



## Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

Date: November 4, 2021

Time: 7:00-8:30PM

Location: Zoom

### Minutes

**Attending:** Adria Arch Christine Noah, Cristin Canterbury Bagnall, Stewart Ikeda, Steve Poltorzycki, Lidia Kenig-Scher, Tom Formicola, Andrea Nicolay, Stephanie Marlin-Curiel, Nick Castellano, Sarah Morgan Wu

**Absent:** Tom Davison, Beth Locke

**Guests:** Ali Carter, Cecily Miller, Terry Holt, Janet Oberto

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm

### 1) ROLL CALL AND RULES OF REMOTE MEETINGS CONDUCTED DURING COVID-19

### 2) APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES

- Cristin, Stephanie and Andrea Nicolay abstained, while everyone else approved.

### 3) UPDATE on POPUPS - Lidia

- Lidia and Tom talked about the relationship between the ACA and Artlinks. They came up with an idea of taking over an empty storefront to do an art store, but that was proving difficult so they are using the Roasted Granola, which wants an artist presence. Over 5 weekends, artists will do demos and there will be music, visual arts and crafts.
- There will be a Holiday stroll in the Heights that will include painted windows and artisan market.
- What happened to the idea of taking over an empty storefront to do a pop-up store: the landlords wanted rent and that they would have to pay for the cleanup themselves to set up the store. It was much upfront cost.
- Artlinks needs a budget of \$350 for publicity – banner, posters, brochure. They are not at the point where they can charge membership dues. Steve, Stewart, and Cristin will discuss and determine whether funds are available
- Cecily and Lidia have not met yet about about Plein Air yet, but that is coming.

### 4) UPDATES - Cecily

- The October 31<sup>st</sup> celebration of the Climate Resilience project was fabulous. 96 people attended. Influencers were there, School Superintendent, a member of the School Committee, two Select Board Members, Jenny Raitt, and State Representative Sean Garballey was there. Interns spoke. ACE (Arlington Community Energy) made a pitch for people to opt up to renewable energy. Finding out how many signups ACE got would be a great indicator of the efficacy of the event. Having all the markers in one place for people to look at was very powerful. Now we just need locations and permissions for the locations in order to install the markers. The Climate Futures Arlington website is remarkable. <https://www.climatefuturesarlington.org>
- Cecily knows someone who can create a database for us to track attendance, donors, artists, etc.

### 5) ZONING and Artist Spaces - Ali

- Two zoning related issues:

- Industrial zoning article passed which allows us to build new artist live/work spaces in industrial zones: 1) Artist Live/Work space in industrial zones, 2) Art in the parks
- We have to create design guidelines for developers to create such spaces. Boston and Somerville have great examples. If we have other examples, please let Ali know.
- Janet (and partner Ted), Tom and Lidia offered to be on a committee.
- Stephanie mentioned that artist spaces should be able to accommodate families
- Both Len Diggins and Eric Helmuth (Select Board members) are very supportive of this initiative
- The space on Lowell Street that Lidia had her eye on for artist studios has been rented and will be occupied for the next two years. How do we start planning for the next opportunity? How can we make an artists' cooperative a viable enough entity for a landlord?
- James Flemming, an Arlington resident, has gotten involved in drafting warrant articles for town meeting, and is especially interested in seeing more arts and cultural activities in the parks.
- In the zoning bylaw it says that art in the park is allowed by special permit only, so Jenny said, let's make it by right!
- Cristin volunteered Tom Davison for working on this with James Flemming.
- At the October 31<sup>st</sup> event, Jenny expressed interest in the idea of shutting down Mass Ave on Sundays as Cambridge does Memorial Drive, and Cecily had mentioned to Jenny the idea of supporting the effort with cultural programming.

## 6) CULTURAL DISTRICT UPDATE AND CONVERSATION

- Goals: Walking tour update, Grants update, Future of the Cultural District
- Walking tour is a self-guided audio tour (walking tour is "ablist"). Sarah Morgan-Wu has been the project manager with the Loop Lab, the consultant. The Arts Arlington website will need to be updated to accommodate the platforms – Google Play, Apple Play, and Spotify. We are reviewing the second part and will wrap up the production and start planning the launch – possibly by Porchfest.
- Grants update: The Fundraising committee has been fielding the emails from Luis from the MCC about the grant. There is a new login for the portal.
- MCC Cultural District Grant apps are due December 15. The walking tour was funded by a FY20 grant. The FY21 (\$7,500) grant was lumped in with the rest of the ACAC FY21 budget to be spent on activities in the district. Those monies have been spent, and Cristin filed a report
- Future of the District: District formed in 2015. The Growth and Development of ACAC in a Cultural Plan, and the growth and development of the District happened at the same time. There is a lot of overlap (actually 100%) between members of the core managing partnership and ACAC Commissioners. Sarah succeeded Jan as the Capitol Business representative
- The MCC Redesignation process will be in 2023. We were originally designated in 2017.
- One thing that strengthened the Cultural District designation was the Pathways bikeway art so when we talk about the redesignation, we should think about whether Pathways is still a priority that makes sense. Making Mass Ave a Greenway would also fill the gap!
- Do we have an opportunity to engage more non-commissioners and businesses?
- We should consider merging the organizations?

## 7) NEW BUSINESS

- The first Chamber mixer is on November 17 in the East Arlington branch in Cambridge Savings Bank.
- Open studios with a Porchfest stage is November 17. Volunteers are needed.
- Great feedback on the newsletter!
- Ali will be out for a while.
- WBUR Artery newsletter. There was a query from the Arts and Culture editor about whether we have seen any art inspired by Climate Change. Everyone should write to her.
- February exhibit at the ACA is about living in harmony with nature

Meeting adjourned 8:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Marlin-Curiel

Next meeting: December 2, 7pm

