



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: October 21, 2025

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Victoria Henkel, Permit Technician
Subject: Public Arts Committee Presentation

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Council listen to concerns from the Chair of the Public Arts Committee, on behalf of the Public Arts Committee (PAC). The PAC is requesting support and attendance at future Public Art events, and to seek clarification regarding public art obligations related to the Barlow Hotel development, Hotel Sebastopol, and the Canopy development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This agenda item asks the Chair of the Public Arts Committee to present their concerns to the City Council regarding two key issues:

- Council support and attendance at upcoming PAC-sponsored events; and
- Clarification on the public art component and associated funding from the Barlow Hotel development project.

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

The Public Arts Committee regularly organizes and supports community-facing events and public art dedications. In the past, these events have not been well attended by members of the City Council. City Council attendance at these events demonstrates leadership support for the arts and helps foster community engagement, civic pride, and public appreciation of local artists, as well as appreciation of the work of the Public Arts Committee. Council presence also reinforces the City's commitment to culture and creativity as public values.

Additionally, the Committee seeks to understand the details of the approved development agreement for the Barlow Hotel project, specifically with respect to any public art obligations or contributions outlined in that agreement. The PAC would like clarification on the process and decisions made.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been 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.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the PAC Chair's concerns and make comments.

OPTIONS:

Accept the PAC Chair's concerns and make comments or provide direction to staff.



ATTACHMENTS:

Letter from PAC to City Council
Presentation Slides

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 10/14/2025

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 9/17/2025

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: N/A_____

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Account Code (if applicable) _____

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: N/A

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 10/14/2025

Sebastopol City Council
City of Sebastopol
7120 Bodega Avenue
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Subject: Support for Public Art Events and Clarification on Public Art Obligations Related to Barlow Hotel

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

The Public Arts Committee (PAC) wants to acknowledge the strong support the City Council has historically shown for public art in our fair city. In the past, Council members have regularly attended our dedication ceremonies, demonstrating the city's commitment to arts and culture.

The all-volunteer PAC has been working diligently to fulfill the Council's vision of installing major sculpture pieces at each entrance to our city. We've made significant progress:

- West Entrance: "Gray Matters" by Michael McGinniss graces our Public Library wall
- East Entrance: The "Sebastopol Spire" by Ned Kahn, dedicated on May 3rd with indigenous tribal participation
- South Entrance: Bruce Johnson's "Koan," dedicated on April 5th
- North Entrance: Currently in planning, pending adequate funding

However, we have some concerns we'd like to address respectfully:

- Attendance at Recent Events: The absence of Council representation at our recent dedication ceremonies, particularly the Bruce Johnson "Koan" dedication, which drew roughly 90 community members, was noticeable to attendees. We were grateful that Sandra Maurer attended the Ned Kahn dedication, and her presence and words meant a great deal to our committee and the community.
- Barlow Hotel Agreement: We understand the Council recently agreed to accept less than the standard 1% public art contribution from the Barlow Hotel project. While we recognize budget pressures, this decision raises questions about the city's ongoing commitment to public art funding.

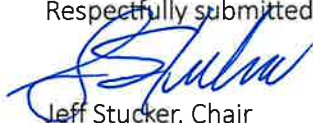
We respectfully ask Council to address these questions:

1. What is the current Council's philosophy regarding public art and its importance to Sebastopol?
2. How will Council members demonstrate their support for the Public Arts Committee and future arts events?
3. Can you explain the reasoning behind accepting less than the standard 1% public art contribution from the Barlow Hotel project?

If the reduced contribution from the Barlow project was accepted to increase overall revenue, we respectfully request that the city budget an apportionment that eventually totals the standard 1% for public art projects. The Public Arts Committee remains committed to beautifying Sebastopol and providing cultural enrichment for our residents and visitors. We simply ask for clarity on the Council's position and a renewed commitment to supporting public art in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted for the Public Arts Committee,



Jeff Stucker, Chair

Members



CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of October 21, 2025



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Public Arts Committee Presentation

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CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of October 21, 2025



Agenda Item Number: 9

The Public Arts Committee (PAC) is requesting the following:

1. Support and attendance from City Councilmembers at future Public Art events
2. Seeking clarification regarding public art obligations related to development projects



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BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

- City Council attendance at art dedication events demonstrates leadership support for the arts and helps foster community engagement, civic pride, and public appreciation of local artists, as well as appreciation of the work of the Public Arts Committee
- Council presence also reinforces the City's commitment to culture and creativity as public values

Attendance at Recent Events:

- Bruce Johnson "Koan" dedication
- Ned Kahn "Sebastopol Spire" dedication

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CITY COUNCIL

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BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

Additionally, the Committee seeks to understand the details of the approved development agreements with respect to any public art obligations or contributions outlined in the agreements for the following:

- Barlow Hotel
- Hotel Sebastopol
- The Canopy Development

While we recognize budget pressures, this decision raises questions about the city's ongoing commitment to public art funding

The PAC would like clarification on the process and decisions made