Arts District mission statement says a lot in a few words

by Josh Bianc

It has been seven years since the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District officially became a nonprofit organization. Standing on its own two feet it crafted a mission statement for the time.

As the Arts District board has developed, it has grown to understand what is needed and wanted from its community, especially in light of the December 2020 merger with the Northeast Community Development Corporation which had served as our fiscal sponsor. While we are always learning and will change over time, board members, after much discussion, formalized a more succinct mission statement that works to capture the essence of what the board sees as its work.

The new Arts District mission statement:
To catalyze the innovative spirit of artists through generative community arts development.

Please spend some time reflecting on the words we chose and see how it speaks to you and how you hope the Arts District board can best serve artists and the arts community.

We look forward to our continued service to artists through generative community engagement in a juried exhibition. We hope you are once again excited to invite you to submit works that represent a range of aesthetics across varied disciplines throughout the Minneapolis Arts District in collaboration with the Northeast Community Development Corporation.

Parking art exhibition submission link will open January 15

Building off the success of last year’s exhibitions at MSP Airport, the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District (NE-AD) is once again excited to invite artists to submit their work for consideration in a juried exhibition. We hope to highlight the many artists working and playing an integral role in our community. We look forward to our continued service to artists and the arts community.

The application form will open on January 15, 2022 at northeastminneapolisartdistrict.org, and submissions will be accepted until March 1. All people who live, work, or have a studio in the district are eligible to submit as many as three works for the jury’s consideration. Selected work will need to be delivered in May 2022.

Photographers looking for encouragement, instruction, critique and inspiration should consider the July 21-24 Highway 12 Photography Workshop destined for the Lily Pad (Icebox Gallery’s Howard Christopher’s place). The drive is almost entirely on lakes. The light around sunset and sunrise is wonderful for photography.


Sculpture park’s potential celebrated at JROW

by Margo Ashmore

Paul Miller of Minneapolis Public Works gets a unique view of North- east Minnesota’s latest “stone soup” project. Traveling in and out of Minneapolis by the Northstar commuter train, he sees the area known as JROW, the two apartment developments that surround the soon-to-be sculpture path, and the XOXO sculpture.

Neighborhood residents see JROW from 22nd Avenue as a sidewalk at the base of the railroad tracks west of Madison St. NE or as an angled pedestrian continuation of Jefferson Street approached from 23rd Avenue NE.

As one of his last events in office, First Ward Council Member Kevin Reich gathered quietly with the two apartment developers and Miller December 14 to celebrate the new concrete walkway and the long permanent sculpture XOXO by Karl Unnasch, recently installed.

JROW + 11

Learn from others and experience on photo road trip

By interviewing building owners, University of Minnesota researcher Kenneth Néméry explores the economic and social nuances of Northeast’s unique arts production district. Through publicly available data, he examines the pressures on industrial land use. Report concludes with case studies of U.S. cities with strong Creative Index Values, similar to Minneapolis. Land use and zoning regulations in these cities advised policy recommendations to explore implementing an Arts District Overlay in the interpretation of the Minneapolis 2040 Plan. Néméry’s work was funded by the Ksl Nelson Community-Based Research Program, coordinated by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota, which is supported by the McKnight Foundation. Report available at https://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/225043

Szyhalski’s prints in German gallery

The first exhibition of Piotr Szyhalski’s complete COVID-19 Labor Camp Report project outside of the US will run until Feb. 20, 2022. All 225 prints are on display at the ACC Galerie in Weimar Germany. It is part of an international show “Demurialisation” curated by Knut Birkholz and Frank Meyer.

ACC Galerie is housed in a historic building (previously Goethe lived in it between 1776-1777) and offers a very unique architectural and spatial features. ACC functions as a complex of small, intimate spaces connected by a long, circular, meandering space in which the Labor Camp Report is displayed. “In this installation the beginning of the series is just around the corner from its end hinting at a endless cycle. It feels appropriate to acknowledge that loop, as we enter year 3 (!!!) of the pandemic,” said Szyhalski in an Instagram post.

Industrial land use & zoning report

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Area was overgrown, now hosts public art

Representing the popular symbol of hugs and kisses, it’s made of Corten steel in flowing forms with a heart for one of the O’s and the other hanging from the last X, both filled with gem stones from within at night by LEDs. It’s placed near the embankment such that selfies are possible with or without trains in the background.

Becky Landon of Landon Group triggered the first development in this area a few years ago, building the Hook and Ladder Apartments. There are two buildings, one of which was built with traditional methods, the other with many energy-saving features. She recalled walking the site with Reich and Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association (HNIA) representatives, finding some intentional raised garden beds amid the overgrown brush and tallow storage facilities.

Landon said she hopes Northeast residents will discover the new path even on their walks this winter.

Reich explained that neighborhood priorities included affordable housing, environmental/energy conservation and art, outside and inside the project. Hook and Ladder did all of those things, with several art pieces on site, artist-designed trash receptacles and bike racks, plus art in common areas inside.

One of Reich’s priorities was to leverage the fact that this is all in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District. As for the sculpture walk, he enjoyed the challenge of working on such a multi-faceted project of a puzzle, he knows how he can give it to Paul Miller to figure out.

As for the sculpture and construction paused when TE Miller Development (no relation to Paul) bought its site for what is now The Huxley, and needed access through the va
cated street for construction staging. Then COVID got in the way. The project experienced other delays with the discovery of abandoned pipe under the street.

Trees and grass had been planted earlier at the northern end. Finally, just in time for this fall, the rest of the concrete and landscap ing went in. To avoid encroaching on the railroad bridge embankment, TE Miller allowed the southern portion of the sidewalk to be built on their property.

Robb Miller of TE Miller, which split the cost of the sculpture with HNIA and partnered with Art to Change the World to commission smaller artworks to give their first tenants, called the collaboration “a lotta fun.” They all agreed it “flips a lot of scripts.”

When the weather is conducive, sculptures will be located on the three recently installed concrete slabs now covered by snow. What’s on display will change every three years, according to the HNIA website. Paul Miller said the art will be managed through the city’s public art program. JROW was funded by the two developers and in part, the city of Minneapolis.

Robb Miller gave a tour of the Huxley building after the windswept exchange out side. It was not named for the author Aldous Huxley, he explained, but tested well in marketing. Artifice facilitated art through out the building including two pieces in the rooftop elevator lobby by Hostle Wood.

and a giant map on one common room wall showing art locations with large stars. With market-rate units “on the small side,” the building includes a co-working space with phone booths and several other places to let people get more space and community in the process, Miller said. The building is completely full.

Public Works’ Paul Miller confirmed that he enjoyed the challenge of working with Reich, the two developers, and the neighbors on this public/private partnership. “There’s more than the curb and gutter, more than the asphalt and concrete.”

And, he enjoys the view from the train. “It’s quite striking.”

Let’s make 2022 successful together! Advertise your business in JROW, which stands for Jefferson Right-of-Way. (Photos by Margo Ashmore)