


Agenda Report Reviewed by:
 City Manager: 

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
 CITY COUNCIL
 AGEND ITEM**

Meeting Date: February 7, 2023
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Public Art Committee (PAC)
 Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Public Art Committee Update to Council and approval of Site for New Art Commission
Recommendation : Receive report, provide feedback; approve new public art location
Funding: Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes _____ No XX N/A
 Net General Fund Cost: N/A
 Amount: \$0

Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget (if applicable) AK (verified by Administrative Services Department)

INTRODUCTION:

This item includes two items: 1) a presentation from the Public Art Committee (PAC) on their recent work; and, 2) consideration of the PAC-recommended location for a new commissioned art sculpture/call for artists.

DISCUSSION:

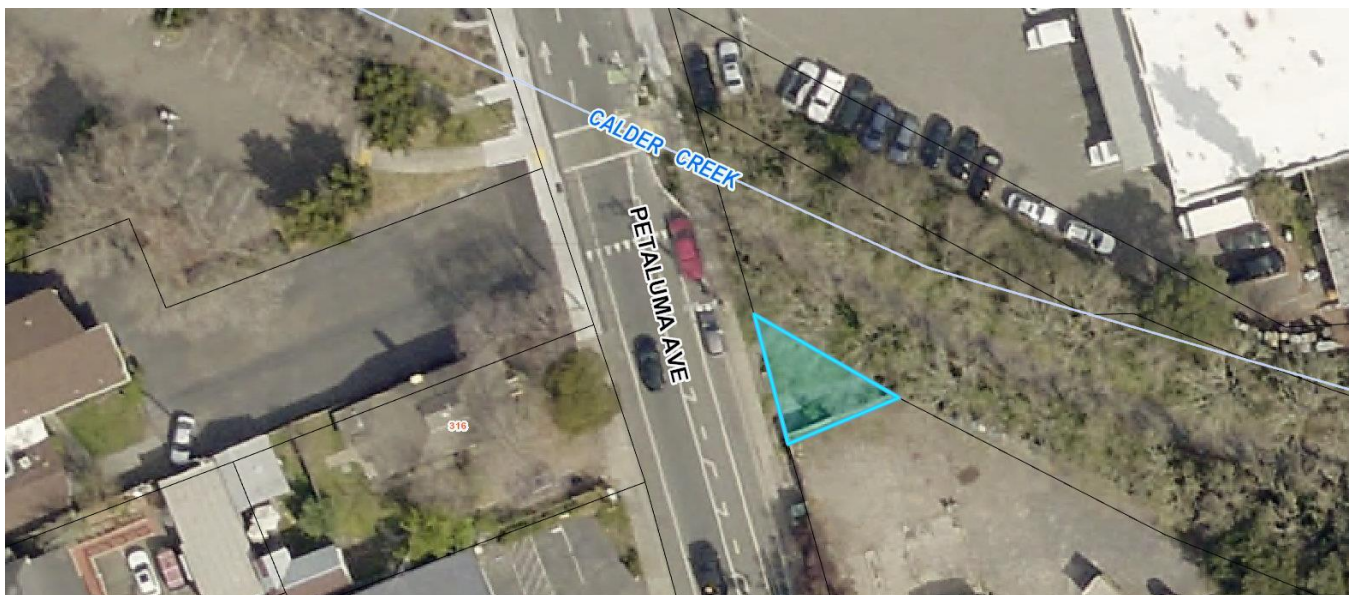
One of the primary responsibilities of the Public Art Committee (PAC) is to steward the City’s public art program (See attached Ordinance for full text). This program requires large commercial/industrial development to either install public art on-site, or pay a 1% fee in-lieu of this art to the City. The City utilizes these funds to commission public art throughout town. As outlined in the attachment of ‘recent accomplishments, the City has two public art commissions by this group – the Michael McGinnis sculpture on the library, as a western entry to downtown, and the upcoming Ned Kahn Sebastopol Spire to be installed at the eastern gateway to downtown. The Public Art Committee has spent the last few months discussing and evaluating potential sites for their next call for artists/public art commission, with the goal of having sculptures at both the northern and southern gateways to the city as well.

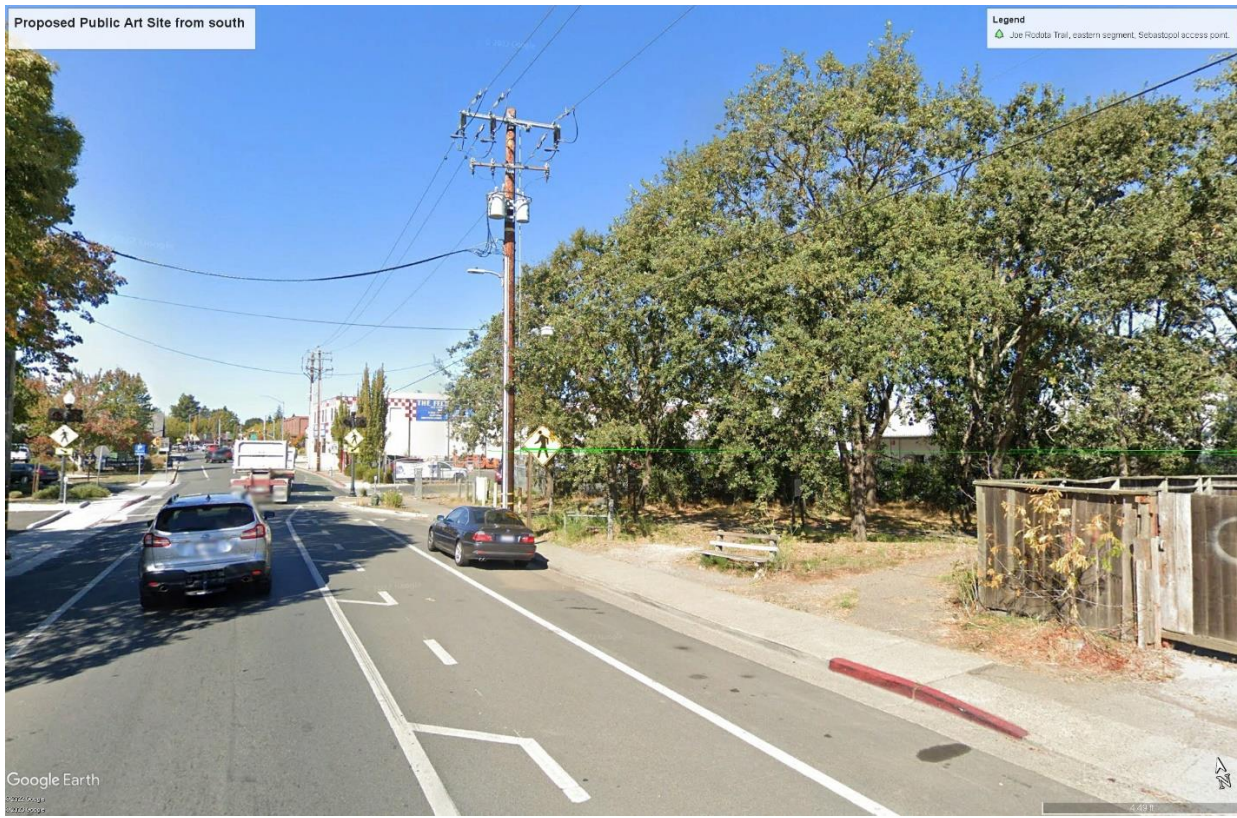
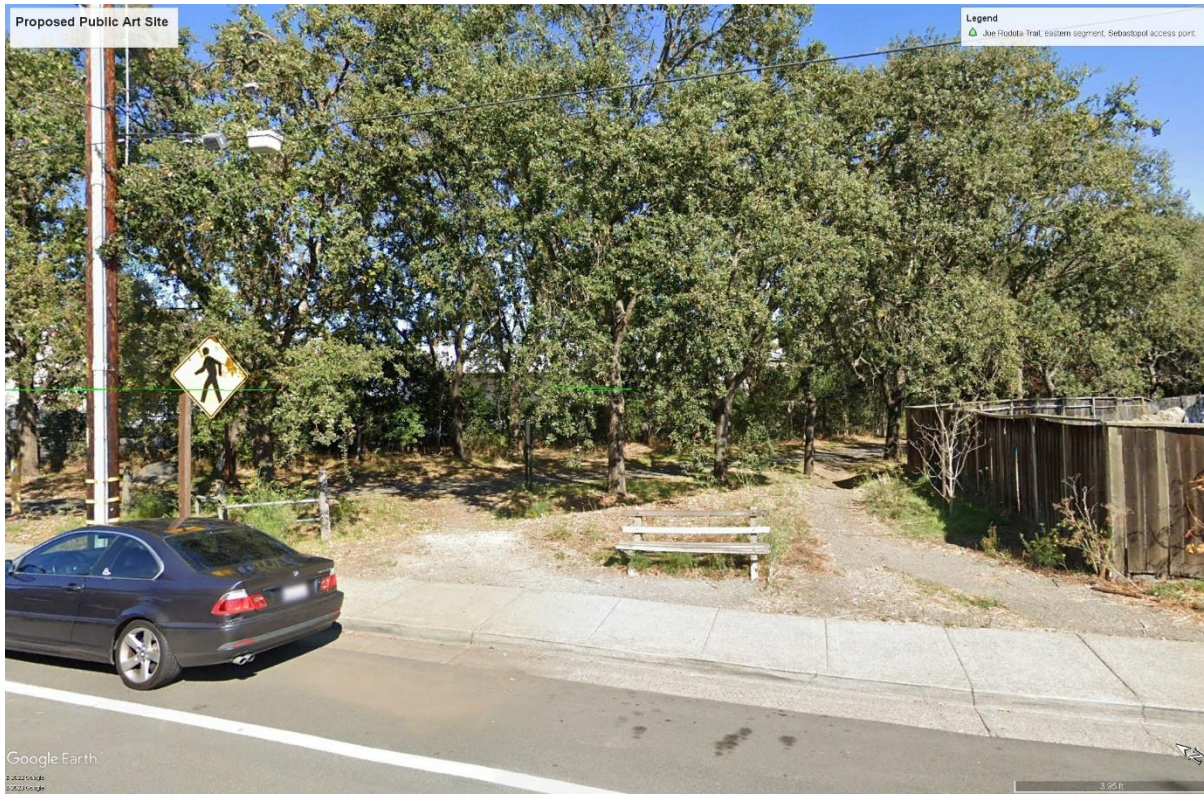
The recommended location for the next sculpture is on County of Sonoma (Regional Parks) land located just south of the Joe Rodota Trail at Petaluma Avenue. This location demarks the southern entrance to downtown, and is highly visible to vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. It’s also a location that could coincide with future improvements in the area – including potential connections to Ives Park through the City parking lot west of Petaluma Avenue, and revitalization of properties in the area, some of which are currently for sale.

Staff has contacted Regional Parks leadership, who have noted that, while they will have some logistics (such as review by their Park Commission), they are “100% supportive of this approach”. The PAC and City staff would like City Council review and approval of the proposed site prior to engaging more specifically with the County regarding process and technical details (licensing, insurance, etc.). These would be completed and in-place prior to any calls for artist being issued.

The Public Art Fund currently has approximately \$30-35,000 to utilize for this next commissioned piece (including honorarium for finalists, etc).

Images of proposed site:





GOALS:

This action supports the following City Council Goals and General Plan Actions:

Goal 5 - Provide Open and Responsive Municipal Government Leadership, including

Goal 5.1.4 Enhance the use of the City of Sebastopol Committees, Commissions and Boards.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The addition of an art sculpture to an existing bicycle and pedestrian trail is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Under Section 15303(e) and 15311 Class 11, which exempts small accessory structures.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of this item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the recommended action tonight. The Call for Artists for the selected location will be developed and will return to Council prior to being issued, which would then commit budget dollars from the Art Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive report, provide any feedback to the PAC. Approve the PAC's recommendation to pursue the selected location for new art sculpture and issue a new call for artists.

ATTACHMENTS:

Chair Mills-Thysen report on recent achievements

Public Art Ordinance

Sebastopol Public Arts Committee Report to City Council

I am pleased to introduce Sebastopol's Public Arts Committee to our new City Council. The Public Arts Committee was established in May of 2011 by City Ordinance #1043 amending Sebastopol's Municipal Code and setting up a 1% fee on commercial or industrial construction projects in Sebastopol to be used for Public Art projects in the city. Either artwork is commissioned by the property owner and approved by the PAC, or the 1% fee is paid by the owner into a Public Art Fund and used by the PAC to develop Public Art projects for the City. Artwork installed on municipal property is also vetted by the Public Arts Committee.

From Ordinance 1043:

"Public art helps make our City more livable and more visually stimulating. The experience of public art makes the public areas of buildings and their grounds more welcoming. It creates a deeper interaction with the places we visit, and in which we work and live. Public art illuminates the history of a community while it points to the City's aspirations for the future. A City rich in art encourages cultural tourism which brings in visitor revenues."

Background

I joined this Committee in its early stages and have appreciated the enthusiastic support for Public Art given by each generation of our City Council. The role of the PAC has evolved over the years through discussion, experience, and community input.

After announcements, applications and interviews the City Council appoints 5 PAC Members for 4-year staggered terms. The other current members of the Public Arts Committee are: Jeffrey Stucker, Vice-Chair, and Lars Langberg, Barbara Harris, and Robert Brent.

What projects has the PAC completed?

Following our vision of installing Commissioned Public Artwork at the 4 Gates to our City, we now have:

Entering Sebastopol from the West: Michael McGinnis' sculpture "Grey Matter" is installed on the outside wall of our public library.

For our Eastern entrance: Ned Kahn's kinetic sculpture "Sebastopol Spire" is in process to grace our city's eastern gateway by the Highway12 Bridge, to be installed in summer 2023.

For our Southern entrance: the PAC unanimously selected a site on Route 116/Petaluma Avenue, at the Rodota Trail entrance, which proposal we are now submitting to the City Council.

The Northern gate commission awaits future funding and proposals.

How are public artwork commissions selected?

When sufficient funding has accumulated in the Public Art Fund, the PAC creates a Call for Proposals that's sent out on the City's website, media, and by word of mouth. Please spread the word! The more and higher quality proposals we receive, the finer Public Art installations we will have in Sebastopol.

After the PAC reviews all applications, it selects finalists and holds a public meeting with the artists so community members can view the artwork proposals and ask questions. We've enhanced this outreach and organization over time. For the second commission, information and maquettes were also on view at the Public Library. Community members were encouraged to leave written comments and their votes at the library or online. These were shared with the PAC before the Committee selected one artwork to send to the Council for further discussion and approval.

After meetings, discussions and selection come engineering, permitting, fabrication and, finally, installation, unveiling, celebration, and ongoing enjoyment!

In addition to commissioned artwork, below are some of our completed PAC projects:

Art App:

1. / This is a location map with images of Public Art in Sebastopol online, through the app "sebastopol-us.streetartcities.com." This posting was created by Jen Vertz, our previous Committee Chair, and current member Lars Langberg.

Support for local Artists :

2. / In view of the pandemic's devastating effects upon Sebastopol artists' livelihoods, the PAC created a project to offer support to our local professional artists. Organized by Jen Vertz (former PAC member) and Marghe Mills-Thysen, the Artists' Support Lottery donated much needed funds to participating artists.

Community Sculpture Garden:

3. / Did you notice when 8 concrete platforms appeared in Ives Park last spring? Sonoma County sculptors were invited to display artwork in Sebastopol's new

Community Sculpture Garden. This past summer 8 sculptures were installed on those cement platforms for everyone to enjoy in our downtown park.

These sculptures will be there for a year, and then another group of sculptures will be displayed. They spotlight local creativity and generosity. The title and sculptor's name appear on each platform, so people can look up the artists and find out more about their work. Most of the current sculptures are available for purchase and pick up after July. We hope you will each treat yourself to many strolls through your city's Community Sculpture Garden.

Outside Art Organizations

4./ Groups frequently contact the PAC to let us about their projects and often ask for input and support. UpCycle now has a display at the Sebastopol Public Library; Sebastopol, Sebastopol Center for the Arts, Relaunch Sebastopol, Black Lives Matter Visibility Group, Creative Sonoma, Sculpture Jam and Art Surround have all been in touch.

FUTURE PROJECTS

1/ We will be redesigning our PAC webpage on the City Website to make it more timely, informative and inspiring.

2/ Our local primary, secondary and high schools are seminal places for creative art. The PAC will be working on Public Art Outreach presentations and possibly programs for our local schools. To encourage, inform, inspire, engage and support our young citizens about and with art in their community environment.

3/ We look forward to continuing with previous and connecting with additional local Arts organizations like ArtStart, Chimera, Art at the Source and ArtTrails, and with art galleries, art supply stores and foundries. We are open to your suggestions.

4/ The second Community Sculpture Garden show is scheduled to start this summer.

5/ As mentioned, our first Commissioned Public Artwork, Ned Kahn's "Sebastopol Spire" will soon grace our eastern gateway, and the third Commissioned Public Artwork is now in process.

Additional Commissioned Public Artwork is dependent upon funding. With input from you, the City Council, and from our local community, the PAC will be creating an inventory identifying viable sites for future Public Art.

6/ In collaboration with other City committees and departments, the PAC would like to improve city signage for public art, and hopefully as public art.

7/ The PAC would like to encourage community members interested in doing something to support Public Art in Sebastopol to contact the Public Arts Committee through Planning Director Kari Svanstrom / Planning Department at planningtemp@cityofsebastopol.org to become an Associate Partner and work with one of the PAC's sub-committees assisting in the creation of City Public Art projects.

I would like to thank the City Council members for your support and hope my words are helpful in understanding and working with the activities of this important and active committee.

Marghe Mills-Thysen
Chair, Sebastopol Public Arts Committee
Sebastopol, CA