

## Update on Gateway Art Project - Jan 28, 2016

At its January 5, 2016 meeting the City Council voted to award a commission for a site specific piece to Susan Zoccola as described in the original RFQ (request for qualifications) and to allocate \$3,500 to support her to develop a second design proposal for consideration. When that proposal is completed the Council will make a final selection between it and 'Gather'.

Later that same week Public Art Commission Chair, Margaret Garrington, and I both called Ms. Zoccola to discuss the Council's decision and to find out if she was willing to comply. She was very gracious and agreed to produce a second design, which I will refer to as "Option 2".

With this issue resolved we were able to take further steps to implement the Council's decision:

- 1) I have sent a letter to Ms. Zoccola with a synopsis of public comments for her use in her process however she chooses.
- 2) I asked Ms. Garrington to be the single point of contact with the artist on all matters except financial/contractual ones, which will be handled by City staff.
- 3) In this capacity Ms. Garrington sent an email last week to the artist that filled in the details of the Council's decision. It included the following excerpt:

"Thank you for your considerable patience and understanding concerning the Gateway Project. The Ashland Mayor, City Council, and the Public Art Commission are very pleased you have agreed to prepare a second concept for the site. As you know, the City Council will select one of the two concepts for installation at Gateway.

The Council confirmed selection of you as the chosen artist and recognizes your high degree of experience, ability, and talents for creating public art. This means they understand your second concept will continue your established creative process, is a bold engaging contemporary piece, and likely constructed of metal. The request for a second concept confirms the City Council's comfort with all of the RFQ parameters sought by the Public Art Commission for Gateway.

The council is both optimistic and excited about the second concept. In way of explanation of the two concept approach: when the concepts are presented side by side, this gives an opportunity for the City to compare, contrast, and maybe even learn something substantive about the role of public art. We

hope this serves to continue a constructive, thoughtful dialogue between the proponents and opponents of Gather and allow the two groups to come together to discuss the outcome from an informed viewpoint.”

Ms. Garrington also included the original description of the Project and Project Intent from the Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

- 4) Being consistent with the preceding statements, neither Ms. Garrington nor I nor any City staff person will be giving the artist further input for Option 2. I have also asked the Council and city commissions not to contact Ms. Zoccola.
- 5) What hasn't been done is to design the process by which the Council will make its final choice between 'Gather' and Option 2. With the help of staff and Councilors Marsh and Seffinger I will be putting together a proposal for the Council to consider, modify or replace with its own preference. This proposal will include public input and discussion and will be completed in time for either the March 1 or March 15 Council meeting..

Ms. Garrington's full email to the artist, the synopsis of public comment and this report will be posted on the City's website on the Mayor's corner link under Hot Topics.