

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone or Zoom. Specific instructions and links can be found at www.norwalkct.org/meetings.

Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" will need to register in advance and use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Sabrina Church at malvarado@norwalkct.org to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

**CITY OF NORWALK
ARTS COMMISSION
JANUARY 5, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Marc Alan, Chair; Robert Abriola; Janet Evelyn; Melissa Matuska; Matthew O’Callaghan; Kadeem Roberts; Nori Grudin (6:23 p.m.); Brian Kaspr (6:34 p.m.); Emerson Straniti (6:34 p.m.)

ABSENT: Helen Roman and Peter Smyth

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development and Tourism

OTHERS: Jason Milligan; Julio Pardo; Michelle Rakowsky

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Alan called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Alan called the Roll as indicated above.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public wished to participate.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

a. Approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020 regular meeting.

**** MS. EVELYN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MR. ABRIOLA; MR. ALAN; MS. EVELYN; MS. MATUSKA; MR. O'CALLAGHAN; MR. ROBERTS)**

V. COMMITTEE/STAFF UPDATES

a. Budget Committee Update

i. Finance update – Nori Grudin

Ms. Church updated the Commissioners on the expenditures. The budget packet was sent out for the first review. The Planning Commission will review the budget next week, followed by other City committees.

Mr. Alan proposed holding a meeting of the Budget Committee in January to go over the details of the budget. He invited all Commissioners to send their ideas.

b. Communications Committee Update

i. Social Media update – Michelle Rakowsky & Marc Alan

Mr. Alan said that Ms. Rakowsky continues to do a great job. Ms. Rakowsky said events are starting to pick up and she is looking forward to new initiatives for social media.

Mr. Alan said he will reach out to Mr. O'Callaghan to discuss the newsletter. He invited other members of the Commission to send their ideas to the Communications Committee.

c. Infrastructure Committee Update

Mr. Abriola said the Infrastructure Committee met last week and went through the guidelines and policies for the Commission. They discussed various projects, such as the new banners on Washington Street.

i. MLK update – Sabrina Church and Janet Evelyn

Ms. Evelyn updated the Commissioners on the MLK project. She said there were a lot of potential locations within the MLK corridor for the Art Installation Project. The locations were narrowed down to publicly owned properties.

Ms. Church explained that a plan needs to be formulated and then taken to the various City departments for approval. She added that they will most likely have to have an agreement with the property owner.

Ms. Evelyn described the three proposed locations.

Ms. Grudin joined the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

Mr. Abriola discussed the traffic boxes. He said there was a technology issue with one box and it was taken out of commission. The box was located near St. Philips's Art Guild. They will find a new location and add a tribute to Mr. Mobilia who came up with the design.

Mr. Kaspr and Mr. Straniti joined the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Mr. Pardo described the three proposed locations for the Art Installation Project. He also discussed holding a clean up day of the MLK Corridor on Earth Day and engaging the community to participate.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve public art amenity for 51 Wall Street design plans

Mr. Alan said that this request is for the Arts Commission's consideration of public art for a building in downtown Norwalk.

Ms. Church explained that in the Zoning code, a developer in that district can get additional height with the addition of a public art amenity. She said that the Arts Commission either endorses or does not endorse the art and then the Zoning Commission can determine if the developer can get the extra height. The Arts Commission's position is to only give their recommendation.

Mr. Milligan said that he has commissioned over 75 pieces of art. He said Norwalk is getting known as an arts and cultural area. He said he is a real estate broker and loves the Wall Street area.

Mr. Milligan said he is requesting to add public art to the David Harvey building. He suggested installing soft lights on the building. Mr. Alan said that he felt the lighting was

completely viable and anything that can be done to light up the neighborhood would improve safety. He said he was all for lights as an art installation.

Mr. Milligan described the proposed lighting and said the building would be lit every night and they would have the ability to have a variety of colors.

Mr. Alan mentioned that someone drove through one of the pieces of art at the Art Park and Mr. Milligan had his crew out the next day to fix the structure. He said that when public art is installed, there has to be a commitment to be sure it is always maintained. He said he has confidence that it will be maintained. Mr. Milligan said the project is subject to third party architectural review. Mr. Milligan thanked Mr. Alan for his testimonial on the upkeep. He noted that he owns 38 buildings and they are constantly being maintained.

Mr. Milligan explained that the lights will affix to the building. The bulbs will shine up. He said the building will be a large improvement to the City.

Ms. Matuska asked Mr. Milligan to come back to the Arts Commission with a day and night rendering and maintenance schedule as well as the reason for the additional story. Mr. Alan said the additional story is a Zoning consideration.

Ms. Evelyn asked if the lighting installation will be specific to this one building. Mr. Milligan said that the Wall Street Neighborhood Association hopes to get nicer lighting on the street. He noted the property owners can't be forced to put lights on their building.

Mr. Straniti commended Mr. Milligan for his work to increase public art, but asked why he did not hire an artist to do something artful. Mr. Milligan said he and his architect tried to come up with something and they hope the Commission can see this as artistic.

**** MS. MATUSKA MOVED TO TABLE THE ITEM PENDING THE
SUBMISSION OF A RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED LIGHTING
** MS. EVELYN SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE (5) VOTES IN FAVOR, TWO (2) VOTES
IN OPPOSITION AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS**

Mr. Alan asked Mr. Milligan if he would be willing to come back next month with a rendering. Mr. Milligan said he was not willing to commit to that.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. KASPR MOVED TO ADJOURN
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MR. ABRIOLA; MR. ALAN; MS. EVELYN; MS. GRUDIN; MR. KASPR; MS. MATUSKA; MR. O'CALLAGHAN; MR. ROBERTS; MR. STRANITI)

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services