

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: PUBLIC WORKS OF ART, Standards and Conditions for Donations, Loans,
Commissioning and Deaccessioning of Public Works of Art (Department of Cultural Affairs).
REPORT: 1438-21
ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

The City of New Haven owns many works of art, accrued over a number of years and which represent many periods and styles. Many are civic monuments in outdoor locations; others include murals, paintings, and works such as stained glass and mobiles which are located in library and school interiors. The City has acquired these works in different ways. Some have been commissioned, some have been donated, and some have been created for specific locations as part of the Percent for Art program set up by municipal legislation in 1982. Maintenance of existing works is an ongoing concern, and in recent years the Parks Department has embarked on a program of restoring older works which are located in City parks. The need to reserve funds for ongoing maintenance is clear. The Cultural Affairs Commission proposes "Standards and Conditions for Donations, Loans, Commissioning and Deaccessioning public works of Art of the City of New Haven." Which are intended to cover all City owned art, and which proposes procedures for non-Percent for Art works (the Percent for Art program already has its own set of procedures and guidelines).


PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Publicly owned works of art enliven and enrich the public realm. Art by its very nature often stirs comment, even controversy; so it is appropriate to have an open process with clear regulations for making decisions regarding commissioning, acquiring or deaccessioning publicly owned art, whether it is donated or paid for with public funds. These regulations stipulate Ad-Hoc committees to help in these decisions with staff pulled from City Departments as well as members of the arts community. If placed in the public rights of way the locations must be approved by the Board of Aldermen and such works must be located so they are visible without unduly distracting or impeding passage by pedestrians, bicyclists or motorists. They must be maintained so as to last for future citizens.

ADVICE

These works enliven and enrich the public and civic spaces of New Haven and it is in the best interest of the City and its residents that tradition is continued; and that existing works be cared for and well maintained; therefore the Commission recommends approval of the Standards and Conditions for Donations, Loans, Commissioning and Deaccessioning of Public Works of Art, and their adoption by the Board of Aldermen.

ADOPTED: March 17, 2010
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director