



To: Planning Commission
From: Public Art Commission
Date: Aug 10, 2016

Section 17.05 Review Maggie L. Walker Memorial Public Art PAC 14-006

Staff Report

Ellyn Parker, Secretary to the Public Art Commission, 804-646-1110

LOCATION

98 W Broad Street

Property Owners City of Richmond Right of Way, Dept. of Public Works.

PURPOSE

Section 17.05 Review to give final approval of the maquette for the statue of Maggie L Walker to be placed in the plaza area at Adams and Broad.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Project Background

The public art statue to honor Maggie L Walker was commissioned by Public Art Commission to be created by Antonio "Toby" Mendez in August 2015. The Site team has approved the conceptual proposal for the art after hosting several public meetings and conducting stakeholder interviews to incorporate the ideas and aesthetics that were communicated to the site team and listed in the original call for the artwork. The community meetings and information that was gathered resulted in the direction of the art being a 10 foot bronze statue, depicting Mrs. Walker in formal career period dress in a standing position.

The artist has created a maquette of the statue that is representative of Maggie L. Walker and reflects the themes and elements that were identified by the site team in the initial call for artwork.

Recommendation: Staff recommends final approval of the statue's maquette that will serve as a basis for enlargement to a full scale 10 ft. Bronze sculpture.

The Public Art Commission and its advisory site team recommended approval with the considerations that several elements be changed slightly. Those considerations were making the maquette reflect a fuller figure for Ms Walker and to make some slight alterations to her jewelry. The Artist was agreeable to making those slight changes.

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

a. Site Description and Surrounding Context

The site consists of a triangular parcel bounded by N Adams St, W Broad St, and Brook Rd that is owned by the Department of Public Works as part of City right-of-way, as well as the road bed of Brook Rd between W Broad St and N Adams St. In December 2015, the Planning Commission and then City Council passed Ord. 2015-251-245 to close the vehicular travel a portion of Brook Rd located between W Broad St and N Adams St for the purpose of creating an urban plaza as part of a public art project.

b. Scope of Review

The project is subject to review as a public art under Section 17.05 of the City Charter.

At their February 16, 2016 meeting, the Planning Commission resolved that the Public Art Commission is the appropriate body to advise the Commission on the design and location of the public art commemorating Maggie L. Walker and the Urban Design Committee is the appropriate body to advise the Commission on the location, character, and extent of the public plaza surrounding the art. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Project Description and background

- a. The public art statue to honor Maggie L Walker was commissioned by Public Art Commission to be created by Antonio “Toby” Mendez in August 2015. The PAC gave approval to the proposal after hosting several public meetings and conducting stakeholder interviews to incorporate the ideas and aesthetics that were communicated to the site team and listed in the original call for the artwork. The initial call for the artwork requested the following elements be considered into the artwork: that the art stimulate thought/discussion and inspire viewers, celebrate the legacy of Maggie L. Walker, serve as a gateway or gathering place for the community and visitors, engage both children and adults, and develop the artwork with community input.
- b. The artist has developed a maquette for a statue that is representative of Maggie L. Walker and will be cast bronze and 10ft in height as currently proposed. The pedestal and surrounding benches will be green granite and the pedestal may include three bas reliefs that celebrate accomplishments from the life of Maggie L Walker. In addition to the creation of the Public Art, the details of the Plaza area are defined below were given final approval at the Planning Commission on July 18, 2016.
- c. This project involves the creation of a plaza at the intersection of West Broad Street, North Adams Street, and Brook Road as part of a larger commemoration of Maggie L. Walker, including a statue and interpretive elements.

The concept for the memorial revolves around a central sculpture of Maggie Walker on a pedestal, to include inscriptions about her life, achievements, quotes, and timeline.