



SPECIAL MEETING

July 9, 2019

Room 215 City Hall

5:30 p.m.

I. Attendance

Present: Ellen Blalock, Lauren Boldon, Elizabeth Bryson, Emanuel Carter, Corky Goss, Jimmy Monto, Nancy Keefe Rhodes, Nadiya Nacorda, and Dan Ward.

Absent: Takarra Smith and Tina Zagya.

Staff: Kate Auwaerter

II. Special Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

III. New Business

SPAC 19-03 *Syracuse Writers*, Locus Design Group

Joe Sisko (Locus Design Group) presented the formal application for *Syracuse Writers*, a text-based installation designed to celebrate the literary legacy of Syracuse. J. Sisko provided a recap for the Commission members, noting that the project is proposed to be installed along a section of the City-owned, wire-mesh fence located on the south side of the 700 block of E. Genesee Street across from Forman Park. The artwork consists of 6, 20"x120", aluminum sheets that will be attached to the existing fence posts, each replacing an existing wire mesh panel of the same size. Each aluminum panel will feature excerpts from the writings of renowned authors who have an important connection to Syracuse. The texts will be laser cut into the top aluminum sheet exposing a second, colored backer panel so that the lettering will be legible. Eighteen authors are featured in this initial installation, representing a wide diversity of voices and genres. The authors include: Jermain Loguen, George Schuyler, John Williams, Toni Morrison, Safiya Henderson-Holmes, Elizabeth Cotten, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Shirley Jackson, Joyce Carol Oates, Daniel Berrigan, Joanne Shenandoah, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Minnie Bruce Pratt, L. Frank Baum, Lou Reed, Rod Serling, and Raymond Carver.

J. Sisko commented that local historian Sam Gruber gathered a list of over 100 authors associated with Syracuse. The engagement process with the local writing community helped to focus the list down to 16 for the purposes of this project. Selection of texts was also challenging given the range of the writers. The selected texts are intended to be interesting, insightful, challenging and humorous.

K. Auwaerter reported that since the June 11, SPAC meeting, she had conferred with the City Engineering Department regarding the project site, specifically regarding the potential of expanding the work into the green strip between the sidewalk and chain-link fence along the Hutchings parking lot. Engineering confirmed that the City owns only a few inches of property beyond the mesh fence, which precludes the possibility of expanding the work to both sides of the fence. In addition to the ownership question, Engineering noted that if the public was invited onto the greenspace it would need to be made wheelchair accessible, which was not feasible given the width of the space and the location of mature trees along the strip. Given the response from Engineering and the overall condition of the fence, J. Sisko noted that the plan was now to remove the entire bottom row of the mesh. Sections of mesh could be reused to replace the mesh panels that are in poor condition. He also recommended that in the future, simple plantings at the base of the fence would be appropriate. K. Auwaerter confirmed that Skilled Trades could remove/replace sections of the damaged mesh.

J. Sisko also introduced to the Commission a new color gradient for the backer panels that will eventually extend the full length of the fence. Some of the change in text color will be seen in the first 60' of the project that will be installed starting at the west end of the fence. The full color gradient will gradually appear as more panels are added moving eastward. L. Boldon asked if the design team will provide the City with the design files so that new panels can be installed in the future, which J. Sisko confirmed. C. Goss encouraged the project organizers to use the momentum of the first installation to start the fundraising that would keep the project moving.

N. Keefe Rhodes made a motion to approve the application as submitted, which was seconded by J. Monto. The motion was approved unanimously. J. Monto made a second motion to recommend to Common Council that the artwork be adopted into the City's permanent collection. The motion was seconded by E. Bryson and was approved unanimously.

IV. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.