

City Council
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Planning Director
Kari Svanstrom
Associate Planner
Alan Montes
Senior Administrative Assistant
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City of Sebastopol Public Arts Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: February 3, 2021
Agenda Item: 6B
To: Public Arts Committee
From: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Ned Kahn Art Sculpture
Recommendation: n/a


Introduction:

At its January meeting, the Public Arts Committee discussed the revised Ned Kahn art proposal at the City's Public Works site on Johnson Street. The PAC voted unanimously to forward a recommendation to City Council to approve the revised proposal and requested additional renderings. Ned Kahn will present the new proposal to City Council at its February 2, 2021 meeting (after the publication of this agenda/item).

The agenda report for Council is attached, and staff will provide an update on Council actions at the PAC meeting.

Attachments:

February 2, 2021 City Council staff report

Agenda Report Reviewed by:
City Manager: 

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
AGEND ITEM

Meeting Date: February 2, 2021
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Public Arts Committee
Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Ned Kahn Revised Art Proposal
Recommendation : Receive presentation, Discuss, and Approve Revised Proposal
Funding: Currently Budgeted: Yes No N/A
Net General Fund Cost: N/A
Art-In Lieu Fund (202) Amount: \$50,000 (\$45,000 for Ned Kahn, \$5,000 for City costs)

Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget (if applicable) AK (verified by Administrative Services Department)

BACKGROUND:

The City conducted an extensive process for the City’s first commissioned public art project, selecting local artist Ned Kahn’s proposal. The Council later supported a site selection for the project, on the eastern approaches to the new Highway 12 Bridge, in Caltrans right-of-way. The Council approved this site and associated funding in 2017. Since then, Planning staff and the artist have been working with CalTrans on the permitting of this project. While this is nearing completion, the delays caused by the lengthy permitting process, there has been a significant escalation in the costs for both material and fabrication due to the length of time, impacts from the Tubbs fire and reconstruction efforts, tariff changes, etc. These costs have made the project infeasible from a cost perspective. Ned Kahn and the Public Art Committee (PAC) have been working together to propose an alternative that is feasible, which is being presented to Council this evening for Council review and approval.

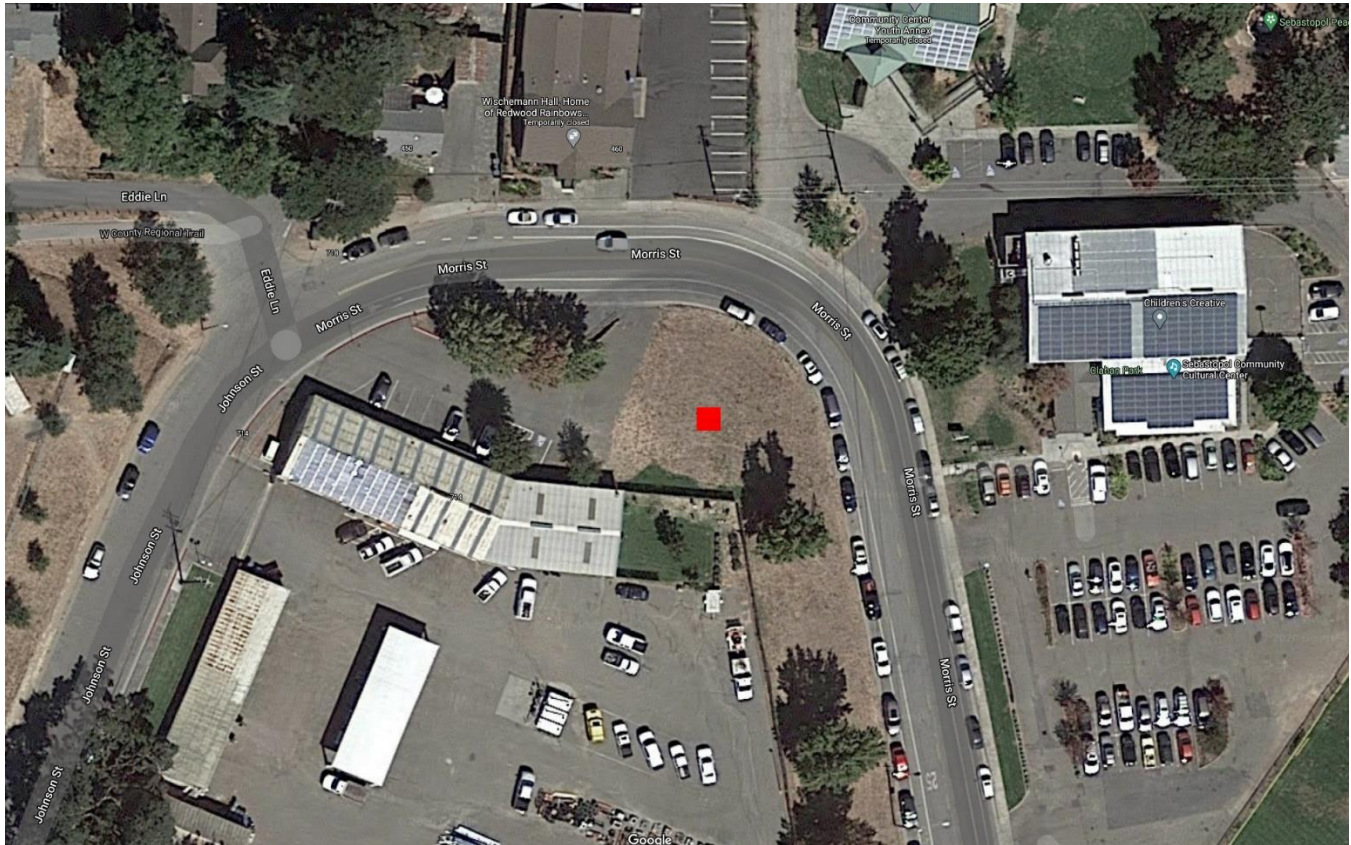
DISCUSSION:

As a result, Ned Kahn discussed the potential for an alternative project at the CalTrans bridge site, or alternative project site altogether, with staff and the Public Art Committee in the summer of 2020, and designated Committee Member Warren Arnold to work with Ned Kahn regarding these alternatives.

Ned Kahn developed an alternative concept at the Highway 12 site, which the Public Art Committee approved of and was prepared to recommend to City Council if approvable by CalTrans. However CalTrans rejected that proposal as infeasible as it needed support from the bridge structure. The PAC asked the artist to consider alternative sites, including those that did not include CalTrans right-of-way (i.e. City property). After reviewing several sites with Committee Member Arnold, the City’s Public Works corporation yard was selected by the artist, and Mr. Kahn returned with a new concept for this site, which was presented to the PAC at its January 6, 2021 meeting. The PAC reviewed the concept

and, with the request for some further perspective images of the work, voted unanimously to recommend the new site and art piece to City Council.

The site is across from the entry to the Laguna Youth Park/Youth Annex and Sebastopol Community Cultural Center, a much visited area of the City:



One of the advantages of using a City-owned site is the permitting process, which will be much simplified. The City's Building Department will review the project, and installation is expected to occur within a few months of authorization by Council (Spring 2021). Site preparation will be minimal, however the PAC recommends that the fish sculpture along Morris Street be relocated, They are working with the Sculpture Jam personnel who sponsored the piece to determine an appropriate site in the City (potentially Ives Park near the creek). Public Works Superintendent Del Prete has reviewed the site and does not foresee any conflicts/complications with the site.

Concept

The Artist has submitted both an Artist statement, plus several renderings of the new proposal:

My latest idea is a twisted, vertical column wrapped with a cable net that supports thousands of wind-activated pendulums. This proposed artwork is a hybrid of 2 sculptures that I currently have installed at the Air Garden, the site of the future Hotel Sebastopol. One sculpture is a twisted column, the same scale as what I am proposing for Morris Street, except this one is wrapped in a perforated Teflon fabric. The second sculpture is an array of hundreds of 1" wide by 9" tall, polycarbonate pendulums that sway in the wind and are attached to a stainless steel cable net. This design was inspired by the movement of Eucalyptus leaves in the wind. My proposal for Morris Street is an identical twisted column structure but wrapped in a series of tensioned cable nets supporting these wind-activated pendulums.

The pendulums are fabricated from a silver-colored, UV-protected, extremely durable polycarbonate plastic which I have used on multiple installations that has functioned with no maintenance for decades. The stainless cable net and stainless frame of the twisted column is also extremely strong and will require zero maintenance. A series of horizontal stainless I-beams, buried just under the ground, functions as the base for the artwork. No concrete footings are needed and the sculpture can easily be dismantled and moved if needed in the future.

The Artist will present the project, as well as a video, at the Council meeting, and both he and a PAC representative will be available to answer questions.



View of Column



Detail of Column

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) under Section 15303(e), which exempts minor accessory structures.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, a consent calendar item may be requested to be removed from the consent calendar if a member of the Council or public requests to provide public comment on this item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project is funded by Sebastopol's 'percent for art' fee, where major projects either provide on-site public art, or pay an in-lieu fee which the City uses for public art projects in the community. These monies cannot be used for other purposes.

The project would cost the same as the original budget (\$45,000 for Ned Kahn's work, and \$5,000 for any site modifications). This is currently in the adopted budget, which included a potential additional \$10,000 if needed based on the concept/location chosen.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the presentation and approve by minute order the new concept and site, and authorize staff to execute a contract amendment with Ned Kahn to reflect the revised location, concept, and timeline.

Attachments:

Additional Artist renderings



View from Johnson Street/West entry to Public Works building



View from Morris Street/approach to Community Cultural Center



Similar Materials at Hotel Sebastopol Site installation