



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

PAC 2019-003: Section 17.05 Review of a public art installation consisting of a mural painted on the bottom two stories of the 21st Street Tower of the James River Park System.

To: Planning Commission
From: Public Art Commission
Date: August 19, 2019

PETITIONER

Mac Wood, recipient of a CultureWorks grant

PROJECT LOCATION

21st Street Tower of the James River Park System near Belle Isle

PROJECT PURPOSE

Short-Term Goals:

Replace the aging paint on the staircase tower with painted life that calls attention to native and invasive species (all coded into the mural), prevents graffiti, helps protect the structural integrity of the tower from destructive vine overgrowth, and maintains the longevity of this riverfront access point.

Long-Term Goal:

Increase foot traffic and artistic engagement by the river and illustrate nature's power; the natural environment will eventually erode the mural and allow for a new creation.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Background:

Mac Wood has experience working with Richmond muralists Will Davenport and Ian Hess, and public art experience working with Joshua Wiener on the metal rings by the Potterfield Bridge. He also has experience removing invasive vines with the Friends of James River Park.

Throughout the conception of this project, the artist worked alongside members of the James River Park System particularly Bryce Wilk, park superintendent, who reviewed the design to ensure it stays true to the vision of the Park's Master Plan and assisted in talking to volunteer organizations who will help priming the tower. The Friends of the James River and the James River Hikers—stakeholder organizations at the Park—have also been engaged in the development of this project.

Correlation to Public Art Master Plan:

- Involves temporary "commissions" (p 8)
- Encourages community-based involvement in a public art project (p 7 & 8)

Recommendation: On July 25, 2019 the Public Art Commission recommended approval of this project with the following conditions:

1. **Before the project can proceed**, the James River Park System must repair the “most egregious damage” on the Tower in order to provide the artist with a smooth surface on which to paint.
2. The petitioner shall be responsible for obtaining and adhering to all necessary permissions and permits for the project as required by the James River Park System and the Department of Public Works.
3. The petitioner shall be responsible for the cost, maintenance, and installation of the mural.

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