

Correspondence



686 South Arroyo Parkway Suite 199 Pasadena, CA 91105 www.mhnapasadena.org

March 16th, 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,

While the board of the Madison Heights Neighborhood Association (MHNA) appreciates the efforts of the Arts and Culture Commission's review and recommendations to the City Council to approve artist Alice Aycocock's concept and art plan for the Glenarm Power Plant, we believe there have been some significant oversights with the process and plan.

The Capital Public Art Program Guidelines provides for the assembly of a group of stakeholders to create a vision for the project that typically draws representatives from residential/neighborhood associations, but in this case, MHNA was omitted from the group because the Glenarm Power Plant has been defined as a "gateway" project. We disagree that this is only a gateway project, because the illumination will be reflected on our neighborhood and the art will be visible from a portion of our neighborhood.

MHNA questions why those from Blair High School and ArtCenter were included due to their proximity to the project site, while MHNA, which is the same distance from the proposed project as Blair High School, was not. As you are probably well aware, MHNA is filled with artists and teachers of art, including renowned Pasadena artists Kenton and Tess Nelson, who would have made valuable contributions to the conversation. More troublingly, none of our residents have reported even knowing about the art until it was covered by *Pasadena Now* on Tuesday, March 14th, even though it is only a block from our boundaries.

In addition, we understand ArtCenter would like to have a massive electronic billboard on the corner of Arroyo and Glenarm just across from the planned public art project. We do not believe our city has contemplated having both illuminated pieces on the same corner, which will produce safety and light issues. This busy intersection involves both a freeway terminus and a light rail crossing. Many pedestrians and cyclists cross that intersection as well, including students from three nearby schools, and the last thing we need there are giant, illuminated attention-grabbers that will significantly distract drivers.

Last, the project goals repeatedly state how this project should connect and enhance the neighborhood and how this public art should reinforce the identity of those neighborhoods. Yet there are zero mentions of neighborhoods in any of the artist-proposed concepts. Indeed, nothing about this proposed public art reflects anything about Pasadena. While we enthusiastically support public art, we 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. Excellent examples include "Language of the Birds" in San Francisco, the "Cloud Gate" in Chicago, "Make Way for Ducklings" in Boston, "Urban Light" at LACMA, the fun "Luci d'Artista" neon art project in Turin, Italy, etc.

The people living within MHNA are in a difficult position because our neighborhood might suffer from light pollution, increased traffic accidents, and, frankly, a Vegas-style gateway only a block from our homes. We



M A D I S O N H E I G H T S

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ask the City Council to reconsider, and to allow our neighborhood time to meet with the artists, have input, and voice our concerns before moving forward financially. We also ask the Council to consider pausing approval of the commission's findings until the planning and decision regarding ArtCenter's billboard is complete.

As MHNA creates a more engaged community through social media and town hall meetings, it is our goal to work together with the City Council and staff to create communities that fit all of our needs.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Latta
President, MHNA

ARMORY

21 March 2018

armoryarts.org

CITY CLERK

18 MAR 22 09:32AM

Mayor Terry Tornek
City Hall
100 North Garfield Avenue
P.O. Box 7115
Pasadena, California 91109-7215

Dear Mayor Tornek,

I write to offer my strong endorsement of Alice Aycock – the artist recommended for the Glen Arm public art project. It is not an overstatement to say that Alice Aycock is one of the country's leading artists. For four decades, her work has been recognized internationally for its bold lines, technical finesse, and buoyant features. Her work is rigorously conceived and executed, a holistic combination of intellect, inspiration, and beauty. It is a perfect gateway into Pasadena, "the city of art and science."

I was honored to serve as a member of the artist selection panel. The process was professional, thoughtful, inclusive, and thorough. Cultural Affairs included public presentations and stakeholders in the process. I am also very proud of the community engagement and artist orientation process we used to insure that the artists were responsive to the site, the community and the City's input. In fact, the selection panel requested further refinement of the design, to be certain that Pasadena will get the best project. At this point, the project has been through Arts and Culture Commission review, Municipal Services Committee review, and City departmental technical review. It is critical to the confidence our community has in its leadership that we honor our procedures and processes for public art, just as we do for design, trees and other aspects of the City.

It will be an honor for Pasadena to be able to say it commissioned an Alice Aycock – just as it is an honor for the artist to be working in our beautiful and dynamic city. I am extremely proud of this project recommendation and believe it will be a landmark for Pasadena.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can answer any questions or be of service.

Sincerely,



Irene Tsatsos

Director of Exhibition Programs / Chief Curator

Jomsky, Mark

From: Branch, Rochelle
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2018 3:14 PM
To: Jomsky, Mark
Cc: Reese, Latasha
Subject: FW: Jay's e-mail about Alice Aycock to Councilmember Masuda

March 22, 2018

Dear Councilmember Masuda,

I live in your district and am was the founding Director of Gallery at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena. I served on the artist selection panel for the public artwork that will be on the site of the City of Pasadena power plant. The selection process was professional, thorough, inclusive, and thoughtful. The City's Cultural Affairs Department included the head of the Pasadena power plant on the selection panel and involved other stakeholders in the overall process. The selection panel members, and I personally, were very pleased with, and excited about, the result: a major public art work by a nationally respected American woman artist, Alice Aycock.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like more details.

Sincerely,

Jay Belloli