

ARTS CONVERSATION
September 15, 2015
NOTES

Everyone with an interest in the arts culture in the greater Sequim area was invited to a conversation focusing on our cultural infrastructure – what works, what doesn't, how and where it thrives. Hosted and facilitated by the City Art Advisory Board, this was an opportunity to look at how all of the arts community understands, supports and nurtures the richest possible cultural life in Sequim. Held at the new Civic Center, 26 people, five members of the Art Commission, the Mayor and the City Clerk were in attendance. The input gleaned from this diverse group is reported below:

WHAT WORKS IN SEQUIM	WHAT DOES WORK IN SEQUIM
Blending of two cultures	Market Sequim better as an arts destination
Elevation of Downtown	Not enough public art to inspire
Buskers	Lack of public venues for music and performing arts
Community monetary support	Lack of public venues for artistic activities
Collaboration: website links, intergroup activities, local activities with for profit and non-profit	Need money for success
Variety	Lack of public relations
Communication between art groups, city council and individuals	Seasonal activities, not constant
Children = programs and support	Lack of videos and photos to show what has been done
Adult education – community, artist led, a gathering place	No point of contact for website and promotion – need dedicated person for this
Volunteer support of events and activities	Lack of good volunteers
Grants for general arts community	Lack of access to websites & activities
Use of vacant space as venues	High costs for activities
Creative thinking & problem solving	Exclusivity
Open mindedness	Negative thinking
Universal design	Bad technical presentation
Giant spotlights	Artists asked to donate for free
AV equipment	Downtown focus
Standards and guidelines	
Timelines	
Review after events	
Follow through	
Share results and what works	
Communication	
Inclusive free events	
Encourage people	
Education about all opportunities	

Encouraging appreciation of the arts	
Tourism promotion	
Respect for the profession	
Quality publicity	
Partnerships	
Fostering the next generation	
Outreach	
Documenting works	

The second question asked of participants was, “What would you add to Sequim’s art experience?” Ideas are listed below:

Cross city partnerships
Art groups working together
Film festival
More outside music
Chamber music festival and performance
Dramatic “circus” events
Gilbert and Sullivan event
Ballet festival
Research what other communities are doing
Art on the Peninsula
Coordinate with other communities and other arts groups – partnerships with Chamber, businesses and schools
Plein Air type events
Buskers – enlarge amount of street performance and events
More public art – temporary and permanent
Blend agriculture and art
Encourage “audience” participation
Focus on cultural heritage art (Hispanic, Asian, etc.)
Remember food is “art” – help promote attendance
Cultural lecture series
Site specific projected installations
Flash mobs
Sing alongs
Walking tour with murals or physical signs and public art map
Series of workshops for tourists opportunities and writing for all arts
Water themed events

The attendees had the following questions of the Art Commission:

- Is the Commission is just about art “pieces” or does it purport to look at the entire “look and feel of the community.” Sharon answered that the Commission is really about the whole kit and caboodle.
- Yes, the Commission also covers literature and poetry.
- We have talked about the need for a single, reliable calendar resource. Renee Brock-Richmond reminded us that there are already three such resources: Sequim Chamber calendar, the Sequim City calendar, and the Olympic Peninsula Visitors Bureau, and that we really did not need to recreate the wheel. Another participant suggested that each of the calendars have links to the others.
- Another participant wondered why the Sequim Chamber of Commerce wasn’t there.
- The communication of information was a big topic, and the need for physical information (e.g., newspaper, radio, email, website) and more virtual forms (e.g., social media) were necessary. This might include FB and text (more adults), along with Twitter, Vine, and Instagram (younger folks).
- We need to have someone who is not a city employee in charge of maintaining a consistent message across all of the media. Most felt that this was more than a volunteer could be expected to handle, and that it might be an intern position. Renee Brock-Richmond mentioned that this is taught at PC and that a job would help keep some of our young people here. We would need to find funding to pay such a position.
- The participants welcomed the idea of having another meeting such as this in three to four months. Someone suggested that we contact each of the participants and ask for one additional referral for next time.
- Renee Brock-Richmond suggested that we post the output from the meeting on the City web site, along with pictures of the actual flip chart pages to show that it was participant driven. It was a BIG fail that we did not think to have someone there taking pictures.