

**Sculpture Walk Open Forum Minutes**  
**Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2013**  
**Springfield Art Museum**

Nick Nelson welcomed the attendees to the Springfield Art Museum and introduced himself.

Leah Hamilton, Director of the Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC), provided an introduction of the SRAC and the Cultural Plan including goals found that support the idea of a sculpture walk. She recognized Karen and Mike Schneider and Bob and Peg Carolla for providing inspiration for the meeting.

Pam RuBert, President of the Springfield Regional Arts Council, showed her work mapping public art on Google Earth and [springfieldarts.com](http://springfieldarts.com) <<http://springfieldarts.com>> . She mentioned that there had been no significant additions to Springfield public art in over ten years. Talked about the yarn bombing of the Art Museum was a metaphor to a sculpture and public art walk, a reminder that we should include street art and non-traditional arts along with traditional arts in our concepts, and also that we need to collaborate and not be in competition with each other.

Russ RuBert, a Past President of the Springfield Regional Arts Council and lead artist at the IdeaXFactory, introduced the IdeaXfactory and talked about the ArtPlace national grant application in which IdeaXFactory was a finalist.

Rusty Worley, Executive Director of the Urban Districts Alliance, reviewed recent reports of Springfield public spaces in Center City as well as maps of current underutilized pedestrian spaces that could be potential sites for a sculpture walk.

Jonathan Gano, Assistant Director for Public Works explained that the maps on the easels would be used after the discussion for feedback on where attendees would like to see art placed. Jonathan explained that attendees could pick up green stickers and place them on the map as indicators.

Comments and questions from attendees followed, moderated by Nick:

- Need for a Public Arts Commission or similar body made up of members of the arts community that will formalize partnerships and oversee public art projects.
- There should be themes that use local history and the environment as the "iconic image", ex. Henry Schoolcraft, Natural Prairie Gardens, parks.
- Public art projects should tie into public parks and gardens.

- Establishing a Public Arts Commission would make it easier to reach out to the arts community. Would prefer a dedicated committee seeking out specific artists than just an open call.
- Projects should have broader appeal than just art by including other things like "Art and nature."
- Projects should beautify unexpected spaces like highway medians.
- Where is the funding going to come from?
- Projects should change like mural walls that are painted over and repainted by artists or permanent easels that artists can draw or paint on.
- Projects should go in existing spaces like parking garages.
- The project should be similar to the Sculpture Walk in Sioux Falls, SD and should include educational programming.
- There should be a connective element like painted lines or bricks similar to Boston's Freedom Trail (<http://www.thefreedomtrail.org/freedom-trail/>). Sale of the bricks could be used to fund the project.
- Small sculptural elements can also connect various sites and sculptures.
- Project should be similar to Philadelphia's "Mural Mile" (<http://muralarts.org/>)
- By incorporating bike trails, public art could have a broader reach and cover more of the city.
- Projects should include the public schools and be participatory. School children should be involved with the projects.
- Projects should beautify "ugly", "desolate", or "overlooked" spaces like painting murals on the underside of overpasses.
- Projects should have a large impact on artists in the community. Instead of bringing in one or two sculptures, we should create opportunities for the largest number of artists to participate. This is the advantage of having changing public art.
- There should be an iconic artwork that serves as an attraction and point of interest. For example, Roxy Paine's tree at Crystal Bridges. (<http://www.jamescohan.com/artists/roxy-paine/>) The Museum should have a work like this.
- Projects should include as much of the community as possible, not just downtown, in order to bridge parts of the community.
- There should be an attempt to attract tourists to boost the economy.
- What is the next step? Where do we go from here?
- Forming a Public Arts Commission should be the next step.
- There should be design charrettes that involve the public to develop ideas.
- Projects should incorporate walking audio tours.
- Some artists in the community don't know what to do or how to be involved. They are unsure about their role and what they are "allowed to do." They want clarity.

Leah asked for continued input through written comments and to sign up for email contact on the way out so that they can receive future correspondence.

Jonathan Gano invited the public to place stickers on the maps where they would like to see art located.

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- The forum closed at 6:45 pm.

### **Comment Cards:**

To elaborate on “small things”: these are smaller sculptures i.e. a bronze bird on a traffic light that create continuity between points of major emphasis, and as I mentioned not unlike the yarn that lead us to this meeting. There was a “common thread” that united the points of creative interest.

Color is a good unifier as well – This world works well when considering the addition of behavioral interest.

I like the suggested idea that we create an icon that identifies the area designated a part of the “art” complex. This icon could also, most importantly be used in the “desolate” area as a connective feature between the already established area giving unity to the adjunct setting that defines Springfield’s “art” complex.

Please consider “sustainable” and/or recyclable art media as a category to bring an area connection to greenway trails – solar driven – kinetics, earth, construction, etc.

Moxie Cinema “Traveling projector” to show movies, artwork, etc. on various exterior walls throughout center city in parks, etc.

Several ideas – none of which involve my art (as I practice none) – 1. Poetry sidewalks – St. Paul, MN – 2. Photo exhibitions with changing photographs (plexiglass frames) – Montreal Canada – 3. “Roving piano” – which appears during Artwalk or other special events that is available to be used by musicians. Further edification available by contacting Sally Baird; [sabaird55@hotmail.com](mailto:sabaird55@hotmail.com)

(Focus – don’t get so broad –nothing gets done. I am getting weary of the focus on the square. I think art and landscaping around the Museum and the empty space west would be great.

Please consider a community committee to select the art and perhaps a theme: Love the ideas: public school student art - utilizing existing structures

\*Mind fullness (perhaps social/community themes) for examples see:  
Both on TED Talks – JR – French street artist – inside out project and Candy  
Chang – Before I Die I Want to ....Project

I would like to propose the starting point be the Springfield Art Museum. I have offered a proposal for a children's garden (sculptures, mosaic, murals, gardens) in the main courtyard with a garden arts studio in replacement of the current conference room with Tower Aeroponic gardens and architecture highlighting nature (Moshe F.L. Wright). I also would like to see a similar art nature (healing art) connection at the new Mercy Children's Hospital. My proposals have been sent to the Art Museum, Mercy and the Creamery. – Thank you for listening.