



DRAFT

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES
CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, September 1, 2020, 8:30 a.m.
Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Department
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

*Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts*

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MEMBERS	O	N +	D +	J	J +	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	APPOINTED BY:
	19	19	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
Leslie Pantin	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	P	Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Dr. Fernando Alvarez- Perez	P	E	P	P	E	P	E	-	-	P	P	P	A	Vice-Mayor Vince Lago
Betty Horwitz	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	-	-	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Pat Keon
Frank Martinez	P	A	P	P	P	E	E	-	-	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Michael Mena
Geannina Burgos*										P	P	P	P	Commissioner Jorge Fors
Dr. Bernice Roth Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	-	-	P	P	P	P	City Manager Peter Iglesias
Dr. Rosa Maria Mayorga	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	E	Board Appointee

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 Dept.

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 8:35 a.m.

Ms. Cathers referenced the False Claims Ordinance for the benefit of speakers as their items were presented.

The Board was advised that Ms. Kautz was unable to attend and that Dr. Mayorga respectfully asked to be excused.

Ms. Burgos made a motion to accept the absences of Dr. Mayorga as excused. Ms. Horwitz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 4, 2020:

Ms. Horwitz made a motion to approve the minutes of August 4, 2020. Ms. Burgos seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. AIPP WAIVER REQUEST, THE PLAZA – JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL

Board members were provided with proposal materials for a waiver request by The Plaza development project to commission and install artwork by Jean-Michel Othoniel on the project site. Staff reported that the Arts Advisory Panel reviewed the proposal and made a motion recommending approval to the Cultural Development Board. Staff introduced Carlos Beckmann as representing the developer and Bill Brady as the art consultant on the project.

Mr. Beckmann stated that this is the third artwork proposed for the site and is for a sculptural water feature by Jean-Michel Othoniel. He described The Plaza development site in detail and the location of the artwork in relation to the other approved works by Tony Cragg and Michele Oka Doner. He stated that this piece will be at the heart of the open-air plaza on Palermo Avenue. Mr. Beckmann noted that the proposal being presented has undergone revisions in response to comments from the Arts Advisory Panel.

Mr. Brady provided background information about the artist, saying Mr. Othoniel was born in 1964 and lives in France as one of the important French artists (of our time). He stated that the artist's aesthetic revolves around emotional geometry, using the repetition of modular elements like bricks or beads. The beads, he said, are the element proposed for this fountain, as was his most important commission at Versailles in 2014. Mr. Brady stated that Othoniel is the only living artist to have a commissioned artwork for permanent installation at Versailles. He listed additional sites and collections that have the artist's work worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art. The artist was selected for this commission, Mr. Brady said, based on how well his aesthetic would work with the Tony Cragg and Michele Oka Doner sculptures. For this commission, he shared that the intent is to create an easy going, engaging sense and is based on sea life forms through the elements' shapes.

Specific features about the technical aspects of the work were presented, referencing a pneumatic pump system for the beaded elements with four (beaded) forms on the interior of the pool reflected in a mirrored column clad in stainless-steel, and four (beaded) elements reaching in from each corner. The four interior elements were said to have two fountain systems and the four exteriors ones with one system, with all playing in concert with each other.

Mr. Beckmann thanked Mr. Brady and continued, showing images of the site and details of the proposal. He said that three water features are included within The Plaza and spoke about the importance of water to provide a sense of calm, freshness, and an oasis for the neighborhood, tenants, and hotel guests.

Board members were advised that the pool itself, the mechanical features, lighting, and maintenance are being covered by the developer with the Art in Public Places fee allocated solely toward the artwork. Mr. Beckmann spoke about the need to keep the artworks immaculate especially as they are a focal point of the entrance.

Continuing, Mr. Beckmann specified the modifications that were made based on recommendations of Arts Advisory Panel members. The first was to move the outer elements inward to deter people from leaning in and to help avoid splashing of water onto the plaza area. The next was to clad the center column with a high polish stainless-steel rather than the proposed ceramic tile. It was noted that the beads will also be made of stainless-steel.

Mr. Beckmann spoke about the 24/7 security that is near the artwork, further deterring adverse interactions with the piece. He advised the Board of the steps taken to address concerns about wind blowing water

outside of the fountain and assured members that the location is an area well protected from the elements of wind and rain. The mechanical system, he said, is such that the water jets can be controlled to adjust the flow (for different scenarios). A copy of the proposed maintenance plan and budget were also presented.

Board members commented that the artwork is beautiful and expressed appreciation to the Arts Advisory Panel for the comments addressing accessibility to the piece. Mr. Pantin added that the relationship of the three artworks to each other works well. 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 Plaza development project to commission and incorporate artwork by artist Jean-Michel Othoniel into the project as presented and as recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel. Ms. Burgos seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

b. AIPP WAIVER REQUEST, THE PLAZA – ARTS BUILDING RESTORATION

Mr. Beckmann made a presentation for a waiver request of the Art in Public Places fee for restoration of the historic arts building at The Plaza development site. Staff advised that this item does not need to go before the Arts Advisory Panel and is an option for developers to consider. Ms. Cathers stated that staff received revised budget information last minute and has questions regarding the breakdown. Regardless, she requested any motion be contingent upon staff approval of the budget. Mr. Beckmann noted that Agave (the developer) currently has their office in the building and will be vacating it in two months.

Mr. Beckmann proceeded and gave an overview of the general concept of The Plaza, he stated that the historic arts building is in the middle of the Project, in need of restoration, and would like it to be a centerpiece of The Plaza. He called out two primary features the developers would like to address: the north façade to Palermo and the south side of the building.

Mr. Beckmann stated that the previous developer created a mezzanine inside the building and as a result, the exterior windows were halved. He said they would like to remove the interior mezzanine and bring back the long exterior windows that were originally in place. The south wing, he continued, was originally open-air corridors connecting offices that have been enclosed to maximize square footage.

There is about \$400,000 dollars left from the original Art in Public Places allocation, Mr. Beckmann said, with a potential of \$1.4m dollars available, still in discussion. He said the restoration of the Arts Building will be about \$980,000 dollars and if there is not support of the project, the developers may not pursue it. He added that the budget reflects a healthy contingency to allow for unforeseeable costs associated with working on an old building. He estimated the project to take about one year. Mr. Beckmann stated that if the project moves forward, all invoices will be documented, and any monies left would return to the Art Acquisition Fund.

Ms. Cathers shared concerns that some of the items on the original proposal have been moved to “optional” and other items appear to be toward structural rather than restoration costs, which is why staff is requesting that if a motion is made to move forward, that it be contingent on staff approval of the budget. She also stated that staff is confident about the project and supports a favorable motion.

Mr. Pantin commented that the project will be great to showcase the building in time for the City's 100-year anniversary. Mr. Beckmann stated that the interior space will be an empty shell, possibly with a café open to the public on the ground floor and a possible gallery space on the second floor.

Mr. Martinez noted that the two major features discussed are wonderful for the building and deserves the kind of preservation and reconstruction proposed. He agreed that staff needs to review the whole package. Dr. Roth asked Board members if they want to wait for staff recommendations regarding the budget before making a motion. Board members agreed.

Mr. Beckmann conveyed that the developer is concerned about touching such an old building and is committing \$500,000 dollars outside of the AiPP fees toward the restoration. He said they are committed to the restoration; however, are committing the half a million dollars and not anymore. If issues arise, he said, it may (become cost prohibitive) and if it becomes overwhelming, they may pass on it.

Mr. Pantin asked if the previous owner would have found any possible structural problems. Mr. Beckmann responded that they have not found drawings related to the changes. Mr. Martinez said he assumes the previous work was permitted and the developer should do a thorough check with the City. Mr. Beckmann agreed and said he will continue to do so.

Ms. Cathers commented on timing concerns of the developer and re-iterated that staff is comfortable with a motion moving forward depending on the budget review. She said the Commission will definitely scrutinize the project and this would be a good first step. Dr. Roth responded that before making a recommendation to the Commission, the Board should have a complete assessment from staff.

Mr. Pantin asked about the plans for Ponce Circle Park and the sidewalks between the plaza and Miracle Mile. Mr. Beckmann said the developer has a meeting scheduled with the City Manager to tour the area, that they've made a \$2m dollar contribution to enhance the park, which is an essential park for the City. He noted the 2,000 parking spaces available at The Plaza in addition to other facilities on site in support of the park. He noted that the only request they (the developers) have is to slow traffic on Ponce de Leon Boulevard. He said they are waiting for direction from the City regarding the sidewalks and most likely will be adding streetlights and Coral Gables beige concrete sidewalks for a perfect connection between the project and Miracle Mile.

CULTURAL GRANTS:

a. GRANTEE PROGRAMS

There were no updates to report.

b. FINAL REPORTS

Staff reported on the Board's request to assess processing of Cultural Grant Final Reports. Ms. Cathers stated that she researched the County's process and they have an applied point system only for Children's Trust funded grants related to education and youth enrichment. She said there is a high level of administration related to this type of review and did not recommend it for the City due to the nature of the City's grants and the lower funded amounts. She said that final reports for grants reflecting the City's operational grants and project-oriented grants are reviewed by staff and that the reports are available to panelists for assistance when reviewing the next years' grants. She confirmed that the information requested for the reports is similar to the City's, such as narrative, project accountability, support documentation, and

receipts. Ms. Cathers said the State follows a similar process and that neither uses a point system. Instead, if a report is not turned in on time, the organization is not eligible for funding until it is.

Dr. Roth stated that it would remiss to evaluate (new) proposals without knowing if an organization did what they said they would do. Ms. Cathers said the Board could continue to divide reports up to review or shift to an administrative review with a summary report presented to the Board. In either scenario, Ms. Burgos said, if points are allocated, the Board can tell based on scoring whether the organization met accountability markers.

The Board continued discussion, concluding that the most important aspect of the report is to know if the organization did what they said it would do, if they were able to meet their goals, and if not – why not, so the Board could provide comments and feedback to help future projects and proposals. It was agreed that past performance should somehow be taken into account for future funding.

With no conclusion, Dr. Roth asked that the item be placed on next month's agenda.

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES UPDATES:

Ms. Cathers reported that two artists are being considered for the Public Safety Building public art project and that they have met with the Police and Fire Chiefs a couple of times. They will be meeting with the Project Manager next week, she said.

The Parking Garage RFQ is closed, Ms. Cathers reported, however, it may be re-opened after further review.

An update on Illuminate Coral Gables will be presented to the City Commission in mid-October, Ms. Cathers said, and have been asked to put together technical and logistical aspects of each piece and how they address social distancing and safety.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. ARTS ADVISORY PANEL MEMBER NOMINATIONS

Board members were provided with the CV of Adler Guerrier as a nominee for the Arts Advisory Panel. Staff gave a brief background of Mr. Guerrier, stating that he is a Haitian artist living in Coral Gables and has a studio in Miami. He received his BFA from the New World School of the Arts, has work in New York and Miami collections, has shown at the Perez Art Museum, and has work in the County's public art collection. Ms. Cathers stated that the artist works primarily with photography and collage and would be filling the artist vacancy position on the Panel. It was also noted that he is a recommended artist for future Illuminate Coral Gables' projects and recently installed a billboard artwork suite in the Design district for a project produced by the Miami Design District and For Freedoms, an initiative founded by Hank Willis Thomas.

Dr. Roth asked if there would be a conflict of interest for the artist. Staff responded that he would be required to recuse himself from discussions and voting on any project that may be of interest to him. With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

Ms. Burgos made a motion recommending Adler Guerrier as an Arts Advisory Panel member. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Staff reported that one vacancy remains to be filled by the City Commission.

CITY COMMISSION ITEMS:

There were no Commission items to report on.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

a. LE JEUNE ROAD BRIDGE – LESLIE PANTIN

Mr. Pantin addressed the Board and reported that Miami-Dade County is replacing the bridge on Le Jeune Road by the Cocoplum circle. He said he participated in a community meeting regarding the project and proposed it as a unique opportunity to do something nice with the bridge using Art in Public Places funds. He acknowledged that there may be challenges to partner on the project; however, it is at the initial stage of development. Mr. Pantin suggested incorporating art on the bridge itself, on the perimeter leading to the bridge, or under the bridge. He mentioned a recent article in the Miami Herald promoting activation of the waterways for canoes, kayaks, etc.

Mr. Martinez asked how the bridge design was determined. Ms. Cathers responded that it's a pre-fabricated bridge. Mr. Pantin mentioned the Carbonell sculpture on the Miami River Brickell bridge and Mr. Martinez said that project was an architectural competition with architects, engineers, and the artist working together.

Mr. Pantin asked for support to have staff explore the possibility of including artwork on the bridge itself, underneath, or as one enters/exits the bridge. He said the bridge is set for completion in 2023. The Board asked staff look into the possibility.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

There were no additional items from the secretary.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the Cultural Development Board meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine J. Cathers
Arts & Culture Specialist