

# City of Joliet

150 West Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432



## Meeting Minutes - Pending Approval

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

5:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

### Arts Commission

*Commission Members*

*Donna Franks-Tapley*

*Eric Gorder*

*Tom Grotovsky*

*Vince Logan*

*Ron Romero*

*John Simpson, Jr.*

*Peg Stoiber*

*Deborah Summers*

*Ellis Wright*

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Citizens who are unable to attend the meeting can email comments in advance of the meeting to [publiccomment@joliet.gov](mailto:publiccomment@joliet.gov).

## 1. ROLL CALL

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Present</b> | Eric Gorder, Peg (Marguerite) Stoiber, Ron Romero, Donna Franks-Tapley, Vince Logan , Tom Grotovsky and Deborah Summers |
| <b>Excused</b> | John Simpson Jr   |
| <b>Absent</b>  | Ellis Wright  |

## 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Tom Grotovsky, seconded by Eric Gorder, to approve the August 21 meeting minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Aye:</b>     | Gorder, Stoiber, Romero, Franks-Tapley, Logan, Grotovsky and Summers |
| <b>Excused:</b> | Simpson Jr   |
| <b>Absent:</b>  | Wright   |

## 3. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

This section is for anyone wanting to speak regarding agenda items and are allowed a maximum of 4 minutes. It is not a question and answer period and staff, and the Commission members do not generally respond to public comments. The City Clerk has a copy of the public speaking procedures; please note, speakers who engage in conduct injurious to the harmony of the meeting shall be called to order by the Presiding Officer and may forfeit the opportunity to speak.

## 4. OLD BUSINESS

None.

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

None.

## 6. NEW OR OLD BUSINESS, NOT FOR FINAL ACTION OR RECOMMENDATION

A motion was made by Commissioner Stoiber and seconded by Commissioner Logan to deviate from the scheduled order of presentations to allow Juanjo Novella to present. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

### A. Presentations from City Square Sculpture Finalists

Attachments: [Finalist Review Criteria](#)

#### i. Chandler Ahrens/Ahrens Vale

Ahrens Vale Van Dyck Murphy presented an overview of its submission "Mirror Image". The proposal is intended to incorporate elements of the surrounding architecture into the sculpture itself. Photos of corresponding facades would be depicted and imprinted on the central

sculpture. The sculpture would offer three different experiences for viewers, depending on their perspectives or points of view. Different relationships between the buildings could be explored, depending on where viewers are looking at the sculpture. The sculpture would contain interactive elements, with viewsheds inside and around the sculpture.

Chandler Ahrens stated the surface will not rust and is graffiti resistant. Ahrens followed up by saying the prints would have a very long life. Images would be obtained by a photographer, possibly a local photographer, to create official images for the sculpture prints. The sculpture would be 7.5 ft. wide by about 15 ft. tall. The development team stated this would be the first time it would be using this technique on a sculpture, though they have familiarity with this technique being utilized by other sculptures in other cities.

Supplemental research was later presented by the applicant team to show that the sculpture itself would remain in excellent condition for at least 30 years with minimal maintenance. If etching of the metal panels to the perforated panels would be used instead of color printing, it's possible that a 100-year lifespan could be achieved.

Attachments:     [AVVA Mirror Image Joliet City Square Sculpture Finalist Proposal](#)

## ii. **Sijia Chen**

Sijia Chen provided a brief background on herself, stating that she has artwork at that has been displayed in London, Italy, and Miami. She is a Los Angeles based artist, and prides herself on having her artist be emblematic of the local place. In Joliet, she wishes to create a prominent landmark that is a symbol of community.

Her proposal, "Dome of Unity" is in a shape that echoes the arch of the Rialto Square Theater, and bring a sense of calm to the surrounding area. The sculpture would have papercut art cutout designs. The final imagery would be developed through a community engagement process. Everchanging shadows create an ongoing dynamic space. An anti-graffiti coating would be applied to the sculpture, and all sculpture edges would be rounded for safety. LED lights from the ground would illuminate the sculpture at night. Various colors could be displayed on the sculpture with LED lights.

Town Hall style meetings would be used to gather input from the community for the papercut designs. Workshops with the public and students would be programmed to insert community creations into the final design. A website would be developed as a central information hub and a source for information gathering and sharing with the community.

Commissioner Grotovsky asked where the lights would be located. The applicant responded that lights would be flush to the ground, with waterproof up-lighting below the sculpture. Likely two or three lights would be installed.

Attachments:     [City of Joliet RFP # 2802-1124 - Sijia Chen Studio](#)

## iii. **Dante DiBartolo**

Dante DiBartolo presented his proposal for "Woman of Steel and Stone". His proposal is a combination of a figurative sculpture with some abstract elements. Several local historical and cultural symbols would be inserted into the sculpture. The tree would represent the people of Joliet and how its growth has evolved. Imagery of iconic buildings and representations of the city would be included, such as the Jefferson Street Bridge, Joliet Prison, Joliet Steel Mill, and the Slammers Baseball Stadium.

The piece would be 9 ft. high and 7 ft. deep. DiBartolo would work with the public and City Council on finalizing imagery that could be incorporated into the piece. Flush LED lighting, likely about three lights, would be installed around the sculpture base. DiBartolo stated that a bronze material would be weather durable and require little maintenance. Edges on the piece would be rounded off to prevent climbing.

Commissioner Stoiber asked how far the rear would recess? DiBartolo stated that it would not be much of a recess. The recessed area would be about 4 ft. high off the ground. DiBartolo also clarified that the base would show natural limestone, blended into quarried limestone. All sculpture elements would be sculpted into the bronze of the sculpture.

Attachments:     [DiBartolo City Square Final Proposal Combined](#)

#### **iv. Juanjo Novella**

Juanjo Novella spoke about the need to belong to a place for his work to be put up. Novella stated that his proposed structure would act as a doorway from the neo-classical, older style of the Rialto Square Theater to the newness and progress of the forthcoming City Square. Novella stated that he has worked on nature patterns for a number of years, and that nature being compromised is an issue of importance for all.

Novella said that more perforations could be added to the lower part of the sculpture, if wanted. He reiterated that maintenance should not be a major issue, as this has not been the case with his past sculptures. The red color would be the natural patina on the sculpture, though there would likely be some changes to coloration over time.

Novella explained that he has sculptures all over the world, citing, the Middle East, Africa, Europe as places of major concentration for his works. Novella emphasized that public art is his life.

Commissioner Grotovsky showed his appreciation of the submission showing a door as a way to transition from the past to the present and future.

Attachments:     [CITY OF JOLIET HQ proposal compressed \(1\)](#)

#### **v. Timothy Jorgensen**

Timothy Jorgensen introduced himself as an art instructor at the University of Northern Iowa. Jorgensen stated that he specializes in aluminum sculptures. The University of Northern Iowa hosts a public art incubator where students are used to fabricate pieces of public art. Jorgensen is a lead for the program and would be looking to use the Joliet commission in this

program.

Jorgensen's proposal "Vessels" deals with natural forms and its interaction with the natural world. The seeds from "Vessels" would represent people planted into the community, but the seeds can also be transient in nature, emblematic of the Route 66 highway that runs through Joliet.

Jorgensen stated that each seed pod would be about 13 ft. tall, and about 300 pounds each. The sculpture lifespan would be around 50 years with some maintenance. Jorgensen estimated four months for fabrication. Coloring of the wheels is open to future suggestion.

Attachments:     [Jorgensen Tim Vessels](#)

## **vi. James Peterson/Art Contraptions**

James Peterson his proposal "Joy". The proposal would create a passage from past to future with an experience of time and color. The piece is inspired by the rebirth of the area. It is intended to be an experiential work. It would be a testament to the many peoples and cultures of Joliet by virtue of the different colors and shapes on the sculpture.

Peterson envisions a collaborative process with city staff and his work team. He envisions different levels of community engagement, particularly with local schools to invite them into the process.

The sculpture would contain a series of modules consisting of varying scale. The interactive experience would meet ADA requirements. CODA material would be used on the arches. Peterson stated this material is highly durable and allows for an extensive lifespan of over 30 years and is resistant to vandalism. Peterson would request two lights per base within the interior of each arch. Peterson stated that pieces would be created in modules, which would then be transported with trucks across the country from Los Angeles.

Commissioner Franks-Tapley asked about daytime lighting. Peterson responded that lights are often dormant during the day to help add to the lighting lifespan, overall. Peterson stated that the sculpture would need to be power washed every other year. Peterson said a sculpture with similar material is in development for the City of Denver.

Attachments:     [James Peterson - Joliet City Square Proposal](#)

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

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## 8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Tom Grotovsky, seconded by Vince Logan , to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Gorder, Stoiber, Romero, Franks-Tapley, Logan, Grotovsky and Summers

**Excused:** Simpson Jr

**Absent:** Wright

This meeting will be held in an accessible location. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact The City Clerk Office, 150 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432 at (815) 724-3780.