Baltimore Public Art Commission Monthly Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 21, 2021, Virtually, 10 AM – 11:06 AM

I. Call to Order

Commissioners
Aaron Bryant
Sam Christian Holmes
Jacqueline Bershad
Alma Roberts
Kuo Pao Lian

BOPA Staff
Kirk Shannon-Butts, Public Art and Curation Manager
Devin Shacklett, Arts Council Program Coordinator

Guest
Ed Gunts
C. Ryan Patterson
Antoinette
Alexa Ashwell
Katherine Phillips, Cross Street Partnership
John Renner, Cross Street Partnership
Elaine Asal, Cross Street Partnership
Gensler, Cross Street Partnership
Mahan Rykiel, Cross Street Partnership
Ashley Wallace, Central Baltimore Partnership
Jack Danna, Central Baltimore Partnership
Fox45 News
Tom McGilloway
Peter Doo
II. April’s Minuets

- There were no additional concerns comments or recommendations.
  - Alma made a motion for approval.
    - Kuo Pao Lian 2nd the motion.

III. Meeting objectives

- Updates from Kirk Shannon-Butts
- Penn North train station statue. (Guest presentation by, Cross Street Partnership)
- Chris Brooks explains his role at BOPA working directly with the community of Baltimore City

IV. Updates from Kirk

- Lake Clifton
  - Kirk spoke with Terrance Jennings and the Mayor’s office.
    - They’re still finalizing the contract with, Morgan State University regarding the artwork that will be put in, Lake Clifton.
  - Baltimore City will have complete ownership of the artwork however, they’re creating a “MLU,” putting Morgan State in charge of protecting and maintaining the upkeep of the artwork displayed.
    - The work must go thru the city/PAC for the work to be moved/sold.
    - Aaron Bryant asked, “Is there a timeline on what’s happening with this project? How is it developing? Is it possible for the PAC to see a timeline, or has there even been a timeline created yet?”
      - Kirk responds, “there hasn’t been a timeline created yet, but will request a timeline from Morgan State.
        - Currently, Kirk knows that Morgan State has been communicating with the city, and they’d like to access the work as oppose to the city. They are in the process of building a conservation team to do a report of the art inside of, Lake Clifton.
  - Aaron Bryant asked, “Does Morgan State plan to move the, Artwork?”
Kirk responded, “No, the work will stay where it is however, there’s a “tile piece” that they’re looking to relocate.
  • Aaron Bryant asked, “Are you referring to the Mosaic?”
  • Kirk responds, “Yes.”
• Alma Roberts asked, “Will the MLU being created allow Morgan State to exhibit the work, or will they just be storing and maintaining the work?”
  • Kirk responds, “When you say exhibit, do you mean however they use the building, will the work be up?”
  • Ms. Roberts responds, “The James E Lewis gallery Museum is at Lake Clifton. I’m assuming they’ll keep the work within their archives. Will they be exhibiting the work owned by the city within the Museum?”
    • Kirk responds, “I will present your questions to the Mayors office to confirm, but as far as I know, the Art is going to stay where it is in the positions that they’re in, at Lake Clifton.”
    • Ms. Roberts responds, “Oh so they’re not moving the work to Morgan State, I see. Sorry I misunderstood.”
    • Kirk Responds, “Lake Clifton is going to become a part of Lake Clifton.”
• Aaron Bryant, “Any additional comments/questions regarding, Lake Clifton?
• Aaron Bryant, “Who do you know from Morgan State/ the city that would be able to talk to the PAC regarding this project?”
  • Kirk responds, “Absolutely! I will follow-up with Terrance who will point me into the right direction.”
  • Aaron Bryant, “Ok great.”
• Aaron Bryant asked, “any additional comments before we proceed?”
1% for Art

- The 1% for Arts have been in the news this month, following the hearings.
  - Kirk thanked Aaron Bryant for speaking on behalf of the PAC, and BOPA.
- Kirk followed up with BOPA’s controller where the funds from the 1% come in, and the deadline was, May 01, 2021, so the funds should be in the process of trickling down.
  - Aaron Bryant asked, “time wise, how are the funds dispersed? How often will the funds be available in BOPA’s, account?”
    - Kirk responds, “Right now, it is contingent upon however the agencies allocate the funds. “
      - This is the purpose of the hearings, in attempt to streamline the process so that it’s either yearly, monthly/some type of schedule so that all of the agencies are all on the same page.
- Aaron Bryant asked, “are there next steps planned to get the agencies/organizations together to discuss how we all can make the process, better.
  - Kirk responds, “Yes! There were 2 hearing that were held regarding the matter.
    - Councilmen Dorsey offered a 6 month from march to follow up/ address this more in depth.
- Aaron Bryant asked, “Is this something that BOPA has to keep checking in on to see if the funds are available, or will the funds be available all a once?
  - Kirk responds, “I will have BOPA’s controller, Brian join our next meeting so that he may better answer questions regarding funds from the 1%.”
- Sam Holmes says, “it should be some kind of regular statement that is given to the council/commission.
  - For example, how much of the fund is available
  - Where it came from
- He continues saying, “that way the commission can keep an account of the funds that the PAC is responsible for.
  - Aaron and Kirk agrees with Sam.
- Ka Po Lian reminded tha “in the past, the PAC was provided detailed spreadsheets regarding the funds, but the PAC hasn’t been being provided with that information.
  - He recalls the report being quarterly.
    - Aaron thanked Ka Po for bring this up.
- Aaron requested BOPA’s controller, Brian come to next months PAC meeting.
  - Kirk says he’s going to ask him to come and bring an example of a “report.”
- Ka Po brought up the idea of having a protocol regarding new projects under the 1%. How does BOPA control the protocol?
• Aaron asked for clarification saying, “Do you feel that the PAC should be a part of the conversation from the beginning, or are you saying protocol meaning even after that. All the way up to the funds reaching the account.
  o Ka Po responds, “probably a little of both.” He wants to assure that BOPA is a part of pre-development meetings when new projects come to the city.
    ▪ Aaron agreed.
    ▪ Kirk says that when Brian comes to the next meeting, he will address this more thoroughly. He also agreed with Ka Po, being a part of “pre-development meetings.”
• Aaron clarifies Ka Po’s request, “we should have a formal process at which where we are required or recommended to attend these meetings so that we know about projects early on in the process.
  o Kirk made a note regarding.
• Sam adds to Ka Po’s statement saying, “there needs to be a paper trail that is initiated when any project starts that we can follow to completion.”
  o Aaron agreed with Sam. He adds, “the Pac should have a conversation with the city regarding a formal documented process that involves the PAC.”
  ▪ Aaron, “Anymore comments and or questions?”
  ▪ There were no more additional responses.

V. Penn North train station statue

• Kirk shares, “earlier this year he was a part of a meeting to discuss the re-development/design of Penn Station train station. From the meeting, he invited Cross Street Partners to this meeting to speak with the PAC regarding the re-design. Specifically, regarding the Male/female statue.
  o The statue was commissioned by The Municipal Arts Society of Baltimore.
    ▪ The President of the organization, Peter Dew is in the meeting as well.
    ▪ Kirk turns it over to Katherine Phillips. From Cross Street Partnership.
      • John Rener from Penn Station/Partnership will be speaking instead of Ms.Phillips. He’s representing Penn Station Partners.
        o Penn Station Partners are the master developers that Amtrak selected for Baltimore Penn Station.
  • John Rener continues. “We’re here today because the re-development of Baltimore is an amazing opportunity to celebrate public art and art programming in Baltimore. Not just about the statue, but the broader re-development plan of the city.
    o The first phase regarding the public realm is the south plaza.
- There will be a pedestrian promenade that will connect Penn Station to the Mt Royal light rail Station.
  - They are working with the University of Baltimore and The Central Baltimore Partnership and a number of community partners.
- Over the 6 years in working on this project, John frequently receives questions regarding the Man/Woman Statue at Penn Station..."What are you going to do with the statue.
  - John's organization, and partners have no jurisdiction over what happens with the statue. They don't even have jurisdiction over the plaza itself.
    - The plaza is a city lease of a parking garage that the city leases from AMTRAK. The Plaza is the roof of the garage. The city owns the plaza and the sculpture is owned by the public.
      - They do not wish to avoid the issue and seek to be apart of the conversion regarding the sculpture.
      - They believe that the plaza can be reconfigured to be more pedestrian friendly providing more programming.
      - There will be a concourse expansion on the surface parking lot to the north of the tracks.
        - This will take place in the second quarter of next year.
  - John and his colleagues will be presenting the PAC with some pro’s and con’s as well as updates on the project.
    - John introduces Elaine Asal from Cross Street Partnership.
  - Elaine Asal, Community Engagement
    - Figure 1.
In 2019, there was a course of “Community engagement Town Hall meetings” regarding the project.

- There focus was to gain community feedback. Please review figure 1 to review the community’s feedback.
  
  - Figure 2.

In 2021, there was a follow up Community meeting regarding the project.

- Please review figure 2 & 3 regarding the communities opinions/wants.
  
  - Figure 3.
Tom McGilloway takes over the presentation to discuss planning and design.

Figure 4

- Currently in the early stages of the design process. The focus point of the project is the Penn Station South Plaza, which is in yellow in figure 4 above.
- Tom and his team has built great relationships with the highlighted areas. There will be connecting points where the colors meet.

Figure 5.

Figure 5 displays the design for the transportation connectors.
Figure 6 shows how the space divides. The different colors indicate where each said part of the plaza will be.

Figure 7.

All of these designs are in the beginning stages created by his design team. In figure

In figure 7, you can see the Male/Female statue where it currently stands in the plaza.
There’s 3 possible options regarding the Male/Female statue and where it will be.

- In the current stage of the project, Tom and his team are asking the community a lot of questions and overall gathering data.
- Figure 9.

In figure 9, the 3 dots are indicators of where the statue is and where it could potentially be relocated.
- Figure 10. Figure 10 displays the pros and cons in:
  - maintaining the existing location.
  - Relocating within the Plaza Area
  - Relocating within the city.

- Figure 11.

The next steps are:
- Continued outreach
• In closing, Tom and his team would like to connect with more stakeholders and regarding art organizations to have a more broader conversation regarding public art.
  ○ “There’s a lot of great opportunities for public art within the Plaza and its new design.

VI. Questions/Comments

• Aaron Opens the floor for any additional comments or questions.
  ○ Jacqueline Bershad asked Kirk and Aaron, “what is the PAC’s role in this project?”
    ▪ Aaron responds, “it’s important that we know the timeline and what’s going on with the project, continuing to be a part of the conversation. However, he’s unsure to what extent the PAC is allowed to make formal recommendations.
  ○ Jacqueline asked, “Isn’t this a part of The Baltimore City Arts Collection?”
    ▪ Kirk responds saying, “no. This is a private piece. It’s a significant piece of art, but it is not apart of the 1% commissioned by the PAC.
  ○ Elma Roberts asked, “will the PAC be asked what our thoughts and opinions are as they continue to plan and design?”
    ▪ John Renner responded and said, yes.
  ○ Elma also asked about the location of MICA and are they a part of the dialogue regarding this project?
    ▪ John Renner responded and said, “absolutely!”
    ○ Ashley Wallace from Center Partnership added that, “MICA Is one of their major partners and have played a major role within the project. They are aware of how important MICA’s role regarding the project being that MICA is so close in proximity.
    ▪ Elma elaborated on her question saying that, “The station is right in MICA’s backyard. Perhaps they would be interested in relocating the statue to their campus?” She provided John with the contact information of the person who would be best in speaking on the project regarding the potential transfer.
  ○ Sam Holmes requested clarification asking, “what jurisdiction does the developers have on this project other than opinion?”
    ▪ John Renner responds saying, “yes, the city leases the plaza from, AMTRAK for 100 years. We are a stake holder among many. We are attempting to fix issues with the station which include:
      • Pedestrian access
      • Traffic congestion within the plaza
      • Amongst a list”
    ▪ Sam Holmes says, “so legally you only can provide your opinion.”
    ▪ John responds saying, “Yes.”
  ○ Kuo Pao asked, “Who owns the statue?”
Sam Holmes responds and says, “I believe the statue was gifted to the city.”

- If the city owns the statue, then doesn’t that give BOPA, purview over what happens with the statue?
  - Sam Holmes says, “yes, absolutely! Does anyone disagree?”
    - Aaron Bryant agreed with Sam. “Being the statue is public art, BOPA and the PAC must continue to be apart of the conversation and be stewards regarding the statue despite it not being funded from the 1%.”
  - Elma adds, “should the PAC be more actively engaged and partner with development to mediate the conversations regarding the statue?
    - Aaron Bryant responds saying, “yes.”
  - Aaron Bryant asked, “Is it BOPA’S and the PAC’S responsibility of to bring the stake holders together regarding the project. What is the role of the PAC.”
    - Kirk responded saying, “I do not have an answer for you right now.
      - Aaron says, okay.
      - Elma adds, “We should be overseeing the process.”
    - Aaron agreed with Elma.
  - Kuo Pao adds, “to confirm, the project should come to the PAC for approval because It is public art.
    - Aaron agreed with Kuo Pao.
  - Kuo Pao adds, “Decisions need to be made quickly. Is there a way that we can confirm protocol and establish this as soon as possible so we are making the right efforts to help he development along as well as educate the community of the future of the statue and where it will be
    - Aaron Bryant adds recommending that Kirk, “Figure out the legalities regarding the responsibility/ownership of the statue.” He adds, “Is there anyone from the city or BOPA that could come speak to the PAC regarding the legalities of the statue?”
  - Jaqueline adds that she doesn’t feel that the PAC may not want to take on the responsibility of facilitating the conversations. It’s an enormous undertaking.” She suggested that the PAC should Partner with the Cross Street team to make sure we are fulfilling the appropriate roll in the process.
    - Aaron Bryant agreed.
    - Elma says, “Being that the statue is considered public art she would like to see the PAC to give approval of the process.”
Aaron asked for any further questions and or comments from the PAC.

- There were no additional statements from the PAC

- Aaron opens the floor for additional statements from the guest in the meeting.

  - Ryan Patterson added that “the statue is in fact owned by the city. In knowing that he expressed how important it is for everyone involved plays there role, have a clear plan and share the plan with the public.” Ryan thought the presentation was great and thanked everyone for their work.
    - Aaron thanked Ryan for his statement.

  - Alexa Ashwell thanked the PAC for allowing her to listen in on the meeting regarding the statue and the overall project. She continues, asking “Is it true that it will cost between $150,000 and $250,000 to move the statue, and if so, where is this money coming from?”
    - Sam Holmes responded saying, “the estimate that was provided was from the artist. The statue is heavy and has the potential to warp if it is moved. The money to do this should come from somewhere else. That cost should not be covered by any city money.
      - Aaron Agreed with Sam.

  - Ashley Wallace added, “Center street Partnership has been working with the state to subsidize and support the public realm in designing and planning. They haven’t had any city investments in the project.

  - Alexa Ashwell had a follow-up question asking, “is there a timeline when a overall decision has to be made?”
    - John Renner responds saying, “after having more conversations with the community and stake holders, a decision will be made between now and the fall regarding the location of the statue.”

  - Alexa Ashwell wanted confirmation that “we are still trying to decide which agency owns the statue.”
    - Sam Holmes responded saying, “that conversation will be had.”
      - Alexa thanked him for his response.

  - Pete Doo, president of the Municipal Arts Society speaks.
    - He was not the president at the time the statue was installed but he was a part of the board. He began giving a back story on the Municipal Arts Society.
      - The society was discovered in 1989. The society of Baltimore one of the only operating running under the original charter.
      - The sculpture was created to celebrate the societies centennial.
        - The statue went through a review process. It was reviewed and approved by:
          - Arts Commission
          - CHAP
          - University of Baltimore
          - MICA
          - AMTRAK
          - Multiple Neighborhoods
“The Society was taken back by the community’s reactions to the installment of the statue. He doesn’t want the statue taken down merely off the sake of people not liking it.”

Peter loves the statue.

He adds, the process may be difficult based on the internal structure.

- John Renner and Aaron Bryant thanked Mr. Doo.

- Ed Gunts asked, “Do the developers have any order of preference regarding what happens to the statue, also what about revisiting the idea in putting the statue within a park?”
  - John Renner responds to Mr. Gunts first question saying that, “the developers do not have a preference.”
  - Tom responds to the second question saying, “we are still early on in the planning process.
    - They want the station to be day to day functional with the community.
    - Jaqueline adds that this was a great preliminary conversation regarding the project.
      - Aaron agreed, closing with this conversation will be the first of many regarding the project.

- Elma added asking Peter Doo, “Is there a record of the dialogue that the Municipal Society has regarding the statue?”
  - Mr. Doo responds it will have to be located, but yes.

VII. News from the PAC:

- Elma had a group show at the Bus Boys and Poets.
- Elma congratulated Sam in his work being displayed his work on an apartment building.
  - Sam thanked Elma.
    - Aaron suggested a presentation from both in a future meeting.
- Kuo Pao asked if there were any updates regarding the new coming “PAC members.”
  - Kirk did not have an updated. Was awaiting the PAC’s confirmation.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm