

NEW BUSINESS

1 Resolution to approve the public art design, *Arbor Winds*, by artist Catherine Widgery, at the East Stadium Boulevard bridge location and recommend the City commission the artist to create and install the artwork at the location .

DRAFT: 4/17/14

WHEREAS, The Public Art Commission recommended the Ann Arbor (Stadium) Bridges reconstruction as a location for a public art project in the Public Art Annual Plan of 2012;

WHEREAS, The City issued a Statement of Qualifications to artists for the project on November 30, 2012. The project's Selection Panel selected four artists as finalists who were eligible to continue with the project. The finalists received a walk-through of the site on April 1st;

WHEREAS, A RFP was issued to the finalists on May 9th and they each entered into a design agreement with the City to complete the requirements of the RFP. The designs were presented at a public meeting on June 7th;

WHEREAS, Through robust public engagement the public's opinion was collected on the four designs and a majority of the public favored Widgery's design;

WHEREAS, The project's Selection Panel recommended artist Catherine Widgery to continue the design direction proposed for the location;

WHEREAS, The City of Ann Arbor entered into an agreement with the artist to revise the proposed art design and the designs were first presented to the Selection Panel on September 6th, after further changes, the Panel recommended the final design; and,

WHEREAS, The final design has been presented to the public at multiple commissions, forums and public meetings.

RESOLVED, That the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission approve the public art design, *Arbor Winds*, by artist Catherine Widgery, at the East Stadium Boulevard bridge location; and,

RESOLVED, That the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission recommend the City commission the artist to create and install the artwork at the location.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**CATHERINE WIDGERY'S DESIGN FOR PUBLIC ART AT THE EAST STADIUM BOULEVARD BRIDGE LOCATION**

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ART PROJECT:

The Ann Arbor Public Art Commission selected the Ann Arbor Bridges reconstruction project as a potential project to include in the Public Art Annual Plan of Fiscal Year 2012. The Commission approved the project with the associated goals of:

- Creating of a piece of public art that has the potential to become a landmark for the city on a site with high exposure to both residents and out-of-town visitors;
- Creating awareness for art on multiple audience levels (drivers, bikers, pedestrians, neighbors, residents, out-of-town-visitors);
- Lending identity to an area defined by highly diverse use (single residences, apartment buildings, university sports facilities, big-box retail).

A Task Force was formed and met in the fall of 2012. The City released a Statement of Qualifications to select an artist with a December 5th, 2012 deadline.

Catherine Widgery was selected as one of the finalists for the project by the project's Task Force. Widgery attended a walk-through of the project site and a Meet-the-Artists event on April 1st. Widgery and the other finalists were asked to create a design proposal for the artwork and they each entered into a design agreement with the City to complete the requirements for a Request for Proposals. The proposed designs were presented to the public on June 7th at a public presentation.

The project's Task Force and the Public Art Commission began a program of public engagement to survey public opinion about the four separate proposals. An online survey was collected and multiple events were staffed where paper copies of the survey were distributed. The survey's results found a majority support for Widgery's design, which was 64% of the favorable opinions that were offered.

The Task Force evaluated the designs and recommended working with Widgery to further the design direction in her proposal. The City of Ann Arbor entered into an agreement with the artist to revise the proposed art design and the new designs were first presented to the Selection Panel on September 6th, after further changes, the Panel recommended the final design.

This past month, the final design has been presented to the public at multiple commissions, forums and public meetings.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

As one drives around Ann Arbor, the gracious stands of trees stand out as a clear expression of the town's identity so trees have symbolized this arbor town from the beginning.

On a deeper level, the trees as portrayed in the artwork *Arbor Winds* are a metaphor for our own paradoxical fragility and strength in the context of our life cycles. We speak of having "deep roots" or of "branching out" or of how someone is "blooming". After a long winter, the return to life of spring is expressed above all through the return of leaves to trees. We all feel the sense of being reborn in the spring with the blossoms and leaves and, in the autumn, the somewhat wistful sadness as the leaves reach their glory of color and then fall.

Arbor Winds evokes not just trees but wind and light as expressions of the energy that surrounds us. In each panel we see the ghostly afterimage as if the wind has blown the tree; we see both moments in time simultaneously. These images etched in glass are like those etched in our memories. We walk through a forest and it is our mental "snapshots" of the branches against the sky or the texture of the thick trunk, or the dense layers of the many trunks silhouetted against the forest underbrush that remain in our memories. Indeed each of these etched images is more the memory of moments rather than a physical reality: a subtle expression of our own ephemeral existence and the light traces we leave behind.

-Catherine Widgery, January 27, 2014

There are three entry works on both the East and West ends of the bridge. Each of these are made up of 22' high stainless steel frames that hold 15' tall laser etched glass panels in groups of three. The images trees are etched on the glass with two images of the same grouping of trees on each face of the glass but one has been moved as if we are seeing two moments in time simultaneously.

-Catherine Widgery, January 27, 2014

Below: west end of bridge, north side of Stadium Blvd



© Catherine Widgery



Below: east end of bridge, north side of Stadium Blvd



© Catherine Widgery

The underpass of State Street below the Stadium Bridge is a gateway to the town so the angled etched glass panels on the underpass walls suggest a colonnade to greet visitors to Ann Arbor. These trees are etched into glass panels set in alternating columns on the walls of the underpass. Each tree panel is lit at night by LED fixtures set flush with grade so the underpass glows at night.

-Catherine Widgery, January 27, 2014



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Left: Detail of underpass column



Right: Detail of entry work



Artwork sites at East Stadium Boulevard bridge location

