

Significant Works of Art at Major Gateways into the City Plan

John Moser, Chairperson, made a presentation on the Art in Public Places (AIPP) program to the Mayor and Council at their meeting on July 1, 2013. The presentation included the recommendation by the Cultural Arts Commission that current and future funding of the AIPP program be earmarked for significant works of art at major gateways into the City. The Mayor and Council directed the Cultural Arts Commission to continue to discuss and suggest a plan for placing significant works of art at major gateways into the City with the earmarked funds of the AIPP program.

Betty Wisda, Arts Programs Supervisor, conducted a tour of major entrances to the City of Rockville with the Cultural Arts Commission. She worked with Community Planning and Development Services staff to identify the seven locations of the “Welcome to Rockville” signs and City-owned property within 1,000 feet of these signs. The following list includes the locations of the signs.

1. Median, Tower Oaks Boulevard, North of I-270 ramp intersection
2. East side of North Bound Falls Road, South of Dunster Road
3. South of East Bound Darnestown East of Shady Grove Road
4. Median of West Montgomery Avenue (MD 28), east of Shady Grove Road
5. Median of Frederick Road (MD 355), north of Redland Avenue
6. North on West Bound Veirs Mill Road, east of Twinbrook Parkway
7. East of North Bound Rockville Pike (MD 355), south of Twinbrook Parkway

The Cultural Arts Commission discussed the criteria for the selection of potential sites for significant works of art at major gateways into the City. The sites should have high volumes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, highly visible without obstructions or major distractions and owned by the City.

The Cultural Arts Commission recommends the following potential sites as the top two priority sites: the grassy area adjacent to Route 355 at King Farm Homestead Park and the corner at Veirs Mill Road and Meadow Hall Drive. The first site is City-owned property. The developer of Twinbrook Shopping Center owns the second site. This developer had granted permission for Twinbrook Civic Association to landscape and maintain this area in previous years.

The Cultural Arts Commission also recommends that the all-inclusive budget for the significant works of art at major gateways into the City should be \$250,000 per site. The earmarked funds are in the Special Activity Fund Art in Public Places (350-900-7701). At the end of the Fiscal Year 2016, the balance was \$516,000. Note: The budget for “Spirit of Rockville” was \$175,000 in 1996; the budget for “ColorPlay” at The Village Green at Falls Grove was \$150,000 in 2002.

Upon receiving direction to proceed with the next step, the Cultural Arts Commission and staff will continue to pursue a significant work of art at King Farm Homestead Park. A Call for Entries would be developed for the grassy area adjacent to Route 355 at King Farm Homestead Park. The Call for Entries would be distributed on a national level to ensure submissions by professional artists who have previous experience with design and installation of works of art at major gateways.