

Culver CITY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 17, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor Vera and Members of the City Council of the City of Culver City

FROM: Cultural Affairs Commission [Chair Tania Fleischer; Vice Chair Brenda Williams; Members Ehsaan Mesghali, Leora O'Carroll, and Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin]

SUBJECT: **2022 Accomplishments and 2023 Proposed Activity and Upcoming Agenda Items for the Next Six Months**

CC: John Nachbar, City Manager
Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager

On January 17, 2023, the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC) approved the transmittal of the following information to the City Council:

Cultural Affairs Commission Accomplishments (July 1 – December 31, 2022):

- **Art in Public Places Program:** Public Art Subcommittee and CAC reviewed applications for three new permanent artworks:
 - Green Open Space at Washington/National Blvds.: Consideration of a concept for *A Frame for a Tree* by LA based artist Charles Gaines and recommendation to City Council. City Council approved commencing with Phase 2 of the project which includes completion of various reports (including geotechnical and arborist) and 100% design and construction development.
 - Consideration and approval of a concept by Marc Fornes/THEVERYMANY in fulfillment of the percent for art requirement for projects at The Culver Studios and The Culver Steps (Hackman Capital Partners).
 - Consideration and approval of a concept by the Haas Brothers for a project at Shaefer Street and National Blvd. (Redcar).
- **Artist Laureate Program:**
 - **Artist Laureate Alexey Steele:** Supported Alexey Steele in his projects, collaborations, and community activities during 2022, including “Love My Neighbor” live drawing session at The Wende Museum and pop-up art installation at Village Well in conjunction with United Against Hate Week.
 - **Recruitment for Next Artist Laureate:** CAC Subcommittee considered eligibility and scoring criteria, reviewed guidelines, assisted with outreach and promotion, reviewed incoming applications (including detailed questionnaire and artistic samples), attended all-day meeting to interview finalists, observed review panel selection process, and prepared recommendations to CAC for 2023 appointment.

CAC considered subcommittee's recommendation to appoint ceramicist and arts educator Katy Krantz as Culver City Artist Laureate for a two-year term (January 2023 through December 2024) and forwarded a recommendation to appoint Katy Krantz for City Council consideration on January 9, 2023.

- **Commission Business**: CAC welcomed a new member, Ehsaan Mesghali, and provided introduction and orientation. CAC created Standing and Ad Hoc Subcommittees based on the work plan and assigned members to each. CAC selected Chair and Vice Chair.
- **Cultural Affairs Division**: CAC received report regarding changes to Cultural Affairs Division structure within City Manager's Office, name change (Office of Economic and Cultural Development) and staffing adjustments. CAC made inquiries and provided comments to staff and prepared a letter to City Council with recommendations and concerns.
- **Culver City Arts Foundation (Culver Arts)**: Reviewed quarterly report from Culver Arts. Reviewed Culver Arts' recent and upcoming grant-making activities and fundraising events and provided feedback. Culver City Arts Foundation Liaison Subcommittee attended monthly Board meetings. Commissioners attended community events, including Tito's Tacos Fiesta Mexicana, Art Walk & Roll Festival and December Holiday Party at The Wende Museum.
- **Outreach and Community Engagement**: As appropriate, CAC participates in targeted outreach and attends cultural activities and sponsored performances in Culver City. Tania Fleischer wrote an article for Culver City Neighbors magazine about the CAC and being Chair of the commission.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program**: Performing Arts Grant Subcommittee and CAC reviewed applications for 2023 grants.
 - Subcommittee reviewed incoming applications, considered questions of eligibility, assisted with recruitment of experts to score the applications, attended an all-day Peer Review Panel meeting, and prepared recommendations for 2023 grant awards.
 - CAC welcomed grant candidates to attend the Regular CAC meeting and received public comments from multiple non-profit representatives regarding their performance plans and proposed projects. CAC considered recommendations of the Subcommittee and prepared corresponding recommendations to City Council regarding 2023 grant awards to 29 organizations totaling for \$213,043.

Cultural Affairs Commission Activities Plan (January 1 – June 30, 2023):

- **Advocacy**: Continue to advocate and address opportunities which may arise that fall under the purview of the Cultural Affairs Commission.
- **Art in Public Places Program**: Continue review of applications for new artworks in conjunction with private development. Public Art Subcommittee will continue work on Washington/National TOD project, The Culver Steps project, and other art projects and concept proposals in connection with development throughout the city. Performing Arts Grant and Public Art Subcommittees will complete revisions to the Art in Public Places Program Ordinance and forward those to CAC for a recommendation to City Council.
- **Artist Laureate Program**: Receive final update and provide continuing support for outgoing Artist Laureate Alexey Steele. Provide support and assist with orientation for incoming Artist Laureate Katy Krantz.
- **Creative Economy**: Subcommittee will meet with Cultural Affairs and Economic Development staff and create plan for future activities and networking events.
- **Cultural Affairs Division**: Receive 2022-23 work plan status updates and progress report from staff. Consider proposed work plan and budget priorities for fiscal year 2023-24. Provide comments and recommendations to City Manager as appropriate.
- **Culver City Arts Foundation**: Continue to liaise and support Culver Arts. Provide input on MOU amendment, receive updates/report, and attend Board meetings and annual retreat.
- **Economic Vitality Task Force (EVTf)**: CAC members continue to support EVTf meetings with a focus on the launch of an art in empty storefronts/businesses program.
- **General Plan Update**: CAC will provide feedback on relevant GPU cultural elements as they are completed and presented for review.
- **Historic Preservation Program Update**: CAC will work with staff to update program as included in the CCMC.
- **Outreach and Community Engagement**: As appropriate, CAC participates in outreach about various programs and attends cultural activities in Culver City.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program**: Attend and support grant-funded performances. Provide support for ongoing evaluation of program and drafting of guidelines for next application.