



**UrbanArt Commission  
Public Art Oversight Committee  
Wednesday, March 12, 2025 – 1 pm**

**Attendance: Takeyshia Johnson, Yvonne Jones, Jennifer Prudhome-Booker, Eso Tolson, Mario Walker**

**UAC staff: Belinda Herrera, Richard Echols, Lakeisha Edwards, Kelly Seagraves, Kayla J. Smith-Hardy Travis Washington**

## **APPROVALS**

### **I. February 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Smith-Hardy asks for approval of the February 2025 meeting minutes. Tolson approves, Johnson seconds, and the motion passes.

### **II. Project Approvals**

#### **a. Greenlaw Park (Neighborhood Art Initiative)- Schematic Design**

Smith-Hardy shares the next approval is schematic design from Eli Gold for a sculpture in Greenlaw Park. The sculpture location will be the corner of 4th and Greenlaw St. Gold's sculpture piece is going to be called Greenlaw in Bloom and feature Tennessee coneflowers. Smith-Hardy shares there will be original poetry underneath each petal that is set to be created by University of Memphis students. Smith-Hardy reads more from the artist's proposal sharing that solar lighting will be around the base. Gold provides a breakdown of the initial budget for the \$87,000 project. Smith-Hardy notes the necessary considerations of shipping needs, renting materials, and obtaining insurance. Additionally, the proposal highlights that the materials will be for the stems, tubing, and base plate. Smith-Hardy shares the artist concept statement that reads, "The sculptural installation of Green Law in Bloom is going to be celebrating community building impact with Black Seeds, which are our neighborhood partners, and the Uptown Greenlaw space. The design is inspired by the Tennessee coneflower, which is a resilient and native species to the area. It's going to be three large-scale flowers with a concrete base, steel tubing to form the stems, and then the overside blossoms that's going to go into the skyline."

Smith-Hardy shows another image on the slideshow that displays Greenlaw inscribed at the bottom of the sculpture. Prudhome Booker asks if the poets would be local to reiterate the community engagement portion, and Smith-Hardy confirms the poets would be local based.

Smith-Hardy asks for a motion to approve. Prudhome Booker motions, Tolson seconds, and the motion passes.

#### **a. Midtown Crosswalks- Artist Selection**

Smith-Hardy shares the next approval is for artist selection for Midtown crosswalks. Using the last of previously allotted art and environment funds, UAC will manage two crosswalk projects this fiscal year- one in Midtown and one in North Memphis. The team is starting with the Midtown project. Smith-Hardy provides background on artist Khara Woods previously creating city-approved crosswalk templates that can be personalized for different neighborhoods. Smith-Hardy shares the Midtown selection committee provided insights and preferences for a design based on the city pre-approved templates. Smith-Hardy displays images of the city-approved design crosswalk templates created by Woods.

Johnson asks for site location. Smith-Hardy responds that the crosswalks will be located at the intersection of Madison and Avalon St. There is a design budget of \$4000 and a \$10000 fabrication allotment totaling \$14,000 for overall project budget. Johnson shares she is familiar with the location and supports public art being added to liven up the area more. Edwards adds that the Memphis Medical District has already used these templates for some crosswalks in their neighborhood. Edwards shares that the personalized designs will help compliment upcoming development happening as well in the Midtown area and encourage more pedestrian safety and walkability.

Tolson adds that Woods is great for this project. Smith-Hardy reminds the committee that UAC will repeat the same process for crosswalks designed by Khara Woods for North Memphis later this year, in partnership with the Community Redevelopment Agency.

Smith-Hardy asks for a motion to approve the selected artist, Khara Woods. Johnson motions, Prudhome-Booker seconds, and the motion passes.

b. Frayser Library-100%

Echols shares the next approval milestone for Frayer Library is 100% fabrication. Amanda Nalley has all of her pieces for this interactive mural created and ready to be installed. Echols notes that the biggest delay has been waiting for construction at the library to be finalized. Echols shows images of plywood recently being added and glyphs that will be installed and cleated into those spaces. Echols calls out that activity from the nearby Rodney Barber Park led to glass damage, as people were using the glass for shooting targets. The glass had to be replaced. Nalley felt more comfortable waiting closer to the official opening date scheduled for April before installing, so UAC is seeking approval to pay for work already fabricated.

Echols notes there is a remaining final acceptance payment and milestone to approve once the mural is installed. Echols adds that the Movable Collection pieces have already been safely installed in the inside of the Frayser Library as well. Echols asks for a motion to approve, Tolson motions, Walker seconds, and the motion passes.

## **UPDATES**

### **III. Other Project Updates**

#### **a. Bert Ferguson Community Center**

Echols announces that new public art is coming to the Bert Ferguson Community Center. Echols is in conversation with the Site Director, and their first meeting to discuss the ideal mural location is on the way. Additionally, the Site Director is helping UAC identify more community stakeholders to join the selection committee. The goal is to release this call to artists in May.

Prudhome-Booker calls out that this project is exciting. Jones asks for clarification on who Bert Ferguson was. Edwards responds that Ferguson was the first President of WDIA- the nation's

first Black radio station and it started in Memphis. Prudhome-Booker adds that with the pre-existing art getting some shine and choosing a new highly visible location for the new mural will be important for community activation. Johnson asks for a timeline, and Echols responds that the goal is to release the call in early May. Then there is a six week timeline to receive applications. The committee chooses finalists, and then there is another six weeks for site-design proposals creation that will be presented to the selection committee. Johnson names that Councilwoman Green would be excited about this project. Edwards adds this project is from the FY'2025 public art plan.

b. Jesse Turner Park

Smith-Hardy gives an update from the artist Maxwell Emcays who is creating the Jesse Turner Park sculpture. Emcays is in conversation with some concrete vendors locally. Smith-Hardy names that Emcays noted the project budget is getting extremely tight. Emcays likely will make some contingency request in a future PAOC meeting to ensure the materials can be shipped from Chicago to Memphis and that there is enough for the concrete pour. Smith-Hardy shares recent images of Maxwell fabricated sculpture pieces for this work titled Five Pillars. The sculpture will be installed at Jesse Turner Park near the intersection of South Bellevue and East Parkway. Smith-Hardy calls out that the sculpture is coming along really nice and asks if there are any questions or comments. Tolson agrees that sculpture looks great.

Smith-Hardy adds the projected installation timeline is set for this spring with hopes to be completely installed by early summer. Smith-Hardy adds that there has been no issues around communication or mismanagement of funds from the artist leading to this milestone. Smith-Hardy continues that she will share exact numbers for the funding request and more details once received.

Edwards notes to PAOC members to consider this recent upcoming contingency request as a reflection of the growing costs to produce public art. PAOC can help advocate for larger project budgets needed to create more transformative art pieces like the sculpture coming to Jesse Turner Park. Committee members encourage UAC to stay in conversation with Council representatives especially as budget season is approaching. Council members should stay informed about projects in their area and invited to events. The UAC team notes the recommendations and gives thanks.

c. Heights Line

Smith-Hardy shares that an amendment was made for the Heights Line sculpture project to reflect the selected artist, Brandon Scott, will only be designing this piece. Now, UAC will directly pay a fabricator, in this case YoungBlood Studios, who also received an agreement to sign. The amendment language was received from the City's Legal division. The sculpture project is still scheduled to be completed on time in 2026. Smith-Hardy notes there were some recent conversations with the artist and fabricator to align the final design with required drawings before fabrication can begin.

Edwards adds that UAC is moving forward in this direction, so that more new public artists can have assistance and learn more about the fabrication process for creating 3D work. UAC will pay fabrication vendors directly in these instances to avoid any issues with payments and staying within budget. This makes it easier for the selected artists and fabrication vendors to communicate through UAC and have their funds managed properly directly through UAC.

Smith-Hardy adjourns the meeting.

**Upcoming (Zoom) Meeting Dates @ 1:00 PM:**

April 9, 2025