



The Philadelphia Art
Commission
Established 1911

Robert Roesch
Chair

José Almiñana
Deborah Cahill
Carmen Febo San Miguel
Sarah McEaney
Matthew Miller
Raed Nasser
Pepón Osorio
Mario Zacharjasz

C. Beige Berryman
Staff

Minutes

The Philadelphia Art Commission

January 12, 2022 - 9:30 a.m.

Remote – Zoom Meeting – Hosted by DPZ

Members Present: José Almiñana, Mario Zacharjasz, Matthew Miller, Pepón Osorio, Raed Nasser, Sarah McEaney, Robert Roesch

Meeting of the Philadelphia Art Commission

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. A link to the recording, will be posted on the Art Commission website and the meeting agenda and materials can also be found on the website at: (<https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-art-commission/>).

*Ms. Berryman polled the commission via roll call announcing a quorum, then stated a few instructions for the public. Members of the public may comment on agenda items during the meeting. When the agenda item that you are interested in is being discussed, you can use the “raise hand” feature and staff will unmute you during the public comment period. If you’re joining by phone, you can also use the hand raise feature by dialing *9 during the public comment period, and if you have submitted comments through email, staff will read those emails out loud at the appropriate time.*

Chair Roesch called the meeting to order at the minute mark in video (00:02:14).

Minutes

- December 8, 2021 meeting minutes

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve the December minutes and took a consensus vote.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Almiñana, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the December minutes (00:02:35).

Report of the Sign Committee – December 22, 2021

First Reviews:

1. **247-21**
Jefferson Health
1101 Chestnut Street

2. **248-21**
Tiffany & Co.
1715 Walnut Street

3. **249-21**
Sam Shaw's Tretery
306 South Street

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve report of the Sign Committee.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner McEneaney, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the Sign Committee Report (6-0).

Administrative Agenda

1. **3-22**
Hartranft Elementary School Improvements
720 W Cumberland Street
Review Type: Minor construction project paid with City funds
Project Details: Roof replacement and facade repair
Submitted By: Pennoni

The proposal is for routine repairs and maintenance work on the masonry façades and the roof. The exterior walls are partially covered with murals and some of the exterior brick work is within the mural areas. The Mural Arts Program has been contacted for future restoration work, but it is not included in the current scope of work. Therefore, the administrative item is for the repairs and maintenance work only and the applicant will submit additional materials for the mural restoration work as a follow up item when the time come for the work to be started.

Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve the administrative item (00:05:04).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz and seconded by Commissioner Nasser, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the Hartranft Elementary School improvements (7-0).

2. 2-22

Lackman Playground Improvements

1101 Bartlett Street

Review Type: Minor construction project located on City property

Project Details: Repairs and renovations to playground

Submitted By: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

This proposal includes minor renovations to the existing playground. Key elements include paving repairs to the parking lot, replacing worn out site amenities, and adding a new tree trench to the parking area. The existing pavement of the underutilized tennis court is being removed to provide tree planting area, additional play space, as well as additional parking as required by the community.

Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve administrative item (00:06:26).

The motion was made by Commissioner McEaney and seconded by Commissioner Nasser. Commissioner Nasser asked if the construction was being funded by Rebuild.

Questions and comments from the public at the minute mark (00:07:12).

Rosa Mannion responded that the improvements were not being funded by Rebuild.

Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the Lackman Playground improvements (7-0).

Presentations for Second Review

1. 117-21

William H. Hunter Schoolyard Improvements

2400 N Front St

Review Type: Construction project paid with City funds

Project Details: Site improvements

Submitted By: Salt Design Studio

Katrina Rogus provided a detailed follow up to their previous presentations, addressing the Art Commission questions and remarks regarding circulation, importance of providing shaded areas, site improvements including the outdoor classroom, tree plantings, stormwater grading, and the budget (00:08:12). Dan Mullen from the Philadelphia School District was also present to support any questions out of the design team's purview.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (00:19:40).

Commissioner Almiñana thanked the team for providing copies of the 90% construction documents.

Chairperson Roesch added that the project was fantastic, and then asked about the caliper of the proposed trees. Katrina Rogus responded that they are specifying two to two-and-a-half-inch caliper for all the canopy trees. Further discussion continued about the caliper size.

Seeing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for final approval (00:22:51).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Almiñana and seconded by Commissioner Nasser, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval (7-0).

2. 214-21
Police District 17
1201 S 20th Street

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Exterior improvements

Submitted By: Department of Public Property

Megan Strenski and Michelle Shuman began the presentation at minute mark (00:23:55). The main purpose of the project is to provide accessibility to the building. Improvements include the ramp and landing, sidewalk repair, exterior lighting, infill of unused sidewalk grates, step lights, and replacement of two tree pits.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (00:19:40).

Commissioner Almiñana inquired about the tree species and suggested consulting with PECO to avoid complications with overhead wires in the future.

Commissioner Zacharjasz asked about the sidewalk width and if it was reviewed by the Streets Department to determine compliance with their codes. Additionally, he suggested turning the stairs 90 degrees to reduce the impact on the sidewalk width and the potential need to extend the railing. Further discussion continued about how to best configure the stairs and ramp to allow as much walking space on the sidewalk as possible.

Commissioner Roesch recommended that the project return to show how these issues were solved, and after approval from the Streets Department is granted.

Seeing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to have the project return (00:39:52). Commissioner Nasser agreed.

The Art Commission's counsel, Claudia Becker, clarified that a motion to continue the Art Commission's deliberation of the project was being called for.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Zacharjasz, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously to continue the project review (7-0).

3. 215-21

**Police District 35
5960 N Broad Street**

Review Type: Construction project located on City property
Project Details: Exterior improvements
Submitted By: Department of Public Property

Megan Strenski began the presentation at the minute mark (00:41:46). The project is similar to the previous review of Police District 17 in that its main purpose is to provide accessibility to the building.

Questions and comments from the Commission at minute mark (00:44:01).

Commissioner Zacharjasz asked if it was possible for the proposal to maintain and respect the existing architectural symmetry of the entrance. Commissioner Almiñana and Commissioner Zacharjasz discussed how the various components of the door opening, landing, retaining wall, stairs, and ramp could be designed to maintain the symmetry while also keeping the circulation areas as wide as possible. Commissioner Osorio asked about the mural. It does not appear on the drawings, but no changes are being proposed for it.

After more deliberations, agreement was reached that the project as proposed was indeed a good solution. Seeing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Roesch asked if there was a motion to approve (00:56:19).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner McEaney and seconded by Commissioner Nasser, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval (7-0).

Presentations for Concept Review

1. 5-22

**FDR Park Welcome Center
1500 Pattison Avenue**

Review Type: Construction project located on City property
Project Details: Alteration of existing guardhouse and stables building
Submitted By: WRT

Allison Schapker and Erin Roark began the presentation at the minute mark (00:57:54). Ms. Schapker and her team have been working closely with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation on delivering the project that is a result of the FDR Park master planning process from 2017. During the two-year planning process the community engagement was robust. Ms. Schapker provided the general context for the project, which aims to provide visitors with a “homebase” for their park experiences. This includes better amenities and services such as places to gather, clean restrooms, opportunities to connect to the horticulture and water features, and a food and drink establishment.

This is a fully funded project, with about 50% of the resources coming from the City of Philadelphia, and the other 50% from philanthropy and grants raised by the Conservancy. The intention is to start construction in 2022 and deliver the project in 2023.

Erin Roark continued the presentation with details about the buildings’ renovations. Historic features are being preserved and the Philadelphia Historical Commission’s preliminary response has been positive. Circulation improvements are being made to the service drive which allow for an outdoor patio space. Viewsheds and flooding are main considerations for the design. Many original window openings are being restored and an increased public use is being brought into the existing buildings.

Charles Neer continued to speak about the landscape design which aims to merge cultural and natural systems. A bioswale and a natural playground are being proposed, and the importance of the area as a bird habitat was mentioned.

Chairperson Roesch complimented the project and clarified that final approval would be contingent upon the Historic Commission’s approval (01:22:21).

Questions and comments from the Commission at minute mark (01:23:39).

Commissioner Nasser expressed that the project was beautiful. Commissioner Zacharjasz asked about the roof material. Some of the roof tile was recently replaced, the asphalt shingles would be replaced in kind. Commissioner Osorio requested a better sense of the lighting. Ms. Schapker responded that there will be lighting around the exterior. Chairperson Roesch requested photographic images of material samples, rather than catalog images, and night renderings.

Seeing no further questions or comments, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for concept approval with the reminder that final approval is contingent on the Historical Commission’s approval.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Osorio, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for concept approval (6-0).

2. 6-22

Norris Square Improvements

2100 N Howard Street

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Schoolyard Renovation

Submitted By: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

John Keiser and Yadiel Rivera-Diaz began the presentation at the minute mark (01:28:55). The existing conditions and community engagement were described, including the radial design, small basketball court, play equipment in the center, and community organizations located around the perimeter. The proposal is for a multi-phased project. A pre-phase includes completing half of the new secondary circulation path loop and basketball court improvements. Phase I includes completing the central plaza area, completing the secondary circulation loop, and the new play area. Lastly, Phase II would include gateway improvements, other programming, and possibly other park structures. The project is currently funded through Phase I. The symbolism and themes of the central plaza and the new playground area were detailed.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (01:46:42).

Chairperson Roesch read Commissioner Almiñana's question, he had to excuse himself earlier, asking how the trees were going to be protected during the renovations. One of the trees is especially old and significant. It was confirmed that the project includes a tree protection plan.

Chairperson Roesch again requested photographs of materials, as opposed to catalog images, to better understand them. He then complimented the topographical components of the play area and the natural color of the safety surface. Commissioner Zacharjasz complimented the project as well but had questions about how paint on trees affects their health. He also suggested adding volleyball lines to the basketball court, and asked about the lighting levels, considering the nearby residential uses. Lastly, he asked if skateboard prevention was considered into the bench and seating area design, and if the project includes signage or wayfinding.

Commissioner Miller expressed that the project was a powerful way to integrate local imagination into the design of a public space, then commended the research that was done, as well as the process of design and community engagement.

Commissioner McEneaney wanted to know if there was a Percent for Public Art component to the project. While it is required, plans for the public art are not yet worked out.

Commissioner Osorio observed that more spaces and activities need to be included in the design to attract a broader range of park visitors. For example, a gathering space for community members who are not actively using the courts. He challenged the designers to think more broadly about the types of park visitors and the spaces they might use.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for conceptual approval (02:02:30). He summarized the Commission's requests for the next presentation including, a detailed planting and tree protection plan, details of the basketball court, play area equipment and site furniture, inclusion of gathering areas for everyone, lighting details, sustainability goals, and the Percent for Art plans.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz and seconded by Commissioner Nasser, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for concept approval (6-0).

3. 4-22

**Kingessing Recreation Center and Library Renovations
4901 Kingessing Avenue**

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Building renovations and site improvements

Submitted By: Kelly Maiello Architects

Dori Bova and Sara Pevaroff began the presentation at the minute mark (02:04:55), they provided an overview of the recreation center and library project. Both buildings are listed on the local Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The budget for the project is \$25.5 million, and they are working with Parks and Recreation as well as the Free Library. Community engagement efforts revealed that a better connection between the buildings is desired, the location should have more of a campus feeling, and include more programming for youth. The proposal also includes extensive outdoor improvements to the sports field areas and gathering areas, which are inspired by a meadow concept. Ms. Bova presented the interior and exterior building renovations.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (02:24:14).

Commissioner Zacharjasz asked if the project had gone before the Historic Commission and if the field material was synthetic. Ms. Pevaroff stated that they had an informal review with the Historical Commission and the field is synthetic. She mentioned that some of the details of the ADA access to the front of facilities still need additional work. Commissioner Zacharjasz then inquired about the lighting for the field and building and asked about the condition of the existing basketball courts.

The Art Commission's counsel, Claudia Becker, clarified that the Art Commission Regulations address the Historical Commission's review process, stating that the Historical Commission's final decision is needed before they return to the Art Commission.

Chairperson Roesch suggested granting a concept approval, with the caveat that changes required by the Historical Commission have not yet been resolved. He also brought up the Percent for Art requirement that will need Art Commission review in the future.

Commissioner Miller referenced the statement that the project was inspired by the area's Lenape inhabitants and the name "kingsessing" meaning "place where there is a meadow." He challenged the project team to involve the Lenape people in their engagement process. Ms. Pevaroff responded that she loved the idea.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked if there was a motion for conceptual approval (02:37:38).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz and seconded by Commissioner McEneaney, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for conceptual approval (6-0).

Seeing no further comments or questions from the Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to adjourn (02:38:26). Upon the motion made by Commissioner Zacharjasz, a consensus vote was taken to adjourn.

This concluded the January 12, 2022 Philadelphia Art Commission meeting.

The next Art Commission will be held Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom.