

Mayor Boley and City Commissioners,

The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission met on June 13th to hear the presentation from the Womxn of Color and review the application requirements they needed to fulfill regarding the Mural they wish to donate to the city. Their presentation provided additional detail about the mural content and how they engaged other women of color during the process. The presentation also highlighted the proposed Library wall as a new location, which was not originally in the scope of the proposal as presented to the Cultural Arts Commission in October 2017.

There are two applications/processes the WoC group are required to follow for this project: 1) [Mural Review Criteria](#) and 2) [Administrative Policy 81- Donated Art Guidelines](#). Murals must follow the mural guidelines as applicable to public buildings. Artwork intended to be placed in a publicly owned place or on a public building *which has not been solicited by the city* are considered donated or proposed to be donated to the city so the Donated Art Guidelines apply here as well. These guidelines and policies have been forwarded on to you for consideration in your review. These requirements were also provided to the WoC group several times since October of 2017.

The submission was incomplete in several categories of review with multiple documents and requirements absent from the submission packet. One omission was detailed information regarding a budget. When asked about this at the June 13 meeting they said they had a budget but thought since this was a donation they didn't need to provide a budget. The LCAC has asked for a copy of a detailed budget as part of their recommendation. Other missing pieces included documentation of the public meetings they held with various stakeholder groups and the support that they indicated those groups provided for the mural being placed directly on the Library. The LCAC has requested the WoC provide documentation and support letters from the stakeholder groups they specifically identified in their presentation as supporting the new location on the library wall. The letters should officially state their position on the new location directly on the Library.

There was a lack of knowledge by the group concerning:

- the need for adhering to ADA guidelines and providing equal accessibility to all.
- how the surface of the library on the SW corner was constructed and any problems there might be with power-washing, priming, or painting what was intended as a board-formed finished surface. The LCAC was not provided with specific information regarding recommended treatments for cleaning of board formed concrete or paint specs.

The WoC also stated that they had spoken with a member of the Library's architectural firm, Gould Evans, and had their support. There was no documentation included in the presentation packet and it has been requested as part of the documentation of support specific to the mural location as stated in the presentation.

The LCAC voted to move the project forward on the condition that the Womxn of Color forward the following items (A and C are required in both the Mural and Donated Art applications):

- A. A detailed budget.
- B. A letter stating the position of the architectural firm from the architects in regard to the new location directly on the library wall. To date we have not received this.

- C. Documentation from the community groups and stakeholder groups cited as being in support of the art in the stated location (mural on the Library). To date we have received one letter of support from a group to place the mural on the library wall. This came from the NAACP, signed by Ursula Minor, who is also a member of the Womxn of Color mural group. The Old West Lawrence Neighborhood Association provided a letter of support from a meeting held last fall for the mural being installed on the garage wall.

Once received, these documents will be forwarded to the City Commission to determine if they are complete and satisfy the requirements of the applicable policies.

This is a precedent-setting issue. Due diligence on the front end of this project (the city having all the information about the site, the construction/material issues, the ADA issues) would have given the muralists a chance to see exactly what they needed to do and address.

Because this comes under the Donated Art Guidelines, the artists are held to a public cooperation criteria. This includes working with City Staff, the LCAC and the public to incorporate recommendations and alternatives. When asked about alternative locations on the Library campus or alternate installation procedures such as painting the mural on panels, exploring alternate locations on the library campus, or their original proposal idea to utilize the concrete wall on the garage side of the campus, the WoC stated they were unwilling to be flexible in considering alternative locations and methods.

The LCAC is in favor of the mural concept moving forward and has attempted to facilitate a process where that can be achieved. The LCAC has forwarded a vote for approval pending the required and requested documents showing support to place the mural directly on the library wall location are provided to the City Commission for review. Based on discussion of the LCAC commissioners during the vote, the commissioners were concerned with:

- the location of the mural directly on the library wall meeting several site review criteria, particularly given written and verbal support stated by stakeholder groups that would be willing to assist with additional fundraising if necessary to cover additional site preparation costs that might be required for alternatives.
- concern that since this is proposed to be on perhaps the city's most public building there has been a lack of public engagement opportunities. While the mural team held meetings amongst themselves and their Facebook followers and other select groups, they did not proactively facilitate public engagement and input meetings from the broader community. The issues created by not including everyone (as in the East 9th Street process) should be avoided here.

Sincerely,
Kate Dinneen, Chair
Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission