

Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture  
Minutes  
January 24, 2007

Commissioners Present:	Gunilla Bishop	Vera Mulder
	Doug Clary	Robert Oppenborn
	Karen Kiefer	Lora Quesenberry
	Jeanine Howe	Katherine Rhein
	Joan Meyers	

Others Present: Mike Curtis (City Project Manager), Harold Stalf (Downtown Development Authority), Bruce Hill (City Council), Traci Altergott (Recreation Superintendent), Burke Martin (Blythe Design), Josh Comfort (JC Development), Kathy Parker (The Lawrence Group), Kevin Koernig (The Lawrence Group), Rafe Ropek (artist), Don Mitchell (artist), and Jeff Bates (artist).

The regular meeting of the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture was held on the above date. Chair Joan Meyers called the meeting to order at 4:00pm. A motion was made by Karen Kiefer, seconded by Jeanine Howe, to approve the minutes of the Commission's last two meetings on November 29, 2006 and January 11, 2007. The motion carried unanimously.

**1% FOR THE ARTS – DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE:** The Commission heard presentations from four Colorado artists detailing their proposals for entryway canopies for the new downtown parking garage over the main entrance and two pedestrian entrances. Berthoud artist Rafe Ropek showed photographs of related projects he has done, explained the inspiration behind his proposal, and presented his idea for artwork titled "Travel through Time" – three canopies constructed out of aluminum grillwork with LED lighting behind an acrylic center. The main canopy would measure 36 feet wide by four feet high by six feet at the widest part of a bowed-out front curve. There would be three layers of aluminum and the canopy would be 12 feet off ground level, which will help deter vandalism. Ropek explained that the LED lights will be programmable and could change color daily, hourly, seasonally, or whatever, noting that LED light bulbs are \$70 each but last for 11 years. The lights would be placed every three feet and are fairly indestructible. The acrylic plastic acts to diffuse the light across the awning. Ropek presented a model of his canopy.

Don Mitchell from Littleton presented slides of his past artwork and his idea for awnings titled "Car Parade" – three canopies with brightly colored, laser cut silhouettes of stylized people and vehicles across the top of each one. The canopies and sculptural pieces would be constructed of ¼ inch thick high strength aluminum, and colored with powder coated primer and acrylic paint, with a clear coat finish which would last at least 20 years. The main canopy would measure 32 feet wide by seven feet tall and would extend three feet out from the building. The figures would be bolt mounted to a beam with four attachment supports. He had contacted the contractor, Shaw Construction, about installing awnings on the building, which they agreed to do. Mitchell presented a model of his proposed piece to the group.

Jeff Bates from Fruita showed photos of similar projects he has completed and presented his design for a metal archway of wrought iron and cross lattice work over the main entrance, possibly with LED rope lighting, five metal capitals at the top of the building, an art deco style awning over one pedestrian entrance, and a retro sculptural piece over the other pedestrian entrance with a six foot diameter metal globe reminiscent of the Superman comic book "Daily Planet" logo. Bates noted that the canopies would be powder coated and he presented samples of the materials he would use in the awnings.

The Cultural Arts Coordinator showed a PowerPoint presentation from Denver artist Elaine Calzolari, who could not attend but was on the telephone during the meeting to answer questions. Calzolari's idea for three entryway features was titled "And Now Playing..." and replicated a stylized old-fashioned movie marquee over the main entrance, with smaller, similar awnings over the pedestrian entrances. The presentation included photographs of other artwork projects she has done and the

landscapes near Grand Junction which inspired her design. The canopies would be in an art deco style resembling the shape of the Bookcliffs and the Grand Mesa, and constructed of powder coated aluminum panels. The main canopy would have three different light sources – flood lights, backlit fluorescents, and neon lights to represent Grand Junction’s two rivers. A model of the main awning was presented and passed around.

Following the presentations the Commission and other Selection Committee members and Councilman Hill discussed the various artists’ proposals. The group tended to lean toward either the Ropek idea or the Mitchell idea. Kathy Parker with The Lawrence Group, who was one of the designers of the building’s façade, noted that she liked Mitchell’s proposal because of its sculptural aspect and that he is using the building as a palette for artwork, as opposed to Ropek’s which is more traditional and integrated into the building itself. Harold Stalf and others noted that either Mitchell’s or Ropek’s would make a strong statement. Commissioner Doug Clary thought that Mitchell’s was a bit too cartoonish in style for this particular installation. Josh Comfort, the other façade architect on the project, noted that he liked Ropek’s proposal because of Rafe’s willingness to work with the architects in selecting his colors and because having a piece which incorporated LED lighting would add an element to the artwork in downtown Grand Junction which is currently lacking – lighting as part of the art. Several people noted the vandalism potential inherent with Calzolari’s proposed neon lights, and others noted Ropek’s strong background and experience with similar and related projects, most notably Denver T-REX light rail project.

After much discussion among the committee, a straw vote was taken, with ten people voting for Ropek’s design and three people voting for Mitchell’s. After further discussion a motion was made by Clary, seconded by Lora Quesenberry, to recommend to the City Council to approve commissioning Rafe Ropek to create three entryway awning features for the downtown parking garage through the 1% for the Arts program. The motion carried unanimously. Various color options were discussed, and it was suggested that Ropek include a clear powder coated finish.

**WORKSHOP SPONSORSHIP:** The Cultural Arts Coordinator presented a request from the Denver-based Colorado Resource Center, a training organization, to co-sponsor a workshop in Grand Junction on March 22 by Massachusetts Cultural Council Program Manager Mark Smith for area arts and cultural organizations about audience development. The Coordinator noted that it should be a good presentation on how to increase participation in arts activities, that it would cost the Commission about \$200 - \$300 for Smith’s expenses and the workshop refreshments, and would only cost attendees \$25. A motion was made by Vera Mulder, seconded by Jeanine Howe, to approve up to \$300 for sponsorship of the March 22 Audience Development Workshop. The motion carried unanimously.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2007:** Karen Kiefer moved and Lora Quesenberry seconded the nomination of Doug Clary for Chair of the Commission. The motion carried unanimously. Clary nominated, and Howe seconded, the nomination of Lora Quesenberry as Vice-chair of the Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

Kiefer reported on plans for the up-coming 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the City of Grand Junction on June 29 – July 4, 2007. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Cowan Sarmo  
Cultural Arts Coordinator