

Legislation Text

File #: 18-7613, Version: 2

A Resolution approving the concept for a work of public art, by Blessing Hancock, in conjunction with the Gables Station mixed-use project, at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 6 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0)

NP International with 251 South Dixie LLC (the “Developer”) is constructing a mixed-use project at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway (the “Project”). The Developer has chosen the option of petitioning for a waiver of the Art in Public Places Fee requirement by commissioning and installing artwork within the project as specified in the Zoning Code, Article 3, Division 21.

The Developer selected Blessing Hancock (the “Artist”) to proceed with a concept design proposal for the artwork. Ms. Hancock was chosen for her previous experience working with area leaders to create unique pieces that speak to a particular community. Here, Ms. Hancock will be working with the local Bahamian community to develop a piece that exemplifies the rich history Bahamians share with the City. As further detailed in the enclosed submittal, her distinctive work applies interactive opportunities for all the senses.

Blessing Hancock owns Skyrim Studio Inc. in Tucson, Arizona, which focuses on site specific sculpture. She utilizes her BFA in Sculpture and MLA in Landscape Architecture to create innovative work for public spaces. Ms. Hancock has extensive experience managing complex projects involving multiple stakeholders; coordinating with city agencies, architects, engineers, and consultants to elevate the position of public art. Community engagement is an essential component of Ms. Hancock’s work, and she has extensive experience working with community groups.

Public projects include *Biota* in Arora, Colorado; *Chinook Arc* in Calgary, Alberta Canada; District VII Police Station in Fort Washington, Maryland; *Ballroom Luminosa* in San Antonio, Texas; BioSigns and Health Careers Center in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota; *Sequence* in West Palm Beach, Florida; Palo Alta Main Library and Arts Center in Palo Alto, California; Texas State University Campus in San Marco, Texas; Tucson Convention Center in Tucson, Arizona to name a few.

The proposed artwork is a sculptural piece for the central public plaza of Gables Station, a focal point for the development. The artwork will be constructed of stainless steel, installed upon a concrete surface, and secured with steel brackets or bolts. Through interactive opportunities to engage with the artwork through touch and movement, Ms. Hancock’s concept will enhance the public experience using light as a connective thread; one that runs throughout her work. Upon approval of proposal and prior to installation, construction instructions and specifications will be provided to the City and ownership of the property.

The specific intent of this work is to connect the Gables Station project with the local Bahamian community. The desire of NP International is to pay tribute to this community, by working with the local Bahamian community to create a visual representation which recognizes their contribution to the history of Coral Gables. Ms. Hancock has extensive experience working with groups in a similar manner, as noted in her biography.

The concept proposal is attached as Exhibit A to the proposed Resolution.

The cost of the proposed art piece and installation (including its companion piece referenced in a separate resolution) is estimated to be \$481,692, which is less than the required 1% of the Project’s total budget estimate of \$73,823,165. The difference in cost is being applied toward additional artwork(s) being requested for waiver of the AiPP fee with the outstanding balance deposited into the Art Acquisition Fund.

The Arts Advisory Panel and the Cultural Development Board voted unanimously to recommend the art concept at their respective meetings on April 25, 2018 and May 01, 2018.

The Developer is required to provide for the perpetual maintenance of the artwork, which will be the sole responsibility of the Developer, in accordance with a restrictive covenant entered into with the City of Coral Gables and following the Art in Public Places: Funding, Goals, and Implementation Guidelines.