



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2021
3:30-5:00 PM

This meeting was conducted electronically.

GENERAL BUSINESS

CALL TO ORDER – 3:34 pm

ROLL CALL

Arts Advisory Committee Present: Frederick Janka, Chair, Robert Adams, Kai Tepper, Marylove Thralls, Vice Chair, Margie Yahyavi

Arts Advisory Committee Absent: Jenna Nicole Tico

Liaisons Present: Oscar Gutierrez, Santa Barbara City Council

Liaisons Absent: Michael Drury, H.L.C.

City of Santa Barbara Staff Absent: Nina Johnson, Senior Assistant to City Administrator

SB County Arts & Culture Staff Present: Sarah York Rubin, Hannah Rubalcava, Audrey Lopez, Suzanne Obando

SB County Arts & Culture Staff Absent: Julia Rutherford Daly

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Agenda Item regarding Library Cultural Asset Mapping will be tabled until a subsequent meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONSENT CALENDAR

Subject: Approval of the Minutes

Recommendation: That the Committee approve minutes from the meetings of February 18, 2021 and April 15, 2021. *Item tabled.*

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Commemorating Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Danny Tsai, Director of Programs at the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, shared information about a 3-part series produced during the month of May in commemoration of Asian American Pacific Islander history in the Santa Barbara area.

2. Grant Final Report Template

The Grants Subcommittee recommended that the Arts Advisory Committee approve the revised CA and OD final report documents as presented. **M/S/C** Yahyavi, Adams. Motion carries. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Adams, Yahyavi, Thralls, Janka Noes: none Abstentions: none.

3. Cultural Asset Mapping Project: Santa Barbara Public Library

Santa Barbara Public Library will share information about a new cultural asset mapping initiative in the South Coast at a future meeting. *Item tabled until a future meeting.*

4. While You Wait Poetry Project

Poet Laureate Emeriti Chryss Yost shared information about a new project by Poets Laureate Emeriti to provide poetry by local poets in local hospital waiting rooms. The anthology was printed by Gunpowder Press and edited by Laure-Anne Bosselaar.

5. Ortega Park Mural Efforts

Committee members reported back on the Ortega Park Mural community event, which has video and survey results posted on the Ortega Park Website. The Committee would like to host a special meeting to support the mural dialogue and ensure accessibility for all stakeholders and community members. **M/S/C** Thralls, Janka. Motion carries. Roll Call Vote: Ayes, Janka, Thralls, Yahyavi Noes: none Abstentions: Adams.

Public Comment:

Barbara Parmet- Community artist documenting art in Santa Barbara for over 30 years- if all muralists can come together in the Arts Advisory space to create a park for all?

Michael Imwalle- Associate Executive Director of Cultural Resources SB Trust for Historic Preservation- preservation cultural history through additional community input.

Mark Alvarado- One Community Bridge member- applaud the effort in moving this forward. Are we going to look at cost or the merit of what the art represents?

Manjari Sharma- Local practicing artist- there has to be a way to preserve the mural and integral part of the Chicano community and update the park.

Lisa Valencia Sheratt- Board Chair of Casa de la Raza. Casa de la Raza would like to support the community and believes there can be a compromise that honors the murals, artists and history while improving the park.

Written Public Comment:

Lisa Valencia Sherratt- Thank you for discussing this important issue regarding the sustainable life of the Ortega Park murals in our community. I am submitting public comment on behalf of La Casa de la Raza, located just down the street at 601 E. Montecito Street.

1. La Casa supports the revitalization of Ortega Park as the community deserves this and the park does need improvements for present and future generations to be able to use and enjoy it, and recreate there for years to come.
2. With respect to the murals of Ortega Park, La Casa values the murals and the place that they hold in our community's and so many community members' hearts, memories, families and lives. We recognize that the original muralists, artists and other partners including the Franklin Neighborhood Center have been working hard for years to preserve and maintain the murals by running a positive and effective youth arts mentorship program that has not only kept the murals alive but has also provided meaningful opportunities for youth who have been directly involved- with paint brushes on the walls. For many of the youth involved this has been the main or only opportunity available to further their own passion and skills as artists, also while earning a stipend for their good work.

3. With respect to history, La Casa has been part of the history of Ortega Park murals since the beginning, and only wants the best for the entire community we continue to serve, especially the Eastside, the same community who loves the murals and all they represent. We appreciate that this history is included in the Ortega Park Mural Evaluation Report completed in January of this year, and we encourage everyone to take a look at it. We appreciate page 8 about the significance of the murals, page 14 about their merit as historical landmarks, and found the cost analysis of the different options of what is possible for the murals to be very informative for this discussion, on page 18.
4. With respect to a future meeting to find the common ground, La Casa supports a community meeting of some form that will provide more background on what has been done to preserve the murals so far, the youth arts mentorship program and how youth can join, and will clarify what the Ortega Park Revitalization Project really includes and what it will look like for the community, and when construction would happen; as well as what will happen if the City Council votes no on the project. We support the community coming together and healing from the trauma of the pandemic we are still in- and all other issues on top of it- including this one. We support the Arts Advisory Committee to follow its own guidelines regarding the relocation of public art with consultation with the artists within the context of an affirmative park revitalization project, as we are lucky to have them all alive and engaged in these murals to this day." *Submitted 5/20/21.*

Victoria Valente: I have been speaking in protest over the manner in which the Parks & Recreation department has handled the Ortega Park Renewal Project, related to the murals.

From what I've observed, and from information I've gathered in my public records requests, it is clear that, from the very beginning, the City had no intention of including the input of the community.

A lot of Eastside residents, including murals preservation advocates and aquatics advocates are extremely unhappy, and feel that outreach efforts deliberately left them out.

The latest community meetings related to the murals included a substantial amount of obstruction and disruption. First, on March 17, by the City's "rate the murals" approach, which I believe was done to deliberately offend the community. This was promptly followed by a letter to City Council by Parks & Rec Commissioner Beebe Longstreet, who complained about the behavior of workshop attendees. This all seemed a little too well orchestrated to me.

And then with the onsite workshop on April 24. This was hijacked by a group that reminded me of people I've seen at Solstice calling themselves the **Save Ortega Park Arts Committee**. They used the same logo as **Ortega Park Murals Rescue**, to confuse the public into signing their petition calling for the destruction of the murals. This was the first time anybody had ever heard of this organization.

They locked arms to appear unified. Their apparent mouthpiece from the city screamed "Sí, se puede!" ... "Sí se puede destroy the murals" was their actual message.

The City's offer to work with murals advocates to reach the Eastside community was insincere.

The community will not be satisfied unless all of the murals are left in place. This is evidenced in the latest community survey. The results indicate that 95% of survey respondents want the murals to be left where they are.

The City needs to revise the Ortega Park Master Plan, starting with a plan in place for the preservation of the murals. *Submitted 5/20/21.*

Questions downloaded from Zoom Meeting Q&A

Lisa Valencia Sherratt, La Casa de la Raza 04:38 PM

Has or will the Arts Advisory Committee discuss the viability of the original artists recreating the same exact murals as part of the Ortega Park revitalization project?

This question has been answered live

Mark Alvarado 04:45 PM

We were told by parks and rec that the grant had a deadline of June 12th for complete submission to include CEQA report and design approval by HLC and Planning Commission

Manjari Sharma 04:49 PM

Have they offered any fair negotiation in response to this uproar?

Lisa Valencia Sherratt, La Casa de la Raza 04:55 PM

Also please address technology barriers for folks who can't do Zoom- YouTube and live radio broadcast is possible, with multilingual Q&A engagement

Mark Alvarado 05:01 PM

Broadcast live on citytv with translation and live call in
we have the technology

Valente 05:14 PM

The March 17 Murals Workshop link is on the Ortega Park page. Ricardo's
Valente

05:14 PM

history is there

FUTURE ITEMS

Earth Day Mural
Design Charrette
Cultural Arts Plan
Tiny Libraries on State

STAFF REPORTS

Tiny Libraries on State
Performing Arts Reopening
Chromatic Gate Update

ADJOURNMENT – 5:13 pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need auxiliary aids or services or staff assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission at (805) 568-3990. If possible, notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will usually enable the City to make reasonable arrangements. Specialized services, such as sign language interpretation or documents in Braille, may require additional lead time to arrange.

REPORTS:

Copies of documents relating to agenda items are available for review and also posted online at <http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/brdcomm/ac/arts/agendas.asp>.