



The Philadelphia Art  
Commission  
Established 1911

Alan Greenberger  
Chair

José Almiñana

Carmen Febo San Miguel

Bridget Collins-Greenwald

Joe Laragione

Raed Nasser

Natalie Nixon

Robert Roesch

Mario Zacharjasz

C. Beige Berryman  
Staff

## Minutes

### The Philadelphia Art Commission

Wednesday, June 3, 2020 - 9:30 a.m.

Remote – Zoom Meeting – Hosted by DPZ

Members Present: Alan Greenberger, Jose Alminana, Carmen Febo-San Miguel, Joe Laragione, Raed Nasser, Natalie Nixon, Robert Roesch, Mario Zacharjasz

### Meeting of the Philadelphia Art Commission

*Chairperson Greenberger called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM introducing everyone to the remote Art Commission meeting.*

*Beige Berryman – staff member of the Art Commission – introduced the Zoom platform and remote Art Commission process, noting that the meeting is being recorded, and by participating in this meeting you are giving consent to be recorded. Ms. Berryman noted the meeting video will be posted on the Art Commission website and the meeting agenda and material items will also be posted there.*

[\(https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-art-commission/\)](https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-art-commission/).

*Ms. Berryman stated a few instructions for the public. Public participants may comment on agenda items during the meeting. Comments should be asked through the “Q&A” function, and the public should type their questions in the box. Staff will then read the comments out loud during the public comment period. If you have submitted comments through email, Art Commission staff will read these out loud during the comment period.*

*Additionally, the agenda had been recently updated. The SEPTA Wissahickon Transportation Center, as well as the SEPTA 11<sup>th</sup> Street Station Improvement Projects have both been withdrawn.*

*Lastly, the Art Commission will be voting by role call, and Ms. Berryman will be asking Commissioners for their vote verbally and individually at the end of each agenda item.*

### Meeting Minutes

*Chairperson Greenberger began the meeting with the administrative items first: The Meeting Minutes from May 6, 2020, then asked if there was a motion to approve or discuss.*

*Upon the Motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz and Seconded by Commissioner Febo-San Miguel, the Commission voted to approve the meeting Minutes from May.*

Chairperson Greenberger noted that the Commission must still catch up on the meeting minutes from the March meeting, which were delayed due to staff retirement and the COVID-19 crisis.

### **Sign Committee Report**

There were 10 proposed sign recommendations from May 20, 2020, that were reviewed by the Sign Committee. Chairperson Greenberger recused himself from the Drexel signage proposal.

1. **44-20**  
**Bank of Princeton**  
1839 Chestnut Street  
Zoning: CMX-5 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial Area
  
2. **45-20**  
**Bank of Princeton**  
224 W. Rittenhouse Square  
Zoning: RM-4
  
3. **46-20**  
**Academy of Natural Sciences**  
1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway  
Zoning: RM-4 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Parkway Buffer Area
  
4. **15-19**  
**Vista Peru**  
20 South 2nd Street  
Zoning: CMX-3 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial Area
  
5. **47-20**  
**Barry's**  
112 South 19th Street  
Zoning: CMX-4 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial Area
  
6. **59-20**  
**Sheraton**  
201 N 17th Street  
Zoning: CMX-5 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Vine Street Area

- 7. 60-20**  
**Lincoln Square**  
1000 S Broad Street  
Zoning: CMX-3 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial Area
- 8. 61-20**  
**Dolce**  
1441 Chestnut Street  
Zoning: CMX-5 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial Area
- 9. 62-20**  
**Rex Pizza**  
1526 Race Street  
Zoning: CMX-1
- 10. 63-20**  
**Drexel Building**  
1435 Walnut Street  
Zoning: CMX-5 within /CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial Area

*Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was a motion to accept recommendations. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz and seconded by Commissioner Alminana, the Commission voted to approve by unanimous vote.*

### **Administrative Approval**

#### **1. Conservation of Multiple Sculptures**

Review Type: Artwork Conservation paid by City funds

Project Details: Conservation treatments for six sculptures at various locations

Submitted by: Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy

*Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was a motion to accept recommendations. Upon the Motion made by Commissioner Febo-San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner Laragione, the Commission voted to approve by unanimous vote.*

### **Presentations**

#### **1. 8300 Castor Avenue**

**Louis H. Farrell Elementary School**

**Schoolyard Improvements**

Review Type: Alteration of City property

Project Details: Outdoor play and learning space  
Submitted by: Salt Design Studio

*Discussion begins at minute mark (09:37) in video Part I.*

*Sara Pevaroff Schuh, Principal of Salt Design Studio was present to speak to the first two presentations.*

Ms. Schuh introduced the presentation. The design firm she represents includes landscape architects, and they are leading the schoolyard renovation project for the Philadelphia School District.

For clarification purposes, Commissioner Alminana asked the presenter if the project had been presented previously at the conceptual level. It had not. Chairperson Greenberger added that this is the standard process that typically occurs. The presenter was under the impression that there was only one submission, but there is possibly two, which is the standard procedure for the commission.

Farrell Elementary School is a K – 8 school, with currently 1,153 students, located at 8300 Castor Avenue in the Lawn Hill neighborhood. They have one of the highest numbers of enrolled students in the district for elementary schools. It is very diverse, representing students from many cultures, speaking over 32 different languages. In 2017, Farrell received interior classroom modernization improvements to support and enhance literacy in grades K – 12. In 2018, an addition to the school was built. The addition provided several different learning centers that address different learning styles for students. The district applied for and received a grant from the William Penn Foundation to reinforce literacy and curriculum goals through the design of playful learning spaces in the outdoor environment and Farrell was one of the schools selected. This initiative is about designing play experiences that focus on learning outcomes, particularly for children and families from under-resourced communities.

Commissioners discussed the inherent dilemma that the City's earth disturbance regulations present to designers. The square footage trigger encourages projects to disturb less ground area, while more earth disturbance, or asphalt removal, has greater environmental benefits. In general, commissioners agreed that the design concept is well-conceived but additional submission materials (renderings, elevations, details) are needed to describe the spatial relationships and change in ground plane created by the proposed components. Additional consideration of the public edge was recommended. The project will need to return for final approval.

Commissioner Alminana commended Ms. Schuh on the transformative effort. Furthermore, it is a vast improvement, that which Chairperson Greenberger agreed.

*Seeing no questions or comments by the public, Chairperson Greenberger ask if there was a motion to approve at the conceptual level. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Alminana,*

*seconded by Commissioner Roesch, the Commission voted for conceptual approval by unanimous vote (8-0).*

**2. 1800 W. Nedro Avenue**  
**Joseph Pennell Elementary School**  
**Schoolyard Improvements**

Review Type: Alteration of City property

Project Details: Outdoor play and learning space

Submitted by: Salt Design Studio

*Discussion begins at minute mark (00:40:30) in video Part I.*

Pennell Elementary School is the second recipient of the Playful Learning grant and it has also received classroom modernization improvements. It is a much smaller school in a very different neighborhood than Farrell. One significant difference is that this has a concrete schoolyard, so the budget and disturbance limit, presents a design challenge. The school has access from Nedro, Conlyn and Ogontz Avenue. All three entrances are used. Two dumpsters are in the schoolyard. The school is currently working with Mural Arts and has a mural on the corner of the school near the steps that lead to Ogontz Avenue. Mural Arts is looking into if they can decommission it, or whether it is going to be restored. Based on the feedback from the students and community, the notion for caring for others came out of the design process. - The six C's: Story, Learning, Performing, Sports, Active Play and Relaxation Circle summarize the feedback.

In general, the commissioners agreed that the proposal has a well-conceived design concept but additional submission materials (renderings, elevations, details) are needed. Information regarding earth disturbance, tree species, and equipment height allowances will be helpful. Designers will submit an earth disturbance drawing to the Art Commission when they submit revisions

Commissioner Nixon remarked that school playgrounds should be considered mini public parks for the community. Commissioner Laragione observed that the dumpsters on slide seven of the presentation should be eliminated from the next set of drawings.

Chairperson Greenberger, along with the other commissioners, extended congratulatory remarks and commended the work that has been proposed.

*Seeing no questions or comments by the public, Chairperson Greenberger ask if there was a motion to approve at the conceptual level. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser, seconded by Commissioner Roesch, the Commission voted for conceptual approval by unanimous vote (8-0).*

### **3. 2100 Diamond Street**

#### **Police District 22**

#### **New building for Police District 22**

Review Type: Construction of City facility

Project Details: New City facility

Project Team: Ballinger

*Discussion begins at minute mark (01:00:33) in video Part I.*

*Michelle Shuman, Project Manager for Public Property; Keith Mock; and Steve Bartlett were present to speak to the project*

Ms. Shuman acknowledged that this is a very sensitive time to be presenting a new police facility and that they obviously designed and worked on it before this weekend's civil unrest and have not talked to the police department since. Chairperson Greenberger expressed his appreciation for Ms. Shuman's remarks.

This will be the City's first constructed district police building in about 15 years. Before getting into the specifics of this project, the design team went through a comprehensive examination of how police facilities work operationally, on the services level, and how they interact with the public. They also looked at how other districts have been using their buildings and spaces to interact with the community and wanted to incorporate some of the best ideas that they found. They also took a field trip to New York City to see how they were incorporating modern architecture and how they were relating to the community. This is going to be the first police building that has a dedicated community room. Diamond Street is an important commercial corridor, and it is also one of the City's first Historic Districts. Goals for the project include improving the streetscape and engaging the community. This is also part of the City's ongoing efforts to improve the sustainability of their buildings in a comprehensive and systemic way. They are also partnering with the Philadelphia Water Department to manage stormwater.

Mr. Mock followed Ms. Shuman's introduction and added that their goal is to create public space so that police can engage in a positive way with the community. The design team also aims to transform the vacant lots along the historic Diamond Street into a gathering place as the community has a history of events and gatherings.

Mr. Bartlett provided a detailed walk through the site design. This project aims to be certified as LEED Silver.

In general, the commissioners agreed that the proposal included a well-conceived site design. They recommended that the design team explore the functionality of plaza so that the space feels more like a place. They encouraged the team to consider paving materials, art, memorial, and landscape

features more extensively. They also recommended reconsidering the entry canopy and signage to be more inviting to the community. Revised submission materials should also provide more details regarding the cornice materials and design. They also encouraged the designers to find more landscape opportunities throughout the site. Chairperson Greenberger, along with Commissioners Nixon, Roesch, and Alminana raised concerns about the conversation with the Police Commissioner, double-sided gate, the Plaza, Police Memorial, Artwork and Landscape.

*Seeing no questions or comments by the public, Chairperson Greenberger ask if there was a motion to approve at the conceptual level. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz, seconded by Commissioner Roesch, the Commission voted for conceptual approval by unanimous vote (7-0; 1 not present for vote). Commissioner Nasser was not present for the vote. Commissioner Zacharjasz left the meeting at noon and recused himself from the last item.*

#### **4. 3101 Orthodox Street Bridesburg Riverfront Park New public park**

Review Type: Construction paid by City funds

Project Details: New public park along the Delaware River

Project Team: Langan

*Discussion begins at minute mark (02:07:16) in video Part I.*

Jayne Spector, Landscape Architect, spoke about the overall objective of the project: to create a significant open space on the Delaware River in Bridesburg, a neighborhood that has long been cut off from access to the riverfront, and to fulfill the vision of the *North Delaware Riverfront Greenway Masterplan*. She indicated that the proposed riverfront park will not only serve as a much needed public open space on the river for the Bridesburg community, could also become a city-wide destination with adjacency to the North Delaware Riverfront Greenway and the national East Coast Greenway.

Commissioner Alminana reminded the design team that this project requires two review hearings by the Art Commission.

In general, the truss design of shade structures was well received, but the design team should consider a visually "lighter" design. Consider more canopy trees in the lawn area to provide shade and include all shade structures in phase I if possible. The public art budget is small, therefore funds will be re-allocated to a different PPR project, to be determined.

*Seeing no questions or comments by the public, Commission Co-Chair Alminana ask if there was a motion to approve at the conceptual level. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Alminana,*

*seconded by Commissioner Nasser, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Approved by Commissioner Alminana, Commissioner Febo-San Miguel, Commissioner Laragione, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner Roesch. The Commission voted for conceptual approval by unanimous vote (5-0). Commissioner Nixon was not present due to weather at her location.*

-----Power outage at 12:18 p.m.-----

*Commissioners and staff discussed item #5, in regards to meeting a quorum considering recusals and absent commissioners due to power outage.*

## **5. 37<sup>th</sup>, Market, and Warren Streets**

### **UCity Square Asphalt Art**

#### **Placemaking treatment with the right-of-way**

Review Type: Artwork placed on City property

Project Details: Placemaking treatment within the street right-of-way

Project Team: StreetPlans

*Discussion begins at minute mark (02:46:10) in video Part I and continues at the beginning of video Part II (abridged due to power outage).*

*Dana Wall, Urban Planner and Designer with StreetPlans was present to speak to the project.*

Background on StreetsPlans was given. They do a variety of design services, including: Transportation planning, placemaking, tactical urbanism, architecture, urban design, public outreach, trainings, workshops, and research and best practices guides. Particularly relevant to this project is their placemaking and tactical urbanism design experience.

Commissioners suggested using the student inspirational art more directly. They reminded the design team that the quality of the paint to be used demands thoughtful consideration and effects their maintenance schedule. They also reminded the team to ensure that adjacent owners give approval for any work on the sidewalk.

*Seeing no questions or comments by the public, Commissioner Co-Chair Roesch asked if there was a motion to approve at the conceptual level. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo-San Miguel, seconded by Commissioner Nasser, Ms. Berryman polled Commissioners: Approved by Commissioner Febo-San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner Roesch, Commissioner Greenberger. The Commission voted for conceptual approval by unanimous vote (4-0; 2 not voting but present). Commissioner Alminana recused himself from this item. Commissioner Laragione abstained from this item.*



**6. Weaver's Knot: Sheet Bond**  
**Delaware River Trail near Penn's Landing**

Review Type: Public Art Proposal  
Project Details: Delaware River Trail Sculpture  
Project Team: Ball-Nogues Studio

*Discussion begins at minute mark (00:26:24) in video Part II.*

*Margot Berg from the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy and Benjamin Ball and James Jones from Ball-Nogues Studio were present to discuss the proposal.*

Ms. Berg began by with some background. This project is the Percent for Art component of the new multiuse Delaware River Trail along Columbus Boulevard between Spring Garden Street and Washington Avenue. It is a bi-directional bike path with a separate pedestrian zone and a planted area for trees and landscaping. Representatives from DRWC, NB5 Engineering, and representatives from the immediate neighborhood were all present to speak to any questions the Commission may have. The artwork location is the sidewalk of North Columbus Boulevard just south of Pier 3 and adjacent to an inlet of the Delaware River. The artwork will be visible to bicycle, pedestrian, auto and river traffic as well as from the Market Street walkway above. A call to artists was issued in December 2019. 150 applicants were received. It has a \$200,000 budget. Four finalists were selected for this commission. The selection panel consisted of Valerie Gay from the Barnes Foundation, Jennifer Navva Milliken of the Center for Art in Wood, and Brent Wall, Artist and Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. The advisory panel consisted of members of the Office of Arts and Culture, the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation, community representatives and a conservator from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Ball-Nogues Studio was the selected artist by unanimous decision.

*There was discussion about whether there would be a quorum for this final item but ultimately Commissioners were able to vote.*

Mr. Ball described the proposed artwork in detail. He showed work from Ball-Nogues larger portfolio of public art, including pieces in California and Canada. The material proposed for the artwork is high grade stainless steel. The concept uses the area's history of shipping, weaving, and textile manufacturing as a starting point for the form of the sculpture. The sculpture is configured to reference a knot used in weaving and sailing known by different names by taking the same shape, hence the name Weaver's Knot: Sheet Bond. The sculpture is composed of two sizes of stainless steel spheres hanging from two masts to form a type of canopy. It will hang high enough overhead that viewers cannot touch the suspended spheres but close enough that they will be able to see reflections in the piece. The knot imagery becomes more obvious

depending where the viewer is in relationship to the piece. The project was described as intending to make a gathering place and a point to bring people together; the knot overall as representing a bond between groups. The visual reference of the pretzel was unintentional but a welcome accident.

Commissioners were appreciative of the piece overall.

*Seeing no questions or comments by the public, Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was a motion for final approval. Upon the motion made by Commissioner Raed, seconded by Commissioner Febo-San Miguel, Ms. Berryman polled Commissioners: Approved by Commissioner Alminana, Commissioner Febo-San Miguel, Commissioner Laragione, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner Roesch, Chairperson Greenberger. The Commission voted for final approval by unanimous vote (6-0).*

*The Art Commission Meeting was adjourned by the Commission Chairperson Greenberger at 1:14 PM.*

The next Art Commission Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday July 1, 2020 at 9:30 AM** via Zoom platform.