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July 11, 2007

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David Corliss, City Manager
City of Lawrence, Kansas
P.O.Box 708
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
(Copy: Sue Hack, Mayor)

CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS

Mr. Corliss,

We strongly disagree with the City's decision to move the 2007 Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibition piece "Prayer Booth" from its assigned site at Seventh and Massachusetts to its current location at the Law Enforcement Center.

Chief among our objections was the Arts Commission's minimal involvement in the City's decision to move the sculpture. As the City's advisory board in matters of public art, this oversight raises substantial questions of protocol and identity.

In the opinion of five out of six Commissioners at the June 13th meeting, many essential protocols governing the relationship and interactions between the City and the Arts Commission are vague or out-dated. We also hold serious concerns about the City's interest in, or awareness of, current national trends regarding public art administration.

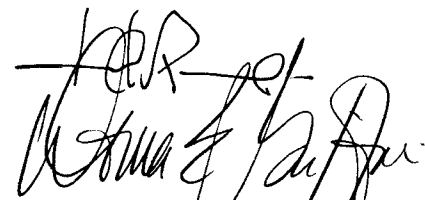
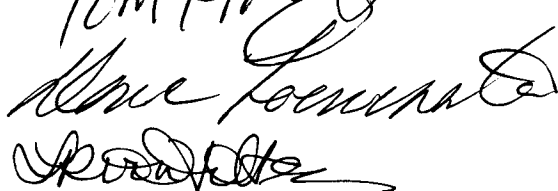
The "Prayer Booth" situation also raised a fundamental issue: the identity of the Lawrence Arts Commission. Are we a token entity, or a task force? How does the City define public art administration?

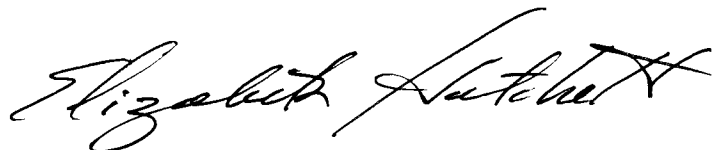
This Arts Commission believes that a vital and attractive arts scene enhances the pride and prestige of any community, and yields proven and significant economic advantages.

This Commission is equipped, and intends, to act as a capable and enthusiastic task force in the regional and national promotion of Lawrence's rich cultural resources.

Taking all things into account, including the City's concerns, the Arts Commission requests a review of City protocols and a precise clarification of the Commission's role and purpose regarding the administration of public art in Lawrence.

Respectfully submitted,


Tom King

Anne Loomis


Elizabeth Antel

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LAWRENCE, KS

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David Corliss
City Manager
P.O. Box 708
Lawrence, KS 66044-0708

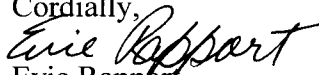
Dear Mr. Corliss:

I wish to express my understanding of and support for the decision made by your office to move the Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibition piece "Prayer Booth" when it was vandalized soon after the opening of the 20th annual exhibit. I am glad that the artist was able to replace the piece, which is now mounted at a less vulnerable site near two other striking and appealing works in the exhibit.

I believe that appropriate communications about this decision were made with me, the chair of the Lawrence Arts Commission; with members of the Parks and Recreation Department, which installs and cares for the ODSE pieces; with the city staff liaison to the Arts Commission, Michael Tubbs; with the chairman of the Arts Commission's ODSE committee, John Reeves; and with members of the city and county administration. It was the city's responsibility to make the most prudent decision to protect the art, and precedent for such a move had been set a few years before in a similar circumstance.

Some commissioners have expressed their concerns about Lawrence Arts Commission policies and protocols. I too have seen the need for revising and formalizing several of our processes. The Arts Commission will be working in the coming months to address many of these concerns, especially as they coincide with goals established at our successful Strategic Planning Retreat in April.

Thank for taking the time to consider these letters and the issues they present.

Cordially,

Evie Rappaport
Chair, Lawrence Art Commission

cc: Mayor Sue Hack
City Commission


Sandra W. Seibert, Secretary
