



To: Planning Commission
Date: April 12, 2016
RE: **Conceptual approval Section 17.05 Review Maggie L. Walker Memorial Public Art
PAC 14-006 PLAZA ELEMENTS**

PETITIONER

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 conceptual approval of a public art installation in the form a bronze statue and the surrounding elements that are integral to the art as part of the plaza for the Maggie L Walker memorial.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

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 reviewed and recommended the initial conceptual proposal with considerations 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 artist has developed a conceptual proposal for a 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.

The Public Art Commission met on April 12, 2016 and made a recommendation to continue the conceptual design item of the plaza until the comments from the UDC, site team and PAC are factored into the overall design for the plaza and the sculpture and that those elements are reflected in the renderings and the application presented.

Motion

To Continue the Conceptual Design of the Plaza until previous comments from the UDC, Selection Team and PAC have been incorporated into the design.

Motion :

To have a report on the budget for the site and have clarity as to the role of the PAC in that budget by the next review.

The Public Art Commission reflected the following items into their recommendation to continue the item until the following items were incorporated into the design of the plaza area that will surround the statue.

1. That strategies to increase the size of the useable plaza space be considered and that hardscape be expanded for additional plaza use.
2. That materials that reflect the historical nature of the Jackson Ward neighborhood be incorporated into the plaza.
3. Re orient seating to face the memorial and public art elements.
4. Relocate or remove the dedication wall that is a component of the plaza design.

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 Site team has reviewed the initial conceptual 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 conceptual proposal for a statue that is representative of Maggie L. Walker and will be cast bronze and 9-10ft in height as currently proposed. The pedestal and surrounding benches will be green granite and the pedestal may include four bronze 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 and were reviewed by the Urban Design Committee on April 7, 2016 and conceptual approval was given with considerations to several items.

- 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, potentially to include inscriptions about her life, achievements, quotes, and timeline.

The program for the plaza includes: a primary focus on the sculpture plaza with seating; an expanded hardscape for public gathering and reflection upon the art, continuing accommodation of loading, deliveries, and valet parking in support of the existing businesses that face the plaza; and offering flexible space for small events, school field trips, and a starting point for tours of the Jackson Ward neighborhood.

The intent is that construction would begin in August 2016, and the plaza will be completed by December 2016.