

EXCERPT

DRAFT

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 03, 2018 8:30 a.m.
Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Department
2327 Salzedo St., Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Table with 14 columns: MEMBERS, M, J, J, A, S, O, N+, D+, J, F, M, A, APPOINTED BY: and 10 rows of attendance data for various members.

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

STAFF:

Dona Spain, Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director
Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts

GUESTS:

Laura Russo, Esq.; Sandra Cardona and Robert Hazard with Hersha Hospitality; Jorge Navarro,
Greenberg Traurig; Zaba Castro, Greenberg Traurig; Jerad Graham, NP International

RECORDING AND PREPARATION OF MINUTES: Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist,
Historical Resources and Cultural Arts

Dr. Roth called the Cultural Development Board meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. MERRICK PARK HOTEL

Laura Russo introduced herself and the developers of the Merrick Park Hotel, Sandra Cardona and Robert Hazard with Hersha Hospitality, which is proposing to incorporate public art within the development. Ms. Cathers reported that the proposal has gone before the Arts Advisory Panel, which made a

recommendation to the Cultural Development Board to accept the proposal presented by the developer for artwork by artist Michele Oka Doner.

The Board was provided with proposal materials and Ms. Cardona began the presentation stating that they felt lucky to collaborate with an artist on this project and selected Michele Oka Doner, who is from this community and has four decades of art in a wide spectrum. Early on, she said, the artist worked with the developers on a piece that would be integrated into the building and would be a lasting architectural element – to take the entryway and treat it as a portal. Ms. Cardona went on to state the location as the most public transitional moment, the entryway to the property

Ms. Cardona described the site of the artwork as a prominent entryway with an old-world marquee and grand drop off zone. The art, she said, developed a strong conceptual base of fusing art with the portal of the hotel. Much of Ms. Oka Doner's work, she said, is rooted in nature and so she took the concept of extracting the cellular structure of a tree and created a geometric pattern; her original concept was to make a gilded metal screen (with this pattern) and attach it to the entire entryway. Ms. Cardona stated that the artist started with this, and then considered the attachments and physical interaction and durability; she wanted to make sure it would be lasting. Then, she said, Ms. Oka Doner took the concept of the screen and instead, embedded it. She asked the Board to imagine a fusing of the material into the glazing to get this pattern; the art then becomes one with the entire entryway and has different looks during the day and night. A rendered image of the building and artwork at night was shown.

Ms. Cathers showed a sample of the work. Technically, Ms. Cardona stated, the doors are a portion of the entire entryway and within the doorway it become operable, but is really one piece.

Ms. Cardona spoke about the door pulls (handles) as seed pods, which draws references to the natural aspects of Coral Gables and is a more literal moment. She asked to imagine over time, as in Europe, the pulls becoming connected with the use and activity of the doorway.

Now, Ms. Cardona said, the project is at the schematic stage. The studio worked with a manufacturing company to vet the compliance with hurricane codes and they feel very comfortable with the execution and that it will look exactly like it is proposed.

Ms. Cardona completed her presentation and Dr. Roth asked the Board if there were any questions.

Mr. Pantin asked what stage the development is in. Ms. Russo responded that plans are in the review process and the hotel has gone to final BOA with construction drawings in process. Mr. Pantin then asked when the project is breaking ground. Mr. Hazard answered that after breaking ground it will be about an eighteen (18) month process.

Dr. Alvarez-Perez asked if there is protection from any changes to the artwork, since it is a piece of the building, and asked what happens if something happens to the building, what happens to the artwork. Ms. Cathers stated that per code, the piece remains with the building. She went on to detail that the property owner is the owner of the piece and the piece transfers with the property owner. Dr. Alvarez-Perez asked for confirmation that the piece does not belong to the City. Ms. Cathers responded it does not belong to the City and fulfills the requirement for Art in Public Places. Dr. Roth explained that if a developer wants to incorporate artwork into their project, it's brought before the Arts Advisory Panel and then this Board,

which makes a recommendation to the City Commission.

Mr. Perez asked the approximate cost to the developer. Ms. Russo responded that the cost is between \$400,000 and \$450,000 and that the cost is still developing with the cost being estimated between the studio fabricator and door manufacturer. She clarified that the project has been coordinating the assemblage of the two. Ms. Cathers noted that the fabricator of the glass is Franz Mayer out of Germany, a prominent, well-respected art glass fabricator, which works on public art projects all over the world.

Mr. Perez asked about the percent for art fee. Ms. Cathers stated that the developer will be completing an affidavit verifying the cost of construction. The one percent will be determined based on that affidavit and instead of paying the one percent into the Art Acquisition fund; they are requesting a waiver to commission and place art.

Dr. Alvarez-Perez wondered why the City doesn't own the work, commenting that it is owned by the developer and if waiving a fee, the City doesn't have anything of permanence. Dr. Roth explained that it's in compliance with the code and this is one of the options for developers per the ordinance. Ms. Spain noted that it's unique and most art in public places fees are typically only linked to municipal projects. She went on to say that this is a way to have art that benefits the public and the developer's project. Ms. Cathers stated that the work needs to be accessible 24/7 and the cost toward the doorway and surround will need to be deducted from the fee waiver request. Ms. Cardona confirmed that they are aware of this and will follow up with a more definitive budget.

Dr. Alvarez-Perez asked that more funds be allocated to the artist. The Arts Advisory Panel, Ms. Cathers stated, requested the same thing. Ms. Cardona said she understood.

With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

Mr. Pantin made a motion recommending approval of the Art in Public Places waiver request by the Merrick Plaza Hotel development project to incorporate artwork by artist Michele Oka Doner into the Merrick Plaza Hotel plans as presented and as recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel. Mr. Perez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Discussion continued and Dr. Alvarez-Perez asked if the Ordinance can address the City maintaining ownership of artworks acquired through the Art in Public Places process. Dr. Roth discussed the benefits of incorporating artwork into development projects and Ms. Spain noted that it allows the opportunity to integrate artwork and if they start early enough, they can get an artist to work closely with the developer. She went on to state that the ordinance requires approval of the artist and design prior to the building permit being issued. Ms. Cathers added that if the cost of the artwork is below the percentage, the balance is deposited into the art acquisition fund.

Dr. Roth shared that prior to the ordinance going into effect, and the Arts Advisory Panel being established, works presented were of lower quality and once artwork is an integral part of the building, it's difficult to ask the City to own it. The Board discussed the maintenance required to keep artworks looking their best and Ms. Spain replied that the City can enforce property owners to maintain the work. The Board agreed that it's a fabulous piece.

Mr. Pantin brought up the example of the Arsht Center and how nice it is for people to see artwork as part of the building rather than free standing artworks that may otherwise get less notice.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dona M. Spain
Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director