

Napa County Arts & Culture Commission (NCACC) • Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2008 (4-6pm)

Napa County Transportation & Planning Agency (NCTPA)
707 Randolph Street, Suite 100 • Napa, CA 94559

Commissioners Present: Alvin Lee Block (Chair), Judith Caldwell, Diane Damé Shepp, Yvonne Henry, Sue Wollack, Debra Lee Hodge, Margrit Biever Mondavi, T Beller

Absent: John Lail (At Large)

Staff Present: Michelle Williams, Kristina Young

Public Attendees: Kathryn Reasoner, Executive Director, di Rosa Preserve

4:00pm Meeting Called to Order

I. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from previous 9/15/08 meeting were approved.

II. Public Comment

Kathryn Reasoner was asked to attend this meeting about NCACC's role in the community and its relationship with its parent organization, NCTPA. The following is a summary of what Kathryn reported:

Commissions are usually appointed by a political body to represent the public, and to advise that governmental body on public policy. For example, the San Francisco Art Commission (SFAC) was created to be final the review for aesthetics of any building done in the city. During the depression, the SFAC was also put in charge of overseeing the process of gathering city-collected sales tax to support the San Francisco Symphony. Since then the SFAC has also been put in charge of overseeing a city-wide art festival.

The main role of commissions is to review, revise, & regulate, and to advise local government on arts related policies. They serve best as an ombudsman to governmental bodies, advocating for the needs of local arts & artists. They may work with planning commissions for zoning, and other city departments, to look at codes that affect artists, and those that protect the arts in their communities.

Most importantly, commissions are one of few bodies that are government appointed and created to represent the entire county equally. They give voice to individual artists and arts organizations who may not otherwise have a forum to communicate easily with local government.

Commissions hold public meetings that are broadly publicized, where attendees are invited to discuss their specific needs. These issues are then usually referred to one of the commission's committees that would then research and advocate for these groups.

Commissions have a lot of power. They are able to bring together disparate groups and educate the public and governmental bodies on important needs and issues relating to the arts community that may otherwise go unnoticed.

In general, commissions are less involved in active programming, which is usually left to local arts councils. Some commissions also oversee small re-granting programs (i.e. loans to performing arts organizations, as in the case of SFAC.)

The Commission chair will report directly to the mayor, or city manager (as in San Francisco). This way, any funds received are under review, as they must run through a county office of some kind.

Funding streams for commissions usually include public funding, or in-kind services. In San Francisco, the Commission receives rent-free meeting space in city buildings (just like other city departments). In cities with percent-for-art programs, commissions may also be supported by in part by a percentage of these fees collected from developers.

Affordable studio space is a big issue in Napa County. There are different policies and building codes in each city and jurisdiction. Members of the NCACC can research these codes and then formulate and advise local government on how to make them more arts-friendly. They can also suggest incentive programs for developers, to increase building of these spaces. It is the role of a commission to work with their cities and county to ensure that the arts are a part of the master plan, just as low rent housing and transportation would be.

Michelle Williams reminded commissioners to attend the monthly 2030 meetings in St. Helena. They are in the midst of creating their community plan and representatives from the NCACC should be there to advocate for the arts & educate the planners in that city.

ACNV is the programmatic arm while the NCACC could shoulder advocacy and influencing public policy. The two groups need to work in tandem. The ACNV staff and board is not publicly elected and so does not have the same power as the NCACC.

Commissioners stated that until the NCACC is established as an official county governmental body with a revenue stream, it couldn't be as effective as it should be. Currently, commissioners are locally appointed (vs. elected).

III. Role and Future of NCACC

Diane Damé Shepp presented research she has done on percent-for-art programs around California. Many of the agencies that run these programs are similar in structure to the goals of the NCACC. Diane suggested commissioners use these successful models of existing agencies to inform formation of the NCACC (such as Portland's Metropolitan Arts Commission, representing three counties in Oregon).

She reported that many of the members of these commissions are appointed by city councils and that in order to make the NCACC work, it must not remain under the NCTPA.

Michelle Williams reported for Jim Krider (who was at another meeting with the Conference & Visitor's Bureau). Jim recently met with the new Interim Executive Director of NCTPA, and although the NCTPA is going through another reorganization, he is committed to making this relationship work.

T Beller stated that Jim will be an advocate of the NCACC under the NCTPA or if it should move towards a county position.

Judith Caldwell said the Yountville city staff will also be supportive either way.

Commissioners agreed that it is important to keep in touch with the NCTPA as the role of the NCACC develops; however, the NCACC cannot be effective in this current structure. As long as the NCACC is under NCTPA, it cannot receive a funding stream, which is required in order to function.

Should the NCACC become a county agency, the individual cities would follow the same format for appointing commissioners. As for writing policy, the commissioners representing individual cities would do the research and then make recommendations to county staff, who would have the ultimate authority.

The NCACC needs an office space and a nameplate, and there are many models of counties giving free meeting space to commissions. Commissioners agreed that they do not need one official meeting place, they could use libraries, for example. They also agreed that meeting places should move around the county as NCACC represents the whole county.

Commissioners decided to hold a separate meeting to continue this important discussion. Meeting will be held on Monday 10/20, from 4-5pm at the NCTPA Conference Room. In preparation, Lee Block asked Michelle to email him a list of the six major problems facing the cultural community so that he can begin to think about addressing the specific issues.

IV. Report on the Borreo Building

Lee Block contacted Jennifer La Liberte and Robin Klingbeil of the City of Napa about this building (located on Third Street at Soscol). It is a city owned building that has been empty for several years during the Napa River flood project. It is a landmark building, built in 1887. Recently the building was again made available for lease by the city, however it requires extensive remodeling and retrofitting before it can be used.

On June 3, the City accepted a 15 page contract from Channel Properties who proposed creating a restaurant offering nighttime entertainment. In their proposal, Channel Properties estimated \$15 million incoming to city from profit sharing and sales tax.

The timeline given by the city to renovate and open is 210 days from the "effective date". Lee was unsure if this is the date the contract was accepted (6/3/08) or another date.

One stipulation of any city approved contract is that out of the building's total 96,000 square feet, the lessee would have to set aside 1,600 square feet for "community use".

Commissioners asked for clarification of this term and agreed that they need to begin to put pressure on the county to provide space for the NCACC. Commissioners agreed that they are not quite ready to get on agenda of the Board of Supervisors but that they to be involved with the organizations like the CVB, Copia, and the Destination Council. Commissioners need to attend those meetings to speak up for the arts in order to strength the NCACC's position before going to the Board of Supervisors. T Beller also suggested speaking with Superintendent Barbara Nemko about using NCOE space.

VI Staff Report

Michelle Williams gave an update on ACNV's Arts in Education Program. ACNV is currently waiting on support from two funders: the Sato Foundation (funding primarily for children's art programming in the classroom) and the Koret Foundation (funding for teacher training in the Visual and Performing Arts Standards, or "VAPA"). ACNV will have heard from these two funders by the next NCACC meeting.

ACNV is also currently researching another public art program, "Sculpture Walk" in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, that Harry Price and Cass Walker discovered. The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) wants to work with ACNV to create a similar program in Napa to educate the community about what public art is, especially after what happened with the Chamber's Legislative Action

Committee. The RDA would like to create a juried program to select 15 sculptures for temporary installation around downtown Napa. Each artist would be partnered with a local sponsor, to create part of the revenue needed for the program. The RDA has agreed to pay for transportation, installation, pedestals and insurance for the selected work. The public will vote on their favorite pieces and RDA will purchase the 'People's Choice' winner as part of the city's permanent public art collection.

VII Other Business

Diane Damé Shepp asked about the outcome of the ACNV grant written to the Hewlett Foundation, in part to support the NCACC. Michelle clarified: this grant request was made to Hewlett to fund the Cultural Planning process AND to pay for a staff member for NCACC. Hewlett only funded Cultural Planning. Future funding from Hewlett is a possibility, according to Michelle, but it would require a grant writer. At the time of the first grant request, Hewlett was not interested in funding the development process of the NCACC. ACNV has been invited to apply for multi-year funding from Hewlett.

In the meantime, ACNV will continue to staff the NCACC temporarily. Ultimately, the NCACC will need paid staff who can better support the commissioners.

VIII Upcoming NCACC Meeting Schedule

- Mon, October 20 (4-5pm), NCTPA Conference Room: Additional Meeting
- Mon, November 3 (4-6), NCTPA Conference Room: Nov. Monthly Meeting
- Mon, December 1 (4-6), NCTPA Conference Room: Dec. Monthly Meeting
- Thu, January 8 (4-6), NCTPA Conference Room: Jan. Monthly Meeting (NCTPA CONFERENCE ROOM NOT AVAILABLE- must reschedule)
- Unless otherwise scheduled, all NCACC monthly meetings will continue through June on First Monday of the Month (4-6pm)

Summer Schedule:

- July 27 (4-6), NCTPA Conference Room: Summer Meeting
- No meeting in August
- Regular monthly schedule will then resume on the First Monday of September

Diane Damé Shepp invited the rest of the NCACC to come view her installation work in the "Evolution of a Sacred Space: Dio de los Muertos 2008" Exhibition at The Oakland Museum (on view Oct 8-Dec 7, 2008. She recommends attending on October 25th, their Annual Community Celebration Day, from 12-5pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:55pm