

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

December 1, 2008 (4-6pm)

Napa County Transportation & Planning Agency (NCTPA)

707 Randolph Street, Suite 100 • Napa, CA 94559

**Commissioners Present:** Chair, Lee Block (Napa), T Beller (At Large), Judith Caldwell (Yountville), Yvonne Henry (Calistoga), Diane Damé Shepp (Napa County)

**Staff Present:** Kristina Young (ACNV), Kate Demarest (ACNV)

**Absent:** Eliot Hurwitz (NCTPA), Debra Lee Hodge (American Canyon), John Lail (At Large), Margrit Biever Mondavi (At Large), Sue Wollack (St. Helena)

### **4:10pm: Meeting Called to Order, Adjourned 5:45pm**

#### **I. Public Comment**

Kerry Smith, Yountville resident and artist, offered additional information regarding the zoning issues for artists in Napa County. She provided a zoning map showing all the locations that are zoned commercial-limited, which is the only zoning designation that allows a studio or gallery. Ms. Smith and the Commissioners discussed zoning and other issues that are 'unfriendly' to artists throughout the County:

- Napa – only one zoning designation that allows artistic space. Limited open spaces with some being uninhabitable.
- Yountville – only allows studios/galleries in the main section of the town.
- Calistoga – most artist-friendly jurisdiction, allows studios in residential areas.
- St. Helena – allows artist spaces in the commercial downtown or industrial areas. Seems more open minded and accepting of artist spaces as long as they have limited traffic.
- Galleries – many galleries are not 'legal' because of zoning restrictions in their locations.
- Studios – in Napa it is not possible to legally have a studio on one's own property. This has forced some artists to 'just do it' without legal approval.
- Artist gallery access – many local galleries have specialized exhibit criteria that eliminate the work of local artists thus restricting exhibition opportunities.
- Napa County is inconsistent in the requirements imposed on different tenants. For example:
  - One artist was required to submit a CalTrans traffic study (at a cost of \$80K) in order to rent a location but the restaurant that eventually rented the space was NOT required to submit the same study. The cost of the study made it impossible for the artist to pursue the space further.
- Current master plans offer no protection for artists. Landlords are free to rent to whomever is willing to pay more. The result is an overabundance of nail salons and a dearth of galleries.
- Ms. Smith attempted to rent a commercial service space in Yountville but was informed that the use of space for artist purposes was 'not a service to the community.'
- Yountville is focusing on European artists while Napa considers a large part of the artist community to be 'Sunday painters'.

The Commissioners discussed these issues:

- Judith Caldwell reported that Yountville is working on a new master plan and this would be a great time to address these issues.
- Lee Block recommended that, since this is an issue that involves both the county and individual cities, each Commissioner approach his/her governing body to find out what the current policy is and then come back to discuss this issue further at a future meeting.
- Lee Block suggested researching how other non-Napa communities handle artist line/work spaces.
- Kerry Smith noted that artists are similar to wineries in that they produce what they sell on their property. The Commissioners appreciated this analogy and agreed that it makes sense to try to have artists be afforded the same considerations as wineries.

### **I a. Continued Zoning Discussion**

Following the close of the public comment period, the Commissioners agreed to approach each individual city regarding the local zoning policy with the goal of educating themselves on the current situation and how it affects local artists. This would include understanding both the history of arts zoning as well as the current mind-set of each community. In the interests of consistency, each Commissioner will pose the following question to their appropriate jurisdiction:

"Have you had the opportunity to review how our zoning ordinances support the presence of artists in our community?"

Commissioners will ask about the background for current zoning regulations. Understanding that some municipalities may not even be aware of the situation, Commissioners will look for ways to explain that the cities may not be encouraging the arts community in ways they might actually want to.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the November 3, 2008 meeting approved as submitted.

### **III. Public Art Discussion**

#### **A. ACNV Update by Kristina Young (on behalf of Michelle Williams)**

Michelle was unable to attend today's meeting due to illness. Kristina reported in her stead.

##### **Report on recent Napa Chamber of Commerce meeting**

Kristina reported that the recent meeting with the Napa Chamber of Commerce was very positive. The meeting was attended by Gordon Heuther, Michelle Williams, Lisa Batto and Ryan Gregory, both from the Chamber. The meeting served as a first step in educating the Chamber on exactly what public art is. Chamber representatives acknowledged that their initial Legislative Action Committee meeting when they discussed public art did not include anyone from the arts community who could present the positives on public art. Michelle has been invited to present to the Chamber's Legislative Action Committee at the end of January. Chandra Cerrito will also be there to present her public art power point slide show. This is part of the ACNV outreach campaign to educate and garner support for public art in Napa.

##### **Report on Upcoming Meeting with Napa Redevelopment Agency**

Michelle and Kristina will be meeting with Napa Redevelopment on December 15<sup>th</sup>. They will be discussing next steps & roles for a sculpture walk program in Napa. The Commissioners discussed the role of the NCACC in the public art process and voiced concern about being left out of these meetings. The consensus was that public art is an important focus of the NCACC and that the Commission should be represented whenever possible. Kristina reported that she and Michelle are working with Chandra Cerrito on an FAQ sheet for Public Art to address some very basic questions (such as what is public art, how do we pay for it, why is the burden placed on developers, etc.). This list of questions will be reviewed prior to Chandra's presentation. Commissioners would like copies of the FAQ for their own outreach efforts.

#### **B. Yountville Public Art Ordinance Report by Judith Caldwell**

Judith Caldwell is working with Steve Rogers, Yountville's town administrator, on a public art program for the city. The city is dissolving the existing Community Hall Commission and replacing it with a new citizen's commission whose purpose would be to advocate for community programs. This new commission will be comprised of existing Community Hall Commission members who will transition to the new group and 4 community members who will be new to the commission. Judith and Steve have reviewed public art programs and ordinances that are currently active in cities of similar size and culture.

Yountville is exploring a public art walk similar to the one now under consideration by Napa. Gordon Heuther and another gallery owner have offered to loan four pieces to the city for this purpose. The goal is to begin with eight pieces distributed over two blocks in downtown on a combination of public and private property. Kristina will email Judith a copy of her research on the Sioux Falls, SD Sculpture Walk program.

Steve and Judith will have the first draft of an ordinance in January. That will be brought to NCACC for review with the intention of presenting it to the City of Yountville in the spring.

Judith has also been invited to write an 800 work article each month about the arts in Yountville.

Diane Damé Shepp questioned whether the bylaws of the new commission in Yountville could include a statement that a member of the NCACC would/ should be a standing member of the Yountville commission. Judith indicated that she will be serving as the chairperson of the sub-committee on art. The NCACC decided to request that this position be filled by the current Yountville NCACC Commissioner, whomever that might be.

### **C. Report on Public Art in Calistoga by Yvonne Henry**

Yvonne Henry has drafted a letter on public art for review. She recommended designing this as a letter to the editor with two goals in mind: 1) when published it will reach the entire community, 2) it will reinforce awareness of the NCACC and remind readers that the NCACC is active. The Commissioners would like to send the same letter to all the papers in the county. Diane Damé Shepp will send the letter via email.

### **D. Discussion of Next Steps for Public Art in Napa**

The Commissioners agreed to meet in January to work specifically on this issue. The exact date is to be decided via email. Diane suggested extending the already scheduled meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup> to work on this rather than trying to find another date convenient for everyone.

## **III. Public Recognition Program for the Arts**

The consensus is that establishing such a program would be a good public relations move for the NCACC. The logistics of this program, including researching individuals and/or groups in each community that are doing things in keeping the NCACC goals, would need to be worked out. Other suggestions included recognizing outstanding artists. Lee Block requested that Michelle work to determine the best way to establish this program.

## **IV. Commission Structure Discussion**

Discussions related to the specific structure of the NCACC continued. Some suggestions/comments included:

- Lee Block recently made a presentation related to the NCACC to the Napa City Council. Councilmember and NCTPA Chair, Jim Krider, voiced his willingness to work with the NCACC to find a more effective structure for the Commission.
- T Beller mentioned a previous discussion of scheduling a meeting to meet with both Jim Krider and the new NCTPA Executive Director to discuss the Commissioner's concerns about the effectiveness of the current structure. She voiced concern that the NCACC might seem to be a new problem on top of other more pressing problems for the NCTPA.
- Given Jim Krider's support, T Beller suggested that the NCACC should consider the possibility of staying at the NCTPA. Now that there is committed support within the NCTPA things might improve. The question is: why should the NCACC remain a part of the NCTPA and what authority will be granted to it?
- Lee Block suggested extending an invitation to Jim Krider to attend the next meeting to allow him to express his opinions prior to each Commissioner's presentation to his/her local jurisdiction. Lee

agreed to coordinate dates for a smaller meeting with himself, Diane and Jim, prior to a formal meeting with the entire NCACC.

#### **V. ACNV Staff Report by Kristina Young (on behalf of Michelle Williams)**

- The first meeting of the Arts Advisory Board to discuss the new marketing initiative will be held on Wednesday.
- The VAPA (Visual & Performing Arts for the California State Education Standards) training program is almost totally funded. This Arts Education program is being developed to train teaching artists in the VAPA standards so that they can tailor their existing programs to align with these standards. Doing so will make their programs eligible for state funding that is only available for VAPA-aligned programs.
- The NCOE gave ACNV 50% of the money raised at the recent Napa County Reads reception.
- ACNV has received a funding commitment from the Sato Foundation for this year's Arts Education Grant Program. Yvonne Henry would like to take information to the Calistoga schools board to let them know that the program is available. Kristina will email information on the program to all Commissioners.

#### **VI. Other Business**

The Commissioners inquired into the possibility of creating a restricted account through ACNV to handle donations for the NCACC. The NCACC does not currently have a budget and has no means of accepting financial support. Using ACNV as a fiscal sponsor would provide a means for processing NCACC-designated donations. Yvonne questioned whether it would be possible to create something by year-end. Kate Demarest explained that ACNV currently acts as a fiscal sponsor for a number of organizations and individuals so the accounting structure is in place. Michelle would need to approve such a program for NCACC.

Lee Block explained a fundraising program he recently became aware of. The newly opened Elements Restaurant posted a sign on each table advising diners that 50¢ per person would be added to each check to support their employees' health coverage. Lee suggested a similar program to support the arts could be implemented with restaurants and wineries. The Commissioners will think about the possibility for discussion at the next meeting.

Yvonne is conducting research on the mural in Calistoga. She suggested that Chandra Cerrito's public art presentation be given to supporters who were instrumental in making the mural a reality.

#### **VII. Next Meeting**

The next NCACC meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 14, 2008 from 4-6PM at the Villagio Inn and Spa (at 6481 Washington Street in Yountville). The meeting will be hosted by Vintage Properties. Steve Rogers of Yountville has requested that this meeting limit discussions to general NCACC topics and not include politics.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm**