

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

November 5, 2013
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E -109

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Tremblay, Commissioners Cole, Fateeva, Jackson, Ludeña, Malkin, Manfredi

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Mary Pat Byrne, Department of Planning and Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: John Haynes, Christina Greene, Tateuchi Center

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairperson Tremblay who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Manfredi

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fateeva and it carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the October 1, 2013, minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fateeva and it carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Tateuchi Center Presentation

Chair Tremblay introduced John Haynes, director of Tateuchi Center, and Christina Green, manager of administration and external relations for Tateuchi.

Mr. Haynes said he came to Bellevue almost seven years ago from the University of Notre Dame where he founded their performing arts program and to finish the design, construction and launch of their performing arts center. He said prior to working at Notre Dame he was president of the California Center for the Arts in San Diego County. The architect hired to design the Performing Arts Center Eastside (PACE), the original non-profit that has since become the Tateuchi Center, is the same architect who designed the Notre Dame project.

The Commissioners were shown architectural renderings of what Tateuchi Center will look like when built. Mr. Haynes stressed, however, that a performing arts center is more than a building: it has other important aspects. The Eastside needs a cultural heart and the Tateuchi Center will reconnect and expand Eastside audiences. It is the right project and it is in exactly the right place. It will

transform the cultural life of the whole region, not just Bellevue and the Eastside. It will create significant economic growth, and it will enhance the local arts ecology.

The mission of the Tateuchi Center is to transform lives and enrich the community by presenting artistic, cultural, educational and entertainment experiences of the highest quality for all within its reach.

Mr. Haynes explained that the project began as PACE and the aspiration of the original board was to build a performing arts center to serve the people of the Eastside. Planning for the center actually began in the mid 1980s, but it was not until 2002 that PACE was formed as a non-profit. In 2003 the architect was chosen. The first market research relative to sustainability was done in 2004. In 2006 the capital campaign for PACE was officially launched. Mr. Haynes said he was hired in 2007 just prior to kicking off the design and engineering work. A second round of market research was conducted in 2008, and in 2010 all three of the design phases were complete and 900 pages of blueprints were submitted to the city for plan review. Also in 2010 the \$25 million pledge from the Tateuchi Foundation was announced. In 2011 the land transfer agreement was signed for the land pledged by Kemper Freeman in 2003. The building itself will be interwoven with the surrounding infrastructure, including the Hyatt, the Winter Garden and the Bank of America tower. Building permits for the Tateuchi Center were issued by the city in 2012.

Mr. Haynes said there is no such thing as planning for now. If performing arts centers are not planned to accommodate the future, they are reaching for the past. The building as designed is sized to facilitate current audiences as well as the projected audiences many years in the future. If the Eastside were a single city, it would be the 32nd largest city in the United States with a population of 600,000 covering 400 square miles on a par with Albuquerque, Omaha, Tucson and Sacramento. The Eastside contains 18 of Washington state's 20 top zip codes for income. It is very diverse, very educated, and continues to be focused on families. Bellevue is and will continue to be the Eastside's downtown.

Eastside audiences for performing arts organizations in Seattle began a decline in 2008 that has been almost ten percent every year since. That is a problem for Seattle arts organizations. It is also a problem for Eastside residents in that they are cut off from the cultural life of the region. The primary culprits are traffic tolls and parking costs. Data collected five years ago indicated that Seattle audiences go to see the arts ten times or more per year, whereas Eastside audiences attend five times or fewer per year. The same statistically valid survey showed that 70 percent of Eastside respondents gave PACE a high rating, and 50 percent gave it a ten out of ten. Sixty-four percent said they were highly likely to attend the arts at PACE. People who identified themselves generally as arts patrons indicated they likely would attend six or seven performances annually, while those who identified themselves as potential donors said they would go about nine times per year. Potential subscribers said they would go on average more than nine times per year, and the responses from potential volunteers averaged 11.3 times per year. Sixty percent of those who said they were highly likely to attend also said there was a high likelihood their attendance would increase at the venues they currently support. Mr. Haynes added that throughout the nation it has been shown that more arts breeds more arts, and supporters become donors.

Mr. Haynes said the projections for the Tateuchi Center anticipate 3.15 million patrons will visit over the first ten-year period attending the 80 to 100 annual performances presented by the center. The building itself and the business plan have been designed to allow a diversity of genre, size and cost. The concert hall is designed to include 2000 seats, with the flexibility to accommodate smaller audiences in what will still be warm acoustically. In the original projection 150 days per year were reserved for regional and local users; the Center will not be a resident company. This is a choice which allows more flexibility on the calendar for all users.

The projected annual budget includes \$600,000 for arts education and outreach. Most of those efforts will involve alliances with existing agencies serving the youth.

The executive director of the Seattle Symphony intends to do something on the order of ten to 15 concerts annually at the Tateuchi Center. He is eager to bring his organization to the facility

because he knows they are losing the Eastside audience and, with them, donations. That is even more true of Pacific Northwest Ballet. Symphony audiences tend to be older, but audience development for ballet companies is done out of their schools. Pacific Northwest Ballet currently has some 600 students in their Eastside ballet school and access to families continues to be critical to their development of a future audience.

Mr. Haynes said from day one the intent has been to make it possible for the Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra to perform at PACE. To be taken seriously and to be allowed to play in a professional hall really ups the game of each youth performer. The 150 days annually reserved for regional organizations will make it possible to charge the smaller organizations no more in rent than what it will cost PACE to provide the service, though there is a limited extent to which users will be able to be subsidized.

One of the two main entrances into the building will be from the Winter Garden proper; the main lobby actually will spill out into the Winter Garden. The other entrance will be from NE 10th Street and it will be covered by an awning. The facility will have a 2000-seat concert hall and a 250-seat cabaret. The two venues have been designed to allow operations simultaneously or as a single venue. The 5000-square-foot lobby will be large enough to handle very big crowds.

Mr. Haynes said just under \$64 million has been raised to date toward the original goal of \$160 million. More than 10,000 separate gifts have been received to date. Once up and operational, there will be some 40 FTEs in the budget, and double that for part-time workers.

Commissioner Malkin asked if consideration has been given to including public art in the building. Mr. Haynes said because of the nature of the design, there is almost no real wall space in the building. The Northwest leads the way nationally and internationally in the development of digital art. The building will have 22 screens and a video distribution studio that will allow every screen to be addressed individually, simultaneously, or in any combination. The screens will be used extensively to display digital artwork as well as general information. No consideration has been given to selling advertising space on the screens.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Cole, Mr. Haynes said there will be musicals but not plays. Acoustically plays could be made to work, but theater audiences tend to be attached to their theater of choice first and a particularly play secondarily. Plays brought to performing arts center stages lose their intimacy and emotional connections.

Mr. Haynes answered a question asked by Chair Tremblay by saying the Tateuchi Center has been designed to the LEED gold standard. Achieving the platinum level would be almost impossible given the categories dealing with the use of natural light, since performing arts venues of all kinds rely on dark spaces to control lighting. The building roof will be planted green and the mechanical equipment will be screened over and not visible from surrounding buildings. There will be plug-ins for electrical vehicles in the lower levels.

Commissioner Cole asked when construction will begin. Mr. Haynes said if all goes well ground will be broken in 2014. Sellen Construction, the construction manager and general contractor, has determined a 24-month schedule, but Mr. Haynes said it likely will take between 26 and 30 months.

Ms. Byrne said the Commission was formed in 1973 with several specific assignments from Council, one of which was to look into the possibility of building a cultural center. She suggested it would be helpful for the Council to fully understand where the Commission stands relative to the project. She provided a brief history of Council engagement in developing performing arts centers over the previous two decades. She also included information about the Arts Commission's past support for performing arts center initiatives, including PACE.

The fundraising campaign for the Tateuchi has reached a point at which substantial public funding could restore fundraising momentum lost during the recession. However, there are several questions that would need to be explored before Council could be expected to make a commitment. The Arts Commission could assist Council by making a recommendation on possible next steps.

A motion to advise Council that:

- **The City of Bellevue, as well as the whole Eastside community, would be enriched, culturally and economically, with the presence of a venue like the proposed Tateuchi Performing Arts Center; and**
- **the Arts Commission asks that Council direct staff to explore options for support bringing the vision of this organization to the community.**

" was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cole.

Commissioner Cole commented that with the recession in 2008 the project lost its traction and momentum. With the economy looking brighter it is time once again to push forward in creating a new momentum.

Chair Tremblay said the motion language telegraphs to the Council how that the time is ripe to seize the opportunity. It is all about positioning and being ready.

Commissioner Cole agreed and said when Mr. Haynes goes out and gets a meeting with a prospective donor he needs to be able to say with surety that everyone is on board. Mr. Haynes agreed, commenting that the big enemy is skepticism.

Commissioner Cole said the comments made by Mr. Haynes relative to how important it is for artists to have a professional venue in which to perform hit the mark. A quality performing arts center is exactly what the Eastside needs. The Council needs to be asked to take the project seriously, and the staff can do nothing about moving the project forward unless told to do so by the Council.

Commissioner Cole added that it is keystone projects that draw people and help to shape the identity of a city. Without them, there will be a completely different outcome 30 years down the road. Chair Tremblay agreed and pointed out that a number of forward-looking studies are under way aimed at projecting what the city will be like in the coming decades. The performing arts center is needed to serve as the heart of the city in the same way the land use and infrastructure needs serve as the city's bone structure and circulatory system.

Commissioner Jackson suggested the motion should include the phrase "whereas the Arts Commission has twice endorsed the performing arts center." Ms. Byrne said she would draft a memo outlining the historical elements. The two bullets represent the core of the motion.

Commissioner Malkin suggested the performing arts center could be the cornerstone for a future cultural center. He noted that at one time the center was in fact referred to as a cultural center. Ms. Byrne said the Ashwood site adjacent to the library is owned by the city and explorations are under way about locating a cultural center there. If that comes about, in conjunction with the performing arts center the city will have a cultural district.

Commissioner Jackson pointed out that the Ashwood site is the last bit of green space left in the downtown, and should it be developed the green space will be lost. The Commission should stress that the city needs a performing arts center, that one is already on the drawing board, and that the city should move forward in supporting it.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. Bellwether 2014 Planning

Ms. Byrne stated that the Bellwether committee has been meeting weekly for about a month. They have focused on the foundational work needed to begin moving the next sculpture exhibition forward. She reviewed briefly how Bellwether and its themes have evolved over the last several years, from no theme between 1992 and 2006, to sustainability in 2008, sustainability and the art walk in 2010 when the sculpture exhibition was rebranded into an art walk named Bellwether, also with a focus on sustainability.

In 2011 after reviewing the new information coming out from the census the committee was struck by the city's increasing diversity, and the idea of regeneration as a theme was adopted. Artists were asked to address how a community that has grown into something far different from what it was in its beginning could regenerate itself, both in terms of people and nurturing the earth.

Commissioner Cole said the committee talked about the idea of connectivity, the thing that allows people to connect with each other even if they do not speak the same language, and how we connect with the environment. The theme proposed by the Committee for Bellwether 2014 is "connection," though she suggested that "connectivity" might have more vitality.

Commissioner Jackson agreed that "connectivity" carries with it the connotation of networking and wires, whereas "connection" is a far broader term denoting connections between people and between computer networks and between people and the environment.

Chair Tremblay commented that "connectivity" is dynamic and speaks to motion, whereas "connection" is anchored and staid.

Arts Program Assistant Scott MacDonald suggested keeping in mind that many residents of Bellevue do not speak English well, and that it may be better to use words that are more easily translatable and to which people can relate easily. Commissioner Jackson said if that is the case the better word would be "connect." That word certainly ties in well with the art walk notion.

Commissioner Ludeña agreed that "connection" is a very strong word. He noted that the committee had also discussed using the words "balance" and "bridge," but in the final analysis there was agreement to go with "connection."

Commissioner Malkin said "connection" fit well with the notion of connecting the neighborhoods, connecting people, and connecting cultures. At the root is the word "connect" which an artist could address in a number of different ways.

Commissioner Fateeva pointed out that the word "connectivity" in the Russian dictionary refers only to computers, nothing else. The words "connect" and "connection" both have broader definitions.

Commissioner Jackson said there were a number of permutations around the word "regeneration" used for the 2012 exhibition and suggested that moving directly to "connect" makes a lot of sense.

Ms. Byrne called attention to the proposed 2014 exhibition draft goals and noted that by and large they had been carried over from 2012. She also provided the Commissioners with an updated spreadsheet showing the budget figures. She explained that the budget numbers are traditionally much higher than what actually gets spent; the budget dollars are shown on the high side to account for the myriad of unknowns. For instance, the budget is affected by the number of artworks accepted into the exhibition. Installation/deinstallation is an expensive item owing to state law requiring cities to pay the prevailing wage, and those costs can't be determined until the artwork has been selected.

A motion to endorse the Bellwether Planning Committee recommendations for theme, goals and preliminary budget for Bellwether 2014 was made by Commissioner Jackson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cole and it carried unanimously.

C. Comprehensive Plan Art Policies Review

Mr. MacDonald said he has been working with the Comprehensive Plan division of Planning & Community Development, coordinating the job of rewriting the urban design policies for the Comprehensive Plan. He said the process involves taking an in-depth look at the Urban Design Element, which, as a top-level City policy, expresses broadly what the city should look like and how all the pieces should fit together. The majority of the policies that are specific to the arts are housed in the Urban Design Element, though there are some policies included in some of the other Comprehensive Plan elements.

Ms. Byrne asked the Commissioners to review the ideas covered by each of the policies and to identify what if anything is missing.

Mr. MacDonald said the Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2004. He stressed the need to think about how far Bellevue has come in the intervening years and the significant changes that have been realized. The trajectory needs to be continued in planning for the next ten years and beyond. The arts district in Bel-Red was not a part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan because it did not exist. East Link was not in the Comprehensive Plan either, and the growth of diversity has been far more than anyone anticipated. The current Comprehensive Plan depicts Bellevue as having two distinct areas, residential and the downtown, but now the downtown is a residential district and the policies need to reflect that fact.

Mr. MacDonald said the topic would be dealt with in more detail at the next Commission meeting.

6. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS - None

7. REPORTS

A. Commissioners' Committee and Lead Reports

Chair Tremblay reported on her recent field trip to the Bellevue Youth Theatre building site. She said the walls are up and the space is starting to take shape.

B. Staff Reports

i. Project Status Report - As Noted

8. CORRESPONDENCE, INFORMATION

A. Written Correspondence - None

B. Information - As Noted

i. September 10 Special Meeting Minutes

ii. Upcoming Agenda Items

iii. Updated Committees List

iv. Cultural Compass Update Basics

v. Public Art Program Budget Update

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tremblay adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.