



**DRAFT**

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
ARTS ADVISORY PANEL MEETING  
Wednesday, January 24, 2018 9:00 a.m.**

**HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT  
2327 Salzedo St., Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

*Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts*

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MEMBERS	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J
	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	18
Silvia Karman Cubiñá <sup>^</sup>	A	-	P	-	-	-	E	-	^	^	^	^
Dr. Carol Damian	P	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	-	P
Dr. Jill Deupi	E	-	E	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	-	P
Lauren Hall	P	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	-	E
Jacek Kolasiński*												P
Juan Roselione-Valadez	P	-	P	-	-	-	P	-	P	-	-	E
Freda Tschumy	E	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	P	-	-	P

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

**STAFF:**

Dona Spain, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director  
Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts  
Carlos Mindreau, City Architect

**GUESTS:**

Jorge Navarro, Greenberg Traurig; Zaba Castro, Greenberg Traurig; Charles Nolan, NP International;  
Jerad Graham, NP International

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

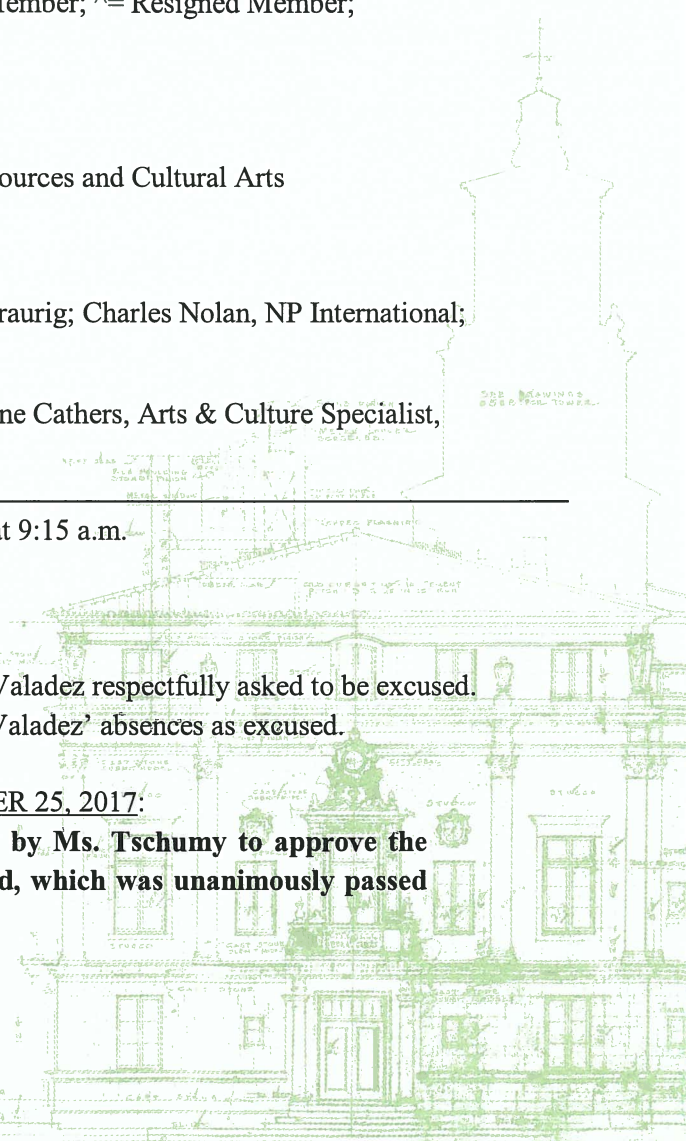
Dr. Damian called the Arts Advisory Panel meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

Jacek Kolasiński was warmly welcomed to the Panel.

The Panel was advised that Lauren Hall and Juan Roselione-Valadez respectfully asked to be excused.  
The Panel-as-a-whole accepted Ms. Hall and Mr. Roselione-Valadez' absences as excused.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD OCTOBER 25, 2017:**

**A motion was made by Dr. Deupi and seconded by Ms. Tschumy to approve the meeting minutes of October 25, 2017 as presented, which was unanimously passed by voice vote.**



DEVELOPER AIPP PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR GABLES STATION:

Ms. Cathers gave a brief introduction of the team presenting the art in public places concepts for the Gables Station mixed-use development project. She stated that the developer is proposing to work with two artists: Arturo Berned and Blessing Hancock. Arturo Berned, she stated, is being presented for consideration as a pre-qualified artist and Blessing Hancock is on the pre-qualified artist list.

Jorge Navarro, with Greenberg Traurig, introduced his colleague Zaba Castro, Charles Nolan as Chairman of NP International, and Jerad Graham as the Project Manager with NP International. Mr. Navarro provided background of the development project stating that it's a mixed use transit-oriented development approved by the City Commission and comprises a 4.5 acre block that fronts Ponce de Leon, is bordered by South Dixie Highway, and South Grand Avenue. The project, he said, is divided into three towers; it consists of ground floor retail with upper level hotel and residential units; includes enhancement of the abutting Underline; the creation of a linear park; and includes over two (2) acres of community open space that includes plazas, courtyards, paseos, and arcades. He went on to say it's a pedestrian friendly design with high visibility to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Mr. Graham presented a large plan view of the development for the Panel to reference during the presentation and discussion.

Mr. Nolan introduced himself and provided background on the developer's choice to partner with Burnet Fine Art & Advisory based in Minneapolis. Mr. Nolan stated that he is originally from Minneapolis and is familiar with the gallery owners and the advisor, Jennifer Burnet. He shared the background of Ralph Burnet, recognized as one of the top 200 collectors in the U.S., and Ms. Burnet's experience and background as a prominent gallery owner, Walker Art Center board member, and procurement advisor for hotel, private, and public art collections. Mr. Navarro stated that Ms. Burnet toured Coral Gables and the property in August, 2017.

**Arturo Berned**

Mr. Navarro introduced the first concept by artist Arturo Berned. He stated that this work would be placed at the southwest corner of the property as an important gateway at the intersection of Grand Avenue and South Dixie Highway, next to the linear park, by an open plaza, and where people are biking and walking. Mr. Navarro said the intent is to create a powerful sculpture people will see, further stating that this artist was selected because of his experience with large-scale outdoor sculptures and his upcoming distinction in the arts community. Mr. Navarro provided details on recent acquisitions of the artist's work worldwide. He stated they would like to obtain one of Berned's pieces to create a sense of space and visual connection between the park and busy intersection. The proposed piece, he said, will be similar to previous work, fabricated in steel, approximately eight (8) to eleven (11) feet in width and height, and installed flush to the ground with up-lighting.

Mr. Nolan detailed the process of selecting Arturo Berned. He said the development team considered internationally recognized artists and looked for someone who would be sought out by people who have an appreciation for sculpture. He went on to state that the intersection, which is heavily trafficked, needs a strong piece visible to driving by, yet be a piece that people could seek out and interact with. Mr. Navarro added that Mr. Berned is an artist who is gaining traction and expressed that it's the right time to acquire

this artist's work. He also mentioned that the work is easy to maintain and most of the artist's works are displayed outside in different exhibitions.

Dr. Deupi asked if the artist has outdoor sculptures displayed in South Florida. The development team responded no.

Ms. Tschumy asked if the sculpture being proposed would be in corten steel. Mr. Navarro said the artist is working on a new piece in corten that is being considered. Mr. Nolan stated a preference for corten, as it has a softer look. Dr. Deupi responded that corten pieces have been problematic in the UM collection and they don't do well in this environment due to corrosion and touchpoints. Ms. Tschumy shared that the piece she did at the University Station is doing fine; however, it is not interacting with water and is somewhat protected so people are not touching it. Dr. Deupi agreed and said landscaping is a consideration as well as noting areas such as joints where water can seep in or collect. The Panel continued discussing the importance of the surrounding area, the type of foundation used, and how the site and sculpture will be maintained. Mr. Graham stated that another consideration for the location of this artist's work is that it's a large open space and does not have key pedestrian activation.

Dr. Deupi asked the development team to speak about the aesthetics of the building towers. Mr. Graham stated that the towers are neutral, almost white in color with Tower A having multiple levels with a two-story courtyard, outdoor seating and palm trees. He added that each balcony will have pillars and strong features.

Ms. Spain asked for further clarification on the material choice of corten over stainless steel. Mr. Nolan responded that they are open to either, and their hope is to get approval of the artist to determine the best piece. He added that corten may be more appealing to the general population. The Panel and staff did not necessarily agree.

Mr. Navarro stated the principals guiding the development team's selection as: a strong piece that is geometric by an artist that is identifiable and sought out.

Ms. Cathers indicated features around the project to the Panel, including adjacent developments, the gas station, and the sculpture across from the property on Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Dr. Deupi asked why the original idea of a fountain was transitioned to a static sculpture, stating that she liked the idea of a fountain at that location. Mr. Graham stated that fountains were removed from the original Underline design and at this location to maintain the connection between the development and Underline. He added that the Underline team suggested not including a water feature due to the activity it may attract.

The development team discussed the inner level courtyard and arcade, providing details of finishes and the connection to U.S. 1. Mr. Nolan expressed how the developers looked at the two locations best suited for public art and established a clear distinction between the locations. The courtyard area, he said, is where pedestrians would hang out in a more intimate and interactive location and the end plaza, he described as a strong, more visual location that people experience while driving, riding, or walking by. Mr. Nolan also noted that the end plaza is an important statement piece as a gateway to the City and a

gateway to the project, adding that there's a dynamic energy between the two works with each selected to compliment the area and encourage people to enjoy the art.

Mr. Nolan described the area under the Metrorail, the Underline, as a large area for pedestrian congregation and that U.S.1, because of the traffic, has a beautiful façade but is not a pedestrian façade. In accessing the buildings on the Ponce side, he said, pedestrians will feel pulled in to the park and the project. The development team also discussed parking access and traffic flow.

### **Blessing Hancock**

The development team then discussed the selection of pre-qualified artist Blessing Hancock and her proposed concept. They provided background on the artist and her unique experience working with communities and neighborhoods.

Mr. Navarro shared one of the conditions of approval from the City Commission for this project is to incorporate a work of art that recognizes contributions Bahamian families made to the Coral Gables community. He noted that Ms. Hancock recently completed a downtown Minneapolis project, competing with over two hundred artists. For that project, he said, Ms. Hancock incorporated words from local poets into her artwork as a series of globes. Mr. Navarro showed examples of the project and said Ms. Hancock includes input from the community, expressing the history and culture in her work. The team, he said, wants her to reach out to the Bahamian community to create an artwork inspired in a similar light.

Mr. Nolan added that this artist is the perfect solution to what the project will become: a pedestrian active place, about the community as a whole. He mentioned the project's commitment to activate the Underline, saying it's a regional opportunity to bring people to the project to interact; and what better way to complement and supplement it then by bringing in an artist who integrates the community's voice into her artwork. Ms. Hancock's art, he said, is intimate and works during the day and at night, complimenting what the project is trying to achieve.

Dr. Deupi commented that the Hancock concept hits all the right buttons. She went on to express concerns about the interest level of the Berned piece and asked if they would consider reversing the sculptures. She commented that the inner courtyard will be activated and having something more static and monumental could work, noting that the Hancock piece is more dynamic, interesting, colorful, and could enliven the area at the end of the property.

Mr. Navarro responded that the intent for the end plaza space is to have something monumental by a world-class artist. He said the courtyard is a very large area being designed as a gateway and landmark entrance. Mr. Nolan added that the dynamics at the intersection make it a difficult place for people to hang out and traditionally, once past a marquee entrance point, elements are more human in scale. He emphasized the corner as the marquee and the interior courtyard as a place where they want people to be.

Dr. Deupi suggested that since it's more of a drive by, the developer may wish to think of something brighter, more eye-catching, something that makes a statement and is more interesting. She expressed that the piece as lovely, but unless you can see it and interact with it, it doesn't hold much interest. Although it's an elegant work, she said, it blends in and people may not notice it. Dr. Deupi added if the goal is to

have a marquee feature that says “I am here, this is here, come see more”, they may wish to think differently.

Mr. Nolan expressed appreciation for the comments and the points, asking how to make the end plaza more of a marquee, whether through landscaping, a water feature, a combination, or something else. Mr. Navarro, responded that if the Panel approves the artist, they can work with him and come back to the Panel with something more substantial.

Dr. Damian thanked the team for their presentation. The development team thanked the Panel and left the meeting.

The Panel continued their discussion, starting with the artist pre-qualification of Arturo Berned. Dr. Damian commented on the artist’s solid credentials and all agreed. With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

**Dr. Deupi made a motion to include Arturo Bernerd as a pre-qualified artist. Ms. Tshumy seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

Continuing the discussion, Mr. Kolasiński commented that the larger plaza needs to further address the site specificity of the work while Ms. Hancock’s work with the community has a tangible, historical position. All agreed.

The Panel as-a-whole asked that the developers take their comments into consideration before the work proceeds. The Panel discussed the sense of the community and the importance of having a connection to Coral Gables. Comments included rethinking the reason for a piece at the large plaza and if so, making it truly a monumental piece; consider the validity of a static sculpture activating the space just because it’s there; the work should be bright and impactful; the sculpture will be viewed primarily from vehicular traffic and should be big and simple; the reference to the Bahamian culture is hidden and community members will not see it looking across U.S. 1; interesting landscaping could add a lot; in addition to vehicular traffic, the underutilized space is an opportunity to create an experience and foster interaction of how people enjoy the space.

Overall, the Panel agreed that there are significant concerns with the Berned piece and would like the developer to consider another artist or ask the artist to come back with something more monumental, brighter, or colorful.

Mr. Mindreau stated that it would be helpful for the developer to provide site specific imagery to better visualize the context of the location.

NEW BUSINESS:

**a. Carlos Cruz-Diez Crosswalk**

Ms. Cathers shared a proposed concept to make the Carlos Cruz-Diez crosswalks in front of City Hall permanent. She presented a quote from the artist of \$160,000 for the design. She also presented a rough estimate for the installation and maintenance, based on the previous temporary installation; she added, the City has not yet received an estimate from the artist team or representative. Staff recommended that to

keep the crosswalks looking their best, the design should be painted four times (4x) per year, making the maintenance budget of the piece approximately \$60,000 per year (\$15,000 per painting). The maintenance, Ms. Spain stated, includes closing the streets, police, lights, and public works crew.

The Panel discussed the merits of the piece and the ongoing cost. They agreed that the piece is a great project and may feel differently if it were permanently installed. The Panel agreed that the crosswalks need the recommended maintenance to look crisp, noting the rough condition of the crosswalk installed in Wynwood. With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

**Mr. Kolasiński made a motion not to approve the expenditure for the acquisition of the Cruz-Diez crosswalks. Ms. Tschumy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

OLD BUSINESS:

The Panel was informed that one place remains vacant on the Arts Advisory Panel and two names have been submitted. Ms. Cathers asked that any additional nominations be forwarded to her attention for the Cultural Development Board to consider at their next meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

The Panel discussed touring the Miracle Mile Streetscape and agreed to meet outside of a regular Panel meeting to walk and experience the Mile. Staff will forward possible days for the Panel to meet and will arrange a time when most Panel members can attend.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

There were no items from the secretary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain  
Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director