



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: February 16, 2016
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Nancy Hunt-Coffey, Assistant Director of Community Services
Subject: Update on the fencing around the Kusama *Hymn of Life* art piece
Attachments: 1. Rendering of fence
2. Drawings of fence

INTRODUCTION

After considering numerous options for protecting the Kusama *Hymn of Life* art piece, the Fine Art Council liaison members Bosse and Krasne, the Fine Art Commission and the Recreation and Park Commission recommend a fencing solution which comprise curved metal arms, joined by stainless steel cabling. As the bids for this solution are less than \$50,000, formal City Council approval is not required. However, due to the sensitive nature of this project, staff wanted to provide the City Council with an update on this project.

Unless directed otherwise staff will proceed with awarding the contract under the City Manager authority.

DISCUSSION

As the City Council will recall, the Kusama *Hymn of Life* art piece was installed in September 2007. Within a few years, the fiberglass exterior of the piece began showing signs of wear such as cracking and scratches. The City's art conservator examined the piece and determined that some of the wear, such as the exterior scratches, was likely due to park visitors interacting with the piece, and some of the wear, such as fading of the paint, was likely due to fabrication issues. As a result, based on the recommendations of the Fine Art City Council liaisons and the Fine Art Commission, staff pursued having the problems with the piece remedied and began working with the Fine Art Commission on developing options for fencing protection. As the piece was under warranty, the fabricator, Ironwood, came out and remedied the issues by filling in the fiberglass and painting. After the defects with the piece were addressed by Ironwood, it should be noted that additional problems with the piece ensued. It continues to be the belief of the fabricator and the City's art restoration company, Rosa Lowinger and Associates, that some of the wear to the piece is due to inappropriate interaction of the public with the piece and that some of the wear may be due to the fabrication of the piece. Ironwood, under warranty, will again restore the piece, and the

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work will be supervised by staff from Rosa Lowinger and Associates to ensure that all of the restoration is done with appropriate materials and to appropriate industry standards.

The proper method of protecting the piece was debated extensively by the Fine Art Commission and the Recreation and Park Commission. Two formal options were brought forward to the City Council, however both were rejected. The Commissions and the Council liaisons, at one time or another, considered numerous options such as extending the mow curb around the piece and adding plants; post and stainless steel cable; low post and elastic cable; an inverted barrier around the piece, enclosing the piece in a glass protective barrier; raising the piece above ground level; parallel slat fencing; curved fixed railing; and the solution that is described herein. Bids and initial drawings were developed on a number of these solutions. Numerous architects and designers were asked to propose solutions, including Mia Lehrer and Associates, Community Works Design Group, Johnson Favaro LLC; Craft Design Build, Dysignfive, and RTK Architects.

After a great deal of discussion and consideration of options, a fencing option with curved arms and stainless steel cables was designed which proved to be acceptable to the Fine Art Commission and the Recreation and Parks Commission. This option was further vetted and approved by City Council liaisons Bosse and Krasne.

The final issue for debate surrounding this fencing was the material and color of the arms. Mindful of costs, the Fine Art Commission explored not only stainless steel, but powder coated galvanized iron as well as lower grades of stainless steel and coreten steel. Councilmember Krasne expressed an interest in the possibility of the fence arms being a light bronze color instead of a metallic color so they would blend in with the setting. The only solution that provides for a color selection is powder coating. The issue, however, was that all of the vendors and City Project Administration staff agreed that the cabling for the fence needed to be stainless steel, due to the desire for very thin, strong cabling. While stainless steel cabling does come in a variety of colors, the look of the colored cabling is not aesthetically pleasing. Additionally, the Commission considered but eventually rejected a powder coated solution for the fence arms due to the potential for chipping and cracking. The concern was that long term maintenance of the powder coating would prove to be more extensive than the stainless steel.

After much consideration, the Commission recommends the use of 314 grade stainless steel posts. This is a mid-range grade of stainless steel that is strong and also resists wear from the environment. Staff is vetting the two companies which had the lowest bids with this stainless solution, regarding issues of warranty, recommended design modifications, etc. Unless directed otherwise, once these last issues are addressed, staff will proceed with authorizing the fabrication and installation of this fence. It should also be noted that the restoration of the piece by Ironwood will commence on February 15, 2016. It is expected that the restoration will last for at least two weeks. Currently there is temporary chain link fencing around the piece. Staff recommends that this temporary fencing remain in place until the stainless fencing is installed.

FISCAL IMPACT

Four bids for fabrication and installation of stainless steel fencing were received. The two lowest bids are just under \$40,000, and both are within \$1,000 of each other. Staff and the Commission have a few last questions for these two low bid companies to ensure that the right approach is used. Once these issues are resolved, staff will proceed with having one of these companies fabricate and install the fence.

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Additionally, it should be noted that a third party contractor will pour the footings for the fence. The cost of these footings will be well under \$10,000. As a result, the total fiscal

impact of this project will be less than \$50,000. Funds from the Fine Art Fund will be used for this project which are only to be used for art related purposes.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for the City Council's information only. Unless directed otherwise, staff will proceed with the fabrication and installation of the stainless steel fence around Kusama's *Hymn of Life* art piece.


Nancy Hunt-Coffey

Approved By

Attachment 1



Attachment 2

