

Village of Dexter Public Art Plan

Adopted by Village Council January 23, 2012

Introduction

In the wake of the housing crisis, communities are competing for new residents and working to keep their existing residents, while facing dealing with declining revenues. Communities have to find cost effective, innovative ways to make their area stand out from the rest. Placemaking, which is a current buzzword when discussing community and economic development, is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Creating attractive public spaces provides a value added experience for residents, merchants, customers and other visitors to a community. One way to enhance the look of public spaces is through the display of public art.

“Public art at its best helps us to see the rest of the space differently. It is an extraordinary quality, a remarkable opportunity and a huge prize for anyone commissioning public art.”

— John Tusa, *The Observer*, May 11, 2008.

Public art enhances a community by:

- improving the aesthetic quality of public spaces and structures
- enhancing the sense of local distinctiveness
- providing cultural and recreational opportunities that stimulate the local economy as visitors come to see the art
- increasing the awareness of Dexter as a destination
- creating opportunities for residents to promote their art
- improving individual and collective experiences of culture in our community
- contributing to local heritage

This plan has been drafted by the Village of Dexter Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee (ACH). The Committee was formed by Council Resolution in June of 2008 as a five member committee. Due to the response from the community, the Committee was expanded to ten members in July 2008. A copy of the resolution forming the Committee is included with this plan.

Shortly after its creation the Committee adopted the following mission statement:

Dexter's Arts, Culture, and Heritage Committee promotes and facilitates arts and culture in Dexter, Michigan. Our mission includes increasing awareness of Dexter's heritage and history; serving the local community by providing networking resources and opportunities; acting as a liaison to existing artistic and cultural organizations; and fostering a wide range of cultural activities that enrich our community.

The function of creating a plan for public art in the community fits well within the scope of the authorizing resolution and the Committee mission statement.

The purpose of this art plan is to identify areas of need for public art in Dexter, to offer examples and visual images which illustrate possibilities for public art, to outline some ways in which the allocation of funds will support public art, and to demonstrate how the process of obtaining public art can be put in place.

Definitions:

Art - refers to a wide range of expressions in the visual and performing arts including, but not limited to, conventional categories such as: sculpture (figural, abstract, kinetic), engravings, mosaics, murals, paintings, mixed media, drawings, stained glass, furniture art that incorporates artistic elements, dramatic performances, and music performances. Visual art may or may not be incorporated as part of architectural elements

Art in public places - refers to art installed, placed, or staged in public places that is privately owned/operated and is dependent upon the discretion of private entities. (As an example of this category, a mural on a building exterior may be widely visible to the public, but might be removed by the building owner, or eliminated by a new owner in a transfer or sale of property).

Functional Art – Art that is has a purpose beyond providing visual enjoyment.

Furniture Art – Items such as artist created benches, drinking fountains, picnic tables, fences, and light poles. Could also be referred to as functional art.

Permanent art - Art selected by the Village to stay on display longer than one (1) year. Permanent art would be the property of the Village.

Public art - refers to installations, placements and stagings of artistic expression, both temporary and permanent, that are not privately owned.

Temporary Art - Art selected by the Village to stay on display for less than one (1) year. Temporary art remains the property of the Artist.

Current Inventory – Art in the Community Today

Currently the Village has various representations of public art in the community.

Publicly Owned:

- Monument Park contains a statute of a Civil War soldier and a Civil War Monument

In several locations enhancements were made that increased the visual aesthetics of an area:

- Painted bricks on the Main Street Bridge
- Downtown Pavers
- Plaza at Main and Jeffords

Art in Public Places:

- Mural on the back and side of Hackney Hardware
- Mural on the Dexter Bakery
- Sculpture in the Broad alley
- (In Construction) Art Piece at the corner of Ryan and Dexter Ann Arbor (LaFontaine Chevrolet)

Action Plan

Proposed Timeline for Implementation

2012

Create a temporary art installation in five locations to introduce the community to the idea of public art

Budget Request - \$1500 for materials to secure the art and a \$200 stipend per artist to assist with the cost of re-locating the piece to the location in the Village

2013-2017

Continue temporary art installation

Select permanent pieces for selection areas of the Village – to be determined after the temporary art installation project.

Installation of two Historical Signs

Budget request - \$10,000 per year based on the cost the historical signs in Ann Arbor (\$10,000) and information on what recent temporary pieces used in Chelsea would have cost to purchase (average of \$8000).

Location/Possible Types of Art

Several locations exist in the community that would benefit from the installation of public art including:

- Community Park
- Warrior Creek Park
- Mill Creek Park
- Peace Park
- Lion's Park
- Pedestrian areas / trails
- Dexter-Ann Arbor corridor
- Baker Road corridor
- Industrial Park
- Central Street/Route of Border to Border Trail

Art selected for these areas should be site specific, representational or abstract interpretations of unique characteristics of the Dexter area. Examples of possible topics include the meeting of the rivers/waterways that run through the Village, memorializing something about the area either literally or figuratively such as the transition from a farming community to a more urban community.

Projects could include: sculpture, mosaics, decorative paths, historical signage functional art, and/or furniture art.

The Committee's recommendations for the locations that would be best to display a temporary art installation are as follows:

Mill Creek Park area

Jeffords and Main Plaza

Peace Park

Downtown along Main Street – grass area in front of Huron Camera/Dexter Flowers

Grass area near the Library/Farmers Market

The display of signage describing historical buildings/locations in the Village is recommended. The areas under consideration are near 8140 Main, which is the site of the old grist mill, and downtown near the clock. The signs will display a historical image of the building and text that describes its historical relevance.

Dexter Community Schools owns a significant amount of land in the Village. Engaging them in the idea of placing public art on their property will help to further the plan. The Committee will coordinate and collaborate with local schools to provide support and guidance and create opportunities. Creating a stable line of communication is essential to stay in touch with the schools' needs and how we can help each other.

Selection of the Art

Establishment of a Selection Committee consisting of:

- Three members of the Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee (not including the ex-officio)
- The ex-officio or other Council representative
- One member from the Parks & Recreation Commission who is a Village resident
- One member of the Downtown Development Authority
- One member of the Planning Commission
- Two at-large Village Residents

When necessary, the committee may request the services of an art professional such as a public art administrator, artist, architect, landscape architect, art historian, museum curator, art critic, and/or educator to act as a consultant for the selection process.

The decision by the committee will require a two-thirds majority vote of the nine members.

Art Selection Methods

Published announcements (electronic, print, and /or web-based) will inform artists of the project and the criteria and procedures for selection, including the necessary submission requirements. The selection procedures will include but are not limited to the following:

(1) Request for Proposal (RFP)

If an artist is selected based on a request for proposal, artists responding to the RFP will send in examples of past completed work, a resume and a proposal for the specific project. Proposals typically include: drawing(s), images or a model, a written description of the artwork, a budget and a timeline for completion.

The Selection Committee will meet to review the proposals. The Selection Committee will recommend its selection to the ACH. The ACH will vote on the recommendation and will forward its recommendation to Village Council for their approval.

The information sent to the Village Council will contain information about the selection process, including information about the other artists who submitted proposals and the reason(s) why the ACH is making the recommendation.

(2) Direct Selection

Direct Selection is the hiring an artist or purchasing an existing work of art. This type of selection may be needed when there is a single clear choice or sole source in terms of the artistic solution for a project.

The ACH will forward the recommendation to Village Council for their approval. The ACH Committee will include information as to why the direct selection method was chosen.

(3) Receipt of a Gift

A work of art that already exists may be accepted as a gift for a specific site. The work of art may be received from the artist, his/her estate, a gallery or a collector. Proposed

gifts to the Village of works of art for placement in public places, or of funds for the acquisition of works of art for placement in public places will be reviewed by the ACH. Once reviewed, the ACH will forward the recommendation to the Village Council for their approval.

Selection Committee Criteria

The Selection Committee evaluates proposals using the following criteria:

- Quality of presentation and artistic merit
- Technical abilities
- Strength of past artwork
- Proven ability to work effectively with a community
- Proven ability to work effectively as a team member within an architectural context
- Experience working in public settings
- Experience fabricating and installing permanent and temporary artwork
- Demonstration of a commitment to reflecting the diversity and cultural richness of the Village
- Input from artist(s) references
- Proposals should be suitable for the site

Organization and Maintenance of Public Art

Artists selected to create and provide permanent and temporary works of art will specify the maintenance that will be required for the work of art and submit a maintenance schedule.

The contract for a permanent installation will provide that the artist(s) will be responsible for the first full year of maintenance (after installation of the artwork), including all corrections and/or repairs of the work(s) or art.

The Village will be responsible for the maintenance of the work of art after the one year period expires.

When possible the recommended maintenance will be performed by Village staff. The ACH will advise Village Council when the services of a professional conservator are required to evaluate the status of/perform maintenance on a piece of art.

Responsibility for the maintenance of works of art chosen for temporary display will stay with the artist.

All art, both permanent and temporary, will be entered into a database that includes the maintenance requirements (for permanent pieces), cost, date of installation, date of removal (for temporary pieces), artist contact information, and location.

Potential Funding Methods

Several funding methods exist for the implementation of the public art plan.

General Fund: The General Fund is the basic operating fund of the Village. General fund revenues are derived from property taxes, state-shared revenues, license and permit fees, charges for services,

interest on investments, and court fines. Money received from any source towards public art would likely be channeled through the General Fund.

Grants - Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs: The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) coordinates grants to arts and culture organizations, cities and municipalities, and other nonprofit organizations to encourage, develop and facilitate an enriched environment of artistic, creative and cultural activity in Michigan.

Grants - Arts Alliance: This Washtenaw County organization is a re-granting agency for mini-grants provided by the MCACA.

Grants - Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan: The Community Foundation is governed by a board of community leaders which awards grants to support a wide variety of activities and programs benefiting education, arts and culture, health, human services, community development and civic affairs in the seven-county region of southeast Michigan.

Donations/Gifts/Memorials: Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations and individuals could contribute in-kind and financially towards the placement of public art in the community.

Fundraising: Dedicated fundraising efforts could be used to generate revenue.

Contractual Agreement: Temporary art displays could be furnished through a contractual agreement

Final Recommendations

The Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee is pleased to present this plan to Village Council for its consideration. Public Art will help to put the finishing touches on our beautiful community. Adoption and implementation of this plan over the next five years will show the Village's commitment to the arts in a public way. These public displays of commitment will increase the likelihood that residents, merchants and artists will support the program through gifts, donations and a desire to display their work.

The Committee would also like to recommend that the Planning Commission consider requesting that new developments include a piece of public art or a heritage sign during the site plan review process. The Committee understands that this would be a voluntary addition to a site plan, but offering it as a suggestion would encourage developers to consider it as part of their site development process.

This plan is intended to be a living document. If an opportunity presents itself to put a piece of art in a location not specifically identified in this report, it should be judged on its benefit to the community and not dismissed because it was not contemplated by the plan.

Further Reference

Goldstein, Barbara. *Public Art by the Book*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.

Walljasper, Jay. *The Great Neighborhood Book: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Placemaking*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 2007.

Project for Public Spaces. *How to Turn a Place Around: A Handbook for Creating Successful Public Spaces*. New York: Project for Public Spaces, 2000.

Fleming, Ronald Lee. *The Art of Placemaking: Interpreting Community Through Public Art and Urban Design*. London: Merrell, 2007

Online Examples of Local Public Art Projects

<http://treetownmurals.com/mural-art/public-art/manchester-mi-mural/>

http://articles.directorym.com/Adding_Art_To_Business_Spaces_South_Lyon_MI-r961624-South_Lyon_MI.html

http://www.heritage.com/articles/2011/04/13/saline_reporter/news/doc4da5320e72924296868568.txt

<http://www.mackinac.org/11463>

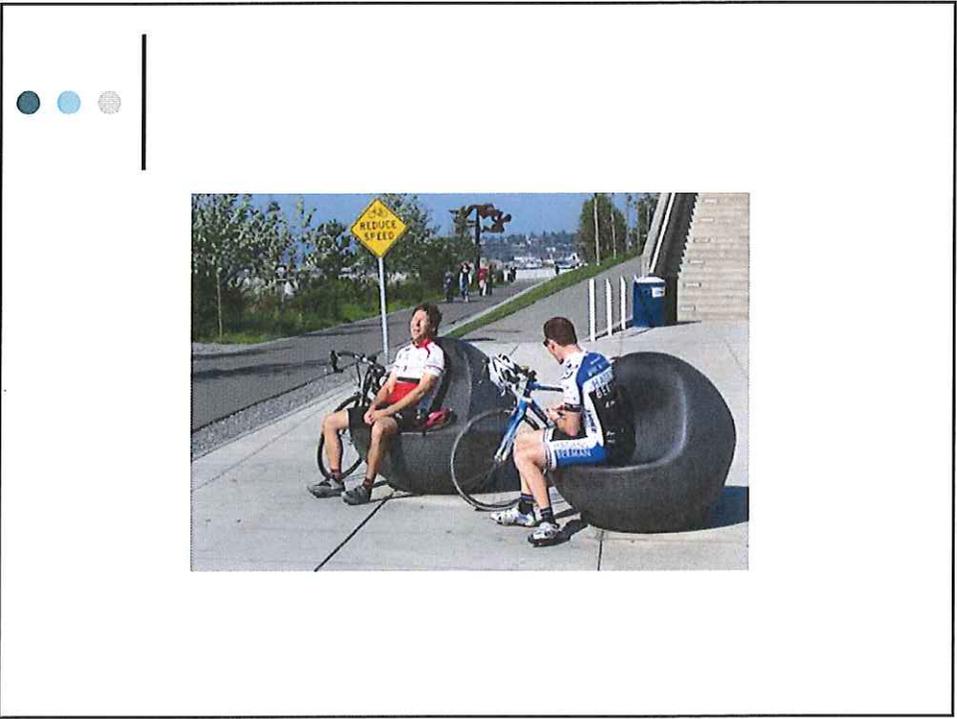
http://www.mytecumseh.org/index.php?option=com_mtree&cf_id=28&lang=en&task=searchby&value=Arts

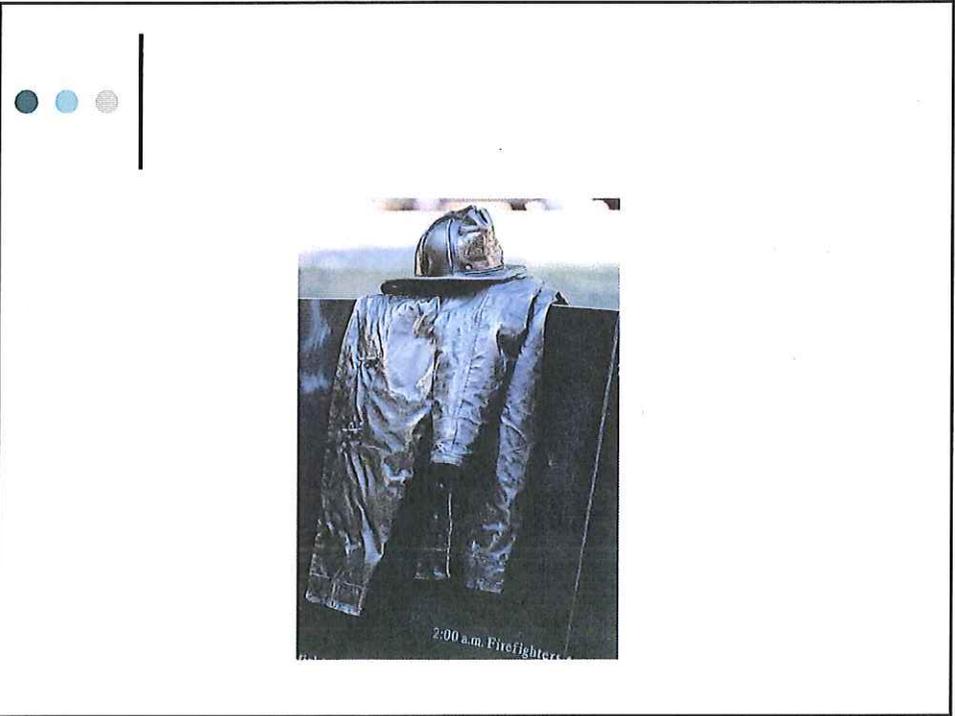
Generating Ideas through Visual Examples: A Power Point Presentation

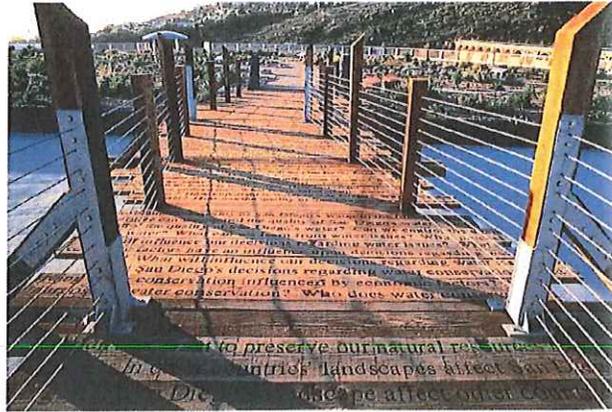
- a. Attached to this document is a hard copy of a power point presentation that illustrates potential for Public Art in Dexter. These images came from several sources:
 - i. Members of the Dexter ACH committee each provided a series of images that they felt best offered ideas for how Dexter could incorporate public art. Some of these images came from Web searches. However, many came from personal experience as committee members reflected on their own encounters with public art in Michigan (and other) locations.
 - ii. ACH committee members used published resources (listed in Further Reading, above) that provided images and examples of how communities have incorporated public art.













Try to make at least three people smile each day.

