Public Art Discussion: Love Sculpture

DATE: October 23, 2019

FROM: Melissa Johnson, Cultural Recreation Manager
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resource Department

Background/Issue:
When discussing future public art possibilities in downtown Matthews with sculptor Tom Risser, the new marketing campaign of Love Matthews was brought up. This new campaign celebrates all of the things that everyone loves about Matthews. This conversation inspired him to create two new pieces focusing on Love Matthews. Both sculptures are literal displays of Love, but each one has a different feeling and look to it. The proposed location is the landscaped bank between the front patio at Sea Board and the public parking lot. This area is maintained by the Town, with seasonal foliage and larger rocks.

The first Love sculpture is 63” tall, 52” wide and 40” wide at the base, and is the heavier of the two sculptures. It is made from stainless steel and the coloration is from heat applied to the metal. It is made up of little circular pieces, and inscribed on the back of one of the circles it asks, “Can you find love?”

The second Love sculpture is taller, at 8 feet tall, 78” wide and 34” deep at the base. This sculpture is slightly lighter at only 200 pounds. This piece is also made from stainless steel, but does not have the coloration like the other piece.

Because the pieces are made from stainless steel, neither one will rust. Only one sculpture is being proposed in this area. The sculpture would be set off from the sidewalk, and the planted flowers should deter people from walking over to the sculpture. It will be securely fastened and anchored into the concrete base that will be poured, so if anyone does climb on it, there is no chance of it falling. The piece would be set back enough that this would not be a distraction to drivers passing by, but an enjoyment for all pedestrian traffic.

Proposal/Solution:
The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resource Department Advisory Committee has seen photos of the two sculptures and been provided with the background information on them at the meeting on October 9. This was also the public input meeting to introduce both of these sculptures for public feedback. The meeting was promoted to encourage additional participation, though only staff and the Advisory Committee were in attendance. Through majority vote, the P&R Advisory Committee recommended love sculpture #1, the larger, circular “Can You Find the Love” sculpture for this location.

Financial Impact:
The sculpture chosen can be on loan to the Town. Expenses would include labor and material costs associated with the concrete base for the sculpture. If the Town would like to purchase either piece, the artist could be asked to provide a price.
Related Town Goal: To increase the presence of Public Art in the Town of Matthews; Vision Statement 6 - Destination for Arts and Culture

Recommended Motion: Provide feedback, no action requested at this time,

Love Sculpture 1 (the lines are shadows)
Love Sculpture 2
Both Love Sculptures for Size Perspective
Proposed Location