



METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)
MINUTES

August 15, 2016

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting on August 15, 2016, in the conference room of the Historical Commission office at 3000 Granny White Pike, with Commission Chair Jim Forkum presiding.

Commissioners Present: Jim Forkum, Chair; Clay Bailey, Vice-Chair, Bob Allen, Menié Bell, Alex Buchanan, Pat Cummins, David Currey, Don Cusic, Bill Hardin, Jim Hoobler, Mark Rogers, Gerry Searcy, and Linda Wynn were present. Lynn Maddox and Dr. Bill McKee did not attend.

Guests Present: Jennifer Cole, Caroline Vincent

Staff Members Present: Tim Walker, Sean Alexander, Tara Mielnik, Scarlett Miles, Melissa Sajid, Fred Zahn and Robin Zeigler. Interns Ryan Jarles and Ava DiNella

Chair Jim Forkum called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m., after verifying that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Jim Forkum

Jim Forkum asked if there were any amendments or questions regarding the minutes from the July 2016 meeting. Bob Allen made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Clay Bailey seconded and the commission voted to approve them unanimously.

PUBLIC ART AND HISTORIC MONUMENT POLICY – Jen Cole, Metro Arts Commission

Chair Jim Forkum introduced Jennifer Cole and Caroline Vincent from the Metro Arts Commission. Ms. Cole first gave a presentation about the Witness Walls, a recent public art project which has its roots in history. *The printed timeline of that project and its description is attached.*

Robin Zeigler introduced intern Ava DiNella, who has been working on scanning the collection of slides of Nashville properties. This has been of great help as the Historic Zoning staff use the images in their staff recommendations on a regular basis.

DISCUSSION OF HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Tim Walker opened discussion on scheduling the MHC's annual Open House and said that a location and chair to set up the event would need to be decided at the September meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Tim Walker

Tim Walker said that he, Jim Forkum and Brian Tibbs (MHZC Chair) hope to schedule a meeting with the Mayor in the next few weeks regarding MHC's budget, staffing and capital projects. They also plan to discuss the

possible creation of an annual preservation fund, a matching grant that would serve as an incentive for rehab of historic buildings that are threatened. This has been done in other cities, such as Knoxville, with much success.

Walker met with Council Member Nancy VanReece, Rich Riebeling, Debby Dale Mason, Joseph Woodson, and Parks Director Tommy Lynch to discuss the Masonic Home for the Aged and the Masonic Boys' School adjacent to it. Mr. Walker and Council Member VanReece had recently toured the Masonic Home structure with representatives from the State government and found that it was structurally sound and would be a very strong candidate for rehabilitation. The Mayor's administration offered to contract with Gobbell-Hays to do a detailed building conditional assessment and rehabilitation cost analysis, which would assist the city in any negotiations to lease or acquire the property. Metro Parks has been very involved in these discussions also, because there is a real need for parkland in that area as it is underserved.

Tim has been having discussions with the National Park Service (NPS) regarding the terms of the long-term leases Metro has on Union Station and the Customs House with the Federal government. There are requirements that Metro and the tenant of these buildings submit a Biennial Report to the NPS that discloses lease arrangements, income produced, and changes to exterior and interior of the buildings. Representatives from the NPS came to Nashville earlier in the month and met with the building tenants, Metro Legal, and the MHC to access the conditions of the buildings. As an outcome of the meeting, the MHC is proposing new legislation to create a Historic Interiors designation. Once the tool has been created through legislation, these two federally-owned properties, the Customs House and Union Station, will be the first two properties designated. This should go into effect later this year.

STAFF REPORTS

Scarlett Miles mentioned that the US General Services Administration will be nominating the Estes Kefauver Federal Building to the National Register.

OTHER BUSINESS

Pat Cummins mentioned that Friends of Kellytown board of directors had met with the design team recently to go over the Master Plan. The landscape architects have submitted two very well-laid out plans. They will be meeting again on August 28. That will be a public meeting. Nick Fielder, former state archaeologist is acting as an archaeological consultant for the project. Letters have been written to the Chickasaw and Creek Nations, requesting their involvement in the design of the interpretive signage, but they have not responded yet.

Cummins then reported that he has contacted District 19 Council Member Freddie O'Connell about the need for the Trail of Tears route to be marked through Davidson County. O'Connell is very interested in being involved in that project. Approximately 40 miles of contiguous trail have been identified from Rutherford to Robertson County. Grant Mullins from HNI has also been pursuing the same goal and has already contacted the National Park Service. The Native History Association, HNI, and the MHC will likely partner on this project going forward.

Cummins also mentioned that Metro Council had voted to approve the new development at Fontanel. The MHC office had requested as part of that approval that any ground-breaking activities be monitored, and if any human remains are discovered, the state archaeologist will be notified so that all state and federal regulations will be followed.

Clay Bailey mentioned that in discussions over the Greer Stadium property, one suggestion made was to construct a children's playground, possibly with features characteristic of Fort Negley. Another idea is that a permanent field could be created for the Vintage Baseball teams to play.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted September 14, 2016.

Yvonne Ogren

Civil Rights Public Art Project History

May 2011

- Metro Nashville Arts Commission (MNAC) receives request for initiation of a public artwork recognizing the Civil Rights contributions of the city as referenced in the Memorializing Resolution 2011-1669.
- Metro Arts staff begins exploration of sites for Civil Rights public artwork.

June 2011

- Council Member Vivian Wilhoite files an ordinance to allow public art funds to be used for the commissioning and installation of statues, memorials, and monuments. The ordinance is BL2011.952 and it is defeated in Budget and Finance Committee.
- BL2011-952 sought to add language to the allowable uses of bond funds within the Percent for Art Program. The definition of "public art" project, while not specifically mentioning historic memorials/monuments, already allows this use as long as the art work meets the other criteria of a capital bond project.

August 2011

- Metro Arts staff works with the Metro Historical Commission to identify appropriate sites for a Civil Rights Public artwork. Site committee participants included Tim Walker, Historical Commission; Dr. Bobby L. Lovett, Tennessee State University; Dr. Reavis L. Mitchell, Jr., Fisk University; Prof. Linda T. Wynn, Tennessee Historical Commission and Fisk University, and Dr. Bob McKee, Cumberland University.

September 2011

- Metro Arts staff reports to the Public Art Committee (PAC) that historical locations have been reviewed, but several sites pose issues because they are not located on property that is owned by the Metropolitan Government or available for additional site changes. Additionally, staff prefers that the project is in a prominent location.

November 2011

- The Public Art Committee approves a \$75,000 budget to hire a facilitator/consultant to begin community input process for the artwork.

April 2012

- Metro Arts staff recommends to Public Art Committee a series of locations for a Civil Rights-inspired artwork rather than one artwork. The Public Arts Committee approves previously encumbered funds of \$75,000 to go toward the first Civil Rights Project on 5th Avenue in conjunction with the \$1.5 million streetscape project approved in the Mayor's Capital Spending Plan.

June 2012

- A Selection Panel is approved for the 5th Avenue site/project. MNAC Public Art Committee Chair Paula Roberts (PAC Representative); Veronica Frazier (Public Works); Courtney Martin (Postdoctoral Research Associate and Lecturer, Vanderbilt); Carlyle Johnson (Head, Department of Art, TSU); Dr. Ernest "Rip" Patton (Civil Rights Veteran); John Seigenthaler (Civil Rights Veteran); Prof. Linda T. Wynn (Assistant Director for State Programs, Tennessee Historical Commission); Inez Crutchfield (Civil Rights Veteran); Mikal Malik (HCA Design Department); and Sally Connelly (Executive Vice President, Nashville Downtown Partnership).

September 2012

- A national Call to Artists is released.

November 2012

- Eighty-two (82) artists apply. Initial selection panel meeting is held. Six bronze artists are short-listed and asked to visit the site and prepare concept proposals. One artist drops out of the running.

February 2013

- Artists participate in site visit. Metro Arts learns the proposed site on 5th Avenue has changed dramatically during construction vastly limiting the space and foundation capacity for an artwork. The Public Art Committee decides to continue with the procurement process.
- Public takes part in two meetings held to gather community input on the project: February 28, Main Library; March 12, Looby Library. A community-wide electronic survey is distributed and made available on the Metro Arts web site.

April 2013

- Semi-finalist artists present proposals. Selection panel does not reach consensus on a finalist, but requests that three of the artists returned with revised proposals.

May 2013

- The Public Art Committee votes to close the procurement due to the extreme limitations of the proposed site on 5th Avenue and the selection panel's inability to recommend one finalist.
- The Public Art Committee asks staff to return with a new project scope, artist list and revised budget for Public Art Committee action.
- Metro Nashville Arts Commission approves the Public Art Committee's recommendation.

Phase One concludes and Phase Two begins with a new artist search, location, and budget.

July 2013

- The Public Art Committee approves a new artist short-list, a newly identified site – Public Square Park, and a new budget of \$300,000.
- Metro Nashville Arts Commission approves the Public Art Committee's recommendation.
- The Public Art Committee votes to hold aside \$100,000 and continue to explore whether a 5th Avenue location could be used, despite the site challenges, for a second Civil Rights-inspired public artwork. If determined feasible, the project will commence once the Public Square Park project is well underway.

November 2013

- A new selection panel is approved with staff making additions as necessary: Anderson Williams – Chair/PAC representative (non-voting); Tim Netsch (Site Sponsor/Metro Parks); Ivanetta Davis-Samuels (Community Member); Crystal deGregory (Historian/TSU); Susan Knowles (Arts Administrator/MTSU Public History); Dr. Ernest “Rip” Patton (Civil Rights Veteran); Jim Robert (Downtown Resident/Arts Administrator); Mary Roskilly (Architect/Tuck-Hinton Architects); John Seigenthaler (Civil Rights Veteran); and Carlton F. Wilkinson (Artist).

December 2013

- Ivanetta Davis-Samuels is unavailable for the selection panel. Carrie Gentry accepts Metro Arts’ invitation to serve in that position.
- An expanded artist site visit is held December 2-3, with the four semi-finalists.
- At a breakfast Q&A on December 3, local Civil Rights Veterans interact with artists giving them feedback and suggestions for what might inspire the artwork.
- Artists visit Public Square (the artwork site) and the Civil Rights Reading Room, and go on a Civil Rights history tour with Dr. Reavis L. Mitchell, Jr. (Fisk University); Prof. Linda T. Wynn (Tennessee Historical Commission and Fisk University); and Dr. Tara Mielnik (Metro Historical Commission).

March 2014

- Semi-finalist artists present concept proposals to selection panel.
- Public Art Committee approves design concept for Witness Walls and commissions artist Walter Hood at its March 12 meeting.
- Metro Nashville Arts Commission approves the Public Art Committee’s recommendation at its March 18 meeting.

June 2014

- Artist Walter Hood meets with subject matter experts on Nashville Civil Rights photos and Nashville Civil Rights-era music at Nashville Public Library.
- Artist meets with Veterans followed by a public reception and Q&A at Hadley Park Community Center. Veterans provide feedback to the artist.

June-August 2014

- Public invited to provide feedback to the artist through a hard copy or on-line community feedback form. Twelve (12) feedback forms are received and forwarded to the artist.

June 2014-June 2015

- Special Collections staff at Nashville Public Library provide contact sheets for Civil Rights photos and respond to specific requests from artist. Special Collections staff provide hi-res image files.

September 2014-January 2015

- Metro Arts and the Ayers Institute for Teacher Learning and Innovation at Lipscomb University announce the Civil Rights/Witness Walls teacher cadre. Ayers Institute staff received and evaluated 39 teacher applications. Six teachers were chosen to participate in the cadre. The teachers selected were both middle and high school teachers whose subject areas included math, language arts, science, social studies, and visual art. Cadre teachers develop six high-quality, interdisciplinary and standards-aligned lesson plan units. All curriculum units are available for download at the Ayers Institute and the Metro Arts websites.

February 2015

- Metro Arts and the Ayers Institute offer a one-day professional development (PD) teacher training day on February 25 so that the cadre can present their lesson plan units to their fellow educators. The one-day event was held at the Nashville Public Library's Conference Center and registration was open to all content area and all level classroom teachers, arts specialists, curriculum coordinators, teaching artists, principals, and/or administrators who are currently working with a K-12 school. The free event includes lunch and was attended by 27 educators plus the 6 cadre teachers.

June 2015

- Metro Arts sends Witness Walls update mailing to Veterans and other project supporters.

July 2015

- American Baptist College, in partnership with the 5th Avenue Arts Association, host unveiling program for Tennessee Historical Commission marker for "Nashville Sit-Ins". The marker's installation closes opportunity for public artwork on 5th Avenue.

October 2015

- Artist meets with Veterans and subject matter experts on photos and music at Edgehill Library to provide update on the design. Suggestions are made for several images.

November 2015-February 2016

- Metro Arts and Special Collections provide additional images for artist's consideration.
- Metro Arts and Metro Legal negotiate permission for use of music and images.
- Metro Arts, Metro Legal, and the artist correspond with and gain confirmation from Getty Images that Metro's intended use of a *Life Magazine* image of a Nashville Freedom Rider in the artwork is permissible under terms of Getty contract.

February 2016

- Artist presents final design via teleconference to Veterans at Feb 2 meeting at Metro Arts offices. Suggestions are made for several images, including a Freedom Rider image.
- Metro Arts and Special Collections provide additional images for artist's consideration.
- Public Art Committee approves artist's final design at its February 9 meeting.
- Metro Nashville Arts Commission approves the Public Art Committee's recommendation at its February 18 meeting.

March 2016

- Metro Arts began working with One Voice Nashville, a local storytelling organization, on programming to enhance the *Witness Walls* experience. Through the "My Witness" project, 8 local high school students will interview individuals who have an informative and insightful perspective on Nashville's Civil Rights Movement and its legacy. Among this group are Nashville Civil Rights veterans, their children, a historian, and the *Witness Walls* artist. The podcasts will be made available on a dedicated *Witness Walls* web site and the public art mobile web site managed by Metro Arts.

June 2016

- On June 29, 2016, Metro Arts received a letter signed by the Nashville Civil Rights Veterans Association (NCRVA) voicing concerns about the final design for *Witness Walls*. The specific request from NCRVA, over which Metro Arts has purview, is to include an image of Rev. Kelly Miller Smith Sr. in the artwork.

July 2016

- This design change option was reviewed by the Arts Commission at their July 21 meeting. The Commission voted to allow the artist to explore a design change, which would include an image of Rev. Kelly Miller Smith Sr., with the understanding a revised timeline and budget will be presented to the Commission in August for review.

Witness Walls

Civil Rights-Inspired Public Artwork



Overview

Witness Walls is inspired by the events and the people who made history here in Nashville and created the blueprint for nonviolent protest during the modern Civil Rights Movement. The artwork will be located on the west side of the historic Metro Nashville Courthouse, steps away from the site of the historic April 19, 1960 student-led protest that led then-Mayor Ben West to disavow segregation of Nashville's lunch counters.



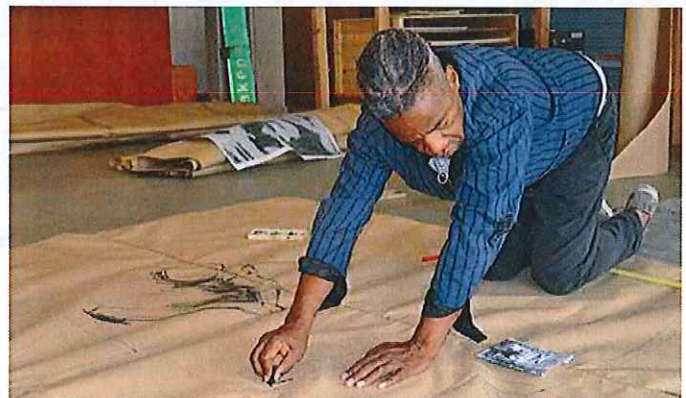
Walter Hood's original design concept for Witness Walls.

Artist Walter Hood designed *Witness Walls* as a set of fragmented sculptural walls, recalling the classical sculpted friezes that pay homage to heroic and mythical events in antiquity. Using carefully selected period photographs, the artist is exploring the full expressive potential of concrete to create a site of remembrance and celebration. Set amid these walls are two small fountains that enhance the contemplative quality of the space.

As visitors walk through the artwork's concave and convex walls, they will encounter Nashvillians taking action—school desegregation, lunch counter sit-ins, economic boycotts, marches, meetings, and Freedom Rides. Surrounded by these images, the artwork's period music transports visitors to these events and places. The proliferation of images and sounds remind us that the Civil Rights movement was a collective endeavor. Just as this site once did, the visitors moving through and around these walls bear witness to the remarkable events that took place in Nashville over a half century ago.

Artist Statement

Witness Walls is the result of extensive research by the artist, multiple conversations with Nashville Civil Rights Veterans, and careful consideration of hundreds of period images. The artist explains, "The selection of images for the artwork does not seek to highlight key individuals or singular events in a chronological or hierarchical order. Rather, through two resolutions of images accompanied by music of the period, it strives to embed the visitor in a movement in which the whole was greater than the sum of its parts." The artist's abstract [stencil] compositions in "exposed aggregate depict scenes of motion: marching, protesting, and walking to school. Meanwhile, the shadow graphic [photo] images allow [viewers] to experience the expressions and emotions of these individuals. Most of these images depict people sitting, all of them focus on people's hands and facial expressions... Both resolutions fade in and out of focus as you move through the sculpture—the former based on proximity and the latter based on angle—so that new relationships emerge with every step".

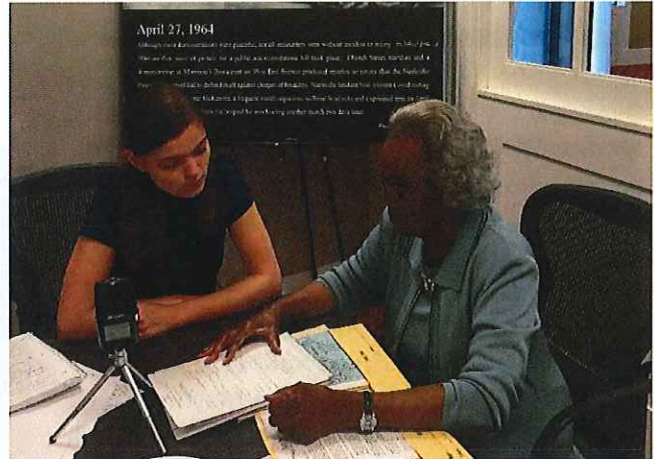


Walter Hood hand-drawing his compositions at the full height of the walls. This allowed him to develop ideas about juxtaposition, foreground and background, and scale of the historic images.

Additional Programming

Metro Arts has recently partnered with One Voice Nashville on a podcast project, "My Witness". Through the project, local high school students interviewed Civil Rights veterans and created podcasts that tell stories both of the Nashville Movement and its impact on their lives and communities. These podcasts will be available later this year on Metro Arts' website, publicart.nashville.gov.

Curriculum has been created for *Witness Walls* in partnership with Lipscomb University's Ayers Institute for Teacher Learning and Innovation with funding provided by the Tennessee Arts Commission. Lesson plans are customizable for middle and high school students and cover English/Language Arts, Physics, Social Studies, U.S. History, and Visual Arts subject areas. Please visit our website at publicart.nashville.gov for these free downloadable resources.



Hume-Fogg student Isabella Killius interviewing Civil Rights veteran Ola Hudson.

Current Status

The Metro Nashville Arts Commission has approved artist Walter Hood's final design for *Witness Walls*. Fabrication of the concrete walls is underway at Gate Precast in Ashland City, Tennessee. The artwork will be installed sometime in late 2016/early 2017. As the installation nears completion, plans will be made for a dedication event. If you would like to receive updates on *Witness Walls*, please email us at anne-leslie.owens@nashville.gov or call us at 615-862-6732.



The artist's technique of embedding an image in concrete allows for changing resolutions. Images come into focus as the viewer approaches and moves around the walls.



At a different angle, the same image is revealed at greater resolution.

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Public art is funded through the Percent for Public Art Program



Funded in part by:

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