



Minutes

The Philadelphia November 4, 2020 - 9:30 a.m. Remote – Zoom Meeting – Hosted by DPZ

The Philadelphia Art
Commission

Established 1911

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

Meeting of the Philadelphia Art Commission

Alan Greenberger
Chair
José Almiñana
Carmen Febo San Miguel
Bridget Collins-Greenwald

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 those participating in the meeting are giving their consent to be recorded. The meeting recording will be posted on the AC website and the meeting agenda and materials will also be posted online at: <https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-art-commission/>.

Joe Laragione
Raed Nasser
Natalie Nixon
Robert Roesch
Mario Zacharjasz
Steve Hartner

*Ms. Berryman stated a few instructions for the public. Participants may comment on agenda items during the meeting, comments can be made by using the “raise hand” feature during the public comment period. If you have submitted comments through email, Art Commission staff will read those emails out loud during the comment period. In addition, if you are participating by phone, you can activate the “raise hand” feature by pressing *9 and staff will unmute you at the appropriate time.*

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

C. Beige Berryman
Staff

Ms. Berryman continued with an informational item concerning the proposed 2021 meeting schedule. The Art Commission meetings are proposed to shift from the first Wednesday of the month to the second Wednesday of the month. In correspondence, the Sign Committee meeting will shift from the third Wednesday of the month to the fourth Wednesday of the month. This will be finalized next month and the 2021 dates will be voted on at the December Art Commission meeting.

One Parkway Building
1515 Arch St.
13th Floor

Chairperson Greenberger stated that roll call will be conducted for the full presentations but not for the minutes, Sign Committee report, or the administrative approvals.

Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-683-4674

Minutes

artcommission@phila.gov

- October 7, 2020 meeting minutes

Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was a motion to approve the October Minutes.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Roesch and seconded by Commissioner Almiñana, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the October Minutes (9-0).

Report of the Sign Committee – October 22, 2020

First Reviews:

1. **160-20**
Atmos
1509 Walnut Street

2. **161-20**
Rite Aid
2301 Walnut Street

3. **162-20**
Rowhome Coffee
2536 Pine Street

4. **163-20**
Fine Wine & Good Spirits
407 N 20th Street

Chairperson Greenberger provided the Commission with a review of the Sign Committee report for approval. Seeing no questions or comments, Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was a motion to approve at (00:05:50).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Hartner and seconded by Commissioner Nasser (00:06:16), the Commission voted unanimously to approve (9-0).

Administrative Agenda

1. **165-20**
Philadelphia Zoo – Animal Hospital roof replacement
3400 W Girard Ave
Review Type: Alteration of City property
Project Details: Roof replacement
Submitted By: Department of Public Property

Ms. Berryman described the project. The roof has surpassed its useful lifespan and needs to be replaced. The only aesthetic change is that a small portion of the overall roof has a sloped roof with slate shingles which will be replaced with dark grey asphalt shingles.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (00:07:17).

Commissioner Almiñana asked if the building had historic features. Ms. Berryman stated that this building isn't on the local Philadelphia historic register but that roof details, such as copper downspouts, gutters, etc. will be replaced in kind. Commissioner

Laragione asked if soundproofing was part of the project because of the proximity to rail tracks. Chairperson Greenberger asked Ms. Berryman to pass this question to the zoo.

Seeing no questions or comments, Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was a motion to approve at (00:09:35).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Almiñana and seconded by Commissioner Nasser (00:09:48), the Commission voted unanimously to approve (9-0).

Presentations for Second Review

1. 153-20

Frank Glavin Memorial Playground Renovation Project 2600 E Westmoreland Street

Review Type: Construction paid by City funds

Project Details: Renovation to playground, site, and Recreation Center

Submitted by: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Chairperson Greenberger recapped the status of this project since the October Art Commission meeting, when the Commission gave administrative approval to the minor building renovations. Also, within the last month clarification about the Commission's jurisdiction was made; because the scope of work for this proposal includes more than playground equipment, it is subject to review from the full Art Commission.

Rae Vassar began the presentation at (00:12:10) and described the recreational center as well-loved but also well-worn. The project includes regrading to meet ADA requirements, building renovations, play equipment and spray ground upgrades, new tree plantings, and included robust community input.

Commissioner Nixon inquired if the lighting was energy efficient. Commissioner Almiñana asked about the light quality itself, was it going to be blue 4000 lumina lights or softer lighting, and requested more information. Chairperson Greenberger added that additional drawings are needed to better describe the overall look and theme of the renovations. Commissioner Roesch asked for more drawings that better describe the climbing wall feature. He also asked if the rubberized safety surface is made from recycled content.

Lastly, the Commission requested a materials board and color pallet so they could understand the overall pattern of the design, and a clearer plan indicating where the elements are placed on site.

Seeing no questions or comments, Chairperson Greenberger asked the Commission if they were comfortable giving this project concept approval with the understanding that it must come back with more details (00:32:41).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Almiñana and seconded by Commissioner Roesch, the Commission voted unanimously for concept approval (9-0).

2. 151-20

FloatLab 2901 and 3101 S. 56th Street

Review Type: Structure placed on City property

Project Details: Structure in the Schuylkill River, docked near Bartram's Gardens

Submitted by: Mural Arts Philadelphia

Jane Golden, of Mural Arts began the presentation at (00:37:34) by reviewing the programming, river context, staffing, visitor and maintenance plans, and the structure and safety aspects that they were asked to address by the Commission last month. Chairperson Greenberger expressed appreciation to the team for coming back and answering a lot of technical and safety related questions about how it will be used, then reminded the Commission that it's also not necessarily in their purview. They should primarily assess the proposal based on the success of the object itself within public space, in this case, the river.

Maitreyi Roy from Bartram's Garden addressed operational and safety questions about the wake zone, hazard buoys, barriers, and staff training. Meejin Yoon described the structure's buoyancy mechanics and how the water in the center of the structure would be kept healthy through vegetation and a water circulator.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (00:56:30).

Commissioner Roesch inquired about the material being used, maintenance, and if a mock-up object would be tested in a tank prior to launching the actual structure. The structure is made out of steel; the structures needs to be inspected at least every 10-years; and a water tank test was performed.

Commissioner Nixon pointed out that the engineering isn't new and there's much to be learned from peers in Amsterdam. She provided a link in the Zoom chat of floating houses in Amsterdam in an area called Schoonschip, then asked the presenters what some of the questions are that they are asking other engineers in places where water structures are more common. The team responded that the engineering and construction methods are straight forward, it's the form that is unusual, but the principles are common.

Further discussion continued at the minute mark (01:04:50) with the David Hamm, Meejin Yoon, Maitreyi Roy, Danielle Redder and the Commission.

With regards to the security and access to the water, Commissioner Febo San Miguel asked how unauthorized people are prevented from accessing the structure from the water when its closed. Chairperson Greenberger added that it's inevitable that a security camera will be needed. Ms. Roy stated that they have cameras in other parts of the garden and agreed with the suggestion to add it to the project. Considering the summer heat, Commissioner Zacharjasz was curious about the provision of shade. Based on weather conditions, they will limit programming and shade is provided in the plaza area. Commissioner Almiñana commented on the success of the adjacency of the dock to other site amenities. He observed that the link between the trail, habitat, and the proposed could be very strong and emphasized through educational messaging.

Seeing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Greenberger suggested that the Commission give the project final approval with the understanding that if there are any substantial changes to the design of FloatLab, they return to be reviewed by Ms. Berryman and her team to decide what an appropriate level of review may be (01:14:25).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Zacharjasz (01:15:41), Ms. Berryman polled the Commission. Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Hartner, Commissioner Laragione, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner Nixon, Commissioner Roesch, Commissioner Zacharjasz and Chairperson Greenberger. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval (9-0).

3. 152-20

Rhawnhurst Elementary School

7809 Castor Avenue

Review Type: Construction paid by City funds

Project Details: New construction for school addition

Submitted by: Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates

Jeff Straub began the presentation (01:17:21), along with Amy Hunnicut and Elysia Mikkelson, by mentioning this is the second presentation and they will focus on the comments from the last presentation in October. Specifically, he described more details about exterior materials and the landscaping of the trees and the ground planting that would be on the site. He made an overview of the existing overall site and proposed site plan. He generally described the project as having two facades, an historic façade on Castor Avenue and a modern façade at the rear of the site.

A total of 13 trees will be removed from the site, many of which are at the end of their life cycle. In comparison, they are adding 21 new trees to the site, 15 large caliper trees and six smaller flowering trees, so they will be adding more vegetation to the site than what is currently existing. Sight lines and safety were both considered in the placement of the new plantings.

The construction schedule includes 18-months of construction, with the building projected to be finished by August 2022.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (01:34:51).

Commissioner Roesch complimented the proposal and presentation for including “the whole package”, and then asked if the asphalt, where the students would congregate, would get too hot. The team performed a heat island study and overall, they are meeting U.S. Green Building requirements for heat reduction. They would take a second look at the play area.

Further discussion continued with Amy, Nicole and the Commission at the minute mark (01:36:41) concerning the needed features of a schoolyard versus play areas. Chairperson Greenberger offered that the new trees at the rear of the site could be planted closer to the street edge to provide more definition, or closer to the play area to provide more shade, either option might be successful. Seeing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Greenberger asked if there was motion to approve (01:42:15).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Roesch and seconded by Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission. Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Hartner, Jose Almiñana, Commissioner Laragione, Commissioner Nixon, Commissioner Roesch, Commissioner Zacharjasz, Chairperson Greenberger and Commissioner Nasser. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval (9-0).

Presentations for Concept Review

1. 166-20

Northeast Water Pollution Control Plant

3800 Richmond Street

Review Type: Alteration of City property

Project Details: Site improvements, facility improvements, new construction

Submitted by: Trans-Pacific Engineering Corporation

This presentation began at the minute mark (01:45:02) by presenters Mike Oliver, Dave Zima, Kellie Hollenbeck, Philip Chiang, and Brian Sparks. Mr. Zima went over the various photos of the existing context.

The scope of work being performed is due to an EPA mandate to process additional water flow from the combined sewer systems to mitigate pollution into the Delaware River. The new building's orientation is due to the alignment of the existing pipe infrastructure.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (02:00:05).

Chairperson Greenberger asked for clarification about the immediate context and the proximity of residential and/or industrial uses. Commissioner Zacharjasz inquired about the fence, the height of the building, and the type of glazing. The fence is wrought iron, the building is about 40-ft. tall due to equipment height, and the glazing along Richmond Street will be transparent.

Further discussion continued at the minute mark (02:06:00).

Chairperson Greenberger commented that the building is a respectable industrial building and asked if the brick proposed on the new fence piers could be revised to match the brick on the new building.

Commissioner Febo San Miguel asked where the ornamental fence would end and the chain link fence start. It was clarified that the ornamental fence is along the entire frontage, the public-facing edge, and that eventually parts of the chain link fence would be replaced with a retaining wall as part of the I-95 reconstruction project.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Greenberger suggested concept approval and for the project to return next month with material samples and lighting details, then asked if there was a motion to give concept approval (02:14:59).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner Zacharjasz, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission. Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Hartner, Jose Almiñana, Commissioner Laragione, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner Nixon, Commissioner Roesch, Commissioner Zacharjasz and Chairperson Greenberger. The Commission voted unanimously for concept approval (9-0).

Chairperson Greenberger thanked everyone and the Commission. The November 4, 2020 Art Commission was adjourned at the minute mark (02:16:10).

Ended at 11:46 a.m.

The next Art Commission will be held Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom.