

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION
PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

February 23, 2026
6:00 P.M.

Call to Order & Roll Call

The special meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission Public Art Subcommittee was called to order at 6:03 P.M. in the Patio Conference Room at City Hall.

Present: Ehsaan Mesghali, Member
Shona Gupta, Member

Staff: Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager
Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst

The following Items were considered out of order.

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Action Items

Item A-2
(Out of Sequence)

(1) Discussion of the Washington Tree Surrounds in the Arts District; and, (2) Provide Comments and Direction to Staff for Reporting to the Cultural Affairs Commission

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, distributed copies of the survey on the tree surrounds; discussed responses; community outreach; raw data; background and context; understanding options for the Commission; the need for the Commission to make a recommendation to the City Council; the tree structures as part of a much larger project; feedback from Architectural Resources Group (ARG) indicating that the tree surrounds were too young to be considered for an historic option; the presentation from Jeff Morriscal to the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC) as part of an Olympics conversation

in 2025; initiation of a letter writing campaign to stop removal after one of the tree surrounds was removed; the City Council action to remand the item to the CAC; community feedback sessions; communication with the principal of Sussman Prejza; interest in storytelling about the Arts District; less consensus about the actual structures; restoration, maintenance, lighting functionality, and broader infrastructure costs; categorization of the tree surrounds; multi-year phased rehabilitation; costs; the option to designate the tree surrounds as a part of the permanent public art collection; rehabilitation over multiple fiscal years; partial retention; determining what to retain; cost for full removal; the film strips; the need to keep the tree surrounds uniform; preservation options; rethinking featured films; film history; legacy of the project; utility functions that become cultural art objects; reinterpretation of the tree surrounds; freeing up money by designating the tree surrounds as art; making a General Fund request; grant possibilities and sponsorships; exploration of different funding models; potential conflict of interest with sponsorships; and whether to designate all or some or none of the tree surrounds as public art, funding if preservation is chosen, and assignment of long-term maintenance and electrical infrastructural responsibility.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding a suggestion to provide a visual map; evaluation of the surrounds; looking at strategic rehabilitation; the intent to be a gateway; preserving artistic integrity; other elements that were part of the larger gateway project; bus stops; consensus on McManus; elimination of the artist reinterpretation option due to feedback from Paul Prejza and difficulty for Cultural Affairs to execute; the option for reinterpretation of the film strips; addressing questionable films; support from the City Manager; interpretation of history; providing context on the City website if the project becomes public art; mapping and a health check grading system for the surrounds; those that are not in a public area; changes to scope and pricing by revitalizing the lighting component which would take the tree surrounds out of public art; funding; the City's electric grid system; the Cultural Trust Fund; the need for numbers for fixing the lighting in its current state; involvement of Public Works; determining the quantity to be addressed; participation of the Business Improvement District (BID); creating a hybrid model; Commission discussion of the Item; a request that Jeff Morrical provide his community

presentation to the Commission; sharing additional research done by staff; information included in the staff report; variables; concern with perpetually draining the Trust fund for maintenance; and staff time.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Alicia Ide, Culver City Arts Foundation, received clarification regarding the inability to have a hybrid sponsorship model; expressed support for making the project part of a fundraising effort; discussed lighting as part of an art installation; and figuring out how to fund the project.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding specific parameters to keep the project as it was intended when something comes into the public art collection; maintaining the artist vision; the ability to make a wholistic upgrade to lighting uniformly through the project; the inability to have a call for artists with individual artists participating; concern with delaying other projects; and maintaining the original vision.

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Item A-1
(Out of Sequence)

Consideration of (1) a Proposal to Relocate *Neptune's Necklace* by David Trubridge from its Existing Location to a New One within the Westfield Culver City Shopping Center; and (2) Review, Discuss, and Provide Comments; and, (3) Make a Motion to Approve and Advance the Relocation Proposal to the Cultural Affairs Commission for Final Approval

Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst, introduced the item.

Josh Morton, General Manager of Westfield Culver City Shopping Center, noted that they had been attempting to move *Neptune's Necklace* for a decade; discussed the desired relocation spot; foot traffic; providing an area for guests to sit; overall goals; maximizing the utility of the area; strategic relocation; fostering deeper community engagement; revenue opportunity; layout options; engagement of the center space throughout the year; anticipated capital investment; use of professional fine art handlers for the move; the proposed

timeline; cleaning and maintenance; and the intent to transition the center court.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Morton, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding Starbucks locations at the mall; the Coffee Bean; kiosks; location of the Christmas tree; use of temporary stages for event buildout; future creation of a more permanent stage; the original artist; and *Neptune's Necklace* as part of the percent for art projects at the mall.

Additional discussion ensued between Mr. Morton, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding previous experience moving a piece at Westfield; original pricing; damages; the covenant; potential benefit to Culver City of moving the piece; creation of a performing arts venue; collaboration with Culver City and the School District; Economic Development; community engagement opportunities; brand activation; opportunities to showcase art; and the audience that is drawn to the mall.

Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

Further discussion ensued between Mr. Morton, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding Commission consideration; communication with the artist; a request to include images in the presentation; the vertical limit for brand activations; a potential venue for Performing Arts Grant activations; connection with the School District; a suggestion to communicate with the Culver City Arts Foundation; diversification of venues; support for a Fox Hills location; and palettes for murals identified throughout the mall.

MOVED BY MEMBER MESGHALI, SECONDED BY MEMBER GUPTA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE:

1. CONSIDER THE RELOCATION PLAN OF *NEPTUNE'S NECKLACE* BY DAVID TRUBRIDGE, AND,
2. ADVANCE THE RELOCATION PLAN TO THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR FINAL APPROVAL.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Morton, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding date and location of the next meeting.

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Consent Calendar Items

Item C-1

Approval of Minutes of the January 15, 2026 Cultural Affairs Commission Public Art Subcommittee Meeting

MOVED BY MEMBER GUPTA, SECONDED BY MEMBER MESGHALI AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 15, 2026 CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING.

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Order of the Agenda

Item A-2 was heard before Item A-1 and Item A-1 was heard before the Consent Calendar.

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Items from Members/Staff

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, discussed upcoming meetings with members of the Senior Center and the PRCS Commission regarding soliciting feedback for the possible placement of the MGM sign on Overland Boulevard and the upcoming Architecture as Art Subcommittee meeting.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the date of the Architecture as Art meeting and receipt of the revised deck before the item goes to the panel.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:00 p.m., the special meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission Public Art Subcommittee adjourned.

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Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK of Culver City, California
EX-OFFICIO CITY CLERK of the City Council of Culver City,
California

APPROVED _____

Ehsaan Mesghali
CHAIR of the Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission
Public Art Subcommittee