

EMMA S. BARRIENTOS MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

REGULAR MEETING

ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

The Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Advisory Board convened via video conferencing.

Board Members in Attendance:

David Goujon, Chair

Olga Campos-Benz, Member

Gerardo Gandy, Member

Ricardo Maga Rojas, Member

Claudia Massey, Member

Endi Silva, Member

Diana Gomez, Member

Board Member *Absent*:

Art Navarro, Vice Chair

Tomas Salas, Member

Wayne Lopes, Member

Staff in Attendance:

Lucas Massie, PARD Division Manager

Laura Esparza, PARD Division Manager

Michelle Rojas, ESB-MACC Manager

Olivia Tamzarian, ESB-MACC Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Goujon called the Board Meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Michael Abelson, previous President of the Town Lake and Rainy Neighborhood Associations spoke with regards to his concerns on the numerous Rainey Street developments and potential encroachment by the Transpiration department through the MACC and potentially create safety issues. He mention working with Councilmember Tovo and his wish to work with the MACC board on their common interest.

Brian Furlong the president of the Rainy Neighborhood Association, spoke with regards to the many developments that are up for approval with the City. He mentioned that the City Council is considering an upgrade of the allowable density in the Rainey District to such a high level that it threatens to overwhelm the capacity of the neighborhood's roads and infrastructure systems. This could over time lead to debilitating levels of local traffic that impedes easy access to the MACC.

Chair Goujon stated the ESB MACC mission statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

Member Campos-Benz motioned to approve the January 7 and February 3, 2021 Advisory Board Meeting minutes. Member Massey Seconded. Vote Passed. (7.0)

CHAIR REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Chair Goujon presented the chair report. He encouraged Board members to be engaged in dialogue, listen, and advocate for the community.

PUBLIC INPUT

Gabriela Bermea representing the Latinos in Architecture and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Austin expressed support for the Master Plan and the Phase 2 design team's efforts and stated the Latinos in Architecture and AIA may be able to provide support in the process for lectures, community outreach, etc.

Marina Islas, former employee of the ESB MACC and current employee of Austin History Center Latinx Community Archivist, expressed concerns and issues with the Phase 2 Community Engagement she attended. She also expressed the concerns with Spanish language interpretation provided and communications.

Senator Gonzalo Barrientos expressed support in the statements from the previous three people presented and emphasized the importance of community feedback in the Phase 2 project. Barrientos mentioned that the community plays an extremely important role in the direction of the MACC. City staff works for the community and should put in the work to get real community participation. He stated he has seen community interactions dwindle in the last 10 years but not under the new director and efforts to engage should be doubled.

Ana Maciel spoke about the Phase 2 expansion and made reference to the priorities from the 2018 Master Plan being well incorporated into the project. Maciel emphasized the importance for the ESB MACC to serve the community and their needs and the Advisory Board to be hands on with the community.

Bertha Rendon Delgado, president of the East Town Lake neighborhood associations, stated her frustration that the community has not been involved with the design of the MACC. She also mentioned the importance and purpose to use city resources to outreach to the community and build a bridge with the community.

Chair Goujon voiced his opinion about the desire to have a comprehensive community engagement plan. He ensured those present that he expressed the need to have an inclusive, transparent, equitable community engagement process.

PRESENTATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

A) PRESENTATION BY THE JOINT VENTURE MIRO RIVERA ARCHITECTS AND TATIANA BILBAO STUDIOS ON THE PHASE 2 BUILDING PROGRAM

Miguel Rivera introduced Design team and acknowledged Barrientos' comment about the 30 year progress of the ESB MACC. Rivera acknowledged the community's needs for more square footage. A PowerPoint slide was presented and the project up to now was recounted including the community engagement process. He stated that designs have not been made at this point. The design team discussed the need to reorganize the priorities from the 2018 plan, assessing the current space and needs, neighboring projects, developments needed, land use, zoning, estimated

additional square footage, and potential connection to the riverfront, potential of the Zocalo and timetable. Elsa Ponce from Tatiana Bilbao studio also recounted the community engagement process that had been done to establish the priorities. She also recounted the neighboring projects including the Waterloo Greenway, the River Street extension and the connection to the Austin Energy district cooling station. Juan Miro emphasized that most of the priorities from the 2018 plan would be part of this project but due to not having all the funding items had to be prioritized. Tatiana Bilbao recounted the three areas where the focus of the project would be emphasized. She mentioned the classrooms, the shaded Zocalo, and the connection to the landscape, nature and the outdoor spaces. She spoke about the potential for connection to the riverfront and to bring the importance of the MACC to the forefront. Juan Miro described the project concept in more detail. He discussed that this project will be a transformation for the building to create a presence with the City and for the Latino community.

Chair Goujon thanked the team for their presentation. He also stated this is not the final design just a draft of the program plan.

Heidi Tse, project manager with Public Works, stated that there is ongoing public engagement and mentioned a public forum would be assembled with leaders of the community and leaders will bring information back to the community and have ongoing dialogue.

Chair Goujon read a communications letter from Emilio Zamora which recommended a public meeting be hosted by the ESB MACC for broader area of discussion. His interest was in regards to the City's proposal to use occupancy tax and development revenues to fund the completion of the construction of the MACC. He would like someone from the board to be appointed to find out what happened to that funding source. Chair Goujon mentioned that the project commended the design team for their imaginative and thoughtful program plan even though the community engagement plan was compromised.

B) PRESENTATION BY LAURA ESPARZA, MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS DIVISION MANAGER ON FY2022 BUDGET

Chair Goujon introduced Laura Esparza. Laura Esparza stated that the Budget Office will present the Budget during the April meeting and comments by Council members can be received until April 9th. Esparza stated comments will go to the Budget Office.

Chair Goujon asked what the current needs of the ESB MACC are.

Laura Esparza directed to Michelle Rojas to speak. Rojas explained there is no additional funding for to replace the existing vehicle to monitor and maintain the grounds of the MACC and the LAAP artist and exhibiting artists have asked for additional funding to support projects.

STAFF BRIEFINGS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

A) STAFF REPORT ON ESB-MACC JANUARY 2021 AND UPCOMING PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

MACC Supervisor Olivia Tamzarian gave the Staff Report, which included summaries and stated the Awards of Excellence is in the planning stages.

Chair Goujon thanked Tamzarian. Member Claudia Massey said to let her know when the Awards of Excellence 2019 working group can be kicked off and would be happy to support. Chair Goujon stated this will be discussed later in the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 5)

A) DISCUSSION OF PHASE 2 RENOVATION AND EXPANSION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP)

Chair Goujon asked if there were comments from the community that helped influence and inspire the design team. Miguel Rivera stated there is a challenge with the building and the site, not only dealing with the program. Rivera mentioned some issues of the facility, additional classrooms, recording spaces, and safety and control over the Zocalo. Rivera also mentioned possible permanent exhibition about the history of the ESB MACC and comments from the youth to open the ESB MACC up more. He mentioned the feedback from the community that the MACC needs to be treated with the same level of importance than other civic spaces of the City. Juan Miro mentioned that they have been gathering information and emphasis on practical need for more space. Miro also mentioned hearing the recordings from the ESB MACC Oral History Project and pointed to remarks made. Tatiana Bilbao stated the importance of identity that the building can give to the community and the city.

Member Endi Silva asked if priorities, scope was based on community feedback and if those priorities could change as the project evolved. Juan Miro confirmed. Miguel Rivera stated they are trying to balance priorities and what can be done with the funding available. The cost estimator is putting a plan together with several proposals to fine tune what can be done. He mentioned that based on the cost estimate, tougher decisions would have to be made. Juan Miro mentioned that some people felt that the Gran Entrada is not as essential as the Zocalo itself, the Zocalo can be more integral to the everyday, and the Gran Entrada is not as critical as the Zocalo itself.

Member Massey remarked that they have heard that the community is not being heard and asked if there will be more chances for community engagement. Heidi Tse stated there will be two more direct engagements through design and the community feedback forum and will have dialogue and feedback for design as well. Miguel Rivera stated they will continue listening and they still have several phases.

Chair Goujon remarked that it would be a missed opportunity to not help educate the community and we should disseminate information to the community in creative ways, for example through family programs.

Member Ricardo Maga Rojas stated his disappointment with some of the ways that the community was engaged, for example not providing an English to Spanish translator for one of the meetings. Miguel Rivera and Heidi Tse clarified that a Spanish interpreter was in the

meetings, with the exception of a Spanish to English translator at the last meeting. Rivera also recounted the extensive engagement that was completed for the 2018 plan.

Member Gerardo Gandy stated that the project team should make sure inclusivity and diversity are at the fore front and that all communication and information is distributed in both English and Spanish. Member Gandy also stated the idea of activating the Zocalo with connection to the trail would help delineate the space, presence along the trail and provide greater access control. He also mentioned that the café space could set the MACC apart and be a point of attraction and potentially build funds for the center.

Chair Goujon stated his support for the design team's feedback but also mentioned his concern with the community engagement. He stated that the design team exceeded expectations but that greater efforts need to be made on the engagement side. Member Maga Rojas expressed his hesitation with supporting the community engagement as it had been presented. Chair Goujon stated he can make the motion to approve the program documents but would like to discuss and would propose two motions to approve program documents and another to want to rebuild trust from the community and increase enthusiasm for the center. Chair Goujon remarked that they value partnership with the design team and PARD. Chair Goujon remarked about the important role Tatiana Bilbao plays being able to inspire as one of the top 100 best female architects in the world. He mentioned how this project has the ability to inspire the community. Members Endi Silva and Member Diana Gomez support separating the two motions.

Chair Goujon motioned to support the Phase 2 building program as presented. Member Silva seconded. Motion passes unanimously. (7.0)

Chair Goujon motioned to create comprehensive community engagement plan to create meaningful avenues for engagement throughout the design phase from start to finish. Member Claudia Massey seconded. Motion passes unanimously. (7.0)

Chair Goujon asked that this is an advisory motion to City Council members and would like to see a meaningful engagement program come out of this and thanked everyone for their efforts.

B) DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE FUNDING FROM THE CREATIVE SPACES BOND FOR A MUSIC HUB. (GOUJON, NAVARRO)

Chair Goujon stated this has been put on hold because of the storm. No further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 6)

A) REPORTS ON ALL WORKING GROUPS

- 1. Arts:** Nothing to report
- 2. Budget:** Nothing to support
- 3. Transportation:** Chair Goujon recounted what the Rainey Neighborhood Association members asked for a comprehensive neighborhood plan that has safety and equity in mind but not just concentrate on density. Chair Goujon stated they need to invite community partners to participate.

4. Phase 2: Chair Goujon recounted the need to include community partners in discussion and the responsibility to include them in greater length.

5. Ethnographic Research: Chair Goujon called on Cassie Smith to give update. Cassie Smith introduced herself and details research, current focus and upcoming survey.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Chair Goujon stated a possible agenda item with Cassie Smith and another item for the Budget presentation next meeting.

Chair Goujon entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Ricardo Maga Rojas motioned to adjourn the meeting. Member Endi Silva seconded. The motion passed. (7.0) The meeting was adjourned at 8:34pm.