

## Commemorative Works Committee Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2022

2:00 to 2:30 PM

### **Attendees:**

#### Committee Members

Anita Cozart, OP Interim Director  
Dulce Naime, DPR  
Jay Coleman, Citizen Member  
Lauren Dugas-Glover, CAH  
Otto Condon, Citizen Member  
Marnique Heath, Chair, HPRB

#### Office of Planning Staff

Alisonya Poole  
Chris Shaheen

#### Others

Armen Kharazian  
Grigor Hakobyan  
Sarkissian Interiors Inc.

### **Minutes:**

Chris Shaheen opened the meeting with a presentation on the High-Water Mark Project near the Municipal Fish Market at The Wharf that identifies the extent of historic flooding in DC – a project that Commemorative Works Committee (Committee) member Jay Coleman referred to at our May meeting as an example of a creative way to commemorate people and events. The artists are Curry Hackett and Patrick McDonough, DC-based designers and educators who collaborate with municipal agencies and neighborhood stakeholders to create site-responsive and community-minded public art. Shaheen thanked Coleman for bringing this to the Committee's attention.

Shaheen noted Commemorative Work Committee (CWC) members Anita Cozart, Dulce Naime, Jay Coleman, Lauren Dugas-Glover, and Otto Condon were in attendance, a quorum was present, and the formal meeting could commence.

Dugas-Glover moved to approve the minutes from the July 2022 meeting, Otto Condon seconded the motion, and the CWC voted unanimously to approve the motion.

#### Armen Garo Application

Shaheen gave an overview of the application for Armen Garo, the first Armenian Ambassador to the United States, proposed to be located in front of the Armenian Chancery at 2225 R Street NW. The site is located to the north of the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and R Street NW. There is some visibility between the site and Sheridan Circle, but it is partially obscured by landscape and the scale of the proposed Armen Garo commemorative work does not compete with the statue of General Sheridan in Sheridan Circle. There are also two small-scale statues in public space on Sheridan Circle - a statue of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk at the Turkish Ambassador's Residence and a statue of Philip Jaisohn, the first Korean-American, adjacent to the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea. Other nearby

commemorative works include the fountain in Dupont Circle and the Robert Emmet Memorial at Massachusetts Avenue and S Street NW.

Shaheen noted that Marnique Heath had joined the meeting.

Alisonya Poole presented the application and reviewed the site plan, elevation, and other details. Shaheen facilitated discussion on the application.

Condon stated he appreciated the explanation of the application and the scale of the proposed commemorative work. He had questions about how vehicles use the adjacent space, how often it is used as a turn-around, how often vehicles will be parked there, and how this effects the art. Shaheen stated he was not sure how often vehicles used the circular driveway, but images from Google Earth and Streetview show vehicles parked in this space on a regular basis.

Naime asked if it was possible to incorporate seating around the commemorative work. She noted there was a small tree near the commemorative work and that if there is a turnaround for cars, then the space will likely become just a space for vehicles.

Coleman stated that the bronze hat on the podium was the same size of the bus and distracting – that this is not a game changer, but instead is an interesting design. He asked if the landscaping was significant, if the planting shown was a bonsai tree, and if there was any significance in the plant selection. He also noted that the proportion of the hands were small, that when you open your hand you should cover your face, and that the proportion of the hand with the bust did not correlate. Shaheen states that specifications for plants are not included in the application.

Dugas-Glover stated in some views presented you see the hand as it is holding the hat and in other views the perspective is a bit off. She noted there is an indent in the sculpture, which allows the hand holding the hat to be a little less odd, but that having the hand come out of plinth was a little disconcerting.

Heath stated the hand and hat are a bit distracting, but that the overall composition feels successful, was designed with intent, and conceptually on the right track. She asked about the surrounding context and if the materials used in the commemorative work relate to the surrounding context. The use of gold to highlight features is aesthetically pleasing, however the plaque on the low wall to the right of the plinth does not need to be made of gold; consider making it a black metal/material like the wording on the plinth.

Cozart stated she agreed with Heath's comments, that it could appear as if it had always been there and be a welcoming feature to the building. She also stated that she agreed with previous comments about proportions - that this could be due to the illustrations – and with comments on materials needing to be compatible with the surrounding context.

Shaheen stated that overall Committee member's comments are positive, the general scale and location is pleasing, and that the use of gold for the bust and hat create a good contrast with the materials used for the plinth. He stated that areas to further develop include more information about context, landscaping, and seating. Specifically, there are concerns with how the commemorative work fits into the paved driveway and areas designed for vehicular movement, how materials work with the context, if the color for the plaque and its location can change, and questions of general proportionality of the head, hand, and hat. He stated these comments will be formally shared with the applicant before the application comes back to the Committee for a second review.

### Conclusion

Shaheen stated that the next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2:30 to 3:30 PM and that more information on that meeting's agenda will be shared prior to that meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30.