the material and how to enforce the attention needed to keep it clean. Some Panelists were in favor of another artist altogether and others felt another form could be considered with the owner understanding the responsibility of maintaining the marble. It was also noted that vegetation and nearby trees should be considered as they also contribute to staining the material.

f. AIPP WAIVER REQUEST, SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING – MICHAEL KALISH

The Panel continued their discussion from June 24 regarding the proposal submitted by Sunrise Senior Living for a work of art by artist Michael Kalish.

Discussion started with comments about wanting content that is closer to South Florida. Ms. Cathers reported that Mr. Austin followed up after the June 24th meeting and verified the artist's intent to use local floral. He also said, she added, that they were expecting and open to comments from the Panel.

Conversation continued with Mr. Kolasiński asking about the entrapment of birds and debris in the structure. Ms. Cathers said Mr. Austin responded to this as well and he said the piece will have less massing and be modular for easier maintenance.

The Panel agreed that the work appears disconnected from the building and requires further thought regarding integration with the site. Different options were discussed about whether the work should speak

to the architecture or have an individual focus. Overall, the Panel agreed that the artist could move forward, assuming a regional floral motif or something more poetic and original that is better integrated with the architecture and surroundings.

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES UPDATES:

Ms. Cathers provided an update on current art in public places projects.

CITY COMMISSION ITEMS:

There were no City Commission items.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no further discussion items.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

There were no items from the secretary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine J. Cathers
Arts & Culture Specialist