



**CITY OF YPSILANTI
ARTS COMMISSION MEETING
Thursday, January 13, 2022 @ 7:00 PM
Council Chambers
One South Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

Page

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Wolfe
Commissioner McAtee
Commissioner Goulet
Commissioner Ventour
Commissioner Seagraves
Commissioner Kirkpatrick
Commissioner Thompson
Commissioner Settles

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3 - 5 A. [12-16-21 Arts Commission Minutes](#)

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Staying Power Presentation

7 - 17 B. Informational Item - ArtSpace Feasibility Study for Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Washtenaw County
[Artspace Preliminary Feasibility Study Overview](#)
[Artspace Preliminary Feasibility Study Planning Packet](#)

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Public Art Process + Guidelines

VIII. UPDATES

A. Proposed Busking Policy to Support Street Art Performances

B. Arts Commission Gala

- C. Ypsilanti Poet Laureate
- D. Communications Committee
- E. Development Committee
- F. Budget Committee
- G. Community Partnerships Committee
- H. Arts Happenings around Ypsilanti

IX. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

X. PROPOSED BUSINESS

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE

February 10, 2022

XII. ADJOURNMENT



MINUTES

ARTS COMMISSION Meeting

7:00 PM - Thursday, December 16, 2021

Virtual

The ARTS COMMISSION of the City of Ypsilanti was called to order on Thursday, December 16, 2021, in the Zoom meeting.

1 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

2 ROLL CALL

Present:

Commissioner Wolfe - City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County
Commissioner McAtee - City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County
Commissioner Ventour - City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County
Commissioner Seagraves - City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County
Commissioner Thompson - Township of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County
Commissioner Settles - Township of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County

Absent:

Commissioner Goulet
Commissioner Kirkpatrick

3 AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved.

Commission Ventour moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Seagraves.

Approved:

Yes - 6, No - 0, Absent - 2

4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 18, 2021 meeting were approved.

Commissioner Seagraves moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Ventour.

Approved:

Yes - 6, No - 0, Absent - 2

5 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

No comments were made.

6 NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

7 OLD BUSINESS

a) 2022 Arts Plan - Committees and Timelines

Commissioner Wolfe proposed adding activities for seniors and for families with young children as priorities for 2022. The commission agreed to form the following subcommittees and asked that they be ready to present an update at the March 2022 meeting:

- Development
- Community Partnerships
- Budget
- Gala and Poet Laureate
- Communications

b) Public Art Process + Guidelines

Commissioners McAtee and Seagraves gave a brief update and agreed to take on a role in developing firm guidelines for the commission.

8 UPDATES

a) Proposed Busking Policy to Support Street Art Performances

Commissioner Thompson informed the commission that there will be short time slots this weekend as a trial run and encouraged the commissioners to reach out to any musicians who might be interested.

b) Embracing Our Differences Mural Project

Commissioner Settles and Elize Jekabson the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority gave updates. The commission encouraged each other to remind artists they know to submit by the February 1st deadline. The commission also discussed the possibility of creating a promotional video to give the event more publicity.

9 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

No comments were made.

10 PROPOSED BUSINESS

a) Staying Power - Scheduled for January meeting.

b) Presence at City Council meetings - Commissioner Thompson proposed that one commissioner be at each city council meeting as an audience member. Commissioner Thompson also said she intends to meet with Council Member Sommerville to see if she will attend Arts Commission meetings.

11 NEXT MEETING DATE

January 13, 2022

12 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

**Commissioner Seagraves moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by
Commissioner Wolfe.**

Approved:

Yes - 6, No - 0, Absent - 2



PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

A Preliminary Feasibility Study is the first step in understanding how an affordable arts development project can move forward within the context of a community’s unique needs, assets, sites, leaders, and resources. Central to this step is the Preliminary Feasibility Visit, in which Artspace visits the community to gather information, connect with local stakeholders, and share information about how these projects come together. With this approach, Artspace works to encourage community dialogue and build general support for the creation of affordable space for the arts sector.

As part of this fact-finding process, the Artspace team meets with artists, city officials, funders, and other stakeholders. They look at potential properties and hold a public meeting to welcome community participation, answer questions, and generate buzz.

WHO MIGHT BENEFIT:

- City Governments/Civic Organizations
- Arts and Cultural Organizations
- Downtown Organizations

WHAT IS INCLUDED:

- Consulting phone/email time in preparation for the visit, including review of invitation lists, agenda, and potential building/sites, and past studies
- Original Artspace materials to assist in preparing and sharing information regarding the visit
- Two-day visit to facilitate focus groups, tour potential sites, hear from the local community, and present at a public meeting
- Written report summarizing Artspace’s findings and recommended next steps

THERE ARE SIX AREAS OF CONSIDERATION:



Artspace Everett Lofts // Everett, WA Photo Credit: Annie Mulligan





WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A TYPICAL PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY VISIT:

Each visit is customized to meet the needs of the community and project. Unique meetings/events suitable to the community's needs may be substituted.

EXAMPLE AGENDA

DAY ONE

- Site Tour
 - Tour potential sites/buildings
 - Visit existing creative spaces and arts communities (e.g. studios, creative businesses, and key arts organizations)
- Dinner with Core Group

DAY TWO

- Continuation of Site Tour
 - Explore additional potential sites and creative spaces
- Working Lunch: Meeting with Cultural Leaders
 - Discuss the community and understand the needs of various cultural/minority organizations and groups.
- Artists, Creatives, and Arts Organizations Focus Group
 - Learn about the creative community's space needs, market for renting creative space, and economic considerations
- Funding and Financing Leadership Focus Group
 - Learn more about potential funding sources for a project; gauge the interest of local finance and business leaders
- Public Meeting
 - Present to the community about Artspace and the economic and community impact of the arts; build support, and facilitate Q&A

DAY THREE

- Civic Leadership Focus Group
 - Learn more about broader community goals, current initiatives and local priorities
- Working Lunch: Debrief with Core Group

WHAT YOU GET FROM A PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

A preliminary feasibility study provides your community a better understanding of your creative economy and what can be done to support it. At the conclusion of a Preliminary Feasibility Study, Artspace outlines recommendations for next steps based on the feedback heard from your community. Whether that recommendation is continuing down the path towards an Artspace project, or pursuing other arts development with local developers, Artspace is committed to leaving each community with a better understanding of how they can grow their creative sector, address space needs and shortages, in order to support artists/creatives, an integral part of any community.

WHAT DON'T YOU GET FROM A PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

The completion of a Preliminary Feasibility Study is not a guarantee for a future Artspace Project. Even if Artspace does not recommend moving forward towards an Artspace style project, the team will always provide recommendations for next steps to better support your creative sector. The report will provide tailored recommendations that can range from strategies for working with local developers/land owners to create more creative space, to forming an arts council to give the creative sector a more formal voice in your community's civic process. The Preliminary Feasibility study is ultimately an opportunity to take an in-depth look at the current state of your creative community, and what could be done to enhance it.

There is no "failing" during a Preliminary Feasibility Study - only discovering opportunities. Whether those opportunities are physical buildings & space or new relationships between artists, business, and civic leaders, taking the time to evaluate your creative sector is an invaluable planning tool to help communities thrive.



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PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY



ARTSPACE
CONSULTING



Preliminary Feasibility Study Planning Packet Table of Contents

Getting Started

- Getting Started PFS
- Assembling the Core Group
- Core Group Template (*Google Sheet*)

Site Tour

- Preliminary Feasibility Visit Site Criteria
- Sites to Visit Template (*Google Sheet*)

Focus Groups

- Focus Group Prep
- Example Focus Group Email Invite (*Google Doc*)
- Sign in Sheet for Focus Groups and Public Meeting (*Google Doc*)

Public Meeting

- Public Meeting Prep
- Example Invites and Press Releases (*located in google drive folder*)

Artspace Materials (*located in google drive folder*)

- Artspace Projects Across the Country
- Artspace One Page Summary
- Artspace Bio
- Artspace FAQ
- Artspace Logos



PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Getting Started

Your community's Preliminary Feasibility Study is underway! Now the fun begins...

There are many ways to go about it, but the earlier you start planning, the better. Here are some suggestions from our experience working in communities of all sizes across the country, which can be tailored to your goals and capacity.

To Do:

Identify and gather the Core Group

- This group of 3-8 key individuals will help carry out the study. They are the hosts and sounding boards as we start to learn about the community
- Their role is to help with planning the visit, participating in meetings and tours during the visit, and reviewing the written report.
- Additional volunteers can help in other capacities, such as planning and marketing the public meeting.

Plan the Visit

- Work with us to set dates and confirm timing
- Customize the sample agenda
- Coordinate logistics for the agenda
 - Plan for the site tour (*See google sheet*)
 - Plan for focus groups (*See google sheet*)
 - Plan for the public meeting (*See page 12*)

Help Us Prepare

Please provide us with the following at least **two weeks** before the visit:

- ✓ Visit agenda, based on the one in the googledrive.
- ✓ List of Core Group members (*google sheet*)
- ✓ List of sites to be included on the tour (*google sheet*)
- ✓ Optional: Site tour map
- ✓ Any recent studies or papers that you would like Artspace to review (e.g. Cultural Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Affordable Housing Plan, etc.)

Questions? Artspace is available as a resource throughout the entire process. Give us a call.



PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Assembling the Core Group

The Core Group includes 3-8 community leaders who interested in contributing to this study which will provide preliminary feedback on the feasibility of creating an affordable mixed-use facility for arts and creative uses. The Core Group provides valuable input, connections, and assistance necessary to make these Visits successful.

Core Group members will be called upon to contribute during each phase of the study, including:

Planning the Visit:

- Participate in an orientation call with Artspace prior to the visit, and follow up conference call(s)
- Communicate with fellow Core Group committee members, via meetings, calls, and emails to help plan the visit
- Assist with the creation and coordination of the visit agenda, including identifying and inviting focus group participants, preparing for the site tour, and planning and promoting the public meeting

During the Visit:

- Attend the Core Group meetings and the site tour
- Participate in at least one focus group meetings (depending on availability and interest)
- Attend the public meeting

Post-Visit:

- Review the delivered report from Artspace and offer feedback
- Provide input about recommended next steps and strategy, as appropriate
- Continue in a Core Group advisory role through any next phases, if desired

Throughout:

- Share expertise and experience, such as making introductions to others in his/her field, providing assistance based on his/her area of expertise, and networking
- Exchange ideas and local context with Artspace

Notes:

- *Consider broad representation in terms of fields of expertise (arts community, real estate, economic development, city/county staff), ages, socioeconomic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.*
- *There will be additional opportunities for volunteer involvement throughout the visit*



PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Criteria for Potential Properties

The process of selecting prospective properties is more of an art than a science. To help focus that process, however, there are a number of criteria to consider:

Location

- Where do artists currently live and work?
- Where do artists want to be?
- Is it walkable? Safe?
- Is it in a priority area for the City? (e.g. TIF, Transit Oriented Development)
- What is the history of development in the area?
- What is the proximity to downtown? An arts or cultural district (emerging or established)?
- What is the proximity to public transit? Complementary cultural assets?

Size

- For Artspace-style live/work project, focus on:
 - Buildings in the range of 60,000-90,000 SF (total area)
 - Lots that are approximately 0.75-1 acre
- For nonresidential projects, look for properties with appropriate square footage for organizations' space needs:
 - How many square feet does the organization currently occupy? How much does it plan to expand? Could space be more efficiently used?
 - If space is larger than organization's needs, is there an opportunity for a cotenant?
 - If space is smaller than organization's needs, is there an adjacent lot for new construction?

Accessibility

- Does it meet, or can it be built out to meet, ADA standards?
- Is the surrounding infrastructure conducive to accessibility needs and wants?

Parking

- Are dedicated parking spaces necessary? Available on-site or an adjacent site?
- Is street parking available? Affordable?



Acquisition

- Is the property for sale or lease? How long has it been available?
- What is the price? Could it be donated?
- Is the current owner amenable to the project concept?

Architectural Suitability

- Is there flexibility of space?
- Is there access to natural light? (for live/work or arts facilities that need light)
- What is the condition of the land or building?
- Are there restrictions on redeveloping due to historical designation?

Potential for Support (Public and Private)

- What and where are the City's priorities for development?
- Does the property/location align with other civic agendas?
- Is there potential for partnerships with other organizations, such as Main Street, neighborhood groups, or community development corporations, etc.?



PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY VISIT

Focus Group Preparation

The focus groups are important for Artspace to better understand how artist spaces fit into the community's current priorities and hear from locals. Artspace suggests conducting three focus groups geared to different audiences. These meetings serve to gather ideas about what the creative sector is missing, collect feedback about potential sites, look at fresh ideas to serve the needs of the community, and explain Artspace's process. Here are some ideas to get you started inviting participants.

Artists and Arts Organizations Focus Group

- Purpose: to understand the space needs of artists and arts organizations, including: current space situation, space needs, economic considerations, and representative arts disciplines.
- Possible Participants (15-30): Local and regional artists representing a diversity of: artistic disciplines, career phase/prominence, homeowners/renters, family size, ethnic background, and age. Please include an emphasis on emerging and young artists. Local and regional arts organizations, creative businesses, artist service organizations, and educational institutions/arts schools, all representing a cross-section of services, sizes, operating budgets, artistic disciplines served, for-profit and nonprofit.

Funding and Financing Focus Group

- Purpose: to learn more about potential funding sources and gauge the support of the community's finance and business leaders for the project.
- Possible Participants (up to 15): Local bank representatives (traditional lending and philanthropic investments); foundation and philanthropic agency representatives; nonprofit developers; someone familiar with local capital campaigns and the donor community; staff overseeing city, county and state affordable housing, historic and cultural funds (e.g., city redevelopment and housing staff). Please include funders of non-arts organizations as well, to help us gauge the broader need and support for arts compatible programming (e.g., social justice/social service organizations, community development nonprofits).

Civic Leaders Focus Group

- Purpose: to answer questions, build support, understand concerns, receive input on the project's feasibility and ability to have a positive, sustainable community impact, and learn about the group's priorities and vision for the future.



- Possible Participants: Elected officials (city, county, state), merchant association boards, small business associations, leaders from other community groups such as chamber of commerce, tourism board, main street organization, and Rotary Club.

Sample Questions

- What kind of creative spaces are currently available? What type of project concept would be most desired? Types of amenities? What is an affordable rent? What types of spaces are needed for businesses?
- What are local funding sources? What are community space development success stories?
- What broader goals could align with this project? What types of partnerships would help this project?



PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Public Meeting Preparation

If the community is planning to have an in-person public meeting, it can be a simple town hall style meeting or a festive arts community gathering. Whatever the style, community involvement is key to the success of a project, so keep artists informed and invested. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Coordinate

- Venue. Identify an accessible, inviting space that seats at least 100 people.
- Speakers. Artspace will handle the presentation and Q&A, but we ask for a member of the core group to introduce us. As an option, we also welcome another speaker, e.g. an elected official or arts leader, to say a few words.
- Entertainment. Connect with artists or arts groups willing to exhibit or perform at the meeting. Involving artists boosts the attendance and energy of the event. (optional)

Invite

- A diversity of people.
 - Across arts disciplines (e.g. visual, performing, literary, music, multimedia, teaching, installation, textiles, film)
 - Across industries (e.g. academia, design, fabrication, non-profit/for-profit, creative enterprises, art institutions... non-artists, too!)
 - Across demographics (e.g. gender, ethnicity, neighborhood/suburb, age, stage in career, renters/homeowners)
- The press. Both traditional and social media. Consider preparing a press release to announce the event, with details about time and location.
- Publicize. Emails, phone calls, fliers, Facebook event, etc.

The Day Of

- Equipment. Please have the venue prepared with:
 - Two microphones (one for the presenter, one for audience questions)
 - Projector and screen (we present from our own Mac computers)
 - Projector cable adapter (we bring our own, but backup is good)
 - Refreshments
- Talking points. Review key goals with the core group and volunteers before the event begins.
- Take names. Have a sign-up sheet to collect contact information. Consider having a volunteer act as a "guest book attendant," inviting people to sign in.