

**CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE
CULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2020
6:00 p.m.**

**WHEAT RIDGE RECREATION CENTER
4005 Kipling Street, Conference Room**

Item 1 – Call to Order

Chair Diane Robb called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Item 2 – Introductions – Members and Guests

Members present: Ruth Baranowski, Jerith Gronski, Carol Mathews, Milly Nadler, Gay Porter DeNileon, Diane Robb, Jessica Schwartz, and Jill Shannon

Members absent: Dave Opp

Guests: Lance Leonard, Teacher, Everitt Middle School
Sina March, President, Wheat Ridge Art League
Deb Warren, Art Share

Staff: Susan Anderson, Recreation & Facilities Manager
Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Center Department

Guest Speaker: Little Free Libraries Concept Presentation-Lance Leonard

Everitt Middle School teacher Lance Leonard presented three designs for Little Libraries created by industrial art students. The design for the library to be installed near the Anderson Building in Anderson Park follows the architecture of the building and features a plexiglass front and corrugated steel roof. The two designs for the Rec Center have the same shape as the little barn in front of the center, but differ in the exterior decoration. One was conservative and simple, the other more playful, with bright colors and small sporting objects affixed to the box.

The commission unanimously agreed that they approved the Anderson Park design and preferred the more colorful option for the Rec Center, with the caveat that the design depict the variety of activities available at the center and that it discourages vandalism. The funds for the construction of the libraries, the books to stock them, and a plaque indicating who constructed them and where the funding came from, are allocated from the commission's balance in the Wheat Ridge Foundation budget.

Commissioner Robb welcomed another guest, President of the Wheat Ridge Art League, Ms. Sina March. Robb stated that guests are always welcomed anytime. Ms. March expressed her happiness to be in attendance for the meeting and is interested in learning more about the Cultural Commission and what they do.

Item 3 – Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Porter DeNileon made a motion to accept the minutes of January 8, 2020, as written. Commissioner Shannon seconded the motion, all accepted and approved.

Item 4 – Unfinished Business

Artspace (Nadler)

Commissioner Nadler reported that on Thursday, January 30th, six members from the Core Committee went to Loveland to view their Artspace space. It was amazing to see the campus that houses 16 tenants at affordable housing rates. The walls of the hallways were full of people's art, which was a joy to see. There was a community space as well as a courtyard where people could gather and grow flowers and/or vegetables.

On Wednesday, February 5th, we welcomed Teri and Aneesha from Artspace and took them on a neighborhood tour. We toured the Recreation Center, the Historic Park, Fruitdale School, Ward Road station, City Hall and our sculpture in Anderson Park. We traveled the major corridors of 44th and 38th Avenues pointing out special businesses along the way. We even managed to grab a coffee at Bardo's.

On Thursday morning, we did a site tour, looking at possible places for an Artspace development. These included on 44th Avenue, Al's Pine Garden, the building next to Hopper Hollow on Jay Street, lot at Monroe and 44th, and the American Hotel. Also on 38th Avenue, the property adjacent to Ornamental Beads, lot near Christopher House, A-1 Rental, and the lot at Swiss Flower.

At 1 p.m., we had the Artists and Creatives Focus Group with about 35 in attendance. The top priorities for that group in an Artspace development were

Housing, Studio Space, Performance and Event Space, and Community Space. Some of the words that were used to describe the Wheat Ridge art scene were HIDDEN, DIVERSE, ACTIVE, OLDER, UNDERFUNDED, HOMEBASED, DEVELOPING. It was suggested that we have a monthly arts newsletter. Later in conversations, Guy Nahmiach offered to do another column in the Neighborhood Gazette interviewing an artist a month.

Hopefulness was expressed that there could be a place where artists could meet and connect on a regular basis.

The Funders Focus Group was from 3-4:30 p.m. and not well attended. There was a good discussion and the conclusion was that an Artspace project was financially feasible.

The Public Meeting was held that evening with another 40 or so people in attendance. The meeting had a very positive atmosphere and people commented on why we could not do it now.

On Friday, there was the Civic Leaders Focus group. Unfortunately, the only City Council person in attendance was Leah Dozeman.

In 4-6 weeks from now, we will receive the results of the Feasibility Study.

Diane Robb will still be on the Core Committee in the future but as a citizen.

Poet-in-Residence Program (Nadler)

Commissioner Nadler stated that Ms. Sharon Heinlen has finished three workshops in three different schools so far. It is very challenging to get these scheduled. As outlined in her report, the Poetry Slam will be in October of this year when things are not so crazy in the schools. The April date has been cancelled.

We are looking at donating 30-40 books to the schools from Wheat Ridge Foundation funds but Ms. Heinlen does not have the time to do the research and get the books. We need someone to go to Barnes and Noble and request help from them and possibly get some donated from them as well. Or perhaps contact Scholastic. Commissioner Shannon volunteered to do that.

We agreed to printing the children's poetry in a paperback type book and possibly including Ms. Heinlen's poems as well. Commissioner Nadler will check with Ms. Heinlen. We could do this next fall and distribute when we do the public event

in October. Commissioner Porter DeNileon will look into local companies for that, including Costco.

There seems to be some mysterious program at Anderson Park with Willmore Davis. Ms. Heinlen believes that Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation requested a "dedication poem" from Wheat Ridge school children with some kind of grant -- every grade level to be presented at the end of April for the dedication of possibly their nature playground. Susan Anderson agreed to check into this.

Wheat Ridge Reads Program (Porter DeNileon)

Commissioner Porter DeNileon reported the two public Wheat Ridge Reads events in January each attracted about 20 -25 people, and most who attended the events found the speaker engaging and interesting, even if the book itself was challenging for some. Swiss Flower and Gift Cottage provided complimentary refreshments for the event there and no more expenses for this year's events should be expected. The honorarium for the speaker, Nancy Stohlman, should come from the city's budgeted funds. Commissioner Porter DeNileon commented she expects to meet with representatives from the Wheat Ridge Library and Wheat Ridge High School to debrief and plan for next year's event. We are considering a young adult title and want to have the books available to give away during RidgeFest in September. There will be no public voting this year. There was discussion on how to get more participation in the public events; Commissioner Baranowski volunteered to help with analysis of past efforts and promotion of future events.

Community Presentation (Schwartz)

On Tuesday, February 11th, Commissioners Schwartz and Nadler presented to 30 members and guests of the Wheat Ridge Art League (WRAL). The Cultural Commission Vision as well as background and outcomes of the ArtSpace Feasibility Study were shared. Going forward we will receive WRAL monthly newsletters including information on their exhibits, classes and members. It was suggested that we could help promote their community offerings through our social media and email listerv. It will be great to partner and have WRAL as a resource for future community events; for example, caricature drawings were suggested by Sina March, WRAL President, who attended the meeting as a guest. In addition to hosting and participating in workshops, special shows and exhibitions, WRAL hosts an art show at the annual Carnation Festival.

Performances in the Park (Opp)

Performances in the Park performance has been contracted with 17th Avenue All Stars Band. Regarding the \$1,500 fee, there was a question as to when the funding

needs to be transferred.

RidgeFest Ideas

Several ideas were discussed to enhance the Commission's presence at RidgeFest. We agreed to continue to sponsor and enhance the Chalk Art activities, and to have copies of the next Wheat Ridge Reads book available at our booth to give away. Commissioner Nadler has reached out to an acrobatic team and a Zumba instructor who can arrange a flash mob if we want to host those. Other ideas include jugglers and a caricature artist. Whatever we sponsor needs to be coordinated with LocalWorks' schedule and activities, and be family oriented.

Commissioner Porter DeNileon talked to Carolyn Doran, LocalWorks Director of Events at the recent LocalWorks open house; Doran wants to work with the Cultural Commission and invited one of us to be on the organizing committee for RidgeFest. Porter DeNileon said she will meet with Doran prior to the next Cultural Commission meeting to discuss our collaboration. Commissioner Gronski has coordinated the chalk artists for three years and will continue to coordinate and support that endeavor as a volunteer with her husband in the future.

City Staff Report (Anderson)

Ms. Susan Anderson provided her staff report to the Commission.

- Foundation Arts & Culture Programs
(*Fund Balance \$7,914.82 as of 12/31/19*)
- Opportunities for Public Art with future builds
- Art Plaques
- Budget – Cultural Commission

Item 5 – New Business

- Research on Arvada Box Project (Baranowski)
No update at this time but this topic will be added to next month's agenda.
- Carnation Festival Partnership (Baranowski)
No update at this time but this topic will be added to next month's agenda.

Item 6 – Future Agenda Items

- New chair vote.

Item 7 – Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Shannon: Thank you to our guests for attending, our guests are welcome back anytime, please come again. I am excited about the little free libraries, and excited to learn about the things that Diane has been working on will

come to pass going forward. Happy to meet the new future next month.

Commissioner Mathews: I am so impressed with everything that is going on and it has come so far. Thank you to Diane, I know you have worked a lot of years, and you have contributed so much, great work. This is a wonderful group.

Commissioner Gronski: Thank you to our guests, we enjoyed having you. This will be my last meeting. I did not sign up for another three years. I have been doing it for four and I feel like I have made some advancements to the Cultural Commission but it is time to move on and do other things. Diane, thank you for your leadership, we have made some great strides. We have made this commission relevant. I will continue to help with RidgeFest, my husband and I like doing that. Thank you one and all. I have really enjoyed the opportunity, but it is time now to move on. I wish you all well.

Commissioner Porter DeNileon: Thank you Jerith and Diane, you will be missed, and thank you to our guests for attending. Also, after our commissioner comments, we have a short celebration planned to honor our outgoing Chair.

Commissioner Schwartz: Thank you to our guests for attending, and to Diane for your service and leadership, you will be missed.

Commissioner Baranowski: No comments.

Commissioner Nadler: Good to see you Ruth, I am excited about all the programs moving forward. I cannot thank you enough Diane.

Commissioner Robb: Thank you so much for allowing me this opportunity. The Cultural Commission has grown. I would still love to be a part of this, please feel free to contact me anytime for upcoming activities and I will stay as current as possible with all of you. Any public art that is happening, I would love to be involved. One reason I joined the Cultural Commission years ago was that I have a passion for public art. Susan, thank you for helping us through this transition and coming on board. Guests are always welcomed to the Cultural Commission.

Item 8 – Adjournment

Chair Diane Robb adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.