



Summary of Actions
Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Design Review Committee
September 30, 2020

APPROVED OCTOBER 14, 2020

The Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) Design Review Committee held a specially scheduled hearing on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 using GoTo Meeting video conferencing software (Meeting I.D. 438681645). The meeting was hosted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department's Community Planning Division.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cederoth called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Chair Nathan Cederoth, Vice Chair Robin Bliss, Nathan Burtch, Mario Cisneros, Anthony Lee

Committee Members Absent: Justin Bost

Staff Present: **M-NCPPC**
Daniel Sams, Mount Rainier M-U-TC Staff Liaison

CITY OF MOUNT RAINIER
Bryan Knedler, City Council Member, Ward 2
Ronald Hopkins, Director of Economic Development
Joe Hicks, Mount Rainier Arts Commission
Elizabeth Marshall, Grant Writer

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Cederoth asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion: Dr. Burtch moved to approve the agenda

Second: Vice Chair Bliss seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 5-0

C. APPROVAL OF APRIL 8, 2020 MINUTES

Chair Cederoth asked for a motion to approve the meeting summary.

Motion: Dr. Burtch moved to approve the meeting summary.

Second: Vice Chair Bliss seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 5-0

D. PROJECT UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

1. Comments on Proposed Mount Rainier Arts Commission (MRAC) Bylaws

Chair Cederoth thanked Mr. Hicks providing the bylaws for the committee's review. Vice Chair Bliss gave thanks as well, commenting that it was evident a great deal of thought had been put into the M-U-TC Committee's involvement. She suggested MRAC inform committee members of a proposed project's location beforehand, perhaps by email, prior to an artist being selected.

Mr. Sams suggested that guidance received from the office of M-NCPPC's associate general counsel directed all deliberations and recommendations on MRAC's projects should take place in a public forum, such as the M-U-TC hearings, unless a member was commenting personally on their own behalf and not the committee's.

Mr. Hicks thanked the committee for their time and stressed that MRAC wants to streamline the review process and address any hiccoughs. He stated the intention of the commission is to garner the M-U-TC Committee's comments before an artist was contacted and to share with the artist the Committee's comments about any historic buildings or sites, for example. He stated that the importance of the M-U-TC Committee's review will be communicated to the artists.

Ms. Bliss suggested keeping Mr. Hopkins informed as well. Mr. Hopkins stated that he would be happy to work with Mr. Hicks.

Mr. Hicks stated that they have not reached out to the Gateway Arts Community Development Corporation yet but will do so. MRAC's projects are promoted on eastcityart.com, a regional arts communication blog, and they will be providing information on projects via MRAC's web page on mountrainiermd.org (city's web site). He noted that MRAC's meetings were now being well-attended by the public.

Vice Chair Bliss suggested talking about the review process.

Mr. Hicks said before MRAC puts an RFQ to the city council they want to have the M-U-TC Committee's comments.

Chair Cederoth stated that the M-U-TC Committee reserves the second Wednesday of every month for hearings.

A discussion of the process and what language should be included in the bylaws regarding the M-U-TC Committee ensued.

Mr. Sams reminded the committee that MRAC cannot compel the M-U-TC Committee to take any action, so please make sure to use “may” rather than “shall;” examples being “MRAC shall ask the recommendation of the M-U-TC Committee” but “the M-U-TC Committee may provide recommendations to MRAC.”

Mr. Hicks reads from Chair Cederoth’s written annotations on the draft bylaws provided earlier, changing a “should” to “may” and the committee declared they were in agreement with this language. Chair Cederoth indicated he would circulate a copy of his comments, and suggested the committee could identify nearby cityscape cues an artist could incorporate into his or her work, but Mr. Hicks said he thought they did not want to limit artists’ creativity that way. The differences between community input and M-U-TC Committee recommendations were discussed.

Councilmember Knedler stated that once three finalists have been selected, the city will be very interested in having the M-U-TC Committee’s recommendations made to the council.

Mr. Hicks clarified that the three final proposals are vetted by the community and property owner before being taken to the city council, so this would now include the M-U-TC Committee’s recommendations.

Mr. Sams reminded Mr. Hicks and the committee that certain types of artwork may require an M-U-TC application, permit, or application to the Historic Preservation Commission with subsequent referral to the M-U-TC Committee. Mr. Hicks stated they were aware of that.

Chair Cederoth stated his intention to finalize the committee’s comments in writing and provide them to MRAC. It was decided the comments would also be appended to the meeting summary and approved with the summary at the next hearing.

E. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Mr. Hopkins stated he would be meeting with Rhonda Dallas of the Prince George’s Arts and Humanities Council to discuss funding for façade improvements the city hopes to make along the southern side of Rhode Island Avenue from Eastern Avenue to the traffic circle. Funding would cover painting, new signs, wayfinding and lighting; the grant application is due October 15, 2020 and Ms. Marshall is working on finishing it. Mr. Cisneros suggested painting all the facades one color. Vice Chair Bliss suggested using a professional sign designer for better results.

Mr. Hopkins also stated the city had applied for designation as a Maryland Main Street “affiliate” only, as the city at this time does not have a full-time Main Street manager required for a Maryland Main Street Designation.

Mr. Sams reminded committee members to let Councilmember Knedler know whether they wished to serve for another two-year term. All present assented, which left only Mr. Bost’s

preference unknown. It was determined the vacancy left by Brent Bolin was for a “Municipal Government Representative,” but that it could not be filled by a sitting city council member.

F. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Vice Chair Bliss moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Mr. Cisneros seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Submitted by Daniel Sams, M-NCPPC Staff Liaison

ATTACHMENT: PROPOSED MRAC BYLAWS W/ M-U-TC COMMITTEE COMMENTS

**Mount Rainier Arts Commission
Bylaws Draft
MUTC Zone Procedures
August 4, 2020**

The Mount Rainier Arts Commission is currently establishing bylaws for procedure, and are requesting input from MUTC Design Review Committee members concerning projects that are proposed in the MUTC zone. Arts Commission members are looking to clarify procedure and obtain recommendations for MRAC bylaws to improve communication and efficiency for future public art projects. Below is a draft for Section 2 that specifies procedure for the Site of Installation. This section will be part of the MRAC project proposal given to the Council and Mayor prior to announcement of any Public Call for any public art project. The intention of this section is to establish procedure with MUTC for recommendations concerning the site prior to the Public Call, and announce these recommendations as part of the Public Call.

2. Proposed Site of Installation

Provide information concerning the proposed site, including but not limited to, the site's:

1. Location including address;
2. Condition of site or building;
3. Exact area of installation for project;
4. Any historical designations for the building or property;
5. Letter of support from Property Owner if the site is private property;
6. Any public comment
7. MUTC zone documentation
 - 7.1. MUTC Zone
 - 7.2. If the Proposed Site is in the designated MUTC zone, the Arts Commission must request a review of the site and receive recommendations for project from MUTC for the proposal. **Before a project is announced**, the Arts Commission shall provide all necessary information about the project to **the MUTC Committee** for review **in writing**, including but not limited to, the location and placement of artwork, suggested artist medium, intended installation dates, ~~(What information does MUTC need from the MRAC) By what process?~~
 - 7.2.1. Recommendations ~~received~~ from MUTCC **may** include, but are not limited to;

- 7.2.1.1. Notification of important architectural elements or parts of the building that should be preserved or may be complimentary to the proposal of artwork from the artists;
- 7.2.1.2. Notifications of any historical value and other possible limitations to using the site;
- 7.2.1.3. Notable provisions of Zoning or Building Code that may be specifically relevant to the project;
- 7.2.1.4. Urban Planning or Architectural elements that may render the project unviable;
- 7.2.1.5. Suggestions for the installation;
- 7.2.1.6. ~~Particular cues from nearby cityscape that may be useful to the artist either for incorporation directly into a piece or for context.~~
- 7.2.2. The recommendations from MUTC shall be included in the Public Call to artists.
- 7.2.3. Prior to City Council's vote to approve the project, MUTC shall be given the opportunity to review the finalists to advise City Council on how the process above was followed, and give MUTC's sense of the project overall

Any other suggestions, including about process, timeline needed for MUTC review and recommendations, etc...?

Week before our meeting so we can turn it around in 1 month?

Suggestion: Artists are well covered by MRAC membership, including experienced public artists. When engaging a consultant, it may be better to hire one from a specialty whose perspective isn't already represented, such as an Urban Planner.