



**CITY OF PACIFICA
BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, March 3, 2021
6:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

CALL TO ORDER: 6:32 P.M. by Chairperson Melinda Moses

Members Present: Gail Bennett, Ryann Hoffman, Patty Hontalas, Linda Jonas, David Martinez, Melinda Moses, and Dan Wells

City Council Liaison: Sue Beckmeyer

Staff Members: Lisa Petersen, Sam Bautista, Paul Lavorini, and Michelle Trayer from Public Works

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Approved.

APPROVAL OF February 3, 2021 Minutes: Approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The BAC received a public comment via email on March 2, 2021 from resident Roger Mascio regarding the proposed Unity Project/Four Directions Mural which read:

“I like the building as is. Maybe it could use a fresh coat of paint, but It blends into the environment. It looks very nice. Why do these murals have to be political? If you go with murals couldn't they just be fun. We go to the beach for fun, to relax, to recreate, etc. Why do we have to have politics hit us over the head when we go to the beach. I think we get enough of that everywhere else. Who will pay for this Unity Mural project? I think this project will be divisive not a unifier. Why isn't there a flag of the United States on any of these murals? That is a symbol that unites. I have seen much better murals than these. As an example, the murals in the Mission District in San Francisco. I think Pacifica deserves better than these. I hope you won't spend one dime of the City of Pacifica's limited resources on these murals. Thank you for your time and all the work the Beautification Advisory Committee performs without pay, for the beautiful City of Pacifica. I appreciate it. Respectfully, Roger Mascio”

Gail Shoemaker introduced herself as the liaison to the Beautification Advisory Committee from the PB&R Commission as well as a member of Tree City Pacifica. She also thanked the Beautification Advisory Committee for the letter of support when the organization applied to be a part of Tree City USA and said she would like to share some Tree City USA virtual conference items in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. Unity Project/Four Directions Mural:

Chairperson Moses opened the Public Hearing portion of the agenda at 6:37 p.m. Mural Subcommittee Member Ginny Jaquith thanked Erica Falk and the artists for their hard work, then briefly introduced the proposed mural project brought forth by the Mural Subcommittee.

She noted the Sanchez Art Center agreed to be the fiscal sponsor of the project for the purpose of handing funds secured from any fundraising efforts.

Director of Public Works Lisa Petersen wanted attendees to know, as a point of order, that at the last meeting the BAC approved the artwork discussion to go to a Public Hearing, and after the hearing and public comments, the committee would be voting to approve the project as a whole.

Lead artist Danielle Redlin Gustavsson prepared a statement for the project and explained the mural was inspired by the Native American cultural concept of the Four Directions Medicine Wheel. The idea came to the artist after speaking with Erica Falk and was initiated from the racial injustice movement which started in April 2020. She explained the Four Directions are reminders that seasons, races, directions, and stages of life are all connected and equally important. She also shared the significance behind each of the Four Directions. Her mural, the East, represents childhood and birth. The West represents youth and adolescence, while the South represents parenthood and getting older, and the North represents the elderly. The Four Directions are also a reminder to live in balance and harmony with ourselves, each other, and our environment. She explained if a certain direction is lacking within an individual in the Four Directions concept, it can mean the person is out of balance and needs more health in a certain direction.

Committee member Jonas asked why there were four political women painted on the South wall if the wall is supposed to represent youth. Artist Gustavson explained on her conceptualized East wall, she wanted to convey unity and believes there is no separation from each other. Committee member Jonas wanted to know how the four political figures related to the concept of unity. Artist Robert Louthan stated the adolescents pictured on the wall are involved in the political movement. Artist Gustavson said the figures are environmental activists, like Greta Thunberg, a climate activist. She explained the mural painted by Jason Budowski represents the stage of life of when adolescents are passionate about life and different issues. Committee member Jonas wanted to make sure none of the figures were associated with any of the riots of 2020, which Artist Gustavson said none were.

Mural Subcommittee member Cindy Abbott added, “Malala Yousafzai is the youngest Nobel Laurette winner” and stated she is, “important and uplifting inspiration for the youth in our community and how their voices have been heard worldwide.”

Artist Jeffrey Wong read a narrative about his North wall piece which pointed out the connection between one’s past ancestors, present, and future and will be painted into the mural itself.

Chairperson Moses asked Artist Gustavson to go over the funding plan. Artist Gustavson said the plan is grassroots organized and comprised of local and GoFundMe donations. Additionally, the group will be spreading the word about the project and looking into local grants. Chairperson Moses said the installation will be done in conjunction with Public Works to ensure a safe work area.

Mayor Beckmeyer wanted to ensure any mural information, especially visuals, are available to the public on the City website. Mayor Beckmeyer asked Artist Gustavson if each of the directions can start with a statement highlighting the different aspects of the direction as a public information item. She also recalled the BAC put together an informational sign at the Community Center while the mural was being installed. Chairperson Moses said the committee would make a similar sign available for the Four Directions mural.

The BAC received a public comment from Erin Macias, who said she loved the Community Center mural and the educational aspects of it, especially for the children of Pacifica. In regard to the Four Directions mural, she said, “From my lenses, murals across a city should have a level of continuity so

they can be connected to education, environmentalism, history, and be connected to tourism and economic development while beautifying our community.” She added, “I do think the mural with the raised fist is very inappropriate for a public space. (The mural in reference says, “Shed to Grow” and there is a raised fist above the doorway.) Overall, there is quite a bit of imagery with underlying messaging in these murals. Much of it has no spiritual, historical, or cultural relevance and the teacher in me leans in the direction of misrepresenting California’s historical landscape. My favorite mural includes the fire dancers, but wouldn’t it be better suited to our community if they were collecting abalone or something that would represent the local indigenous population instead? The environmental and social justice images are thought provoking but seem more suited to a large politically charged city like San Francisco. I do think that each mural should be presented to the city with a concise explanation of the messaging behind each of the symbols in them. The raised fist was mentioned tonight, but no suggestion to modify that one section of the mural was made.”

The BAC also received a public comment from Pamela Overman who said the Ohlone Indians are native to the Bay Area and asked if the mural represented them. She also remarked, “I don’t think the murals should be linked to the Four directions of the Native American Tribes.”

Artist Gustavson explained the project was never intended to be educational or historical unlike Artist Jeffrey Wong’s Community Center mural which was commissioned to be a historical piece. She said while there are pieces of history in the mural, it is more of a universal look into the present and not secular to Pacifica. The intent of the mural, she further stated, is to unify and be relatable. Artist Wong added he worked closely with Jonathan Cordero, a descendent of the Ohlone tribe, and read a second narrative which further detailed the images in his North wall section. Artist Gustavson clarified the Four Directions Medicine Wheel is a universal Native American concept but is also a cross-cultural one. She learned from Johnathan Cordero the Ohlone people did not practice using the Medicine Wheel or the Four Directions and reiterated the mural concept is not intended to represent the Ohlone tribe alone, but people of all faiths and races.

Mural Subcommittee member Abbott thanked the artists and Erica Falk for pulling together a well-thought-out and inspirational concept that she felt met the intention of the project while understanding art is viewed differently by everyone. She further explained the Mural Program, which involves creating art on public spaces, does not have a theme. She said when the Mural Subcommittee put the program together, they never designated that an art piece needed to have a historical, community, or consistent theme. She said it is up to the artist who is bringing a proposal to the subcommittee to come up with an idea to present. She also noted an organization who wants to fund a mural might reach out to an artist with a specific theme in mind.

The last public comment about the mural came from Simon Olavarria, a teacher, who agreed the mural should show Pacifica history and background. He added although he did not consider any of the figures on the South wall to be political, he thought they were quite young. He explained although teenagers will do many things in their lives, they can change as they grow older, and wondered if including the wisdom of someone so young could cause the mural to have to be changed at some point. Mr. Olavarria also inquired about the symbolism of the flags, or blue and red dots under the tree on the South wall mural. Committee member Martinez thought because the artist narrative mentions the tree is a “wishing tree”, the dots represented individual “wishes.” Lead artist Gustavson confirmed the symbolism. She added there was to be a community education and engagement portion for the initial proposal, but it was put off due to the Covid pandemic. She shared during the second stage of the murals, she hopes kids can be involved in creating their own collaborative mural that is inspired by themes of unification and current issues such as climate change. She also pointed out the mural was not so much to pay homage to the figures themselves, but to highlight global youth activism in general.

The Public Hearing portion of the agenda was closed by Chairperson Moses at 7:21 p.m., and the committee voted in favor of accepting the Unity/Four Directions mural project proposal. Committee member Martinez thanked the Unity Group for their work, and Committee member Jonas thanked Mural Subcommittee Jaquith for her coordination.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Pacifica Beautification Awards update:

The Mayor's Annual Pacifica Pride Awards Subcommittee shared their ideas of changing certain areas in the current Mayor's Beautification Award Program. The proposed changes discussed were changing the award name, altering the timeline of the awarding to at least once a year, changing the application and flyer, adding new ways of advertisement, and giving a prize to the final winner in partnership with The Pacifica Garden Club. Committee member Hoffman shared a draft report to Council and a PowerPoint Presentation which detailed the proposed changes. Erin Macias asked if beautification needed to be curbside or if it could be in the backyard. Committee member Martinez said the beautification awards are for curbside only. The committee voted to approve the proposed changes and bring said changes to the Council. PW Director Petersen will report back to the Committee in April on the projected date for City Committee/Commission report outs to the Council.

B. Rockaway East/West Planting update:

No new updates to report. Committee member Hontalas will follow-up with adopter Lisa Eccleston about the application and planting plan.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

A: Palmetto Sponsor site:

Public Works Field Services Manager Paul Lavorini stated someone accidentally cut the irrigation line in one of the sponsor bump-outs during maintenance and reminded everyone to keep the drip system in mind when cleaning up the site.

NEW BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA:

- A. Discuss increasing the number of BAC members and recruiting for subject experts
- B. Discuss changes to the 2012 Beautification Plan

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Reminder to email, text, or call if not attending the meeting as it is important for quorum. Please review minutes and agenda before meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Chairperson Moses closed the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

The next meeting of the Beautification Advisory Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. and is subject to change.