

INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT

# COMMISSION HEARING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 3, 2024, 5:30 P.M.  
2nd Floor, Room 260, City-County Building  
200 E. Washington St., Indianapolis, Indiana

**Commissioners Present:** President Bill Browne (WB), Vice President David Baker (DB), Bernice Corley (BC), Michael Bivens (MB), Anjanette Sivilich (AS), Anson Keller (AK), Disa Watson (DW), Secretary Susan Williams (SW)

**Staff Present:** Meg Busch (Administrator), Chris Steinmetz (CS), Shelbi Long (Senior Architectural Reviewer), Dean Kessler (Architectural Reviewer), Grace Goedeker (Preservation Planner) Melony Evans (Office Manager/Recorder) (Emily J. out)

## BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER 5:30PM

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

NONE

III. OLD BUSINESS – NO PUBLIC HEARING (*BB recused and DB chaired old business*)

2022-COA-447 (IURS)

39 JACKSON PLACE

MICHAEL EICHENAUER for DMD

Review of art proposals for underpasses along Meridian St., Illinois St., and Capitol Ave and the train shed.

**Mindy Taylor Ross Art Strategies LLC 12815 Brandenburg Drive Carmel IN**

**Art Strategies** – Owner and chief curator of a woman owned business celebrating 20 years in business this May. I am pleased to be here to talk with you about proposals of the integration of art into the renovation and enhancement of the streetscapes around Union Station specifically those at Capitol, Illinois, and Meridian. There is a reason the COA was issued with possible art as an exception. Our team was brought on and started behind the larger design team. We have been working hard with the team to catch up and integrate art into these design improvements. Therefore, the project proposals that we are sharing with you are only in schematic design at this time. We are seeking either approvals or feedback so that the City of Indianapolis and Metropolitan Development can make decisions about moving these artists into design development because these are site specific projects. Because we had to fast track this process the selection of artists and the review of proposals happened with community advisors which included The Arts Council of Indianapolis and Gang Gang. Additionally, Jordyn Ryan of The History Concierge was a member of our art strategies team and provided feedback and research specific to the project. All the projects were conceptualized for Indy with the utmost respect of its history. These sites tend to be dark, not very clean, and full of pigeons and not necessarily welcoming as spaces or even corridors to connect pedestrian and cyclists from the south side to our urban center. We also need to plan for the future as well with forthcoming development plans that many more residents and visitors are going to frequent this area. We hope to change the present conditions, draw attention to the incredible architecture of these spaces and celebrate the dynamic history of these structures. We know that staff has made a recommendation that the commission provide feedback only on these proposals and it would require a return to a full hearing. However, our hope is that Capitol and Illinois could be considered for approval, if possible, with the stipulation that we would come back and work with staff throughout design development to approve methods materials and all of those details. We hope this project can be approved with stipulations for Capitol and Illinois because they are being bid first and Meridian is being bid second. We would only commission one and not both. I can answer any questions.

**DB:** Myself I would not mind particularly on the two that you are proposing approval, I would like to hear some explanation about them.

**MT:** I will give you a short explanation. (Explains slides) Capitol Ave is the one that is furthest along and these two we had fairly unanimous approval. If the commission was moved to approve them with stipulations it would be great to move these into design development so that we can catch up with the design team.

**SW:** Is it ok if we stop here and talk about this one? I think these are wonderful very well done. I do not see any reason to delay Meg unless you have strong feelings about it. One comment that I will make we as a city have been blessed with some really good artists. I don't think we celebrate the artists enough. I hope there will be a strong acknowledgement of the artists so that the community will know who is responsible.

**MT:** From a semi-permanent standpoint, there will be interpretive signage that will display who these wonderful artists are. Also providing some interpretation of how it relates to the history of the space. I think that's really important. We like to make people aware of the fact that we are bringing in these incredible artists. It has always been important to us to have that local global balance.

**DB:** Anyone have questions or comments? I have a couple. I really like this. So, on the train side there is nothing physical about it? What happens when the cameras are off?

**MT:** The intention would be to keep them on 24/7 minus a couple hours at night. That is something we have to dig deeper into with Blockhouse. The only thing that happens to the wall is a very high finish to get the best projection.

**DB:** My concern is maintenance. The underpasses traditionally have been thought that no one is paying attention so bad things can happen. What is it going to look like if there happens to be graffiti on the wall. For this kind of installations, they are outdoors but they are almost like indoor rooms they will almost need daily maintenance. The pigeons don't bother me, but can kids throw things at them? There needs to be a way to protect the art after is installed.

**MT:** We have been working really hard with DMD to discuss the ongoing maintenance. We did a preliminary maintenance budget for them. I know that DMD is working closely with us to think about these things and the artists are assertive in making sure that their art is maintained as well.

**DB:** I think it would be good to have a plaque to display who the artist is and displays that this is an art exhibition. I think that it would help from a maintenance standpoint if it were presented in such a way that it is obvious that this is an art installation.

**MT:** (Discusses prior art installation projects) I think we had one instance of small graffiti in the first exhibition. There was no vandalism in the exhibitions that followed. There will be graffiti protection on the main wall, and we will look into the durability of the mesh for wear and tear.

**BC:** I have shared a concern about maintenance, and I have brought it up in the past. The installation on Virginia.

**MT:** I was the curator and producer of that project, and it never functioned the way it was intended, then the artist died. We did our job to give them all permission to settle the fact that the project never functioned the way it was intended and that they could take it down. The donor names could be reused or replaced. We did that 15 years ago. It really should have been taken down.

**BC:** I understand that you shared what maintenance would look like. As we sit here, we do not know what the cities response will be, is there a point if we were to take action that if maintenance was not secured that it would come back to this body's attention?

**MT:** We are certainly as the contractor and vendor working really hard to advise the city to make sure that maintenance is kept up. The artists are asking us as well. We are not into the business of buying things that are not solid. That is our practice, and it is important to us as art advocates. I cannot speak on DMD and the process, but we are doing what we can to supply them with the info.

**DB:** Meg do you think it is ok to move forward with this one and then move to next underpass?

**Meg:** Just a reminder to everyone you have already approved a COA for this, so it is already in as a stipulation to approve the final plans. So, after we hear the Illinois

Street proposal if you are so inclined you can take a vote for staff to go ahead and sign off on that stipulation that is in the original COA including any comments made by the commission tonight.

**DB:** So, we can move on to Illinois Street.

**MT:** On Illinois Street it is the artist it is 2 different walls and spaces that drew us to it. One of the things we proposed doing is creating an outdoor gallery by using large scale lite boxes. This would be a space where Indy can partner with us, the Arts Council, or maybe Gang Gang to curate maybe twice a year for artists to display their art in this space and take advantage of an outdoor gallery and provide artists with an additional venue. This is also the side of the street that will lead up to the new Signia Hilton. We expect there to be a lot more people once we improve this space. That is what we are proposing as infrastructure. Then on the other side of the street Jamie Polis, creator of Care Don't Care. She started off as a graphic designer and this is her art. She has presented us with this idea of using all these different types of sign technology. There are not active storefronts, so we wanted her to create some activity there like a Soho effect. We might even get developers to think about what could really be there. We thought this was really fun. We also considered this to be a temporary space. Just to create some light and fun in this space. It is very dark in that space right now. There is going to be greater overall lighting in these spaces The designers are doing a great job of using lighting enhancements at bringing out the structures.

**BC:** I really like the artist rotation opportunity. It made me think about what they are doing at the airport. It will give a sense that Indy is proud of art, we take it seriously and we are proud of our local artists, and we support it. I really like that.

**DB:** I like everything about this. There is one slight concern. It comes to mind when BC used the airport as the example. I just want to make sure that advertising would not be an issue. Sometimes art needs to be paid for. I know that is not the case but the reality is they are boxes and electronic so we know what could happen.

**SW:** If we are planning to rotate the art, I am assuming you are planning on paying the artists, there will have to be a fund set aside. I understand that there has to be a team that brings in the art, changing it etc. I do not think the city's budget is nimble enough to handle something like that.

**MT:** We do not foresee that as an extreme cost if they are rotated once or twice a year.

**DB:** Does anyone want to **make** a motion to approve these two concepts with the understanding that the details will be worked out with the staff.

**SW: Moved**

**MB: 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

**MT:** The overpass on the Illinois street. There is one more. The Illinois street south façade. We also wanted to look at the possibility of doing something here. We have commissioned world renown artist Raphael L. Henner. We might have also provided the hour-long presentation that he gave us pitching us this idea and it is worth the watch. He began his career as a chemist and ended up as an artist. He loved that this site was near Eli Lilly world headquarters. He did his research and figured out that Cosmic Rays are one of the research bits that Indiana is really known for. They have a cosmic ray detector that actually detects the particulate matter as it comes into the atmosphere. This detector can be put on display somewhere but as the rays hit, his program would be aggregating all of this information and it would be activating very thin white penlights that would go up onto the train shed. This is a nighttime experience only. But we found it so compelling, so site specific and frankly kind of beautiful in a way to take this thing that's not very beautiful and actually use it assets, which is it's a corrugated blank canvas. It doesn't cause any marks to it; all the electronics can be run on the inside of the train shed and we poke holes through. We think this would be a really beautiful and bold statement for the city.

**BC:** I love the idea and the concept. Is the light ever that dark to display this art?

**MT:** He did provide us with examples of other urban projects similar to this that he has done. It seems to be pretty well proven that he is successful in achieving the contrast in an urban space.

**DB:** I really like this. Over the years we have considered many proposals to fix up that space we had to have. This doesn't do anything to it, it just uses it. So, for some reason it doesn't work it can change. Do you want an approval for this particular one too tonight.

**MT:** Ideally yes. Because it would be included in the Illinois street package.

**DB:** Does anyone want to make a motion to approve this concept with the understanding that the details will be worked out with the staff.

**SW:** 1st

**MB:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

**MT:** Last but not least we would like your feedback on two proposals that we are considering for Meridian Street. There was not a unanimous sense of which way to go on this with our team, but we still wanted to bring this to you to get your feedback. This is the historian, and it also has a music theme to it. On the westside there is usually retail there. What we are trying to do is build an outdoor space that is a sense of community that people can sort of come together in community and hang out. On the eastside has a long blank wall and there will be the introduction of a stairwell and elevator there so that wall will be interrupted to provide more access to the platform above. We spoke with Luftwork in Chicago, they do primarily light-based work. They want to use the form of the tracks to create a kind of lexicon or an alphabet. What they are proposing to hang from the ceiling this lexicon of forms that will be light and then on the wall they spoke to a locally based mural painter that will work with them to bring these forms down unto that long wall on the east side. Essentially it is light based with a mural. The forms themselves and the color pallet can be decided alongside the art committee and staff.

The second proposal we took was from Project 1 studios, they are an Indianapolis based studio. Everyone took a lot of inspiration from the tracks above. They created these ribbon forms that have a track like appearance that wind their way throughout the space. This form they believe could ribbon its way in and out of the bridge and on both sides of the bridge and be a unifying form overhead. We would work with staff to find out what the color palette would be. They think they could do it all by bracketing so there would be no damage to the structure. Those are two proposals that we are considering for Meridian Street and since we are here, we wanted to hear your thoughts, concerns, and feedback.

**DB:** On both of them is the light a constant color or does it change or move?

**MT:** In Luftworks project the light is programmable so I think it can change and move. We can work with them on what that is or if it wants to change. The second one, our understanding is, once the color is decided upon the piece is actually painted and the light is white LED, so that project is constant.

**BC:** On the second project, from the photos, to be clear it is completely separate from the winding structure?

**MT:** It is actually built into the winding structure. That is how it illuminates it. My understanding is its run on a channel as part of the form.

**BC:** I didn't realize it was painted. They are steel pieces, and they are painted. In terms of the life of the paint, what is the idea of how long that paint would last?

**Meg:** Sorry to cut you off, but because this is recorded and we are on Channel 16, they can't hear the commentary. So, if you are going speak, I am going speak I will need you to get sworn in and come up to the mic and talk.

**Anne Surach:** Curator with Art Strategies. So it is not steel, it is some other composite material. They are used to working in outdoor environments. They did not say the lifespan of the paint, but I am sure we could find that out.

**MT:** The good news is they are sort of indoor and outdoor, so we don't have to worry about some of the things that fade paint quickly.

**DB:** Any other questions or comments.

**SW:** I like the first one because it also activated that blank wall. I can see some advantage to leaving the wall bright and lite as they do in the second one. I have a question that is so random. Are there still trains that will still run on those tracks?

**MT:** Yes, there are.

**SW:** I remember when we were working on the Superbowl we had to work with Homeland Security and learned there were 43 trains a day that went across there. So, when you talk about maintenance there will be a lot of sot and yuck that comes just because the trains are going across there.

**MT:** That is something that we have to think about these things in the context of the larger project which is seeking to fix a lot of the drainage and yuck issues that we are now experiencing.

**SW:** When I see these bright walls that are white or a light color, I think about that, and it is less about the graffiti in my mind. I agree with you I think as a community all the murals and public art we have done; you don't see much graffiti I have not seen any. I am sure there is some. But the dirt that is created by the weight and the movement of those trains has been a real problem.

**MT:** We also do have the ability to do a little more with this in terms of the light being able to change. So, I think that might be a benefit in our eye as well. It makes it a little more dynamic. Again, these were just for your consideration and in case you saw any issues or pros or cons we just wanted to hear those out.

**AK:** As much as a couple of the other installations seem to consider that pigeon problem, these don't seem to consider that as much and seem to provide quite a few more places for them to put a nest.

**MT:** We do think there is a little more due diligence with both of these teams.

**BC:** In terms of the first design, I think it was illustrated as being on one side. Whatever the ultimate design I really like the idea of balance, that it be the same on both.

**MT:** In this particular rendering they do show it on both. It vacillated a little bit and that is because in their presentation it is budget dependent. So, it is hard for them to really make that call and they are moved into DD. Ideally it will be on both sides. Thank you for your feedback today.

**ME:** I do apologize, we missed something before you started speaking, we did not swear you in.

(Swears in MT)

## 2022-COA-447 (IURS)

### 39 JACKSON PLACE

**MICHAEL EICHENAUER for DMD**

Review of street planting plan.

#### ***Kevin Osburn 618 E. Market St.***

**KO:** What we are here to you talk about is updated drawings related to street trees for the project per stipulation 15 of the previous approved COA. The updated drawings illustrate the proposed locations of street tree plantings based on the streetscape design and layout, the locations of underground utilities, and the commissions expressed concerns regarding obstructions of buildings within the district as a result of a fully treelined street. The drawings reflect both plan and elevation views with approximate sizes and height at time of planting and after 12-15 years of growth. The updated plans reflect a more selective and balanced approach to the placement of street trees in order to frame and enhance views of existing buildings while achieving the environmental, economic and social benefits of street trees. This approach is consistent with the placement of street trees within other regional center historic districts. In comparison to the original plans the tree spacing that we are showing with these updated plans has been modified to what was a very consistent 22 feet on center spacing to a roughly 40 to 50 feet on center spacing and the overall quantity of trees has been reduced by nearly 40%. From 49 total trees to 30 trees. I will open this up to any questions or comments you may have.

**BC:** As someone who spoke in support of trees when I looked at the images, I just want to offer that my thoughts are I would like to not see any trees by Union station or the side of the Omni that faces Illinois and Georgia. It looks like it is blocking the view of the building. I felt it was too obstructing at those two locations.

**DB:** I have spent quite a lot of time with your plan studying it. I think that I will forever have angst over introducing trees into the wholesale district because it is not in its original character to do that. On the other hand, it isn't a wholesale district anymore and as it is evolving in the way that I think people hoped that it will evolve becoming a 24/7 district. So, softening it up makes some sense. I felt that you accomplished what I was hoping you could accomplish, and you framed the buildings nicely and you left vistas that I thought were important of buildings still there. While I have reluctance in it, I do feel like I can support this the way that you have done it now. BC has some issues with some of them, I think some of those buildings are so large that a tree or two at their base is not obscuring them much.

**MB:** I think it strikes a nice balance between hiding too much of the historic character. We can lose 1 or 2 at Union Station. I appreciate the effort of you working to find a nice balance. I think I would be supportive of it.

**DB:** I would like to hear you respond on the issue BC presented and explain why you think those are necessary. In your plan it talks about existing tree growth on the other side of the sidewalk in front of Union Station. Will those trees remain?

**KO:** Yes. Whatever trees that are there today we are not changing any of those. Our project does not go into Jackson Place. It does not modify those streets.

**DB:** In that corner there already are a lot of trees there.

**KO:** You are correct there are plant beds that kind of form the auto court that is Jackson Place now and there are some tree plantings in those plant beds we are not proposing to change those. I think you may be referring to the two trees that we have out on the streetscape at the curb line that are within that same area at Jackson Pl. I think our preference would be to keep that rhythm of trees along that streetscape segment if possible. As you have noted the Union Station structure there is a massive structure. It has a very significant presence on the streetscape I honestly do not think a couple of trees in that location are going to block any views of the architecture. The trees that we are proposing, would be high limbed trees so that they are not low branching you are able to see under the canopy that will develop. I think our preference would be to keep those, but if that is a direction that the commission decides we need to reduce those trees we would obviously take that direction.

**DB:** Any other commission members have thoughts about this?

**AK:** I think with the existing trees, I do not think the trees that are shown will compromise the character of Union Station. I do not necessarily agree with the concept of reducing the trees in the first place. That being water under the bridge. I do have one question about the practicality of the location of these. Some of the trees seem to have some really small planting beds and that seems to have led to the demise of many of the street trees here in the city and that is the reason why some of them look so sad. Are you doing any soil modifications underneath the sidewalks to allow access to water and nutrients for these trees to survive and thrive?

**KO:** Yes we are imploring similar techniques that we have used in other urban street tree projects like those that we have used on the Cultural Trail and what was recently done here on East and West Market St. We are also imploring suspended soil assemblies to expand the root zone. We are imploring what we think are the latest and best practices on how to insure vibrant and healthy street trees.

**DB:** I think **AK** both feel comfortable with this plan, I know **BC** has some issues about a couple of the trees. How is everyone else feeling about this or would someone like to make a motion to approve the plan as it is being proposed with the understanding that the staff work out any details.

**MB:** 1<sup>st</sup>

**BC:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

**DB:** Ok we are doing the trees.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS – NO PUBLIC HEARING 5:48**

**ELECTION  
OF 2024  
OFFICERS**

**BB:** We are now ready to move to new business- Election of 2024 Commission Officers.

**Meg:** Read the slate of Commission Officers for 2024

**AK:** 1<sup>st</sup>

**BC:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

## PUBLIC HEARING

**BB:** Introduces Commission, Staff and reads Rules of Procedure 6:40P

**V. REQUEST TO WITHDRAW OR CONTINUE APPLICATIONS 5:53**

**2023-COA-251 (FP)**

**529 FLETCHER AVENUE**

*continue to February 7, 2024*

**KIM COOK**

Maintain work started without approval to include retaining deck extension and fence in the side yard.

**2023-COA-506 (ONS)**

**1201 N. DELAWARE ST.**

*continue to February 7, 2024*

**MIKE LYNCH & JAMEY SMITH**

Maintain work started without approval including the installation of cameras and the replacement of siding with a non-matching material.

**2022-COA-447 (IURS)  
AMENDMENT 1**

**39 JACKSON PLACE**

*continue to February 7, 2024*

**MICHAEL EICHENAUER for DMD**

Amend approved plans: expand the use of brick from gutters to the full width of the parallel parking lane.

**Meg:** reads cases.

**DB:** 1<sup>st</sup>

**SW:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

**VI. EXPEDITED CASES 5:56**

**2021-COA-053 (LS)  
AMENDED**

**521 LEON ST.**

**LUKE BURROW**

Amend approved plans: relocating roof deck space from front of house to rear.

**2023-COA-482 (HMP) &  
2023-VHP-008**

**318-320 E. 19<sup>th</sup> ST.**

**ALEX & LESLIE LINTON**

Extend previously approved retaining wall and approve a Variance of Development Standards to reduce required off-street parking from 1 space to zero (0) at both 318 & 320 E. 19<sup>th</sup> St.

**2023-COA-515 (LS)**

**512 E. NEW YORK ST.**

**JASON WOLFE**

Demolish existing garage and construct new 3-car garage.

**Meg:** Do we want to check to see if there is anyone here wishing to speak to those.

**DB:** The project on 19<sup>th</sup> street I support approving the variance. My question though is it appears to me that there are two separate units and even two separate parcels, so I am wondering why we are not reducing the required off street parking? I may be missing something here.

**DK:** Reads the order so it covers both parcels.

**Meg:** We will need 2 votes. Reads cases.

**AS: 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**DB: 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

**Variance**  
**MB: 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**BC: 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

**VII. APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD (CONTINUED)**

**NONE**

**VIII. APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD (NEW)**

**NONE**

**IX. PRELIMINARY REVIEW**

**NONE**

**X. APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD – WORK STARTED WITHOUT APPROVAL**

**NONE**

**XI. CLOSING BUSINESS**

**NONE**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT 6:48 PM**