



Minutes

The Philadelphia Art Commission

June 8, 2022 - 9:30 a.m.

Remote – Zoom Meeting – Hosted by DPZ

The Philadelphia Art
Commission
Established 1911

Robert Roesch
Chair

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

C. Beige Berryman
Staff

Members Present: José Almiñana, Sarah McEneaney, Carmen Febo San Miguel, Raed Nasser, Mario Zacharjasz, and 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 any submitted comments through email, staff will read those emails out loud at the appropriate time. Thank you.*

Chair Roesch called the meeting to order at (00:01:53).

Minutes

- April 13, 2022 meeting minutes
- May 11, 2022 meeting minutes

Hearing no questions or comments from the Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve both sets of minutes and took a consensus vote.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the April and May minutes.

Report of the Sign Committee – May 25, 2022

First Reviews:

1. **104-22**
Brooklinen
1703 Walnut Street

2. **105-22**
Madewell
1729 Walnut Street

3. **102-22**
Restore Wellness
1229 Chestnut Street

4. **103-22**
State and Liberty
1517 Walnut Street

5. **107-22**
Code Ninjas
777 S Broad Street

6. **106-22**
7-Eleven
2201 Walnut Street

Questions and comments from the public at the minute mark (00:03:22).

Linda Brown asked the Commission to reconsider the Sign Committee's disapproval recommendation for the projecting sign at 1703 Walnut Street.

Commissioner Nasser and Ms. Berryman responded to Ms. Brown that projecting signs on Walnut Street in Center City are prohibited through the zoning code. Counsel to the Art Commission, Claudia Becker confirmed that a variance process would be required for a proposal of this type. Commissioner Zacharjasz added that the Sign Committee has been very consistent in denying projecting signs along Walnut and Chestnut Streets. The applicant then stated they will comply with the zoning code and withdrew their request.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the public or Commission, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve the recommendations of the Sign Committee from May 25, 2022 (00:10:08).

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

Administrative Agenda

1. 111-22

Forrest Elementary School Renovation

4300 Bleigh Avenue

Review Type: Minor construction project using City funds

Project Details: Routine maintenance and mechanical systems upgrades

Applicant: Philadelphia School District

Ms. Berryman presented a single administrative item (00:11:17). The scope of work for Forrest Elementary School is focused on repair work and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing system upgrades for the site and for multiple buildings. Exterior site work includes repair of existing stormwater draining system, sidewalk, fencing, gates, and pavement. The main building work is comprised of interior and systems renovations. Exterior renovations include roof replacement, concrete repair work, and replacement windows.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve the administrative item (00:12:15).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel, seconded by Commissioner Zacharjasz, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the Forrest Elementary School renovation (6-0).

Presentations for Concept Review

1. 100-22

Scanlon Recreation Center

1099 E Venango Street

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Outdoor site improvements, concept review continued

Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Presenter: Heckendorn Shiles Architects

Jared Bookhamer presented the updated design, which included more curvilinear areas and a mounded tree planting area for interest, and gave an overview of the proposed renovation (00:13:02). The goal of the project is to reinvigorate sections of the outdoor recreational space to create a safe and engaging experience for the community. The existing space has deteriorated over time.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (00:27:17).

Commissioner Almiñana asked if asphalt was below the play surface, and asked how much previous area is around the new trees. Mr. Bookhamer confirmed that the playground surface is on an asphalt base, and there is a flush curb around the tree area for water infiltration.

Commissioner Zacharjasz clarified that the Commission was only reviewing Phase IA for concept approval. Commissioner McEneaney asked about the lighting in the play area. Aparna Palantino from Parks and Recreation responded that existing lights on the site provide enough ambient light.

Commissioner Zacharjasz inquired about the outdoor hockey rink panels, including their material, and colors. He then asked about the residual space behind the goal, as it appeared awkward and may collect trash, be difficult to maintain, and may be a safety issue. He suggested a gate to limit access to the space. Commissioner Almiñana then asked about a similarly awkward space, the dimension between the rink panels and the nearby wall. Perhaps four bays of the panel and fence system could be eliminated by using the wall surface instead.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the Commission or public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for conceptual approval (00:42:00) and added upon returning for the final review, the two awkward spaces should be addressed.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Almiñana.

Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for concept approval (6-0).

2. 112-22

Inside the Watershed

Schuylkill River Trail, near Paine's Skate Park

Review Type: Art installation located on City property

Project Details: Interactive sound arbor

Applicant and presenter: Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University

Pete Angevine presented an overview of the project and requested final approval. The art installation is a sound portrait of the city's rivers, exhibited through a temporary pavilion (August – October) that is free and open to the public.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (00:50:09).

Chairperson Roesch inquired about the safe storage of the electronics and sound equipment. Mr. Angevine responded that the equipment will be stored in a waterproof, secured, safety box that remains within the pavilion. Commissioner Zacharjasz asked about the material and space between the louvers on the underside of the roof structure. There will be mesh between the louvers, the wood is pressure treated and stained, and no lighting is included. Chairperson Roesch asked about the sound artist and structure designer. Commissioner Nasser asked about the length of the art piece, which is about 10 minute loop.

Commissioner Febo San Miguel raised concerns about the ramp and accessibility. Commissioner Zacharjasz asked if a landing was needed. Commissioner Almiñana added that the ramp may not adequately address the high volume of pedestrian traffic. He then suggested that the separate ramp structure be eliminated, and instead use the landscape to meet the

grade that is needed. Bringing up the grade with a gravel path that provided an entrance and exit route would improve the circulation and be easy to disassemble.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the Commission or public, Commissioner Almiñana made a motion for final approval with the proviso of the ramp revisions.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Almiñana and seconded by Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval with provisions (6-0).

3. 113-22

**Mann Rivera Recreation Center Public Art
3201 N 5th Street**

Review Type: Art installation located on City property

Project Details: Mural fulfilling the City's Percent for Art requirement

Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Presenter: Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy

Marguerite Anglin began the presentation at the minute mark (01:06:01). The goal of this project is to create a landmark work of art at the highly visible intersection of 5th Street and Allegheny Avenue, that reflects the people, culture, and values of the vibrant Fairhill community.

Linda Fernandez continued the presentation and described the art in more detail. The mural is composed of painted tiles with symbols and colors that create a theme of "home, community, and culture" of Latin America.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (01:13:50).

Commissioner Almiñana inquired about a landscaped area between two of the retaining walls, asking if a fence was needed and how the area would be maintained. Commissioner McEneaney voiced concern that an unmaintained landscape area would obscure the art. The project team responded that the little green space would be maintained by Parks and Recreation.

Regarding the digitally printed tiles, Commissioner McEneaney asked about their durability, color preservation, and graffiti protection. Ms. Fernandez responded by showing images of the tiles and describing their UV ray resistant, graffiti resistant, weather resistant, and scratch resistant qualities.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for final approval (01:32:47).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner McEneaney, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval (6-0).

4. 114-22

**Alain Locke Schoolyard Improvements
4550 Haverford Avenue**

Review Type: Construction project paid with City funds

Project Details: Outdoor site improvements

Applicant: Philadelphia School District

Presenter: Trust for Public Land

Kari Sannino began the presentation and Evan McNaught provided details. Mr. McNaught provided an overview of the project, which included an update on the asphalt, existing conditions of the parking lot, and the play equipment. Virtual engagement was held with the students for feedback on the design concept, drawings, and overall project.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (01:44:18).

Chairperson Roesch asked about lights and if the project was open at night. Lighting is not in the scope but the space is not used at night. Commissioner Zacharjasz inquired about the existing tower. It is an obsolete chimney and its future is not determined at this time. Commissioner McEneaney asked if the school was fenced off, which it is.

Commissioner Febo San Miguel stated that the project should not need to return to the Commission. Commissioner Almiñana added that the applicant would return only if there were any significant changes in the scope and design.

Commissioner McEneaney wanted to know if public art was required. The budget is under \$1 million and therefore does not trigger the Percent for Art requirement.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for approval (01:49:08).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Ms. Berryman polled the Commission: Commissioner Almiñana, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Zacharjasz, and Chairperson Roesch. The Commission voted unanimously for final approval (6-0).

5. 115-22

**Shepard Recreation Center Improvements
5700 Haverford Avenue**

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Building and site improvements

Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Presenters: SMP Architects and Salt Design Studio

This presentation began at the minute mark (01:50:05). Project manager Robert Totaro introduced SMP Architects, and Katrina Rogus of Salt Design Studio, who presented the site design. The presentation included an overview of existing buildings, and proposed landscape elements including trees, fields and green space, basketball court, playground and picnic area, plaza space, site entrance, and pedestrian circulation. Some existing elements would remain in place, but the focus of the design is a new corner entrance at 57th Street and Haverford Avenue. This provides increased safety for the site.

Todd Woodward briefly gave an overview of the building's existing conditions and proposed renovations.

Questions and comments from the Commission at the minute mark (02:04:59).

Commissioner Zacharjasz asked if there were any graffiti problems. The proposal includes a protective coating on the tile wall. Commissioner Febo San Miguel asked if the project required the Percent for Art program, it does but the artwork is not yet planned. Commissioner McEneaney encouraged the project team to think about it early so that it's integrated into the project. Chairperson Roesch agreed.

Chairperson Roesch summarized that the Commission needs to see details of the play spaces and equipment, lighting, and a more detailed plan view including final paving materials (02:15:17).

Seeing no further questions or comments from the Commission or public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion for concept approval (02:15:49).

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

Seeing no further comments or questions, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to adjourn.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Febo San Miguel, the meeting concluded.

The next Art Commission will be held Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom.