

Dreiseitl sculpture Report

The questions in this report were drafted by the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission and sent to representatives of the Dreiseitl project for written response. The questions were sent to representatives of the Task Force, the City, the Project Design Team and the artist. The following are the responses that were received.

Attached is an email correspondence between Ken Klein and Herbert Dreiseitl. The emails were sent by Ken Klein at the request of city staff (Aaron Seagraves and Matt Kulhanek) to answer the question regarding the intent of the water flow.

Who were the major decision makers on this project?

Project Design Team:

Herbert Dreiseitl, artist

Quinn Evans; Ken Klein, architect of the Justice Center & Municipal Center and project manager for the Dreiseitl sculpture

Conservation Design Forum; Patrick Judd & David Yocca

Future Group; Rick Russell

CAE, Inc; Jim Fackert

City:

City Council

Sue McCormick, former Public Services Administrator

Bill Wheeler, former Municipal Center project manager

Matt Kulhanek, Fleet and Facilities Manager

Ann Arbor Public Art Commission

Project Development Task Force:

Margaret Parker, Ray Detter, Laura Rubin, Bob Grese, Elaine Sims, Margie Teall, Sue McCormick and Spring Tremaine

What went well with the process? Conversely what were the lessons learned? (From the key stakeholders' perspectives)

Margaret Parker: The Dreiseitl Project arose out of the environmental goals of City Council for a new City Hall that would use storm water retention methods throughout the building and demonstrate them to the entire community. Using the rain garden feature already designed into the structure, this project was designed to use collected storm water and resurface it as a sculptural fountain and water path. I think it very successfully took on those goals and, when working to full capacity, will stand as a unique art work and reflection of environmental infrastructure.

As the first project for the commission, it was a steep learning curve. Every step in the selection process was tested, all will need refinement. This was an ambitious project in a very high profile building. I think we did an excellent job, and from here every project will be easier.

Quinn Evans: I think the end sculpture fits very well with the municipal center project, the community and reflects the theme of appreciating water as a valuable resource. Planning for the public art on the project began later in the process than ideal and caused a considerable amount of redesign effort. More clarity on the scope of the artwork would have helped alleviate misunderstandings about the proposed pieces - especially for the atrium and lobby. While I'm very supportive of public art and the location of this piece, other opportunities on site were not taken advantage of (in particular the two niches in the atrium lobby or the idea of site furnishings that could be used by people). Finally, the amount of time it has taken the technology subcontractor to complete the work was not anticipated. We also learned that the city will need to maintain the plaza area better to minimize debris from clogging the filters (we have replaced the pumps and filters that supply the pearls because they were being clogged by cigarette butt filters).

Matt Kulhanek: The design, fabrication and installation of the main bronze component of the artwork appeared to go very well. When the work is complete, the City should have a piece it can be proud of. Efforts by the design team to make the mechanical and lighting systems maintenance friendly were appreciated and only time will tell if those efforts were fruitful. The entire team appears very dedicated to the project. Lessons learned – The timing of the initial selection of the artist and the time required to finalize design details caused coordination issues with the A2MC Project and added to the overall cost of the artwork project. Utilizing a small, local engineering firm for the water and lighting systems has caused delays in the project. While very competent, the firm has limited resources to address the complexities of such a unique system in a timely manner.

What was the role of the commission on this project?

Margaret Parker: AAPAC prioritized the new Municipal Center as the top priority and first job that the Commission should tackle in the first Annual Public Art Plan. According to the Guidelines that the Commission wrote, a Task Force was appointed as a subcommittee of AAPAC to coordinate all the art at the new Municipal Center. Assistant City Administrator Sue McCormick was on the Task Force and helped guide its progress. The Task Force handled the details of choosing the sites for artwork, setting the mission for the building, and selecting the artist for the project which was recommended to AAPAC, and then City Council. Once the artwork was approved, the city and the architect took over the project management of constructing and installing the piece. The Commission planned the opening reception and publicity around the project.

Quinn Evans: To my knowledge the pac initiated the project, selected the artist, contracted with him for the concept and then approved the concept. Qea was not involved in this process other than advising the pac regarding timing, potential locations for public art and associated costs to modify the design to accept the artwork.

How was public input folded into this project?

Margaret Parker: Our means of public input were public surveys, annual discussion events where the public could meet commissioners and ask questions,

development of a web page on the city's website where people could write in to the administrator and a Facebook page, and our meetings were always open to the public and had time for public comment. The commission published annual reports which were available on the website and had great detail on the project.

Quinn Evans: To my knowledge that was more of the public art commission role, although i did attend a number of pac meetings that were open to the public and responded to questions from the observer, chronicle and a2.com.

Did the design take into account periods of little or no rain? If not, then what steps are being taking to address this issue?

Margaret Parker: Until this summer of prolonged heat and little rain, there had been a series of heavy storms. So too much rain had been on our minds not the reverse. But the piece was designed to reflect the natural ebb and flow of rainwater and that is what it seems to be doing. "What steps are being taken or have been taken to address this issue" should be asked of the architect. I believe SDI, the storm water consultants, have said that there is no water back up for dry periods. If the Commission has more questions, they should contact Herbert Dreiseitl for his input. To my mind, the community needs more education on this piece - how it channels the storm water, how the water's collected, where it's stored all around the building, how it comes down the sculpture and down the waterway. This piece will reflect the climate changes that we're all experiencing so the more is known about how it works, the better. A sign with all this information in the entrance way would be a great start. Tours for school kids perhaps linked with the Hands-On Museum would be a great way to teach parents as well.

Quinn Evans: Herbert Dreiseitl's original concept was for a rainwater sculpture utilizing harvested rainwater from the roof of the new justice building. The drought we are experiencing has meant that the sculpture periodically runs dry. I don't think this was adequately discussed during the design process (since many are not aware that the sculpture has no city water hook up).

The water storage tanks were sized to hold enough water to keep the sculpture running during typical weather conditions. We did not complete detailed calculations to understand losses from evaporation, since there is no readily available data to support figuring the losses from an installation such as this. We relied on the artist's experience with similar installations.

Matt Kulhanek: As stated by the artist in the email I sent you earlier, the artists designed the system to reflect the local rainfall conditions. When the City experiences long dry spells, no water would be flowing from the sculpture. This intent is also consistent with the actual design of the system which has no ties into either a potable water supply or the rainwater cistern.

From: [Kulhanek, Matthew](#)
To: [Hupy, Craig](#); [Seagraves, Aaron](#);
[Elias, Abigail](#);
cc: [Harrison, Venita](#); [Powers, Steve](#);
Subject: FW: Sculpture Water Supply
Date: Friday, July 13, 2012 9:18:56 AM

Per our discussion yesterday, Ken Klein was asked to contact Herbert Dreiseitl to clarify his intent for how the water component of the sculpture was to operate. As you can see from his email below, the water component was to reflect the local rainfall conditions. When we have longer dry spells, no water would flow from the sculpture. I hope this helps address the questions that are out there. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks.

Matt

From: Kenneth Klein [<mailto:kclein@QUINNEVANS.com>]
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2012 4:11 PM
To: Kulhanek, Matthew
Cc: Seagraves, Aaron
Subject: FW: Sculpture Water Supply

Matt,

Will this suffice?

Quinn Evans Architects
Kenneth Klein
d 734 926 0408

Confidentiality Notice: this transmission is intended for the sole use of the addressee and may contain information that is privileged and confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, any dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately by telephone. Thank you.

From: Herbert Dreiseitl [<mailto:herbert.dreiseitl@dreiseitl.com>]
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:39 PM
To: Kenneth Klein
Cc: Yocca, David; Rick Russell; Judd, Patrick
Subject: Re: Sculpture Water Supply

Ken,

yes you are right we were thinking the sculpture is reflecting the seasons.
Rainy days - water on the sculpture.
No water for a long time - no water in the system.

If you have a chance could you send me some pictures / photos please?

I will be in New York this coming sunday to tuesday night on an international conference on urban parks: <http://www.urbanparks2012.org/Workshop/international-parks-forum/>

Greetings,
Herbert

Herbert Dreiseitl

Atelier Dreiseitl
Nussdorferstrasse 9
88662 Ueberlingen, Germany
www.dreiseitl.com
tel.: +49 7551 92880
herbert.dreiseitl@dreiseitl.com

Am Jul 12, 2012 um 9:19 PM schrieb Kenneth Clein:

Herbert,

Thank you for responding so quickly. It's too bad we can't trade a few days. Here is has been dry and hot.

To me there is something poetic about letting the sculpture reflect the natural cycles, but I too understand that the City and residents would like to see the water running all summer. Your original concept for the sculpture was to rely on the rain. Is that correct?

Thanks,

Quinn Evans Architects
Kenneth Clein
d 734 926 0408

Confidentiality Notice: this transmission is intended for the sole use of the addressee and may contain information that is privileged and confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, any dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately by telephone. Thank you.

From: Herbert Dreiseitl [<mailto:herbert.dreiseitl@dreiseitl.com>]

Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:12 PM

To: Kenneth Clein
Cc: Yocca, David; Rick Russell; Judd, Patrick
Subject: Re: Sculpture Water Supply

Dear Ken

thanks for this info. Well here is raining all days, would hope to have some sun and summer.

I think if there is no rain it is OK for me to use potable water. It is even more relevant to celebrate the beauty of water in a sensitive way just in dry weather conditions.

We just had a delegation here from Ann Arbore.

Hope you are all well.

Greetings

Herbert

Herbert Dreiseitl

Atelier Dreiseitl
Nussdorferstrasse 9
88662 Ueberlingen, Germany
www.dreiseitl.com
tel.: +49 7551 92880
herbert.dreiseitl@dreiseitl.com

Am Jul 12, 2012 um 8:27 PM schrieb Kenneth Clein:

Herbert,

Hope all is well with you. There seems to be some confusion regarding your intention for the water supply. Currently only filtered rainwater is used and many have been surprised when it has run dry due to lack of rain this year.

The City would like a brief statement from you regarding your intentions for the water supply to set the record straight. Apparently they had the impression that it would run all season (which with normal rain fall would probably be true). The City may ask us to devise a source of potable water as a back-up. If you have any misgivings about this, please express those as well.

Please respond at you earliest convenience and enjoy your summer.

Vielen Dank,

Kenneth Clein, AIA LEED AP
Principal
d 734 926 0408

<image002.png>

WASHINGTON, DC | ANN ARBOR, MI | DETROIT, MI | MADISON, WI | www.quinnevans.com

Confidentiality Notice: this transmission is intended for the sole use of the addressee and may contain information that is privileged and confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, any dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately by telephone. Thank you.

<image004.png><image006.png><[image008.jpg](#)>

Sculpture with Water Features by Herbert Dreiseitl, 2011

Dreiseitl, with his studio *Atelier Dreiseitl*, has completed water sculptures that enliven cityscapes in Germany, China, Norway, Switzerland, Austria, Australia, Singapore, and the U.S., winning dozens of awards since the 1980s. All of his installations integrate water features into urban landscapes.

Ann Arbor's water sculpture demonstrates the flow of water through local rainfall cycles, using rainwater that is captured and stored in tanks under the structure. When the storage tanks are low during dry weather, the pumps stop circulating water over the surface of the sculpture until the next rainfall. The water pumps do not operate late at night or during the winter months, however the energy-efficient LED lights continue their cascading display year-round. Management of rain water—illustrated by the closed-loop of rainwater—reduces run-off entering the Huron River, a source of drinking water.

Dreiseitl worked with Michigan artisans to cast and install the bronze sculpture and the concrete simulated riverbed base. Local businesses also developed the water pumping and lighting systems, and adjacent rain gardens. The fabrication of the blue glass spheres as integrated with the lights and water flow were produced in cooperation with the College for Creative Studies in Detroit. The technology for routing the mold used to cast the sculpture was engineered with graduate students during Dreiseitl's fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Funding for this installation came from the City of Ann Arbor's water, wastewater and stormwater percent for art program, as derived from water-related capital improvement projects.

The promise of water is all about the future. Like rain, it is comforting, providing renewal and refreshment for a dry and thirsty landscape in a cityscape coming out of drought conditions. It is not only a symbol, water gives hope for the potential for life.

The sculpture consists of two layers of melted metal. Slightly leaning and finding its balance, the sculpture is subtly dynamic in every way. Resembling the surface of a standing wave, the top is concave and the bottom is convex. The concave surface is associated with reception, openness, taking in what is from above, and the convex surface is associated with giving away what it has received to the earth below, thus showing the transition from the sky to the earth—what rainwater always does.

The glass spheres bring floating light into the darkness of a physical form while water flows from above to quench the thirst of the earth. Emulating the motion of water drops, light moves down the sculpture at different speeds intensely illuminating the blue glass spheres in the day and softly illuminating them at night. The glass drops, which stick out at the top, slowly recede into the sculpture then reappear on the lower region of the other side, as if they are raindrops flowing down, penetrating into the sculpture and come out again. —Herbert Dreiseitl