

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