



**Minnesota State Capitol Preservation Subcommittee
Art Subcommittee
August 3, 2015 Meeting Summary**

Attendees

- Subcommittee: Paul Anderson, David Senjem, Diane Loeffler, Peter Hilger, Ted Lentz, Dean Urdahl, Gwen Westerman-Wasicuna, Paul Mandell (ex-officio), David Kelliher (ex-officio)
- Support: Brian Szott, Brian Pease, Curt Yoakum, Cathy Klima, Alice Roberts-Davis, Erin Campbell.
- Interested Parties: Scott Russel (Healing Minnesota Stories – St. Paul Interfaith Network), Roy Taylor (White Eagle Consulting–American Indian public affairs)

1. Review of July 6, 2015 meeting summary

- a. No comments. Approved by the subcommittee.

2. Housekeeping matters/protocol

- a. Email Cathy Klima:
 - i. What title subcommittee member would like to have appear on the art subcommittee website.
 - ii. What phone numbers, email addresses subcommittee member would like to have available for other subcommittee members and the media.
- b. Future meeting notices will be sent via Outlook. Those who cannot have the meeting automatically added to their calendar upon acceptance will need to manually add it.

3. Refine and adopt vision statement

- a. The subcommittee discussed and wordsmithed the vision statement.
- b. Rep. Loeffler will refine the vision statement and email it to subcommittee members for input.
- c. A final version of the vision statement was not adopted, but the subcommittee generally agreed on the following language:

The role and purpose of art in the Minnesota capitol is to tell Minnesota stories that engage people to:

 - Reflect on our shared history;
 - Understand our government;
 - Inspire citizen engagement;
 - Appreciate the varied landscapes of our beautiful state.

General agreement was to use active verbs and separate the intro into two sentences. Members will be sent a revised draft the week following the meeting and are encouraged to review, comment and/or suggest changes via email by Friday, August 7. Send comments to cathy.klima@state.mn.us



- d. The existing statutes regarding Capitol art were discussed to help clarify the scope of art and who has the final authority on relocating, removing and replacing art:
 - i. [Statute 138.67](#) which defines “Works of Art” in the capitol as “paintings, portraits, mural decorations, stained glass, statues and busts, bas-relief, ornaments, furniture, plaques, and any other article or structure of a permanent character intended for decoration or commemoration ... ” It was noted that this definition includes fixtures and furniture in art, so it is a broader definition. The subcommittee generally appreciated that focus.
 - ii. [Statute 138.67](#), which defines the “Supervision of Preservation,” reading in part: “No monument, memorial or work of art shall be relocated or removed from, or placed in such areas or altered or repaired in any way without the approval of the Minnesota State Historical Society.”
- e. The subcommittee’s focus will be the Capitol building. The Capitol grounds are not a within the scope of the subcommittee charge, at least at this time.

4. Space Issues

- a. The subcommittee reviewed and discussed what space in the restored Capitol building is available for art.
- b. Ted Lentz [presented maps of each floor](#) to give members context for the changed use of existing space and the new public spaces. Each map indicated:
 - i. Open areas available for art at the Capitol
 - ii. Zones potentially included for art at the Capitol
 - iii. Corridors potentially included for art at the Capitol
 - iv. Zones not included, or not available for art (mechanical, utility and private offices)
 - v. Mr. Lentz estimated that there will be about 10,000 square feet of new public space available in the basement, which is tentatively being called “The Stone Gallery.” The subcommittee discussed potential challenges of this space including lighting, way finding, and sound containment.
 - vi. The subcommittee noted that certain spaces may include locations that have not traditionally been considered public or semi-public, such as the Attorney General’s reception room and the oval staircase walls. Even restrooms are being considered for art as construction plans propose that they have furnishings and lighting in the original style of 1905.
 - vii. It was said that the amount of new public space throughout the Capitol makes it a place to discover; meaning that seeing everything in one visit may not be feasible and there will “more to find” over the years.
 - viii. The subcommittee also expressed a desire to know how much linear feet of wall space is available in each area and especially how much linear feet is used by governors’ portraits.
- c. Rep. Loeffler led a discussion about the “Language for Zones,” which means categorizing zones from a visitor, citizen, or building occupant’s point of view. These may help decide what stories are best told in what zones.
 - i. Citizen gathering
 - ii. Decision-making (chambers, courts, hearing rooms)
 - iii. Public corridors (grand corridors and public corridors)
 - iv. Relaxation and refreshment (dining areas, retiring rooms)



- v. Ceremonial honor (Governor's reception room)
 - vi. Utilitarian (mechanical areas, restrooms)
 - vii. Private offices (traditionally decorated how the person wants it. Perhaps we need to define "private")
 - viii. New public meeting/gallery spaces (3rd floor and "stone galleries")
Many of the above may be divided further into primary and secondary spaces. For example, the large connecting hallways of each wing would be primary spaces while smaller public corridors would be secondary.
- d. Other ideas were:
- i. Treat 1905 art in a special or different way from art added after 1905, or the art to be added now and in the future.
 - ii. Categorize art by how long it is expected to be displayed:
 - Permanent
 - Semi-permanent
 - Rotating
 - Temporary
- e. Comments on zones:
- i. The Minnesota Historical Society agrees with the zones. Major decision-making spaces (Chambers and Supreme Court Courtroom) are pretty well decorated or well-defined.
 - ii. Primary gathering areas are citizen gathering places, like the Rotunda.
 - iii. Secondary gathering areas are public corridors. Spaces occupied by building tenants are to be included.
 - iv. Some spaces lend themselves to permanent or semi-permanent programming.
 - v. Who gets to reserve the areas? (A Capitol Public Space Advisory Committee is developing these policies).
 - vi. There may be different tension points about different areas based on who pays the rent (turf wars).
- f. Next Steps: An independent task force is needed to provide guidelines for different areas. The subcommittee is looking for members who have an area of interest and willing to be on task force. (A single group seemed to get split into selective assignments for some areas later.)

5. Definitions of art

- a. Discussion included:
- i. Movable art is art stretched on canvas with a frame
 - ii. Fixed art is art stretched on canvas, permanently affixed to plaster wall with glue. The majority of murals are fixed to plaster. Consideration of three-dimensional art such as civil war sculptures, the Quadriga, etc.
 - iii. Many "permanent" pieces were added after 1905.
 - iv. Perhaps the perspective of "permanent" should be based on the significance of the piece. It may have a status designation that may be reinterpreted by different generations.
 - v. Does permanent mean the original "intention" of 1905?
- b. Next Steps: Brian Szott, Gwen Westerman-Wasicuna and Paul Mandel will review and refine the definitions for further discussion by our next meeting on September 14.



6. Website – description about

- a. Cathy Klima gave an online tour of the art subcommittee website.
 - i. “Communications” tab includes meeting agendas, minutes, presentations, budgets and correspondence.
 - ii. “Artwork” tab lists the 148 pieces of artwork inside the Capitol with links to images of some of the more prominent pieces. A question was raised whether we should add pictures of all of the items in the inventory, including those added after 1905. Since the statutory definition of works of art includes furniture, etc. should we come up with a different term or refer to paints, sculptures, and plaques?
 - iii. “In the News” tab has links to media coverage of the art debate.
 - iv. “About the Subcommittee” tab describes the mission of the subcommittee and includes a list of its members.
- b. The website can change and will most likely grow based on subcommittee’s needs.
- c. Cathy Klima is securing a dedicated Art Subcommittee email address for the public and working on getting a shortened website address for the Art Subcommittee home page.
- d. Next Steps:
 - i. Cathy Klima will add links within the Capitol Restoration Project website to the Art Subcommittee homepage.
 - ii. She will email members the dedicated email address and shortened website address.

7. The how’s and wherefores of public input

- a. Cities proposed for public hearing locations were: Rochester, Mankato, Bemidji and Duluth, to be held in late October/early November.
- b. It was recommended that the number of metro area meetings should equal the number of out-state hearings, given that the majority of Minnesota’s population is in the metro area. It was noted that many citizens are dependent on public transportation.
- c. Next Steps:
 - i. Need to develop communication strategies for input. Potential tools like Facebook, twitter, Instagram, flickr, traditional press, blog on art subcommittee website need to be considered and evaluated. Need to establish word limit for submitted ideas. Perhaps create a form to fill out. Basic outline is to tell people what we are doing, get their ideas – we might get information on something we missed, and let them know we care. Make it clear we are getting input, not voting on ideas. Surveys will need to be designed to manage expectations. Use governor’s media office, house and senate media to help identify smaller press outlets to help spread information.
 - ii. Rep. Loeffler, Sen. Senjem, Peter Hilger and Alice Roberts-Davis will work on questions for the hearings.

8. Budget issues

- a. Discussion revolved around the fine art assessment and conservator selection.
- b. Conrad Schmitt Company is conducting the assessment. JE Dunn Construction is coordinating the conservator selection process with input from the Minnesota Historical Society.



- c. The assessment report (or a summary) will be posted on the website when the project is awarded and announced at the end of August.
- d. Next Steps: The subcommittee would like regular updates on the status of the \$3.2 million appropriation funding at future meetings from MNHS.

9. Preliminary discussion about culturally sensitive issues

- a. At least five paintings or murals are considered to be culturally insensitive
 - i. "Father Hennepin at the Falls of St. Anthony" (1905), by Stephen A. Douglas Volk
 - ii. "The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux" (1905), by David Francis Millet
 - iii. "Attack on New Ulm" (1904), by Anton Gag, Room 118
 - iv. "Eighth Minnesota at the Battle of Ta-Ha-Kouty (Killdeer Mountain)" (1910), by Carl L. Boeckmann, Room 317
 - v. The "Chief" figure in the Senate Chamber mural.
 - vi. The relief in the House Chamber, and the words under it.
- b. Gwen Westerman-Wasicuna commented that of the four most sensitive paintings (the first four listed above), three specifically depict Dakota tribes, not all Native Americans. She expressed the view that overall, several paintings are romanticized representations. Note: Perhaps the American Indian in the House Chamber mural is "generic – non-representative?"
- c. How do we go about discussing with the public what is controversial?
 - i. Without interpretation/context – may perpetuate stereotypes
 - ii. Interpretation by different tribes (Dakota, Ojibwa, etc)
 - iii. Don't point out why they are controversial, let people tell us what they see and how they feel about the paintings. Don't pressure them too much.
- d. Next Steps:
 - i. Three work groups were set up to examine the areas and provide preliminary guidelines and options for consideration for art:
 - 1. Ted Lentz: East Wing, 3rd floor.
 - 2. Peter Hilger: Public Corridors, both primary and secondary. Peter's charge will involve the Governors' portraits and limited prime spaces for public viewing.
 - 3. Gwen Westerman-Wasicuna: Governor's Reception Room and Dakota depictions.
 - ii. In addition: Other working groups to be formed.
 - 1. Workgroup charges need to be articulated, conveners to be designated, volunteers solicited and tentative meeting scheduled.
 - 2. The objective is to have the working groups report back and lead discussion on their topic at the October subcommittee meeting.



10. Hard Hat Tour

Members appreciated the opportunity to see the progress on the restoration, the new spaces as they become more defined, and asked questions of the staff guiding the work. In general they were impressed with the progress to date. Key follow-up questions:

- Will the skylights have UV protection in the new spaces on the 3rd floor? If not, what types of art will be impacted and how long can those types of art be displayed in those spaces?
- Security/access questions need to be sorted out re: new spaces.
- It appears electrical, video and camera connections are spread out in redone hearing rooms in a way that will minimize the possible locations for art. For example camera mounts are much lower than in the House hearing rooms. Initial reaction was that the restoration crew felt it too late to make alterations.
- Lighting may need to be considered/enhanced if art is displayed in the stone gallery pillars area and/or the gathering place in the lowest level. Wayfinding is an issue.
- Recessed areas for sculptures /artifacts shall be preserved where possible.
- Justice Anderson will inquire with the Supreme Court as to whether they envision that the historic chief justice office space will be available for public tours and what stories might be told there.
- Need to tally the spaces in the main corridors that have been designed to hold art. i.e. there are two in the corridor that line up with the east elevators on the 3rd floor. There is a recessed area on the newly restored ground level public corridor (formerly Senate Counsel).

11. Next meeting: Monday, September 14, 10 am-2:30 pm. Location to be determined. Justice Anderson will seek use of the court space again as the technology was useful.