

6-10-18

Cultural Arts Commission

Re: Womxn of Color Mural

Our city is about to receive a gift of outdoor art. This is a wonderful thing. This process of acquiring art has two components: choosing the art itself, and then, where to place it. Placement has become an issue here.

I live in the area near the library, and walk through it frequently. The new public space created between the library and the parking garage is quite attractive, and we as a community are still learning how best to use it. We will make decisions over the years that will hopefully enrich the community experience to be had there.

As I examine the two proposed options for installation of the mural, I am struck by this thought: neither seems like a good location for a mural, or art of any sort. I can't imagine the designers of this space at any point thinking either location would lend itself to such a thing.

In general, I would think public art here should be easily seen by people using the plaza area near and to the south of the library entry, and should also be visible from within the library for anyone looking out the large windows on its south elevation. Neither of the proposed sites accomplishes this very well.

The site on the library is tucked away on a back corner, in a recessed area. People entering the space from the west could see it at least, but from some distance away. There is a large hose connection that appears to me would be within the mural field. This is clearly a utilitarian space; not a formalized aesthetic one. The site on the garage, if I understand the location correctly, is also utilitarian in nature. A long handrail is attached to the wall there which would bisect the mural lengthwise. Both sites are below eye level of those passing by, rather than at or above.

To me, a more prominent location would be to do the mural on panels, and attach the panels over the rust-colored screening material on the second level of the garage, near the structure's northeast corner and on its north elevation. It might also be possible to choose a prominent free-standing location somewhere in the public space, where the panels could be installed. The mural panels could still be created in public, in full view of anyone passing by. Installation costs could be covered by a small fundraising effort that library patrons have offered to help with.

My suggestion would be for the Cultural Arts Commission to reject both proposed locations as poor choices for display of public art, and then set up a committee of stakeholders to choose a better location within this space.

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 Reply  Reply All  Forward  IM

Sun 6/10/2018 9:17 PM



Susan Esau <sus.esau@gmail.com>

Integrity of Lawrence Public Library

To  Porter Arneill;  Stuart Boley;  Lynne Zollner

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Going to the public library

for books

, to study or to meet friends has been a part of my life for 50 years. I

it was a no-brainer for me to

support the \$18M bond

issue

to rebuild

the

Lawrence Public Library

. I understand an additional million dollars was generously donated by private citizens to subsidize the public funds. We now have a beautiful library because of

the efforts of many, many people. I am

concerned

that anyone is suggesting painting on the face of a city building not even

four

years old. Our award-winning library should not be used as a canvas for any and every group that wants to make a

public

statement. I

enjoy seeing

murals on old, privately-owned buildings whose owners have

allowed

groups/

artists a medium to express their sentiments. Damaging the architectural integrity of an iconic city-owned structure

, however,

should not be arbitrarily granted

, and it

open

s

the door for anyone

else wanting

to

do the same

,

no matter how legitimate th

eir

statement may be. There are, surely, more appropriate options for permanent or rotating displays available for art depicting

persons or

groups who are part of Lawrence's unique fabric of history.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and I would appreciate it if you could share it with the rest of your respective boards.

Susan

Esau

Lawrence, KS