

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

June 28, 2023 - 5:15 – 6:30 PM

Conference Room A

**Members Present:** Chris Dwyer, Ellen Fineberg, Beth Hartnett, Jen Meister, Alyssa Murphy, Nancy Pearson, Bob Thoresen, Bob White, Mara Witzling

**Absent:** Paul Burke

**City Council/Staff:** Sean Clancy, City Councilor Kate Cook

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

1. Motion to accept May 31, 2023 PARC minutes made by Ellen Fineberg, seconded by Jen Meister. *The motion passed unanimously.*
2. Discussion with Peter Britz from Planning & Sustainability Department re:
  - a) PARC role re: land use Boards (HDC, Planning Board)—review process
  - b) Required ordinance changes to establish PARC role.
  - c) Planning Dept process of flagging projects with public art components
  - d) Zoning ordinance change: distinguishing **public art** from signage.

*PARC role is advisory.*

*A step could be added to permit application process to flag public art as part of a project. Staff could refer public art to PARC*

*The current sign ordinance typically only used in historic district and/or requires a variance. Need some guidance to help distinguish art from signs.*

*Regulatory process is complex and time consuming. Committee members want to avoid having PARC advice/approval add to complexity. Where does PARC fit into the process? Advisory review from PARC could follow BOA approval and be provided to HDC as advisory.*

*RE the Planning Board, can public art be added as another incentive in the conditional use process? Where does a review of the art come in that process?*

*Consider beginning with an ad hoc process to pilot approach.*

*There was some discussion among the PARC members about the extent to which the committee should get involved in reviewing art on private property through the existing regulatory process. Discussions will continue.*

3. Updates:

- a) Criteria for accepting public art works (Jen Meister and Mara Witzling)  
*Reorganized existing criteria and synthesized content. Goal was to make current evaluation process broader and more procedural so it can be applied to more situations*
- b) Public art criteria/ordinances from other cities (Ellen Fineberg)  
*Example from Willoughby, OH*

4. Next Steps:

1. *Discuss with HDC and Legal Department where PARC fits into the approval process to serve in advisory role to the land use boards.*
2. *Develop draft language distinguish art from signs.*
3. *Pursue including public art within list of incentives for conditional use permits.*

5. Topics for Next Meeting:

*July 26- Invite HDC representatives with legal  
Discuss/identify inventory (include Percent for Art past/upcoming as well as other opportunities such as rail trail and public art) (Sean to check CIP; Ellen to check Save Our Sculpture; Nancy has photo collection)*

*Set aside August 30 meeting to discuss the proposed criteria prepared by Mara and Jen.*

6. Action Items: *Create a PARC landing page on the city website and set up a Wiki map. Invite the public to add to the map. Nancy will reach out to city's communications director*

7. Public Comment: *No public comments.*

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Pearson