

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE PORTSMOUTH
PUBLIC ARTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PARC)**

May 10, 2023 - 5:15 – 6:30 PM

Conference Room A

Members Present: Paul Burke, Chris Dwyer, Ellen Fineberg, Beth Hartnett, Jen Meister, Alyssa Murphy, Nancy Pearson, Mara Witzling

Absent: Sean Clancy, Bob Thoresen, Bob White

City Council/Staff: City Councilor Kate Cook

Chris Dwyer called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM

1. Welcome: *Chris Dwyer, member introductions*
2. Motion to accept May 10, 2023 (PARC) minutes made by *Mara Witzling*, seconded by *Ellen Fineberg*. *The motion passed unanimously.*
3. Motion to nominate Nancy Pearson as Secretary for PARC made by *Ellen Fineberg*, seconded by *Jen Meister*. *The motion passed unanimously.*
4. Discussion: Set the priority of committee tasks: *Chair Chris Dwyer suggested each member select their top three priorities as a way to move forward with a plan of action. After input, the tasks were consolidated into three groupings: foundational, projects, and opportunities. Participants agreed that developing a process for reviewing and revising the existing criteria for selecting/accepting public art and establishing the relationship with the land use boards should be initial priorities, but that work can also begin in other areas.*

Foundational-

1. Develop sets of criteria appropriate for selecting/accepting public art in different circumstances, e.g., percent for art commission; privately supported public art in the historic district.
2. Frame out membership of the committee, make-up, diversity, etc.
3. Clarify the relationship between the public art review committee's role in land use boards (e.g., authority, procedures) and identify the need for any changes in ordinances/guidelines, e.g., signage regulations.

4. Guidance/guidelines for private developers interested in adding public art to their sites.

Projects-

1. Develop a plan to work with projects that are in process, specifically Bohenko Park and Rail Trail
2. Create an inventory of upcoming percent for art opportunities along with any past opportunities that have not yet been realized (e.g., middle school)
3. Identify public spaces that could be sites for public art—a contribution to the next master plan.

Opportunities-

Identify funding opportunities for acquiring/commissioning public art.

National Endowment for Arts Our Town Grants Page-
<https://www.arts.gov/grants/our-town>

Webinar Registration- <https://www.arts.gov/news/events/our-town-fy24-grant-guidelines-and-summative-feedback-session>

5. Q and A with Assistant City Attorney Ferrini about PARC's relationship/authority regarding land use boards: *PARC should target goals of how it wants to interface with the land use boards. Potential for advisory capacity analogous to the Conservation Commission's role with the Planning Board? The HDC ordinance already includes language about advisory roles: "may request advice from..." If the PARC wants to strengthen language re: referrals by HDC or Planning Board (as in "shall refer"), changes in the current ordinances would be required. A zoning change may be needed to clarify the distinction between signs and art. Discussion ensued about the mechanisms for triggering knowledge that public art is part of a project in order to trigger a review, including an alert to planning staff upon submission; pre-TAC and TAC meetings; a flag in the online permitting process; and during orientation for land use boards PARC may also interface with other bodies, such as public works and other public art committees, e.g., the library's committee*

6. Topics for next meeting:

1. *Invite Planning Director to discuss ways to flag public art in future development projects and how to approach changes to land use board ordinances to accommodate PARC review of public art.*
2. *Follow up with an invitation to the Chairs of the land-use boards*

7. Action Items:

1. *Jen and Mara to compile existing criteria for art acceptance and bring them to the committee for revision/discussion at the June 28 meeting.*
2. *Ellen will explore public art criteria and ordinances from other US cities*

8. The next Meeting is scheduled for June 28, 2023.

Future meetings: July 26, August 30, and September 27.

9. Public Comment: *No comments.*

10. Motion to adjourn made by *Beth Hartnett*, seconded by *Jen Meister*. *The motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Pearson