



WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

WEST CHICAGO CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Thursday, December 1, 2022

West Chicago City Hall – 475 Main Street

7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Establishment of a Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Cultural Arts Commission Meeting: November 3, 2022
3. Public Participation/Presentations
4. Items for Discussion and Possible Action
 - a. Art Banner Exhibit 2022
 - b. Art Banner Exhibit 2023: Program Outline
 - c. Summer 2023: Andy Warhol “Popcan” Initiative
 - d. Tampico Mural Discussion
 - e. CAC Meeting Time
5. Other Business
6. Adjournment

CC: Mayor Ruben Pineda, City Council, Michael Guttman, West Chicago Cultural Arts Commissioners, Media, Daniel Peck

West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission
Thursday, November 3, 2022
7:00pm
MINUTES

1. Call to Order at 7:08pm by Heidi Kuharich; Roll Call: Uwe Gsedl, Jacob Hernandez, Anni Holm, Heidi Kuharich, Buddy Plumlee, and City Liaison Daniel Peck in attendance; Quorum established
Guests: Don Feld
2. Approve Minutes of October 6, 2022
 - a. Anni Holm made motion to approve, Uwe Gsedl seconded; Approved unanimously
3. Public Participation/Presentation: Don Feld of TAG (Thorium Action Group) spoke to Commission regarding TAG's longstanding efforts to remediate the Kerr-McGee effects in the community and to seek input on recognition for those efforts when the parcel of land is transitioned into a park. Ideas included the park name or a memorial or art installation with a plaque that commemorates those efforts for posterity's sake.
4. Items for Discussion and Possible Action
 - a. Welcome New Member, Jacob Hernandez
 - b. Alebrijes Projects
 - i. Portals: two full boxes of wreaths remain/Dan Peck confirmed they cannot be returned to the vendor/need to discuss options; Heidi Kuharich asked about MCC retrospective exhibit of Alebrijes originally discussed at outset of project season/no further discussions have been had
 - ii. Sculpture: Heidi Kuharich reported that the WeGo Amigo needs to be moved from Library by 11.14.22, suggested move date of 11.6.22 to allow time for raindate; Heidi Kuharich mentioned delivery of a treat basket for the Library Staff from the entire Commission for being so welcoming during the entire project and wrote a letter on CAC behalf to the Library Trustees to express gratitude, tout staff, and promote future partnership
 - c. Banner Exhibit—Project Outline
 - i. 2023 Planning: Dan Peck submitted proposal of roll-out; Commission rejected schedule that would cut the summer banner display in July instead of the long-established September end; Heidi Kuharich noted that in every instance, the title should be "Vitality/Vitalidad" regardless of language version; Buddy Plumlee will contact first choice of juror, David Exner; remaining juror shortlist includes: Judith Horsley, Sara Phalen, past Mayor (Michael Fortner)
 - ii. 2022 Recognition: follow-up discussion on certificates for all participating artists/Buddy Plumlee, Uwe Gsedl, Heidi Kuharich will work to produce all; renovations at City Hall preventing traditional solo show for People's Choice Award recipient, Heidi Kuharich will work with Gallery 200 to offer location as an option
5. Other Business
 - a. Heidi Kuharich noted that the at-a-glance document has been removed from the CAC page of the City website
 - b. Uwe Gsedl requested reconsideration on moving standing CAC meeting date/time; Dan Peck will distribute a Doodle Poll to gain consensus
 - c. Discussion on ideas to support COD 2024 Warhol Exhibit: banners should NOT be the answer; Anni Holm suggested wrapping downtown trash cans in Campbell's Mushroom Soup can design to honor the West Chicago farm connection; Buddy Plumlee will submit proposal document
6. Adjournment: 8.53pm

West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission: Agenda Items

Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

1. Art Banner Exhibit 2022 – Cont'd Discussion

- a. During the previous meeting on Thursday, November 3 the Commission discussed creating certificates for participating artists and having an exhibit for the People's Choice Award winner.
This is a continued discussion regarding closing out the 2022 Art Banner Exhibit Program/Project.

2. Art Banner Exhibit 2023 – Project Outline

- a. During the previous meeting on Thursday, November 3 the Commission was presented with a potential timeline for the 2023 Art Banner Exhibit that would change the length of the overall exhibit. The Commission was not in favor of changing the timeline.
- b. City staff will present components of a draft Downtown Streetlight Pole Banner Program that will showcase dates for all streetlight pole banner initiatives along with some potential options for the Commission to consider and provide commentary. City staff intends to present a formal Streetlight Pole Banner Program to the Public Affairs Committee in January 2023.

3. Summer 2023: Andy Warhol "Popcan" Initiative

- a. Members of the Commission will present a proposal for a public art project that will involve decorating trash cans throughout the downtown area. The project will coincide with a larger City initiative that will decorate the downtown area with aspects of the pop art culture, primarily artist Andy Warhol, through the summer months.

4. Tampico Murals – Cont'd Discussion

- a. During the Commission's previous meeting on Thursday, October 6 the Commission discussed murals being displayed at Tampico.
 - i. Background: Currently there are two murals on the façade with the initial mural being installed in coordination with the Commission, and most recently, a mural was installed for the "Year of the Alebrijes" that was not associated with the Commission.
Although an initiative may have been discussed by the Commission in previous years, and two murals have been installed, there is no reference to a program. In order to meet the functions of this Commission, members of such must establish a program that provides some details as to their wishes and objectives that can then be presented to the Public Affairs Committee/City Council.
 - ii. Staff recommended the Commission formulate a concept plan for a Program in which the Commission could serve as the primary recommending group for public art displays in the City of West Chicago. As a component of the Program, interested artists/groups could complete a registration form in which the details of their proposed artwork would be outlined. The details could then be reviewed and discussed by the Commission, which could then provide a recommendation for approval to the City Council providing the artwork fit within the parameters established within the Program.

5. Commission Meeting Time

- a. Members of the Commission mentioned conflicts with schedules and requested an attempt to change the times of meeting be considered. A Doodle poll was sent to Commission members with 4 of the 6 members responding. Based on the results, there were only two available times in which a majority of members (3+) could meet, which included Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., or Thursday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- b. The Commission will need to decide on how to proceed based on the results.

Agenda Item 2: Downtown Streetlight Pole Banner Program Summary [ATTACHEMENT]

Provided is a summary of the City's current streetlight pole banner displays, an overview of components of a proposed Downtown Streetlight Pole Banner Program, an overview of the necessity to change the timeline for the Art Banner Exhibit, and options for consideration.

Background

Currently, banners in the downtown area are installed and removed loosely at different times throughout the year. The City has no formal program, guidelines, or any other form of documentation that outlines the process for City staff to follow. Provided is a general summary of the content of banners displayed, and when they are displayed.

- Art Banner Exhibit Program (late-May/early-June through mid-September)
- Mexican Heritage Month (mid-September through early-October)
- Veterans' Day Banner Program (early-October through late-November)
- General winter banners (late-November through early-April)
- General spring designs (early-April through late-May/early-June)

West Chicago Downtown Streetlight Pole Banner Program - Overview

The Downtown Streetlight Pole Banner Program would provide the framework that would allow different displays to be cycled systematically on the City's streetlight poles in the downtown area. Displays would be meant to correlate with the changing of the seasons as well as the City's annual seasonal downtown special events.

Goals

- **Establish Routine Schedule for Banner Displays:** Establish a standard schedule and processes that City staff can routinely follow to successfully install and remove displays systematically each year.
- **Create Interest in the Downtown Area:** Utilize banner displays as a marketing tool that creates interest in the downtown area and provides an additional unique characteristic for each of the City's downtown special events and summer initiatives.

Cyclical Schedule for Displays

Provided in the table below is a general program schedule for when a display should be installed, and when it should be removed. As stated, the Program aims to provide fresh displays during each of the City's main downtown special events. With this in mind, the table also identifies the special event that that will occur during the display.

	Begin	End	Weeks on Display	Event During Display
Spring	First full week of March	First full week of June	14 Weeks	Blooming Fest
Summer	Second full week of June	Last week of August	12 Weeks	Food Festival
Fall 1	First week of September	Last full week of September	4 Weeks	Mexican Independence Day
Fall 2	First week of October	Third full week of November	8 Weeks	Halloween Festivities
Winter	Last week of November	First week of March	14 Weeks	Frosty Fest

2023 Streetlight Pole Banner Display Schedule

	2023 Begin	2023 End
Spring	Monday, March 6, 2023	Sunday, June 11, 2023
Summer	Monday, June 12, 2023	Sunday, September 3, 2023
Fall 1	Monday, September 4, 2023	Sunday, October 1, 2023
Fall 2	Monday, October 2, 2023	Sunday, November 26, 2023
Winter	Monday, November 27, 2023	Sunday, March 3, 2024

2024 Streetlight Pole Banner Display Schedule

	2024 Begin	2024 End
Spring	Monday, March 4, 2024	Sunday, June 9, 2024
Summer	Monday, June 10, 2024	Sunday, September 1, 2024
Fall 1	Monday, September 2, 2024	Sunday, September 29, 2024
Fall 2	Monday, September 30, 2024	Sunday, November 24, 2024
Winter	Sunday, November 24, 2024	Sunday, March 2, 2025

Overview of Different Banner Displays

Provided is general summary of each of the seasonal displays that are part of the Program, along with their general timeframe.

- Spring (March - Early June)
 - West Chicago Art Banner Exhibit Program
 - The West Chicago Art Banner Exhibit is an annual program that allows artists to submit artwork based on a particular theme to be part of an exhibit that is on display through the streetlight pole banners. The public is asked to vote on their favorite artwork, which is then declared the “People’s Choice Award” winner for the year.
- Summer (June - August)
 - WeGo Summer Showcase Program
 - The WeGo Summer Showcase series coincides with a creative placemaking initiative in the City’s downtown area each year. Banner displays will reinforce the initiative and provide additional support in promoting the City’s downtown as a place to visit.
- Fall (September – November)
 - Mexican Heritage Month (September)
 - The City decorates the downtown area with different items, including streetlight pole banners, to commemorate and celebrate Mexican Heritage Month.
 - Veterans Banner Program (October – November)
 - The City displays the images and names of local Veterans throughout the downtown that are on display through Veterans’ Day.
- Winter (December – February)
 - (Current) General Winter

Art Banner Exhibit - Reschedule

As part of the Program, a firm schedule is being proposed along with the inclusion of another display for the summer season. With the potential changes that would accommodate an additional summer display series, there would need to be a restructuring of the City's Art Banner Exhibit Display, which is currently loosely on display from late-spring/early-summer (May and June) through fall (September).

One concern with changing dates is that there would potentially be a lower turn-out for the voting portion of the Exhibit for the "People's Choice Award." City staff investigated the voting periods from the previous three years, and provided the initial analysis.

- In 2020, voting began on June 17. Within the first ten days, 109 people voted which accounted for 56% of the overall votes. Over the next 30 days, 96 people voted which accounted for 49% of the overall votes. And, over the final 50 days, 5 people voted which accounted for 3% of the overall vote.
- In 2021, voting began on May 25. Within the first ten days, 215 people voted which accounted for 62% of the overall votes. Over the next 30 days, 18 votes were counted which accounted for 5% of the overall votes. And, over the final 60 days, 128* people voted which accounted for 37% of the overall vote.
- In 2022, voting began on June 23. Within the first ten days, 233 people voted which accounted for 79% of the overall votes. Over the next 30 days, 39 people voted which accounted for 13% of the overall votes. And, over the final 45 days, 25 people voted which accounted for 8% of the overall vote.

() Within a 4 day period between August 27 and August 31, 75 of 112 votes were made during Food Festival.*

In reviewing the data, staff concluded that the bulk of voting occurs primarily within the first 10 days of opening the portal (56%-79% of total votes), and interest primarily wanes after the 40-day mark (67%-95% of total votes).

Based on this initial analysis, staff believes that changing the dates of the display to be primarily through spring should not interfere with how people vote. In retrospect, a potential second larger pool of votes may occur towards the end of the cycle of the newly proposed dates as the final days would be during the Blooming Fest event. Having an earlier exhibit would also provide the City an attraction to the downtown area prior to any of its regular large-scale events.

Options

The following options are presented to provide potential scenarios for 2023 and beyond.

- **Option 1:**
Implement the timeline as-is, with the Art Banner Exhibit being on display from March 6 through June 11.
- **Option 2:**
Implement the 2023 timeline with the following incremental change to the Art Banner Exhibit:
 - Install the general spring banners from the first full week of March through the first full week of April (4 Weeks);
 - Install Art Banner Exhibit from first full week of April through first full week of July (14 Weeks); and

- Install the Summer Showcase Series from second full week of July through the last week of August (8 weeks).

In 2024, the City could implement the Program as-is with the full change of schedule as proposed.

- **Option 3**
Revise and redraft the Program to accommodate previous timeline for Art Banner Exhibit, and remove the Summer Showcase Series option.

Agenda Item 3: Summer 2023: Andy Warhol “Popcan” Initiative [ATTACHEMENT]

Provided is an initial draft created by members of the Cultural Arts Commission for a summer public art project initiative.

PopCans

Garbage Can Makeover Display

PROPOSAL FOR PUBLIC ART PROJECT WARHOL SOUP CAN THEME / POPULAR CULTURE ART FORM

Background: The McAninch Arts Center at the College of Dupage will be featuring a comprehensive exhibition of American Pop Artist Andy Warhol’s work in 2023. Warhol’s serigraphic images of Campbell Soup cans are among the most iconic of the Pop Art movement. It is impossible to not recognize the immediate visual connection to West Chicago’s history as the main producer of Campbell Soup’s mushrooms for their mushroom soup. With this in mind, and in the interest of joining other local arts organizations in promoting projects that are mutually beneficial, and in the spirit of cooperation between local entities, the West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission proposes a public art project that participates in the celebration of this important American artist.

The proposal is to transform city sidewalk garbage cans in the downtown area into visual representations of Warhol soup cans:

- City will provide support materials (TBD: fiberglass, vinyl, wood surfaces) that will be painted on or wrapped with printed vinyl of art
- City will provide artist(s) with a \$100 debit card from Blick Artist Materials to purchase materials [may be extended if one artist designs multiple cans]
- Supports will be temporarily attached/mounted to the city garbage can holders in the downtown area to form uniform cylinder around existing can forms
- Each can would begin with a template design including a historical point where the ingredients, UPC, company info would typically be found.

Shortened version of below or serialized from can to can or QR codes:

Prince Crossing Farm/Campbell Soup Mushroom Farm

In 1947 the Campbell Soup Company started growing mushrooms for their soups. They opened their Fresh Mushroom Farm, also known as Prince Crossing Farm, just south of Hawthorne Lane on Prince Crossing Road in West Chicago. This was the first and most profitable of Campbell’s eight mushroom farms.

Mushrooms were grown on compost from used racehorse bedding. The majority was sold to groceries and restaurants, and about 10% was used in Campbell’s Soup. Growing mushrooms in the six wooden barns was a very labor-intensive and dangerous

business from start to finish. Employment agents actively recruited Mexican workers to grow and hand-harvest the mushrooms.

Many local families who came to work for Campbell's had been migrant workers and now were given year-round employment. Like the railroads, Campbell's provided housing for its workers on site. Initially, workers and their families were housed in barns and chicken coops on the property. Later, cinder block apartments were built for families.

Campbell's ran a very restrictive company town, with its 100 or so employees dependent on the available grocery, cafeteria, and laundry. The grocery store provided Campbell Soup and subsidiary products at reduced prices. Families supplemented these items by growing vegetables in plots behind their apartments. Campbell's paid all utilities.

1962 Strike

In early October 1962, Prince Crossing Farm mushroom workers went out on strike, protesting long hours, poor pay, and dangerous working conditions, after a Mexican worker was electrocuted. All but about 10% of the 125 employees sought to join the Teamster's Union. This was the first strike Campbell's had with its two mushroom farms (the other was in California).

The workers were from Texas, Mexico and Puerto Rico, and most spoke only Spanish. One employee who was supporting his family with five children received \$1.35 an hour. Campbell's said its workers were the highest paid of any mushroom farm in the Midwest. Six day work weeks of 60-70 hours and no overtime pay exploited the laborers who were not allowed to unionize.

Father Stephen Kos, associate pastor from St. Mary's, came out to support the striking workers. Father Kos reported that they had been denied certain basic rights as workers and that as the poor they had no other place to work; the church was involved as an upholder of the dignity of man.

The strike lasted 20 days and ended when the National Labor Relations Board would not recognize the Teamsters as the workers' bargaining agent. The Prince Crossing employees were judged to be agricultural employees, and as such they were legally exempt from unionization based on the federal law.

Workers got a five cent an hour pay raise, the addition of two more holidays and the establishment of a grievance committee. Although the concessions gained were not great, the strike was notable as the first attempt to organize agricultural workers in the Midwest, and received national news coverage. Teamsters at Campbell Soup Company plants in Sacramento, California, and Camden, New Jersey, went out on strike in solidarity with West Chicago. For those who had been "treated like second rate human beings," it was a moral victory which put a spotlight on injustice.

In 1974, Campbell's treatment of its workers continued to be an issue. The company refused to allow Illinois Migrant Council workers onsite to talk to residents about improving language and work skills. It used state trespass laws to limit access to the town, allowing only relatives to enter or those specifically given permission. The Illinois Migrant Council sued and in 1977 Campbell was ordered as result of a federal court decision to allow them access. The court stated that Prince Crossing Farm was legally a "company town," and even though meetings were held on its private property, the First

Amendment rights to free speech of its residents were guaranteed. Campbell lost this legal battle on appeal.

Prince Crossing was the last company town in Illinois, when its resident facilities closed in 1981. At the time, about 50 residents were still living in the company-provided rental housing. Sometime after the 1962 strike the company began to charge \$88 a month rent. A payment of \$2500 was offered to each family for relocation costs. Some of the six remaining families had lived in the two room cinder block apartments for as long as 20 years.

Option A: community participation

Participation will be open to residents of West Chicago

Option B: open artist participation

Participation will be open to artists of West Chicago [...or DuPage or no limit]

Option C: targeted artist(s) participation

Participation will be open to selected artists invited by CAC

Add-Ons:

Include other City property (city vehicles, building windows, walls, utility boxes, light poles, police cars, fire trucks, sidewalks, pavement, etc.) similarly with vinyl wraps or rigid supports with similar or expanded Warhol designs (Brillo, etc) or referencing Warhol design with West Chicago history/imagery (Union Pacific, Campbell mushroom farm, General Mills, Jel-Sert, Ball, etc.)