

MIAMI BEACH

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee Members

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: November 6, 2020

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION OF JACK STEWART MURAL**

HISTORY:

The Versailles Hotel, owned by Alan Faena, applied to the Historic Preservation Board and was granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for total demolition of the 1955 south addition, and the construction of a new 16-story detached ground level addition, as part of a new residential development. The *Apollo* mural was sited on the 1955 south addition and subsequently was removed by Mr. Faena's contractor for this project.

The *Apollo* mural was brought forward to the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) as part of redevelopment project on November 14, 2014, and to the Art in Public Places Committee (AiPP) on March 17, 2015 and April 21, 2015. The following background provides an overview of the HPB process:

On March 17, 2015, at the request of Mitch Novick, the *Apollo* mural was presented to the AiPP Committee, as a proposal to be incorporated into the new Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC). AiPP Committee members requested the following information:

- an appraisal from an art conservator who is a member of the International Society of Appraisers, the American Society of Appraisers, Uniformed Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices and or the Appraisers Association of America;
- cost of transportation;
- cost of storage;
- cost of restoration; cost of installation;
- cost of ongoing maintenance; and
- whether funding had been identified to cover the above costs.

AiPP Committee expressed unanimous opposition regarding installing the mural at the MBCC the use of AiPP funds for this project for the following reasons:

- the mid-century mural does not fit MBCC's new contemporary design aesthetic;
- not convinced that adding this mural in the location identified be a good design decision for the MBCC project;
- the public MBCC Call to Artists has been completed and internationally recognized contemporary artists were short-listed;
- Art in Public Places is not charged with taking on preservationist activities for the
- City of Miami Beach; and the mural is the property of Alan Faena and the disposition of the work is his responsibility.

On April 25, 2015, the *Apollo* was once again presented to the AiPP Committee at the request of Mitch Novick. While expressing support for efforts to preserve and relocate the mural, AiPP members reiterated concern that the mural issue continues to be on the AiPP meeting agenda. Members reaffirmed their assessment that proposing a site for the mural at the MBCC is inappropriate considering the MBCC's contemporary architecture and 25 international artists had been invited and contracted to propose projects for all potential public art sites throughout the renovated MBCC. Members restated that AiPP's advisory role does not encompass historic preservation and that disposition of the mural is not the responsibility of AiPP. In addition, previously requested information related to project costs had not been provided to AiPP.

As of April 25, 2015, the remains of the mural were stored in a privately owned outdoor facility and were showing signs of significant deterioration.

ANALYSIS

A preliminary estimate for the conservation of the Apollo Mural, from a known conservator, for the restoration and reinstallation of the Apollo Mural is approximately \$500,000 to \$700,000. The cost will on depend on the condition of the work.

Applicable Area

Citywide

**Is this a "Residents
Right to Know" item,
pursuant to City Code
Section 2-14?**

**Does this item utilize
G.O. Bond Funds? No**

No