Lin Lisberger, Chair
Julia Kirby, Vice-Chair
James Cradock
Jenna Crowder
Christopher Devlin
Alison Hildreth
Pandora LaCasse
Tony Muench
Corey Templeton
Brian Batson, City Councilor

Management & Administration
Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer

Portland Public Art Committee
Wednesday, May 17, 2017
4:00-6:00pm, Public Library Room 5

Attendance: Lin Lisberger, Chair, Julia Kirby, Alison Hildreth, Councilor Brian Batson, James Cradock, Jenna Crowder, Chris Devlin, Pandora LaCasse, Tony Muench, Corey Templeton Staff: Caitlin Cameron Not in attendance: Penny Harris

Call to order 4:00pm

Approve minutes from April 19, 2017 [Kirby, LaCasse 8-0]

Project Reports

Art Underfoot: Crowder reported the mold is done and installation of replacement brick will be next month.

[4:06pm Batson arrives]

Maintenance/Conservation:

- No updates on Lincoln Park Fountain or Cloud Couch
- Portland Brick – 3 bricks are missing from Maine Jewish Museum and sign is gone from Commercial Street. Lisberger asked committee how to proceed. Committee decided to install new sign on granite plinth in tree well. Lisberger will call Jeff Tarling to access the granite plinths. Committee will contact artist to get suggestion for replacement bricks. Kirby asked whether anyone has spoken with the Jewish Museum – Lisberger responded not yet. Cradock asked whether new bricks should be shown to congregation first before install to get community buy-in. Devlin asked whether we want to replace the bricks due to the expense. LaCasse reminded the committee that the theft may have nothing to do with the Maine Jewish Museum or the congregation. Cameron asked whether the committee would like to do a press release. Templeton responded that a press release might be a good idea because it brings awareness to the artwork. LaCasse added it must be hard to take the bricks out. Lisberger will follow-up.
- Armillary – The Rotary Club approached the PPAC to offer up to $5,000 for conservation of the work. Lisberger will follow-up with Patrick Plourde. Devlin asked whether Jonathan Taggart should be consulted.

Amethyst Lot: No updates. Public meeting to be held on May 25th for the landscape design. A subcommittee is being formed. Muench shared the latest plans with the committee.

Subcommittee Reports

Governance Committee: Lisberger and several other candidates applied for two openings on the committee. Lisberger did not know how many applicants there were. Interviews are on May 25th. The replacement Creative Portland member will be announced over the summer. Kirby asked whether there would be a benefit to Dinah Minot attending the meetings in the meantime.

Communications Committee:

- Council Outreach: Kirby met with Ali and Ray and has a meeting with Costa on Friday. Lisberger is trying to get a hold of Mavadones and Duson. LaCasse and Templeton will meet with Thibodeau and Strimling. Lisberger will also talk about the committee's work during interview.
- PSA: Kirby will send the PSA file to Cradock to post online. Cradock asked to schedule a time to update the website with Lisberger. Kirby asked for ideas on where to distribute the PSA – film festivals?

Other Business:

Congress Square: Sze Studio submitted three schemes for review, discussion, and approval. Cameron reviewed the project timeline, goals and parameters, and overall process. LaCasse described the approved concept. Sarah Sze called at 4:30pm to present the proposals and answer questions. Twelve members of the public were present.
Questions:

- LaCasse: Important artwork is seen from cars as well as pedestrians – how can the schemes be modified to be visible gateways? SS: Strongest potential for that is scheme 1 and could be raised and grow depending on funding.
- Lisberger: Is shattered sphere concave or convex? SS: depends if viewed from inside or outside. Presents to street as a sphere and presents to park as a nest. The reflecting pool could also face outward but can't get as high – about 6' tall max. Stainless steel is also more expensive. Outside/inside intended to be different experiences. If street view is important, strongest in shattered sphere.
- Lisberger: We don't want to block view into the park. SS: Potential for artwork to be backlit or for sunlight to create shadows.
- LaCasse: Would it be possible to use reflective surfaces on shattered sphere? What is the nature of the structure/armature? SS: Similar to High Line material that reads as structure but is also beautiful. Feeling of floating, drawing-like, flipping between structure and sculpture.
- LaCasse: What interactions with the artwork do you anticipate? SS: Expect people will touch or climb so has to be thick enough to support that activity. Graffiti, etc. considered – practicality will shape the final design.
- HIldreth: Like the polished steel/reflection but also like material/color of hammocks – as the work develops, can elements be combined? SS: All three relate to each other, not set in stone. One experience inside versus outside. Exact detail doesn't need to be set in stone now. Shattered sphere could be reflective. One material per side – one image, not a mix of reflective with enamel.
- Hildreth: What is the scale of the mothership piece? SS: Depends on budget, most flexible scheme is shattered sphere, less flexible is hammocks (human scale), reflecting pool would take up more ground space.
- Lisberger: Worried reflective surface would disappear with snow – what are the considerations for maintenance and landscape? SS: Landscape would have to be hand-cut or allowed to grow, would prefer over-grown. Melting snow would have a reveal/emergent effect.
- Lisberger: Could the third piece spread further away from the first two? SS: Would resist changing the location – proposal would change. Artwork should be surrounded by greenery.
- Lisberger: Have you had a conversation with Patrick Cullina yet about the landscape? SS: A little, but seems flexible, wild landscape and proposal responds to that.

- LaCasse: Is the sphere rising from the ground or is it raised? SS: Scaffolding will have bottom of sphere raised off the ground at about knee level.

Public Comment:

- Ian Jacob: Concern about words such as "shattered" and "degredation" which are in opposition to the redesign of the park. SS: Degredation can have positive meaning, passage of time, narrative arc, live and material. Project is about landscape which is dynamic.
- Ian Jacob: What are you hoping a lay person will take away? SS: Wonder, draw you in and encircle you.
- Ian Jacob: How did the site inform/relate to work? SS: The work could only exist in Congress Square, it is a response to how the landscape has been shaped, encircle to draw away from busy street. It is specific to the scale of the park, draw people up the hill.
- Mark Bessire: What is the scale of the shattered sphere? SS: 10 to 20' height off the ground, feeling of being inside.
- Mark Bessire: Can you look inside if it's that tall? SS: Will send examples.
- Mark Bessire: Why hammock shape or form with an "abandoned" narrative? SS: Causes you to think about behavior of landscape and people. It is a portable site/habitat.
- Pat O'Donnel: Concern about practicality of hammocks. SS: Certainly a practical concern for this piece, compromise to accommodate safety, probably make them inaccessible but tethered. It is a more intimate piece and doesn't have as much possibility to be iconic. Very intimate.
- David Kelly: Share concerns about hammock – is it rigid? What is the longevity? What happens when trees grow? SS: Ideally they are attached to trees and change attachments with growth, technical challenges.
- Ian Jacob: How would the materials hold up with birds, freeze/thaw? SS: Can't have an unrealistic expectation that these site realities compromise the value of the work. Stainless would have to be polished but scratches could be buffed. Long term plan for maintenance and no working parts.
- Ethan Hipple: Do you have a favorite? SS: Like each for different reasons, shattered sphere has the range. Like doing hidden, intimate pieces.

Discussion of proposal:

- LaCasse: Like the flexibility of sphere and pieces will still have sense of discovery. Like idea of reflectivity and bringing sky to the ground. Doesn't necessarily need to be reflective everywhere. Like the interpretation of the scaffolding, rhythm created. Concern about the pool disappearing for many months in winter. Less excited by hammocks.
- Hildreth: Agree with LaCasse. Like the mothership piece because most reflective.
- Muench: Space has become a fabric and artwork proposed also indicative of fabric and falls in with fabric of space rather than one large sculpture. Sphere answers the iconic desire.
- Devlin: Shattered sphere – what is the image? Sky but possible reflective.
- Templeton: Shattered sphere is multi-dimension is appealing to think about at night, more vertical presence.
- Crowder: Sphere and pool combination, elements of pool that come up from ground, landscaping doesn't have to be grasses. Polished steel brings maintenance questions. Like the idea of discovery elements.
- Lisberger: Sphere has potential for both sphere melting to pool.
- Cradock: Complement each other – could also reflect sound. Concern about grass overgrowing (Tracing the Fore).
- Lisberger: Concern about behavior with pool.
- Devlin: Agree it's a skateboarding risk.
- Kirby: Space should be expansive rather than looking down at pool; like sphere
- LaCasse: Scaffolding brings more to the piece.
- Batson: Liked reflection but prefer sphere because it is beckoning – combine the two.
- Crowder: Dappled effect will be created, seeing site through gaps of scattered pieces.

- Devlin: Thoughts on “disintegration”? Public sentiment with sense of destruction? Lisberger and Crowder agree language could be adjusted.

Staff will send follow-up email to Sze Studio with these comments to give direction.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm

Submitted by: Caitlin Cameron