

Warren Sata, Ed.M, M.Ed
Pasadena Resident
Arts and Culture Commission
Volunteer Commissioner

April 16, 2018

Re: The Glenarm/110 Freeway Public Art Project

Dear Honorable Mayor Tornek, Honorable Vice Mayor Kennedy,
Distinguished Councilmembers, and Honorable City Manager Mermell:

I'm writing to express an opinion pertaining to the proposed Public Art project on the approximate intersection of the 110 Freeway and Glenarm Avenue at the old Steam Plant "Gateway" to the beautiful and vibrant city of Pasadena.

First: I would like to commend the diligent hard work and tireless efforts of the Cultural Affairs Division, under the direction of Rochelle Branch. Through her offices' efforts an equitable and transparent protocol for vetting, selecting and evaluating candidates was established and implemented to initially provide 4 world class semi-finalist artists (from a field of 89 submissions) to the selection committee.

Eventually narrowing the candidate list to 2 finalists, RFP submissions represented a solid and diverse sample of the best in world class public artists.

Second: I would like to respectfully highlight the sensitivity and receptivity to neighborhood concerns that council brought to listening to the matter. In narrowly voting for additional time to further study the proposed finalists - in light of concerns raised about location, design and concept - council, as a whole, was fair and reasonable in expressing thoughtful insights and recommendations on the matter in question.

Third: I would like to note that finding a balanced fit between the diverse needs of our multi-faceted city requires both (a) visionary fortitude as well as (b) an adaptive malleable mind-set to recognize that, indeed, one size does not fit all. To council's credit, the city maintains a wealth of knowledgeable, intelligent, creative and passionate people serving as leaders who have the best interests of the entire city at heart, mind and in action.

Fourth: I would like to frame my opinion in the following way - we, as citizens/residents of Pasadena, are fortunate to live in a city where the principle of public art is not in question. What is called into question, is, by its very nature, the essential core of what public art is supposed to do: challenge us to question our own thinking, emotionally push our assumptions of what is good and/or help us to better understand how and why we form perspectives of like or dislike.

04/16/2018
Item 7

April 13th, 2018

Mayor Tornek, City Council, and Planning Department

Pasadena City Hall
100 N. Garfield Ave
Pasadena, CA 91101

Dear Mayor, City Council, and Planning Department,

Pasadena is an iconic city full of historic architecture, charming neighborhoods, renowned gardens and museums, leading educational institutions, and nationally televised events including the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl. The City of Pasadena is currently considering another soon-to-be iconic landmark—a public art project by sculptor and installation artist Alice Aycock. There is no question that public art enhances our city by helping to create a visual story of who we are, and I believe we are very fortunate to live in a city where investment in public art is a high priority. But at \$740,000, this investment of public art funds will be the largest in Pasadena history, and as such, I have some serious concerns regarding the proposed location of this installation at the Glenarm Power plant along the city's southern entrance.

My husband overheard my conversation with a fellow neighbor and said, "Erika, why do you care about the city spending money on public art? At least they are trying to do something nice for the power plant." While he is correct that it does seem crazy to be complaining about public art expenditures, I feel that with our city's rich history, Pasadena is unlike any other city in the country. We understand what it means to have high standards and honor them.

The Glenarm Power Plant isn't exactly a pedestrian thoroughfare, and as currently planned, this installation will only be viewable from the car. There are serious concerns regarding road safety and the level of distraction this artwork will create for drivers at the end of the freeway. At the very least, this art should be accessible on foot and so that it can be experienced up close. On a larger level, this project is only planned to last 30 years. How will history judge this moment and this vote to spend three quarters of a million dollars to dress up an eyesore and hazardous waste site? I question whether the power plant is something we should be enhancing at all. What will visitors and residents think about the decision to put an LED-lit bandaid on a defunct power plant when there are so many other areas of our city that could benefit from a project of this scale?

I hope the council will reflect on the following questions before voting to approve the project:

04/16/2018
Item 7

- Should the \$740,000 be spent on an public art project that will last longer than 30 years but rather a lifetime?
- Will residents feel that the city created public art that represents them and the city they love?
- Will Pasadena residents be celebrating this installation?
- Is this a story of collaboration between residents and city staff or just a project brought forth by a limited group of stakeholders?
- Will this art expenditure revitalize Arroyo Parkway and bring needed tax revenue to our city by increasing visitors to area?

While I enthusiastically support public art, I further feel that since it *is* public art, the City should seek work that is somewhat less avant-garde and polarizing, and instead approve a project that's likely to be at least somewhat more widely appealing and reflective of Pasadena as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Erika Foy
672 Magnolia Ave

Jomsky, Mark

From: Cybele Garcia Kohel <cybelegarcia@me.com>
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 2:14 PM
To: Jomsky, Mark
Cc: Stone, Rhonda; Kennedy, John
Subject: 4-16-2018 City Council agenda item #7

Mr. Jomsky,

I would like to submit my comments in support of the Glenarm Captial Public Art Contract Award which is to be voted on this evening at City Council. I understand there have been some recent concerns by members of the public who were unfortunately not involved in the lengthy process to find the best artist for the proposed public art site.

First, let me say that the process for identifying artists began with a series of well-attended community meetings just to write the initial Request for Qualifications. I can attest to this because I attended them. There were many Pasadena residents there, from Pasadena Youth Ambassadors, to local District 7 residents, artists and Glenarm workers. Together we as a group came up with the guidelines for artist selection, guided by experienced Public Art Guru Barbara Goldstein. These series of meetings led to the resulting search for finalists, and then the selection committee. All of this was done in accordance with usual public meeting outreach and public involvement that the Arts & Culture Commission usually undertakes. This process happened over many months, rightfully so, because public participation is at the center of everything we do at the Commission and it takes time to get it right.

Second, I would like to address safety concerns. As you know, the result of our lengthy public process has brought us Ms. Alice Aycock as the project artist. Ms. Aycock is an experienced, world class public artist. She understands materials, especially which materials are best to ensure the longevity of her design, and safety for the public. Furthermore, the majority of the budget for the installation is going to pay for engineering and installation. Everything is of course done in accordance with every safety standard our City stipulates. There is no plan for neon lighting, no blinking lights, and, because Ms. Aycock knows that public input is at the center of public art, she wants to have a specific series of meetings for local residents to help her decide the lighting for her design. She wants to make sure there will be no light pollution and that everyone can be happy with the result. I think that is outstanding, and speaks to the importance of using experienced public artists for such a prominent gateway location.

This piece would most certainly be a beautiful welcome to visitors and residents who traverse the 110 Freeway. I hope you will consider voting yes on this agenda item, as it will only add credence to the idea that Pasadena is a world class city, with world class art, science, innovation, and business. Thank you for your daily dedication to our beautiful City, and thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Cybele Garcia Kohel
Arts & Culture Commission, Mayoral Appointee

Jomsky, Mark

From: Tiffany Owens <misstiffanyowens@prodigy.net>
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 4:28 PM
To: Madison, Steve
Cc: Suzuki, Takako; Jomsky, Mark
Subject: RE: CORRECTION, 4/16/18 Council Mtg. - Glenarm Public Art Project

April 16, 2018

Dear Council-member Madison,

I write to you as both the chairperson of the City of Pasadena Arts and Culture Commission, and until quite recently as a long-time former resident of District 6, about the subject of the Glenarm Public Art Project, which will come before council again this evening

This project is in alignment with the city's Gateway Improvements Approved by City Council in 2013 after a 5-year community-wide participatory process, the Public Art Master Plan contains several Policies and Implementation Strategies that explicitly refer to vehicular gateways and the Glenarm Power Plant as appropriate sites for large-scale public art

Over the course of the past few years, this project faithfully submitted to the city's established process, and successfully completed it, which is why it was brought before council in the first place. It would not have come before you without having undergone that process, and it was public, open, and available for all citizens to engage in. To sidestep established public policy now would not be in alignment with what is correct, transparent, or fair.

For many years preceding this project and all the years of its development I have been a resident of District 6. I say, very respectfully, that I hope as an elected representative you intend to follow-through on the responsibilities with which you have been entrusted by *all* of your constituents not just a few who, at the eleventh hour, come in to denigrate a thoroughly vetted and approved process that began years ago. The objections raised by the Madison Heights Neighborhood Association and others certainly do not represent me as a resident of south-west Pasadena in District 6. The objections also do not represent the city-wide body of representatives on the Arts and Culture Commission who have served as your and other council-members' representatives and dedicated our time and energy to be stewards of this process.

If you wish to honor the energy, passion, and effort of your respective community members who participate in city government, then you must honor the established policies and processes that are in place through which the Glenarm Public Art Project has already gone. If you simply throw those established policies out the window tonight you will be demoralizing all the citizens who participate in and follow the policies that exist to guide our decision-making in circumstances exactly such as these.

Many years ago I chose to find out how the city works and learn where I could participate as a citizen so that any input which I offer comes from a collaborative, engaged, and well-informed place, rather than a last-minute, reactionary one. I support the city council in its efforts to maintain a civic landscape that is representative of the thoughts, concerns, and aspirations of all its citizens. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Owens

--
Tiffany Owens,
Chair and Mayoral Representative
City of Pasadena Arts and Culture Commission

04/16/2018
Item 7

Jomsky, Mark

From: Tiffany Owens <misstiffanyowens@prodigy.net>
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 4:25 PM
To: Tornek, Terry
Cc: Stone, Rhonda; Jomsky, Mark
Subject: RE: 4/16/18 Council Meeting - Glenarm Public Art Project

Dear Mayor Tornek,

For a second time in as many months I am writing to you on the Glenarm Public Art Project that will come before council again this evening. I know you have received all the supporting, factual documents about the project, and will not detail them here at this time.

I wish to say that your support of a project that has gone through a deliberate, open, thoroughly vetted and approved public process is important to the commissioners and other citizens who have sought to educate ourselves and engage in the public process over the past many years. I thank you for honoring the energy, passion, and effort of the community members who participate in city government, by honoring the established policies and processes that are in place and through which this project has gone. I hope that council also carefully weighs the input on this matter that comes from a collaborative, engaged, and informed position, rather than a last-minute, reactionary one.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Owens

--

Tiffany Owens,
Chair and Mayoral Representative
City of Pasadena Arts and Culture Commission