

MassDOT Silver Line Extension | Chelsea Commuter Rail Station

1. Integral Art Information Session | Summary Minutes

2. Responses to RFQ Questions and Answers (August 5, 2015 deadline)

Location of Meeting: 100 Summer Street, Boston, MA

Date and time of meeting: July 29, 2015, 6pm – 7pm

1. Integral Art Information Session | Summary Minutes

MBTA

Marggie Lackner, Katherine Knowlton, Allison Sweeney, John McCormack

CONSULTANT: Urban Culture Institute

Christina Lanzl with support from Thu Ngan Han and Hilary Buskirk

Meeting facilitators, Marggie Lackner and Christina Lanzl, welcomed the group of artists and project team members. All meeting participants introduced themselves.

PURPOSE

Public artist information session for artists who are interested in applying to the selection process for integral art at the new Chelsea Commuter Rail (CR) Station, part of the MassDOT Silver Line Extension Project, an extension of the Silver Line to Chelsea. The new station will be constructed adjacent to the new Downtown Chelsea Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stop. One half of 1 percent (0.05%) of the construction budget is allocated for artistic enhancement of station components to:

- enhance the rider experience;
- complement the wayfinding signage at entrances and at platforms;
- complement the station architecture as a permanent feature;
- stimulate local communities;
- build local cultural assets.

Up to 4 artists will be hired as sub-consultants to AECOM, the design consultant, to create designs in full color for up to 22 - 4' x 4' porcelain enamel (PE) panels, which will be grouped in twos to form 4' high x 8' wide installations. Each 4' x 8' group will have either only signage or only art. The panels will have the color banding of the required sign panels at all CR stations above and below the 4' x 8' panels. The signage is designed to improve orientation for passengers on the platforms and in the trains, including double-decker models.

PRESENTATION

Ms. Lackner proceeded to give an overview of the integral art program and showed some examples. She pointed out the layout of the 22 art panels within the overall layout of the station and its way finding signage. The budget has been allocated in line with the integral art program policy, which defines that 0.5% of the construction budget is allocated for integral art. It is anticipated that each of up to four selected artists would receive a design fee of \$17,500. Copies of the Integral Art Policy/Program were available to attendees and are available on the MBTA Art Program page at www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/art.

John McCormack provided the architectural context for the Chelsea CR Station and MassDOT Silver Line Extension project. The purpose of this project is to extend Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service from South Station in Boston to East Boston and Chelsea.

The new multi-modal transportation service will offer both the BRT and CR stations adjacent to each other. Chelsea Station is located on the MBTA's Newburyport/Rockport Line in downtown Chelsea, approximately 4 1/2 miles from North Station in Boston. It is currently situated at the intersection of Arlington Street and Sixth Street, in an urban center with nearby residential neighborhoods. The existing station is in disrepair and does not meet current ADA or MAAB requirements for accessibility. The new station is being constructed in phase 2.

Ms. Lackner and Ms. Lanzl gave an overview of the PE panel quality and passed around material samples. The fabricator will be a subcontractor to the construction contractor. The contractor will install the panels as part of the station construction. This means that the commissioned artist(s) will exclusively work on the designs for the art panels. It is possible that there will be additional integral art opportunities, such as a stair, ramp or elevator structure at the Downtown Chelsea RT station. The final design is currently being developed and will determine whether there are any integral art opportunities in addition to the porcelain enamel panels at the CR station.

The meeting facilitators laid out the online application and review process. The online applications need to be uploaded to the submittable.com site at <https://mbta-art.submittable.com/submit/44831>. For the 10 required images, artists should consider uploading a cohesive body of work, because the jury will be looking for consistent quality. It was emphasized that applicants need to ensure to click on the "submit" button at the very end of the online entry form following the References section. The firm deadline is Monday, August 24 at 11:59 PM. Entries cannot be processed by the site afterwards. Artists may be requested to collaborate on a theme. A goal will be to curate an attractive overall installation for the 22 panels.

Ms. Lanzl shared the composition of the 5-member selection committee. The members' names are confidential to avoid lobbying and outside influences. The composition is as follows:

- Chelsea community member
- Station design architect
- 2 Public Art Professionals from Greater Boston
- MBTA representative

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: The MBTA has installed information panels with historical images at a number of stations. How do these relate to the art panels?

A: The historic interpretive panels are in place to document the history of a station's immediate surroundings. They are separate from, and in addition to the art program. A series of these panels will be mounted at the Chelsea Commuter Rail Station.

Q: What are the sizes of the panels?

A: PE panel size is 4x4 feet. Two panels will be situated side by side within a standardized MBTA format that features the color banding of the required wayfinding at all CR stations at the top and bottom of each panel. A single design could stretch across two panels.

Q: Will MBTA maps or other informational signage be located next to art panels?

A: The artwork will be installed separately from the map panels and schedule cases to clearly identify it as artwork that is intended to improve the user experience.

Q: You explained that a new Chelsea CR Station is being constructed. Is it possible to visit the site?

A: Renderings of the new station at 30% design are available online as part of AECOM's design submittal. The drawings show the anticipated, overall design. Artists can visit the existing Chelsea Station to get a general impression of MBTA stations, but the currently inadequate station will be demolished. The new station is not yet under construction.

Q: Can you explain the selection process in more detail?

A: It is anticipated that approximately 10 semi-finalists will be selected from the artists that have submitted their qualifications. The work they submitted online will be presented at a community conversations/neighborhood forum. The selection committee will then reconvene to take their final votes, which will include consideration of comments collected at the public meetings. The commissioned artists will need to be on board by November, so that they can work directly with the design consultant and the MBTA to complete their designs by March 2016. The station design needs to be completed by the architects by early 2016 as project is scheduled to be bid for construction in December.

Q: How will the artists' work be presented once the semi-finalists are selected?

A: The public presentation of the semi-finalist artists' work will be conducted by the MBTA. The public will be invited to make comments, but does not vote. The MBTA will

collect comments for consideration by the selection committee. Comments will be screened for well-developed thoughts and relevant points that support the goals of the project.

Q: How are the artists selected? Will the artwork be commissioned as site-specific installations?

A: The jury panel will select artists based on the quality of their past work.

Q: How many public meetings will be held?

A: The MBTA will hold a public meeting as required by Massachusetts law. Advance notice will be given. Depending on the language diversity of a neighborhood or special needs, interpreters will be provided as necessary.

Q: Will all 22 panels be installed in the Chelsea Commuter Rail Station, since a new BRT Station is also being constructed?

A: All 22 panels will be installed in the Chelsea Commuter Rail Station. The construction phase for the BRT station has already begun. Therefore, it is too late to integrate art into the station design.

Q: Could you explain the opportunity stated in the RFQ about integration of art into a stair, elevator and/or ramp?

A: The design is still in process and a decision has not been made yet, whether and how the access from Washington Street to the station will be provided. Possible options are a staircase, an elevator or a ramp. It is unclear whether an integral art opportunity will emerge as the design is further developed.

Q: Could you please explain the fabrication of the art panels?

A: Artists are hired to work with the station architects on developing the design of the art panels. They will not be responsible for the fabrication. The contractor's fabricator will produce the art panels. The contractor will install the art panels by as part of station construction.

Q: How does the Question and Answer process work? We noted a deadline prior to the entry deadline.

A: To ensure fairness and a level playing field all questions and answers related to the RFQ will be made available to all artists. Christina Lanzl will collect questions from artists sent to her via email. Following the August 5 deadline, the questions and their answers will be posted on the MBTA's online Chelsea Submittable [page](https://mbta-art.submittable.com/submit/44831) at <https://mbta-art.submittable.com/submit/44831>.

Q: Are there any specifications on enamel panel material and potential color restrictions?

A: Virtually any color and 2D medium such as painting, photography or typography can

be reproduced on enamel panels. They are highly durable and need little maintenance. Colors can be brilliant and generally resistant to UV light.

Q: Could you name good examples of existing MBTA enamel panel artwork?

A: Arlington Station on the Green Line features a good example with a reference to nearby Boston Garden and its Swan Boats. Davis Square Station on the Red Line showcases a project undertaken in partnership with Tufts University and the City of Somerville to develop a series of enamel art panels inside the station.

2. Responses to RFQ Questions and Answers (August 5, 2015 deadline)

Q: I have looked at the calls and think that I get what is required. Is there anything particular I should keep in mind?

A: Please be sure to read and follow the instructions.

Q: I've just submitted for the Blue Hill Project. Should I submit a separate application for the Chelsea Project as well or would that be redundant?

A: Artists need to upload separate applications for each MBTA integral art project.

Q: I have a question pertaining to the budget of said project in the subject line. The RFQ reads: "It is anticipated that each of up to four selected artists would receive a design fee of \$17,500". My question is, if just one artist was chosen would the fee then become \$70,000?

A: Yes, this is correct. It will be up to the jury panel to determine the number of artists for the project.

Q: From my reading of the application guidelines, it seems that the 10 images to be submitted by Aug 24 are works done in the past, not potential images for use on this project. Is this correct? Or should the applicant supply 10 images, which are more recent, which he or she feels appropriate for potential final use in this specific project?

A: The 10 images should be examples of the artist's past work. The competition winners will be asked to create new, site-specific work for the Downtown Chelsea Commuter Rail station.

Q: During some of the period November 2015-March 2016 designated for "artist engagement and design," I will be working out of town on a couple of other projects. Are there definite meeting dates set yet for this engagement and design phase? Is the scheduling flexibility? Can some of this design collaboration work be done through online communication, Skype or other telecommunication means, or must all of it be done in person?

A: the project architect and the artist(s) will determine meetings together. It is anticipated that email and digital communications can and will be employed during the design process.

Q: The first sentence of the RFQ states, "Artists will be commissioned to create the artwork for the porcelain enamel panels and possibly other elements...." It was my impression from the information session that the Chelsea project involves porcelain enamel panels only. Is there potentially more to the project that we should know about and take into account when applying?

A: At the information meeting the project team shared that the design for the Chelsea Commuter Rail Station is 30% complete. The design team determined to further develop to 60% design the three options of an access in the form of a ramp, elevator or stair from Washington Street to the station. Following submittal of the 60% design in December, a decision will be made, which option to build. At that point, the potential for integral art opportunities will also be reviewed.

Q: From the RFQ: "Preference will be given to artists from the region." How is "region" being defined in terms of the Chelsea project – Chelsea, or Boston area, or New England?

A: The term region can be applied in a variety of way. The jury panel will use the artists residence as one criterion within the overall review process.

Q: What is the size of the porcelain enamel panels?

A: The porcelain enamel panels measure 4 x 4 feet.

Q: The RFQ lists 22 designs to be created by up to 4 artists. Does that refer to 22 designs from each artist or is 22 the total number of designs?

A: The total number of available panels for art is 22.