

DRAFT

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES
ARTS ADVISORY PANEL MEETING
Wednesday, October 13, 2021 9:00 a.m.**

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

MEMBERS	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	A	S	O
	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	20	20
Nelson de León	-	-	V	P	E	-	P	P	P	P	P
Eugenia Incer*									P	P	E
Adler Guerrier	-	-	V	P	P	-	P	P	P	P	P
Maggie Hernandez*			V	P	P	-	P	P	P	P	P
Dr. Jacek Kolasiński	-	-	A	P	P	-	P	E	P	P	P
Emily MacDonald-Korth	-	-	V	V	P	-	V	P	E	E	E
Manny Mato	-	-	V	V	E	-	V	P	E	P	P
Marijean Miyar	-	-	V	P	V	-	V	P	P	P	P
Juan Roselione-Valadez	-	-	A	P	P	-	V	P	P	P	P

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

STAFF:

Warren Adams, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director
Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist

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

The Arts Advisory Panel meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 25, 2021 MEETING MINUTES:

A motion was made by Ms. Miyar and seconded by Ms. Hernandez to approve the meeting minutes of August 25, 2021 and accept the excused absences of Ms. Incer and Ms. MacDonald-Korth, which was unanimously passed by voice vote.

CITY COMMISSION ITEMS:

a. ORDINANCE – AMENDING ZONING CODE SECTION 9-106 DEFINITION RE. MAINTENANCE, 2ND READING

Mr. Kolasiński asked Mr. Guerrier to report on the City Commission meeting item regarding the Ordinance Amendment to the Art in Public Places zoning code.

Mr. Guerrier stated that the Commission asked the Panel and Board to condense their comments as a memo for them to consider incorporating within language for the second reading. Ms. Hernandez said she hoped the scope could be narrowed for how the monies are used. Mr. Guerrier responded that it is an opportunity to suggest language and the memo will state the multiple points that the Panel and Board are prioritizing.

Staff stated that the Cultural Development Board will meet next week and after the discussion today, may designate someone to attend the meeting to speak regarding language the Panel may have. The Panel was advised that the Commission was receptive to the Panel and Board comments and understood the concerns.

Panel members were provided with the Commission's verbatim transcript to fully understand what is being requested. Mr. Kolasiński asked how to initiate a conversation with the City Attorney's Office to go over language. Staff responded that the Commission wants it to come back on October 26 and that staff can arrange a meeting with the CAO to discuss draft language, with the Cultural Development Board considering any additional tweaks.

The Panel discussed the use of the term "historic public art", if it is removed or will be incorporated with the existing definition of public art. Mr. Guerrier said the conversation moved slightly away from that difficult question because it is nebulous. The idea of limiting the fund, he said, took priority - defining how the fund may be used. One of the questions, he said, was how much of the fund can go toward maintenance and as of right now it seems that there is no limit. He stated the importance of wanting to continue to commission public art and not just maintain the art we have.

Mr. Kolasiński asked if Mr. Guerrier would be able to speak on behalf of the Panel with staff and the Board. He agreed.

With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

Ms. Hernandez made a motion nominating Mr. Guerrier to speak on behalf of the Panel regarding the Art in Public Place ordinance amendment. Ms. Miyar seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Staff asked for the Panel's thoughts on the use of the funds toward maintenance. The County's model of taking 10% of the project cost and putting it into a maintenance fund was discussed along with other models used in other programs.

Ms. Hernandez noted the importance of defining what is not so available funds for maintenance and restoration aren't used for anything that is decorative and not art. This could quickly decimate the whole budget, she said.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE BY MAYOR LAGO

Mayor Lago appeared before the Panel and thanked them for their service. He expressed his gratitude for their commitment to the City, to the arts, and to the City as a whole.

Mayor Lago stated his desire to push the arts to a new level in the City and provided some background about his interest and activity in the arts, including being an avid art collector, regularly attending prominent art fairs nationwide, visiting private collections, and having served on the Board of Locust Projects for ten years. He mentioned his recent visit to the Rubell Museum, mentioning the Margulies and de la Cruz Collections as those that are pushing forward the conversation on art locally and nationally toward a positive light on Miami-Dade County.

The Mayor continued, sharing a specific proposal to present artwork by the artist Alan Sonfist and a broader idea of developing a program to present world-class temporary art. He requested the Panel's input and guidance on these initiatives.

Information was provided to the Panel about the artist Alan Sonfist. Mayor Lago stated that he has a small work of the artist in his collection. He noted that the artist's work focuses on sustainability issues, which are important to him and has been a hallmark of a lot of the legislation the City has been passing. Fred Snitzer, the Mayor said, brought a work to his attention and stated that he would love to lend the piece to the City for two years. The artwork was described as a bronze which is a cast of tree (limbs) that he found in the wild and that the artwork invites people to come closer to see the texture, has a sense of fragility without being fragile. Images of the artwork were shared with the Panel.

Mayor Lago then spoke about the proposal to present world-class art on a temporary basis and asked the Panel and staff, through the Manager's office, to be ambitious and think about collectors in the community who may have monumental artworks and be willing to show them publicly on loan for up to two years. He asked to be a conduit to speak with collectors, meet with them, and propose works to have on loan that would bring credibility to the work and the City. He asked for the Panel's opinion, if there is interest in pursuing this and something he could advocate on behalf of.

Mr. Kolasiński asked for questions from the Panel and stated his interest in social practice in art that is ephemeral. He asked the question of how to historify this on the level of the City if the art comes here, what is left - is this an experience, is it some sort of archive, is there research where the community can learn about works that were brought to the City. He asked about the framing of what the work means today and how to move from tangible object to something else.

Mayor Lago shared his experience of viewing art with his daughters and the hope that people will come to Coral Gables to look at art and think outside the box. He stated that the City doesn't have the wherewithal to own a great deal of art, but if artworks of a certain magnitude can be brought in on loan, it expands who we are as a City with an interest in the arts. Mayor Lago mentioned looking at artists who are young, mid-career, and established artists. In addition to collectors, he suggested asking gallerists and institutions if they have work in storage that could be presented. Locations were briefly discussed, including Ponce Circle Park.

Mr. Guerrier responded that the Mayor's points are good and that world-class temporary exhibition of work is the center of fine arts, saying that before it has a collection, an institution shows temporary works. He stated that if a program is built for the City's open spaces that functions as a consul, a program can be created that is consistent, and always has works on loan. Technically, Mr. Guerrier said, the City has done this with its history of putting work in the public realm, but the world-class feature requires more infrastructure such as lectures, docents, and (materials) to point out the ecological lessons within a sculpture.

Mr. Kolasiński echoed Mr. Guerrier's comments and added the idea of bringing people who deal with site specific interventions, that come out of a residency and research, people who are imbedded here for a given time who can really understand our community, dialogue with the community, and learn from the community about the issues concerning us here.

Mr. Roselione-Valadez wondered if the Museum could expand its purview to make things happen around the City in this way. Mayor Lago responded that it's a great idea but wasn't sure if it's within the bandwidth of the Museum, noting their long-term programming and if they have the ability to have someone dedicated to it.

The Mayor encouraged a conversation moving forward of how to speak with major collectors in the City to showcase their generosity with the right infrastructure, lighting, insurance, and security. He gave the example of the trolley expansion's success, the development of downtown, businesses coming in, and the influx of people wanting to live downtown with the potential engagement of world-class art.

Mr. Guerrier asked the Mayor if he sees this as something that follows the same process where a work is proposed to the Panel and discussed regarding the benefits, how it works, or is it something negotiated with staff. Mayor Lago responded that he is open to discussion.

Following the discussion about a temporary public art program, Mr. Roselione-Valadez asked the Mayor to respond to what transpired with Illuminate (Coral Gables). He stated that he doesn't think there's a Mayor in the Country as knowledgeable about contemporary art as he is; however, he questioned the remarks made and stated his concern about what is being presented.

Mayor Lago reiterated his position and stated that the Commission approved the project for \$300,000.00, saying he would support 18 of the 20 artists but needed further information on the other two based on information received about the artists from residents and business owners. He went on to state that the following day Mr. Fung decided to resign and didn't have a conversation with him.

Continuing the general discussion about art, Ms. Hernandez stated her concern about how some of the art is selected, saying that when demanding to include certain elements into the art, it becomes something other than a piece of art. She stated the Panel's role of listening to the developers, architects, and designers while still making sure the integrity of the art is there. Mayor Lago agreed and said he doesn't want artists to be held back by any pre-programmed vision. If we (the City) are not happy with the direction, he said, he would like the Panel to provide input and encouraged Panel members to share their opinions, concerns, guidance, and recommendations.

Mayor Lago thanked the Panel and left the meeting.

Mr. Kolasiński had to leave the meeting and passed the gavel to Ms. Hernandez.

Ms. Hernandez asked the Panel to continue their discussion of the Mayor's comments.

The Panel briefly discussed Illuminate and agreed that the elimination of the exhibition was unfortunate. Mr. Mato stated that it was important to hear the Mayor's views; however, it seemed like a quick action to put something in jeopardy for the quality of art that was being presented. Ms. Miyar added that art does not come sanitized and is meant to engage at many levels, some being difficult. Panel members agreed.

Returning to the proposal of presenting a program of temporary public artworks on loan, Mr. Roselione-Valadez shared that in Miami there are few opportunities to see artwork pre-1980 and he would love to see these somewhere. He expressed challenges with the environment and how hard it is on artworks, even bronzes. While he said it would be great to get these works from

storage, it would be very hard and take time, which is why he hoped the Museum could get excited about the prospect.

Ms. Hernandez said she would love to have something like that happen in the City and suggested identifying public places for potential installation. She went on to recommend institutionalizing what the City is looking for and establishing a selection process. She stated that if something is loaned at no cost, there is still a cost for the installation, insurance, and lighting that can be expensive and needs to be up to code.

Ms. Hernandez expressed her apprehension of art in Coral Gables that has been selected by the people in power at the time, selected as a unilateral decision and not from the professional arts board. She suggested redefining what the strengths and contributions of the Panel should be.

Mr. Roselione-Valadez said there is a concern that the proposed temporary public art project might not happen and will get lost in the process. He shared his thoughts of having two-dimensional (2D) works presented on a dedicated wall space in the Museum on a rotating basis from different collectors with wall text about the artist and the collector's motivation for having the artwork. Ms. Miyar agreed that it sounds like a better fit with the Museum as a curatorial project, adding that these types of projects take funding and time, and that it's unlikely that galleries would pick up the tab.

Mr. Guerrier reiterated that the curatorial and educational content is what will make it world-class and that can only come from salaried staff. He recommended the creation of formal spaces and developing a plan that in time could sustain itself.

Overall, the Panel agreed that it would benefit the Museum to discuss further with the Mayor.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. ALAN SONFIST – ARTIST CONSIDERATION FOR CITY PROJECT

The Panel was provided with materials about the artist Alan Sonfist in advance of the meeting and was advised that the artist is pre-approved. Images of the proposed artwork were shared by Mayor Lago during his appearance and discussed with him for consideration as a temporary loan to the City.

Mr. Guerrier spoke about Alan Sonfist's work, suggesting a location that fits the scale of the artwork and that the artist may want to do something specific that is reflective of his 30-year career. The Mayor said it could be a good opportunity to place in an appropriate place and that the works are beautiful, significant, and exceptional works. He suggested possibly placing the sculpture in the City Hall courtyard where people come and suggested their interest would be peaked as they walk by.

Mr. Roselione-Valadez stated that he shared the Mayor's love of the work and questioned if it's more appropriate for the Museum and their role.

Considering the scale, Mr. de León said it might be interesting to put it in a more pedestrianized area like Miracle Mile or Ponce de Leon where there is more movement, as a surprise element, maybe in one of the tree wells where it can be interacted with. Ms. Miyar agreed and suggested the Art Cinema Plaza. Ms. Hernandez supported putting it in the City Hall courtyard where there is security and would be protected. Mr. de León said it would be nice to see in a place where you can get close to the art and experience the piece close-up.

Mr. Guerrier asked if a study had been done to find spaces to place sculpture in more pedestrian friendly places with smaller footprints. Ms. Cathers responded that the original Public Art Master Plan identified specific places and when the Cultural Arts Master Plan is addressed, it can be revisited. She did say that Miracle Mile was looked at extensively by the Panel and repeatedly found to be difficult to place art due to it being highly designed.

Ms. Miyar made a motion recommending that artwork by Alan Sonfist be considered for temporary installation in an intimate space and recommended that the Museum consider it within an outdoor location. Mr. Mato seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES UPDATES:

The Panel was advised that the Minorca Garage Artists were approved at the last Commission meeting and that Fire Station 4 artist recommendations will move forward to the Cultural Development Board; however, the City may revisit whether to do art at that location.

PRESENTATIONS:

a. ART IN PUBLIC PLACES WORKSHOP

Staff offered to prepare the presentation as a pre-recorded webinar to which the Panel agreed.

b. JEAN WARD SCULPTURE COLLECTION

Staff offered to prepare the presentation as a pre-recorded webinar to which the Panel agreed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Ms. Hernandez asked about plans for the annual Art Basel temporary exhibition. Staff responded that the City has a contract with Fung Collaboratives to re-install the Kiki Smith exhibition, adding that the City has a state grant that is tied to the exhibition.

Ms. Miyar mentioned a recent studio visit with Carlos Quintana in downtown Coral Gables and encouraged Panel members to do the same.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

There were no additional items from the secretary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine J. Cathers
Arts & Culture Specialist