



Philadelphia Art Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 12, 2023 - 9:30 AM

Members Present: Deborah Cahill, Carmen Febo San Miguel, Raed Nasser, Sarah McEaney, Pepón Osorio, and Robert Roesch

Meeting of the Philadelphia Art Commission

Alex Smith – Director 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/>).

*Mr. Smith 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.*

Chairman Roesch called the meeting to order at the mark in video (00:02:12).

Minutes

- May 10, 2023 meeting minutes
- June 14, 2023 meeting minutes

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission, Chairman Roesch asked for a motion to approve the May and June Minutes (00:03:16).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Raed and seconded by Commissioner McEaney.

Consensus of the vote carried all in favor of approving the May and June meeting minutes.

Report of the Sign and Streeter Committee – June 28, 2023

Sign Applications

First Reviews:

1. **145-23**

Jewelers’ Row Gateway Signage – Concept Approval

Various locations including 700 block of Sansom Street and on 7th and 8th Streets.

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Mario Zacharjasz

Alex M. Smith
Director



2. **152-23**
The Inquirer
100 S Independence Mall West
3. **151-23**
Bardot Bridal Hair
1135 Pine Street
4. **148-23**
Volume Hair Studio South
45 S 3rd Street
5. **146-23**
Flight Club
1411 Walnut Street
6. **149-23**
Anthos
1612-34 Chancellor Street
7. **147-23**
JAP Clothing
1226 Chestnut Street
8. **153-23**
Lilly's Ferry Bar & Grill (*Sign already installed*)
10 S Front Street
9. **150-23**
Wells Fargo
340-50 S 2nd Street

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Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or the Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion to approve the recommendations of the Sign Committee and Streetery Committee from June 28, 2023 (00:04:04).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Raed and seconded by Commissioner McEneaney.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the recommendations of the Sign Committee and Streetery Committee from June 28, 2023 (6-0).

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Administrative Agenda

1. 58-23

Vernon Park – Public Restroom

5800 Germantown Avenue

Review Type: Minor construction on City property

Project Details: Construction of restroom in Vernon Park

Applicant: Rebuild

Mr. Smith presented a summary of two administrative items beginning with the Vernon Park – Public Restroom (00:04:52).

Rebuild proposes the installation of another pilot location for the city's new public restroom facility project currently referred to as the Portland Loo. The Pilot location, the third project to be reviewed by this Commission will be within Vernon Park, a Parks and Recreation owned and maintained facility in the Germantown neighborhood of Northwest Philadelphia.

Questions and comments from the Public (00:07:13).

Oscar Beisert, of Germantown, inquired about the lighting. Angie Dixon, of Rebuild, responded to the comment (00:08:21).

Commissioner Raed and Commissioner Cahill raised questions about the hours of operation and maintenance.

Additional public comments were made by Allison Weiss and were addressed by Ms. Dixon.

Questions and comments from the Commission (00:13:12).

Chairman Roesch inquired about the distance between the small parking pad and the historic areas of Vernon Park. Commissioner Febo San Miguel and Commissioner Nasser suggested additional considerations for the color of the restroom or to have a more pleasing standard color for the overall Loo project.

Additional comments were made by Commissioner Cahill regarding canopy trees and additional vegetation (00:16:09).

Chairman Roesch asked presenters to submit additional information to Mr. Smith before administrative approval was granted (00:17:56).

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (00:18:15).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner Cahill.

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Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

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The Commission voted unanimously to approve the administrative item: Vernon Park – Public Restroom (6-0).

2. 165-23

Roxborough High School – Scoreboard

6300 Ridge Avenue

Review Type: Minor construction on City property

Project Details: Replacement of existing scoreboard

Applicant: Gilmore & Associates / School District of Philadelphia

This project includes the relocation and a new scoreboard for the Roxborough High School Stadium. The existing scoreboard will be removed due to its problematic sighting close to the endzone of the football field. The new scoreboard will be moved slightly west providing a better view from both sides of the field. Additionally, a memorial sign for a young victim of gun violence will also be added to the scoreboard. The memorial will be minimally increased in size due to the memorial display but is in character with the previous scoreboard size.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (00:19:52).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner Cahill.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the administrative item: Roxborough High School – Scoreboard (6-0).

Presentations for Concept Review (continued from June 14 meeting)

1. 139-23

River Soundings

601 N Columbus Boulevard

Review Type: Public art

Project Details: New outdoor sculpture for PHDC Percent for Art program

Applicant: Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC)

Presenter: Haddad|Drugan

Kacie Liss began with an overview of the project (00:20:53), then introduced Laura Haddad and Tom Drugan, who continued the presentation at the minute mark in video (00:22:30).

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Questions and comments from the Commission (00:36:31).

Chairman Roesch recommended seeing the project be reviewed by a structural engineer, requested additional documentation on the hanging pieces during weather incidents, and suggested communication and clearance from US Coast Guard regarding potential navigational hazards. Additionally, he noted potential lighting impacts on residents living in nearby condominiums.

Additional comments were made by members of the Commission requesting the applicant bring in more of the themes and images shown in the presentation – topographic maps, throwing out the weights, etc. Also, having Philly based artists use the information and images presented to inform or inspire their work moving forward. There were also some concerns about sound and wind impacts on the art piece.

Questions and comments from the Public (00:43:20).

Allison Weiss commented about the location and beautiful view of the bridge.

Xhulio Binjaku pointed out environmental concerns and recommended the applicant team consult an ecologist to explore impacts on migrating birds and other wildlife.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (00:49:30).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner McEaney.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for concept approval (6-0).

2. 140-23

48th Street and Woodland Avenue Recreation Center

4740 Woodland Avenue

Review Type: Construction project on City property

Project Details: Spray ground and amenity improvements

Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Presenter: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Andrew Pirie. and Josh Sarantitis. began the presentation at the minute mark in video (00:50:48).

Questions and comments from the Commission (00:57:06).

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Chairman Roesch wanted to know what material the base and surface treatment was proposed as. Mr. Pirie responded.

Additional comments and questions made by members of the Commission included: asking if there was enough room for more shade trees. The species of trees being proposed isn't a great shade tree and would like to see more variety of tree species proposed. Consider places where parents and guardians can sit while children are playing; are the shaded structures permanent, and what are their life expectancy.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (01:03:33).

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

Commissioner Cahill inquired about the corner with the activity panels and offered a suggestion for another shade structure – one of the things that the community wanted. Also, requested if presenters are able to add the additional shade, to please send a rendering or confirmation that it got done (01:03:58).

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for final approval (6-0).

Presentations for Final Review

1. 138-23

Tacony Boat Launch

7071 Milnor Street

Review Type: Construction project on City property

Project Details: Park site improvements and new building construction

Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Presenter: NV5

Rosa Mannion presented the project responding to previous requests from the Commission at the minute mark in video (01:06:50).

Chairman Roesch expressed concerns about the amount of parking.

Questions and comments from the Commission (01:13:39).

Commissioner Cahill commended the additional seating, then inquired about the seeded meadow and maintenance plan for the rain garden.

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Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (01:15:52).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner McEaney and seconded by Commissioner Febo San Miguel.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for final approval (6-0).

2. 19-23

Simons Recreation Center 7200 Woolston Avenue

Review Type: Construction project located on City property
Project Details: Exterior site improvements
Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Presenter: Langan

Andrew Pirie began the presentation at the minute mark in video (01:16:55). Giovanni Fuentes continued the presentation (01:24:00).

Questions and comments from the Commission (01:28:00).

Commissioner Cahill inquired about the main entrance way specifically noting that it lacks welcoming elements into the park. She requested the applicant add more trees or vegetation around the entrance. Additionally, it was noted that this project will return for its Percent for Art requirement (01:30:25).

Chairman Roesch suggested a motion that approves the current proposal including site work, the new buildings etc., and provide Art Commission staff the entrance gateway and planting plans that shows the new trees added. He also noted this project will return for its Art Requirement (01:32:50).

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (01:35:53).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Osorio for final approval with the condition of sending Art Commission staff a final planting plan, reconsideration of the main entrance area, and One Percent for Art.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for final approval (6-0).

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Presentations for Concept Review

1. 159-23

Armenian Heritage Walk 2500 Spring Garden Street

Review Type: Construction project located on City property
Project Details: Exterior site improvements and relocation of public art
Applicant: Armenian Heritage Foundation of Philadelphia, Inc
Presenter: Armenian Heritage Foundation of Philadelphia, Inc

Kurk Selverian introduced the team: Simon Koumjian III, David Hoplamazian, and Ned Moore, then began the presentation of Phase I of the project (01:38:00). Mr. Koumjian III continued the presentation, with plans, renderings, and other design details (01:46:30).

Questions and comments from the Commission (01:54:38).

Chairman Roesch inquired about the maintenance of the garden.

Additional comments and questions made by members of the Commission included: having a trash can near the bus station, and more info on the Elm tree protection and maintenance plans.

There was an additional request for: a landscape plan for final approval, analysis on how much storm water management is needed [erosion and site sediment plan will be included in final presentation], lighting, winter garden rendering, and to include the maintenance plan for the Elm Tree in final presentation (01:55:27).

Mr. Hoplamazian addressed questions and concerns from the Commission regarding protection of the Elm Tree and storm water management (02:03:50).

Questions and comments from the Public (02:05:29).

Xhulio Binjaku, resident of Fairmount commented on the three points of entry.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (02:10:24).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner Cahill.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEneaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for concept approval (6-0).

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2. 160-23

Thomas Paine Plaza

1401 John F Kennedy Boulevard

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Exterior site improvements

Applicant: Department of Public Property

Presenter: Ground Reconsidered

Karen Skafta began the presentation at the minute mark in video (02:12:09). David Ade continued the presentation (02:21:01).

Questions and comments from the Commission (02:27:51).

Commissioner Osorio commented on the ability of the colored light changes and inquired about commercial space.

Questions and comments from the Public (02:36:20).

Mina Monavarian – staff member of the Art Commission – read an email into the record from a member of the public, Nicholas Baker at minute mark in video. Ms. Skafta responded to Mr. Baker’s email.

Questions and comments from the Public continued.

The public comments varied, with a mix of opposition and support of the project. Testimony was given by the following individuals: Benjamin She, Claire Stricklin, Timothy Reimer, Kelley Yemen, Xhulio Binjaku, Todd Grant, and Pat Heid regarding skateboarding, security, bike parking, trees, and the Municipal Service Building (MSB) concourse roof damage. End of public comments (02:57:56).

Commissioner Cahill asked about the inspiration for the project (02:58:11).

Chairman Roesch called for additional sub-committee meetings, with the applicant and design team, and Commissioner Nasser suggested two parking spaces, for food trucks at the bottom of the ramp (03:00:51). Commissioner Osorio requested that the design increase space for more civic engagement.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (03:03:11).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner McEaney and seconded by Commissioner Nasser for concept approval, with calling for sub-committee meeting, then go from there.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for concept approval (6-0).

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3. 161-23

Paschalville Library - Percent for Art 6942 Woodland Avenue

Review Type: Public art

Project Details: New story circle and seating with associated work

Applicant: Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy (OACCE)

Presenter: OACCE and Joshua Sarantitis

Marguerite Anglin began the presentation at the minute mark in video (03:04:42). Josh Serentitis continued the presentation (03:06:40).

Questions and comments from the Commission (03:13:38).

Commissioner Cahill inquired about how well the mosaic seating lasts and questioned if there was a protective covering proposed, noting concerns with fluctuating temperature impacts. The Commission loved the concept and commented on how beautiful the project was.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (03:17:35).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Cahill and seconded by Commissioner Osorio.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for final approval (5-0).

4. 162-23

Nicetown Park 4301 Germantown Avenue

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Exterior site improvements

Applicant: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Presenter: Ground Reconsidered

Sarah Endriss began the presentation at the minute mark in video (03:19:09).

Questions and comments from the Commission (03:30:30).

Chairman Roesch asked about the One Percent for Art responsibility. Members of the Commission spoke highly of the project and sculpture but expressed concerns about the need for more info on the restrooms, stage lighting, maintenance, and an overall lighting plan for security purposes (3:31:54).

Julie Bush addressed the Commission questions and concerns about lighting, and power sources.

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Questions and comments from the Public (03:34:45).

Allison Weiss offered a suggestion for solar lighting.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (03:35:54).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Osorio and seconded by Commissioner Nasser for concept approval and must return to present final with lighting plan.

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Osorio, Commissioner Nasser, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for concept approval, (6-0).

5. 163-23

Russo Park

7300 Torresdale Avenue

Review Type: Construction project located on City property

Project Details: Exterior site improvements

Applicant: Rebuild

Presenter: Ground Reconsidered

Julie Bush began the presentation at the minute mark in video (03:38:40).

Questions and comments from the Commission (03:49:39).

Commissioner Cahill commended the amphitheater seating and wanted to know if adding restroom facilities had been thought about as part of the project scope. Commissioner McEaney asked if the presenters were in communication with the Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy, (OACCE) about their One Percent for Art requirement.

Seeing no questions or comments from the Commission or Public, Chairperson Roesch asked for a motion (03:53:12).

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Febo San Miguel and seconded by Commissioner Osorio (03:53:26).

Mr. Smith polled the Commission: Commissioner Cahill, Commissioner Febo San Miguel, Commissioner McEaney, Commissioner Nasser, Commissioner Osorio, and Chairman Roesch.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve for final approval (6-0).

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Seeing no further questions or comments from the Commission, Chairman Roesch asked for a motion to adjourn the July Art Commission (03:53:57).

*Upon the motion made by Commissioner Nasser and seconded by Commissioner Cahill.
Motion carried with no nays.*

This concluded the July 12, 2023, Philadelphia Art Commission.

The next Art Commission will be held September 13, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom.

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