

REGULAR MEETING, DECEMBER 13, 2005
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION

PRESIDING: CHAIR JAYNE

**Call to Order
7:01 p.m.**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Gayle Smashey; Luther L. Henderson, III; Clement Hanami; and, Ronnie Jayne.

Commissioner Deen's absence was excused due to illness.

**Pledge of
Allegiance**

Ms. Mim Shapiro led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States.

Staff Present

Christine Byers, Public Art & Historic Preservation Coordinator; and, Susan Obrow, Theatre Coordinator and Special Events Producer.

Item #C-1.

Agenda Posting.

It was moved by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Smashey and unanimously carried, to receive and file the Secretary's Report regarding the agenda posting for this meeting.

Item #C-2.

Approval of Minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Smashey and unanimously carried, to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2005 Regular Meeting as amended, and the minutes of the November 8, 2005 Regular Meeting.

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**Item #A-1.
7:05 p.m.**

**Consideration of Updated Accomplishments for 2005 to
Short and Long Term Outcomes of Adopted Community Cultural
Plan.**

Ms. Byers summarized the staff report by noting that the Community Cultural Plan contains six goals and was adopted by the City Council in 2003. She continued by stating that in 2004 the CAC established a policy of reviewing the short- and long-range outcomes associated with each of the goals on an annual basis and update the accomplishments which are associated with these outcomes.

In listing some of staff's accomplishments in the past year, Ms. Byers continued by informing the CAC that she and Ms. Obrow have devised a set of short- and long-range concepts for public art and cultural programming along the area of Washington Boulevard (west of the 405 Freeway) to help stimulate economic development in that area.

Ms. Byers further reported that she is engaged in ongoing work with private property owners and artists for approval of public art concepts for their development projects and advised that in the past year approvals were granted by the CAC for Symantec, Echo Horizon School, a project at 9599 Jefferson Boulevard, and Park Century School. She listed some of the other visual and historic preservation accomplishments for 2005 by reporting that the first review panel for *Architecture as Art* was implemented in February; that the Harry Culver sculpture is on schedule to be completed and installed in the spring of 2006; that historic designation plaques for "Landmark" and "Significant" structures were procured and installed; that expanded information has been included on the City's website providing property owners with tools for better understanding historic preservation; that May 2005 was proclaimed Historic Preservation Month in Culver City for the second year in a row; that a comprehensive inventory, which includes images, of public art on private- and City-owned property was completed and will be placed on the City's website; that the utility box art program was completed in October; that contracts have been put in place for routine maintenance on several of the City's art pieces; and, that educational plaques were installed on the zoetropes in the downtown area explaining their origin and how they tie in with Culver City's film history.

Ms. Obrow outlined the accomplishments for 2005 in the area of performing arts by reporting that Culver City planned and facilitated the opening of the Pan African Film Festival in February; that the fourth *Music in the Chambers* series took place during the spring; that Tim Robbins' nationally recognized The Actors' Gang had been secured as the resident theatre company for the Ivy Substation; that the 11th annual Summer Sunset Music Festival had been completed; that a series of Art in the Plaza events took place in Town Plaza; that relationships with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and the Getty Foundation summer intern programs are continuing and a new relationship is being established with USC for interns in 2006; that *The Lion's Fountain* was completed in Town Plaza and was unveiled with a community and children's event in celebration; that a free performance featuring Grammy-nominated John Santos and his Latin Jazz Quartet was presented; and, that the 2006 Performing Arts Grants Program, with a cash award of \$32,000 to nine arts organizations serving Culver City, had been unanimously approved by the City Council.

Looking forward Ms. Obrow advised that much was learned about the Performing Arts Grants Program procedures this year, saying staff is in the process of streamlining the program and developing a stronger relationship with resident theatre companies. She reported that staff has begun the massive project of identifying a new performing arts space to be ready by January 2007 for that year's Performing Arts Grants recipients; that an art walk is being developed for the spring of 2006 to highlight the civic spaces and

art galleries located near the Washington Boulevard and La Cienega Boulevard intersection; and, that a working relationship has been established with the United States President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with Culver City submitting a proposal to host part of their spring 2006 meeting.

Ms. Byers concluded staff's presentation by advising that the updated matrix along with Commissioners' comments will be added to the complete Community Cultural Plan and forwarded to the City Council. She welcomed suggestions regarding the document's format and organization, noting the Community Cultural Plan is a living document which is meant to be adapted as necessary over time.

Chair Jayne entertained comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Henderson questioned the use of the term "living document" in relation to the Community Cultural Plan.

Ms. Byers explained that it is an organic document that can be adapted as necessary with the growing needs of the Culver City community and/or the Cultural Affairs Commission.

Commissioner Henderson commented that his view of the Community Cultural Plan is somewhat different. He noted that the community provided their input on the six goals and the City Council granted their unanimous approval, saying his perception of a living document is something that can be changed which he does not believe is applicable to this document and he is, therefore, uncomfortable with that terminology. He advised that, while he is not opposed to changing the document's appearance and making it easier to understand, he believes it is the Commission's proprietary responsibility to maintain the public trust by adhering to the goals as set forth.

As far as the format is concerned, he suggested it would be helpful to date the matrix to indicate when various tasks and outcomes are achieved. He indicated that providing routine reporting of what has been accomplished, what needs to be worked on, and what is being done to address the short- and long-term goals would, in his opinion, be an appropriate way to communicate with the public and preserve their trust.

Ms. Obrow remarked that staff agrees wholeheartedly, explaining the idea behind the term "living document" does not mean changing or adjusting the goals but rather adapting the accomplishments and tasks necessary to fulfill them. She commented that a year ago the area of Washington and La Cienega Boulevards did not have 15 art galleries, saying that was a wonderful surprise for the City and led to a reexamination of the goals to determine if they could in some way be linked to these

types of fortuitous happenings in the city that were not anticipated when the plan was created.

Commissioner Hanami stated his understanding of the term "living document" in this instance refers specifically to the matrix. He remarked that the matrix should remain malleable in order to reflect achievements and course corrections. He noted one beneficial change made in response to a previous recommendation was to indicate past accomplishments in a smaller font which makes it more evident what has been achieved and what remains current. He maintained that the type of chart being used is an effective tool because the format outlines each accomplishment and how it was achieved. He suggested providing a narrative for the public describing the various accomplishments to make it unnecessary to look at the matrix and to continue using a smaller size font to indicate those things which have already been completed.

Commissioner Smashey commented that reviewing the Community Cultural Plan without having participated in its development makes her question whether some of the goals actually speak to where the City has been rather than to where it is going. In terms of its being a living document, she queried whether it might be appropriate to revisit some of the goals to determine whether they continue to reflect what was originally intended. She specifically cited Goal No. 2, relating to strengthening Culver City's arts and creativity image and capitalizing on and strengthening its legacy of film history, by saying, while that might have been germane in the past, she wonders if focusing on what the City has accomplished in terms of its image remains strictly tied to its film history. She questioned if there is a mechanism in place and whether it would be appropriate to amend the goals or tasks. She maintained that a true living document should stand the test of time and move forward with the City, noting Culver City has changed incredibly in the years since this document was developed.

Commissioner Smashey commented on the format by noting the listing of multiple goals and outcomes made it difficult for her to cross reference. She suggested using miniature matrices to reflect the tasks and outcomes of each specific goal rather than placing everything into one gigantic matrix, saying that would create a better working document and would allow individuals unfamiliar with it to easily reference which goal is being accomplished by a particular task. She suggested some type of prioritization might also be helpful, noting there seems to be no particular priority or order and, that color coding a specific year's accomplishments would be useful since the document will continue to grow incrementally as more updates are received.

Commissioner Henderson noted that Goal No. 2 does not speak only to Culver City's film history but to its cultural history, public art,

and historic preservation, saying the viewpoint of the Commission when the document was developed was to examine the City's resources and history and, by looking back as well as forward, enhance how the City viewed itself in terms of that history and determine in what direction it should be moving. He explained that it took quite some time to get the citizenry involved and that the Community Cultural Plan is essentially a wish list that the CAC has prioritized in terms of what can realistically be accomplished within certain time parameters while taking into consideration financial and other constraints. He remarked that the goals provide a framework and road map to facilitate those achievements and maintained that the establishment of the 501(c)(3) will promote fundraising and make achieving some of the larger goals possible.

Commissioner Henderson suggested there could be great benefit in creating a colorful brochure outlining the cultural happenings in Culver City and the goals that have been accomplished, citing things like the City's public art, The Actors' Gang, The Kirk Douglas Theatre, the free Music in the Chamber series, and the Summer Sunset Music Festival, saying many things are taking place that could be used to encourage business within the community. He suggested staff explore developing such a brochure to enhance the artistic events that are currently taking place and perhaps entice other businesses to come to Culver City.

Commissioner Smashey added that the CAC attended the first Los Angeles County Arts Forum in 2005 and requested staff include that as another accomplishment for the year.

Chair Jayne candidly remarked that Commissioner Smashey just took the wind from her sails, saying one of the joys yet frustrations of speaking last has to do with providing others the opportunity to state their ideas first. She commented that she, too, believes the City's participation in the first Los Angeles County Arts Forum was a major accomplishment not only in terms of Culver City's image and public relations but also because of the tremendous representation from other municipalities and the opportunity to meet various Commissioners and compare and contrast what other cities have and have not been able to accomplish. She commented that she was amazed and delighted to realize just how far Culver City has come in the last few years.

She claimed that the idea of prioritizing outcomes is rather interesting, saying there are some things that +can be planned and other things that are just simply fortuitous. She cited as examples the new art galleries and the arrival of John Santos and his quartet shortly after the conclusion of the Summer Sunset Music Festival, saying priorities often change in response to events and circumstances.

Chair Jayne recommended regularly revisiting plans for the long-term goals, saying the groundwork needs to be laid now so processes can be put in place to continue towards their fruition. She commented that she found the charts outlining the goals and tasks very useful in illustrating the interrelationship of things and showing how one task can accomplish a number of goals and move things forward in various areas.

She concluded her remarks by noting the staff report mentions completion of the draft articles of incorporation and by-laws for the 501(c)(3), saying, although a great deal of work has been done, she does not believe "completed" is an appropriate term.

Ms. Obrow pointed out that the year is not quite finished, saying staff just received revised documents from legal counsel, so the 501(c)(3) is moving towards completion.

Ms. Byers recommended including a narrative page with a comprehensive overview each time the Community Cultural Plan is updated so individuals can easily read through a particular year's accomplishments without having to peruse the various tables.

Chair Jayne noted that would be a good alternative and suggested both formats be included since people tend to absorb information in different ways.

Commissioner Smashey suggested identifying the goals in parentheses in that summary for those individuals who would like to do further investigation.

Commissioner Hanami inquired if there is a life expectancy or finite time line for the strategic goals, saying, while it is likely there is enough work to accomplish over the next ten years, the document at some point will need to be revised in response to changing times.

Ms. Byers recollected that the various short- and long-term outcomes were believed to be completed, all told, within approximately ten years, noting that does not mean a major update to the outcomes cannot occur at some point.

Commissioner Henderson agreed, recalling that a ten-year window was projected for the long-term goals and up to five years for the short-term ones. He stated he anticipates that future Cultural Affairs Commissions will use the Community Cultural Plan to determine what has been accomplished and will most likely poll the public again and make any necessary revisions at that time. He remarked that ten years is probably a reasonable time frame because it corresponds with the census and the likelihood of demographic and other changes occurring within the community. He noted wonderful things have occurred in Culver City which

were not unanticipated when the plan was developed two-and-a-half years ago such as the Symantec project at Corporate Pointe, saying other things like the Westfield Shopping Center redevelopment are underway and will provide additional revenue and further enhance the City with additional art work.

Commissioner Henderson requested that staff explore the possibility of hosting the Los Angeles County Arts Commission Forum in 2006, noting it would be a great way to further strengthen Culver City's image throughout Los Angeles.

Chair Jayne recalled Commissioner Henderson mentioning that idea at a previous meeting and asked if the item could be agendaized for discussion.

Ms. Byers proposed that staff initiate a conversation with the Los Angeles County Commission first to learn the particulars regarding that event and determine if it is something that would be suitable for Culver City.

Commissioner Smashey reiterated her question about the living document terminology, saying she would like to ascertain if there is any intent to revisit the language used in the goals and whether there is a process in place to modify or change them.

Ms. Byers, noting the Commissioners' various interpretations of the term "living document," explained that staff's view is that it is something that is continually being worked on and readdressed. She concurred with Commissioner Henderson's comment that the Community Cultural Plan was created after a number of public surveys and a great deal of community input, saying amending the goals or outcomes is not to be taken lightly and would certainly merit a noticed meeting and public input. She suggested it is important to consider the plan's relevancy as things move forward, noting that five years can equate to a significant amount of change within a community.

Commissioner Henderson maintained that the six goals are basically a plan of action adopted by the City Council which should be reviewed by the CAC every year to reassess the tasks and outcomes. He opined that changing any of the goals at this time would be premature since they represent what the community wants and are in a workable document that does not restrict the Commission or the City. He declared that the accomplishment of some of the short-term goals will lend themselves to some of the longer term goals so the Commission should utilize the Community Cultural Plan to move forward.

Commissioner Hanami moved to adopt the updated accomplishments.

Chair Jayne proposed a friendly amendment to include the accomplishment of participation in the first Los Angeles County Arts Commissioner Forum.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER HANAMI, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SMASHEY AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULVER CITY CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION APPROVE THE UPDATED ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE 2005 SHORT- AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES OF THE ADOPTED COMMUNITY CULTURAL PLAN WITH THE INCLUSION OF CULVER CITY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARTS COMMISSIONER FORUM.

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8:05 p.m.

Receipt of Correspondence.

None.

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8:06 p.m.

Items From Staff.

Ms. Byers reported that the public art installation on the McManus Avenue side of the Echo Horizon School is nearly complete and that Turning Point School will be initiating a public art component for their tenant improvements sometime in 2006.

Ms. Obrow announced the program for the upcoming 2006 Music in the Chambers series, noting performances will be held during the winter season on Friday nights.

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8:10 p.m.

Items from Commissioners.

Commissioner Smashey extended wishes to all for a glorious holiday season and hope for peace in the coming year.

Commissioner Hanami proclaimed that he is extremely pleased to be associated with his colleagues on the CAC. He remarked that it is good to reflect back to see what they have been able to accomplish in a year's time, saying he is proud to be a part of the great things that are happening in Culver City. He wished everyone a wonderful holiday season.

Commissioner Henderson advised that the Community Cultural Plan is available on the City's website at www.culvercity.org. He expressed happy holiday wishes and peace and health to all for the New Year.

Chair Jayne, in traditional fashion, expressed her holiday greetings in song, wishing everyone a happy, healthy, and peaceful New Year.

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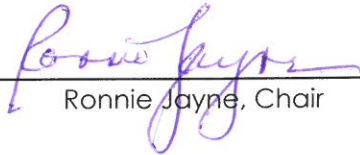
8:14 p.m.

Adjournment.

With no further business for the Commission to consider, the Chair entertained a motion for adjournment.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER HENDERSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SMASHEY AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:14 P.M. TO THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2006 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE MIKE BALKMAN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL.

Respectfully submitted,



Ronnie Jayne, Chair



Debra Presutti, Minutes Reporter