



Cultural Arts Programs

Cultural Arts & Marketing Division

PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM V.A.3

Title: Fire Station 18 Project Artist's Preliminary Design
Submitted by: Kristen Zaremba, Assistant Public Art Coordinator
Committee Date: March 2, 2009

SUMMARY

Staff requests Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) review and approval of the preliminary design for the Fire Station 18 Project as presented by selected artist Laurel True. PAAC approval of the design will allow the artist to proceed with final design and fabrication of the project in time for the proposed installation in late 2009.

BACKGROUND

The Oakland Public Art Program recruited artists to design, fabricate and install a permanent work of art for the Fire Station 18, located at Bancroft and 50th Avenue, in conjunction with replacement of the existing station. On May 5, 2008 PAAC approved the selection panel recommendation to award artist Laurel True a contract in the amount of \$115,000 and authorized her to proceed with design development. Commencement of the 10-month construction project has been delayed but is scheduled to commence in April 2009. In the interim, the artist and public art staff have consulted with Oakland Fire Department Administration, Project Architects Shah-Kawasaki and District 6 Council staff on identification of the most appropriate areas to include artwork, the scale of each area (to allow the artist to develop a feasible scope and budget for the project), and for suggestions on community outreach. A public community meeting was held at the Melrose Branch Library in August of 2008 to introduce the project and invite comment. In addition, the artist has engaged in research with the fire station crew and in individual interviews with community members to help generate concepts for the artwork design. The project and artist's preliminary concept will also be presented to the community at a future Melrose-High Hopes 27X NCPC meeting, and possibly others, before the design is finalized.

The artist's concept is to create a series of a minimum of four hire-fired tile mosaics: for the areas surrounding each of two exterior street-level windows facing onto Bancroft and 50th, for the interior community room, and in the second-floor outdoor courtyard provided for the on-call fire station crews. The artist's original thematic metaphor for the work was based on the tree of life, and the fire station's role as a part of a community within that metaphor. The intent is to provide inviting and engaging tactile artwork at the street level, accessible to all passer-by, with a connecting element in the community room which encourages the community to enter the building and engage with the staff, as well as to help define this new municipal facility as a neighborhood beacon. As a final element, the artist is proposing a mosaic work for the fire station employees in their outdoor courtyard (the second floor courtyard is accessible to members of the public during tours of the fire station).



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FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no direct financial impact associated with this design review and approval.

REQUEST

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