

Cultural Council Minutes

July 16th, 2008

Present: Amy Whittenburg, Kathy Feek, Tom Gant, Jennifer Bushnell, Bob Larson, Ellen Miller-Wolfe (staff), Julie Reynolds (staff), Boris Srdar, Leah Kliger, Mia Coolidge, Becca Singer, G.G. Getz

Absent: Mary Jane Vinella, Linda Meuter, Eric Synn

Guests: Jerry Allen (Strategic Arts Plan Consultant), Emily (observer)

Jerry Allen: Strategic Arts Planning Brainstorming

Consultant Jerry Allen reported to the Council about first site visit. Council brainstormed on the four topics that were identified as key issues for the strategic plan to cover:

1. Public Art in Kirkland

- A. Kirkland has been reactive in acquiring public art, would like to be proactive.
- B. The City feels pride for its public art program but would like it to be more diverse.
- C. Public art is mostly in the downtown, some would like it to reach into the neighborhoods.
- D. Others believe you get “more bang for the buck” to have it all in close proximity. Whether spread out or concentrated, KCC wants the placement to be strategic.
- E. KCC discussed static versus rotating art exhibits. Rotating exhibits bring more tourism.

2. Economic Development and Tourism

- A. Tourists would prefer to have art concentrated downtown.
- B. Should KCC act as an information clearinghouse for arts events? Council members feel the Explore Kirkland website is not accessible enough.
- C. Kirkland is in the shadow of Seattle—how do we distinguish ourselves to become a destination?
- D. To become a destination you have to have either outstanding product or effective marketing—we could improve on our marketing—local hotels offer more information about Canada than Kirkland.
- E. Cultural tourism will be just one part of an overall tourism strategy.
- F. Cultural tourism must target residents as well, since the best ambassadors are local residents.
- G. One way to stand out is a signature event—Concours and Uncorked are possibilities for that.
- H. Do the City’s citizens agree with our desire to be a destination (some concern with traffic)?
- I. Can we create better street life? More foot traffic, outdoor restaurants, covered areas.
- J. We do have an event for each season—can we market that?
- K. Are we too fractured? Some KCC members voiced concern that we need to concentrate on one thing.

3. Resources and Fundraising

- A. City faces a significant structural budget gap that is going to endure for the foreseeable future
- B. Non-profit status: don’t want to be another non-profit with a low budget
- C. Other arts agencies did not want KCC to become competition
- D. City would like KCC to become a non-profit
- E. Other option is to be a foundation but that would also be competition for funding for local arts agencies
- F. Comes back to the role of the cultural council
- G. What do we already have that we can capitalize on?
- H. Funding: there are private and public sources that have not been looked into

4. Role of KCC

- A. KCC members see the board as advisory, not necessarily hands on—catalyst for event but not the administrator or planner.
- B. Would KCC want to decide where City money for the arts will go? Is there a way to combine fundraising efforts? That idea makes many organizations nervous.
- C. The current roles were listed: public art, art in private development, and now will start on cultural planning, and community outreach. KCC members expressed concern that this is a lot to do already.
- D. KCC should be an advocate for the arts—marketing, fundraising, and educating the public.
- E. KCC should be an advocate for arts education.
- F. Our advisory role has been out of necessity—KCC doesn't have financial or structural resources to put on an event or take a different role.

Jerry will try to be at a meeting again for his next site visit. KCC would like to hear status as well as give feedback.

Additional thoughts can be sent to Jerry at: jallen9876@aol.com

% for Art Update

Deferred

Cannery: Historical Site Designation

Staff member Ellen Miller-Wolfe reported that she called Thad Pound (owner of the Cannery) as a follow up to Bob Burke's presentation to the cultural council because she wanted to put them in touch with each other. She wanted to be sure that Thad was aware of the discussion he had with the cultural council regarding historical designation of the building.

Cultural Council Budget

Staff member Ellen Miller-Wolfe reported that the City has been asked to make 4% internal cuts, but up to 10% has been mentioned. The Cultural Council has 46,000 currently in the budget. KCC needs to look at the money that they have and figure out what they want to do with it. They have to have a plan in place to be able to keep it. A large portion of this is currently earmarked for the Cannery. Should we open up possibilities for that money and look at it more broadly as seed money for what comes out of the strategic plan? The benefit of combining all of it for strategic plan is that it leaves all options open. Staff will let KCC know if there is danger of losing any of that money. Boris made a motion for \$40,000 to be earmarked for implementation of the strategic arts plan. KCC wants to continue funding KAST and Uncorked, and there will be need for reproduction of the art in private development DVD. The motion was tabled to allow KCC to have further discussions on what other possible needs they would have for money.

Community Collaboration Subcommittee

KCC member Leah Klinger reported that the goal of this new committee is to enhance collaboration and communication between arts and culture organizations in Kirkland, artists, and potentially others. One idea they are considering is to host a series of gatherings. Funds will be needed for that. Committee would like funds encumbered to host these events and to help with information exchange. Leah Klinger made motion for \$5000 to be encumbered for community collaboration. Council approved that motion.

Orchids & Onions

Chair GG Getz raised the concern that many of the founding council members have term limits coming up next year. She posed the question of how to keep the history and those people engaged? Strategic plan may address this in the role of the KCC.