

**DRAFT**

**CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION**

**Minutes**

November 9, 2010

Manhattan Beach City Hall

City Managers Conference Room

6:00 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Cultural Arts Commission (CAC) was called to order at 6:14 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Susan Sweeney, Chair  
Peter De Maria, Commissioner  
Russ Samuels, Commissioner  
Susannah Rosenthal, Commissioner

Absent: Nancy Humbarger, Vice Chair

Others in Attendance:

Richard Gill, Director of Parks and Recreation

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

NA

**IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Local artist Charles L. Bragg introduced himself.

**V. GENERAL BUSINESS**

02/0612.29 Sculpture Garden Ad Hoc Committee

Not Discussed

**VI. REPORTS & OTHER BUSINESS**

**The Strand Alcove Bench Program**

The Commission received approval to secure new bench designs for the Strand Alcove Bench Program. Four architects participated in the presentations: Predock Frane Architects; Christopher Kapeller (CK Architecture); Sparano + Mooney Architecture; and Ball & Noguees Studio who are well known in the field. Commissioner De Maria gave a brief introduction of the City's Strand Alcove Bench program. He also explained that the purpose of the presentations that evening was to provide the Commission with a clear understanding of the proposal, not to vote for any of the designs. Each design team was given ten minutes for their presentation, and five minutes for questions and answers.

## 1. Predock Frane Architects

It was explained that the design process was initiated by a site visit to the Strand. The concept for the design came from the motif of the surfer's wetsuit. Surfers torque their bodies in numerous directions as they move through the water. The lexicon of body positions marry with the fabric. The shape of the lower part of the wetsuit became a module unit of the design. By varying the configuration of the modules, the bench can have numerous design possibilities and flexibility. The proposed material for the module is fabric forming concrete which allows a variety of shapes, surface treatments and colors. Three variations are shown; contorted shapes offer a wide range of possibilities. The fabric modules flow into natural positions and the bodies fit like a jig saw puzzle; a steel structure holds the modules. Benches are fine but become interesting when they drift into an area of art and sculpture; then they become a visual object and functional as well.

Commission's concerns include:

- The need for preventive measures to ward off skate boarders
- The protrusion of legs and other appendages could be an issue
- The stability of the piece was questioned
- Damage from skateboarders

## 2. Christoph Kapeller (CK Architecture)

### Design #1 – Whale

The intension for the designs was to create multiple-use designs that were stable but not dangerous. Inspired by Moby-Dick, the architects created a minimalist piece that thrusts out of the ground and rests on a bed of sand. This elongated round shape offers versatile seating areas. The material is solid granite with a highly polished surface. A structural analysis may be needed to determine the impact of the granite bench on the alcove.

Commission's concerns include:

- Commission De Maria was concerned with the weight of the piece and its impact on the support structure of the alcove.
- The puddling of water was questioned. (This could be resolved by using grooves and slopes to drain the water.)

### Design #2 – Dent

The design shows a round form with playful seating indentations for single or multiple users. The piece is made of glass fiber reinforced concrete. The thin shell can support the tension and solid surface has stability to hold up. Computer generated form with a groove design and color is available.

Commission's concerns include:

- Standing water was also an area of concern.

### Design #3 - Shell

An organic tube-like design can provide multiple ways for seating; people can face the beach or the Strand. The finish is polished with vertical grooves to emphasize the shape. The shell is turquoise in color and the material is glass fiber reinforced concrete

Commission's concerns include:

- Will the color fade?
- The hollow space inside the tube may attract overnight sleepers.

### 3. Sparano + Mooney Architecture

Design #1 – This design is a white tube structure similar to sea weed. The concrete bench is white buffed to a high polish. The shape is straight forward and provides seating on the ends and the long side.

Design #2 – This design takes its inspiration from ocean going vessels. The materials used for this form are thick pieces of steel and iron wood (called tepay). One inch steel ribs are anchored in concrete with a wood surface.

Commission's concerns include:

- How long the wood would last in an outdoor environment.

### Design #3 – Rock form

The beach environment inspires a bench with forms that are inspired by the corrosive process of the sand, wind and sun. Material is fiber reinforced concrete with a high gloss finish.

### 4. Ball and Nogues

These designs called “Beach Pillows” are cousins to inflatable beach toys used in swimming pools, etc. The pillows are fabricated through a hydro-forming process using water pressure to create balloon-like forms and the three basic designs are puddle, splash and lava flow. Two sheets of 316 Marine grade stainless steel are inflated with water. This process is related to the aerospace industry and it is also used to make high grade bicycle frames. It is a durable product made with a top and bottom sheet of steel that are welded together. A thermal metal spray is bonded molecularly to the surface and never comes off. Donors are offered three patina colors: brushed stainless, bronze and brass. The forms can be filled with sand to give them more weight. The amount of heat projected can be controlled.

Santa Monica Place has a decorative cluster of spheres made with this hydro-forming process that adorns the mall's west wall at 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Broadway and Colorado.

## **Report from Richard Gill, Director of Parks and Recreation**

### 1. Sculpture Garden

Mr. Gill mentioned that the \$2500 stipend had been used for creating artwork, rather than leasing the sculptures with a higher value. He referred to the failure of past temporary City public art projects and that insufficient funding was a contributing factor. Mr. Gill expressed his concern over the quality management of the program. Commissioner Rosenthal thought one of the program's purposes was to encourage the participation of local artists; and in this year's Sculpture Garden recommendations, the Commission intended to include artists from the Manhattan Beach area.

### 2. Communication with City Council

Although the Commissioners were advised to communicate with the City Council through the monthly meeting minutes, the Commission thought this method of communication was not working effectively. They would have appreciated some response from the Council to the issues listed in the minutes. Mr. Gill suggested that the Commission attach a memo to the minutes with

specific questions. The Commissioners believe that a direct communication line with the City Council will improve their understanding of the Council's vision and allows the Commission to check with the Council for needed feedback prior to making recommendations.

### 3. Public Art Fund

Commissioner Rosenthal raised a question about the use of the Public Art Fund for programming. (Other cities are allowed to use the fund for educational programs or events.) Mr. Gill will contact the City Attorney for determination of the fund and its usage.

The Cultural Arts Commission will schedule a special meeting in a couple weeks to further review the Strand Bench Alcove designs.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m. The next Cultural Arts Commission meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.