



Legislation Text

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A Resolution approving the concept for a donation of a work of public art to be sited in Balboa Plaza, in conjunction with Townhouse on Valencia project located at 444 Valencia Avenue and Beatrice Row, project located at 2509 Anderson Road 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: 5 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 5 to 0)

Torre Companies (the "Developer") is constructing buildings at 444 Valencia Avenue and 2509 Anderson Road (the "Project"). The Developer has chosen the option of petitioning for a waiver of the Art in Public Places Fee requirement by donating and installing artwork to the City as specified in the Zoning Code, Article 3, Division 21.

The Developer selected Roberto Behar and Rosario Marquardt of R & R Studios (the "Artist") to proceed with a concept design proposal for the artwork. Behar and Marquardt received their Diplomas in Architecture from the Universidad Nacional de Rosario in Argentina. Behar has been a visiting artist at the Getty Research Center in Los Angeles and received a Visual Arts Fellowship from the American Academy in Rome. He has been a visiting professor at Harvard University, Cornell, the University of Maryland, and is an Associate Professor at the University of Miami's School of Architecture. R & R Studios has created award winning landmark projects in Miami, Denver, Austin, and Phoenix, among others and their work has received numerous awards including recognition by Americans for the Arts as one of the best public art projects of 2007 and 2013.

The proposed artwork is a commissioned sculptural bench titled *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; in the Artist's words, it "is conceived as a social sculpture, a place of encounters and a stage for everyday life and stories to unfold." The artwork appears as an oversize sofa constructed of oolitic stone; measuring approximately thirty (30) feet long, over four (4) feet high; and framed on either side by two equally oversize lamps standing fourteen (14) feet high and made of powder-coated aluminum. "The appearance of the oversized piece is sudden and wondrous, at once real and fantastic, familiar and unprecedented; a slice of domesticity in a public park. The sofa invites us to conversation, a moment of repose or to wait for a friend. Together with the two lamps we are reminded of home."

The installation of the proposed artwork will be placed within Balboa Plaza, in front of an existing large banyan tree and aligned with the historic fountain looking north toward the banyan trees on the Granada golf course. The artists are proposing to include trees planted along the east and west edges of the plaza to give a sense of the space as a kind of outdoor room.

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

The cost of the proposed art piece and installation is estimated to be \$87,000, which is less than the required 1% of the two Project's total budget estimate of \$9,200,000. The difference in cost will be issued as a check for deposit 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 March 30, 2016 and June 07, 2016. The Historic Preservation Board is scheduled to review the proposal for appropriateness on July 21, 2016.

The Developer is required to provide for the perpetual maintenance of the artwork, which will be realized as a one-time contribution of ten percent of the value of the artwork into a public art maintenance fund with the City. The maintenance of the art work, hereafter, will be the sole responsibility of the City, in accordance with the City of Coral Gables Art in Public Places: Funding, Goals, and Implementation Guidelines. The bench will age appropriately and will require little

maintenance. The lamps will be equipped with LED light bulbs estimated to be replaced every eight to ten years.