

Westport Arts Advisory Committee 7/11/2023 Minutes

Tuesday, July 11, 2023. 12:00 – 1:30pm Westport Town Hall, Room 201

WAAC members attending; Nancy Diamond, Shobana Mani, David Rosenwaks, Kathie Bennewitz, Dina Upton, Miggs Burroughs, Eric Chiang, Britt Steele, Charles Rosoff, Richard Epstein.

Additional attendees: member of the public

Announcements:

AGENDA items:

1. Social Media: Canyon Sharits will be engaged for the purpose of creating and maintaining WAAC social media sites. Shobana Mani and Britt Steele will be the WAAC members in charge of monitoring social media platforms. Canyon will be invited to the September WAAC meeting to present her ideas. After this, WAAC will agree upon a budget for WAAC social media spend and to create a workshop for Arts non-profits.
2. Sculpture Subcommittee: Dina Upton reported on latest developments with the sculpture placement. She has negotiated a deal for “Windows” by Carole Eisner (loan for 3yrs at \$5k) This amount would come from the WAAC budget. A further meeting will take place today at 3pm with Parks and Rec to discuss where it will go, what landscaping will suit the sculpture, what it will cost to install and where the budget will come for maintenance. First Selectwoman Jennifer Tooker is on board thus far with this specific installation. The Second sculpture installation, for Pasacreta Park will likely have the “Passage” sculpture by Niki Ketchman. A zoom meeting will take place to further discuss the needs of this installation. Scott Springer of WestPac and Vice Chair of Historic Commission, has been invited to offer his views on the installations. A meeting will take place on July 18th with artists Babette Blocks and Mark Mellon to assess their work for future installations. There are 22 parks in Westport, with 6 that are eligible. So far, WAAC has worked on finding sculptures for 2 parks. Dina Upton will circulate a list of the parks so that WAAC members can do site visits informally. A one page flyer will be created for the public. This flyer will give the public a chance to make suggestions for the remaining parks. We will need to finalize who will pay for the maintenance of these sculptures.
3. WestPAC : Artworks by Howard Munce were found in the collection. The work ties in with the Sunday comics. They were put up to be accessed. The collection may be getting some work from Larry Weissman and Tracie Sugarman. Nancy Diamond and

Jeff Mayer kindly donated etchings from Phillip Reissman of NYC. Nancy Diamond will try and provide the catalog that goes with the works. Alex Boldach, a senior center patron has decided to donate a painting he owns by Brooke Wharing. Shobana Mani recommended the accession and Charles Rosoff Seconded. All in favor, no one opposed.

In terms of the new WestPac nominees discussed at the previous meeting, Nancy Diamond will write a letter to Jenn Tooker as a next step.

4. Downtown Walkway Artwork: David Rosenwaks has volunteered to coordinate the cleanup and signage for this site, including artist statements. Some graffiti on acrylic and on brick walls, to be discussed with David Waldman. David is also working on finalizing artists' statements for the wall. The statements will be 150-200 words maximum.
5. TEA Talk: November 5, 2023: WAAC has agreed that the TEA talk will commence with a keynote from AI demos. Perhaps a famous person like Einstein, or David Pogue (we would ask permission) where the chat bots write the script. Miggs will fine tune this idea. Alan Turing also mentioned as an idea for the keynote. At this meeting an outline came together for the session. There will be three main disciplines that are discussed: Education, Practitioners (Artists- various mediums), and Users. The Impact of AI on all these areas will be discussed. Shobana to follow up with Steve Zimmerman of WPS, for the education section. The members are brainstorming other names to include in each section.

The next WAAC meeting will be held on September 12, 2023, at noon. There will be no meeting in August.

Meeting adjourned 1:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shobana Mani
Co-Chair, WAAC
July 11, 2023