

Report of the Capitol Preservation Committee to the 2018 Kansas Legislature

CHAIRPERSON: Jennie Chinn, State Historical Society

SENATE PRESIDENT'S APPOINTEES: Senator Elaine Bowers; and Harrison Hems

HOUSE SPEAKER'S APPOINTEES: Representative Fred Patton; and Melinda Gaul

SENATE MINORITY LEADER'S APPOINTEE: Tim Graham

GOVERNOR'S APPOINTEES: Kim Borchers and Jeremy Stohs (one position vacant)

HOUSE MINORITY LEADER'S APPOINTEE: Representative Valdenia Winn

OTHER MEMBERS (*EX OFFICIO*): Frank Burnam, Kansas Department of Administration; and Peter Jasso, Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission

CHARGE

The Committee is directed to:

- Review progress of the *Brown v. Board of Education* mural; and
- Consider Capitol grounds plans (which may include the *Ad Astra* Plaza).

Capitol Preservation Committee

ANNUAL REPORT

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Committee directed Michael Young, the artist of the *Brown v. Board of Education* mural, to:

- Review the facial features of the male child on the right side of the mural to ensure his features are not depicted in a cartoon-like manner;
- Paint the teacher's hairstyle in a manner that reflects the era, but is still timeless; and
- Leave the subtle depiction of the Ku Klux Klan in the background of the mural to reflect history and allow the audience to interpret the piece of art.

The Committee recommended the Kansas Department of Administration:

- Meet with Mr. Young to discuss and implement the lighting of the *Brown v. Board of Education* mural prior to the mural's ceremonial unveiling to the public;
- Continue to fix fractures in the marble flooring of the Capitol Visitor Center with epoxy and to monitor the flooring;
- Update kiosk signs in the Capitol Complex with notations of "You Are Here" to ensure accuracy and improve the visitor experience;
- Work with the State Historical Society regarding signage for parking on Saturdays; and
- Update the directional arrows on signs outside the Capitol Complex directing visitors to the main entrance and the Capitol Visitor Center.

The Committee recommended the State Historical Society:

- Closely monitor the cracks in the Overmyer murals; and
- Proceed with obtaining cost estimates to stabilize and conserve the Overmyer murals, as necessary.

The Committee recommended the Report of the Capitol Preservation Committee to the 2018 Kansas Legislature be forwarded to the Joint Committee on State Building Construction.

The Committee supported completion of the *Ad Astra* Plaza project, without providing any state financing for the completion of the project.

The Committee supported the expansion of the Law Enforcement Memorial on Capitol grounds.

The Committee supported the enactment of legislation for the Eisenhower statue on Capitol grounds.

The Committee supported the development of a Legislative Coordinating Council policy regarding non-controversial artwork in Capitol committee rooms.

Proposed Legislation: None

BACKGROUND

The Capitol Preservation Committee was created by the Kansas Legislature in 2010 to approve renovation proposals in all areas of the Capitol, the Capitol Visitor Center, and the Capitol grounds to ensure the historical beauty of the areas is preserved, preserve the proper decor of those areas, assure that any art or artistic displays are historically accurate and have historic significance, approve the location and types of temporary displays, and oversee the reconfiguration or redecoration of committee rooms within the Capitol. As provided by KSA 2016 Supp. 75-2269, the Division of Legislative Administrative Services has the responsibility of implementing the recommendations of the Committee.

The Committee is made up of 12 members, with the Governor appointing 3, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House each appointing 2, and the Minority Leaders of the House and Senate each appointing 1. The Committee's three *ex officio* members are the Statehouse Architect, the Executive Director of the State Historical Society, and the Director of the Creative Arts Industries Commission. The Governor has the authority to appoint the chairperson from the Committee's membership.

The Committee was granted one meeting day by the Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC).

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee met on December 7, 2017, at the Statehouse. During the meeting, the Committee received an update from the artist on

the progress of the *Brown v. Board of Education* mural, heard an update on the progress of fundraising efforts for the mural, discussed the deterioration of the county map and marble flooring in the Capitol Visitor Center, discussed the conservation of the Overmyer murals on the first floor of the Capitol, heard concerns regarding signage directing visitors to the main entrance and the parking garage of the Capitol, received an update on the *Ad Astra* Plaza project, heard an update on the expansion of the Law Enforcement Memorial on Capitol grounds, discussed the enactment of legislation for the Eisenhower statue on Capitol grounds, heard an informational briefing on artwork in Capitol committee rooms, and discussed the work of a subcommittee.

Progress of *Brown v. Board of Education* Mural

The Committee heard an update from the artist and an update on fundraising efforts for the mural.

Update from the artist. The Committee received an update from the artist of the *Brown v. Board of Education* mural, Michael Young. Mr. Young stated his goal for completion of the mural is February 1, 2018. He noted the changes he made to the original sketch include painting a more diverse group of students in the foreground of the mural, painting the teacher as African American, and bringing more jewel tone colors into the mural. Mr. Young also stated he added Ku Klux Klan (KKK) members in the far background of the mural to reflect history. It was noted the mural will hang outside the Old Supreme Court Room in the Statehouse and, in this room in 1925, the decision was made to prohibit the KKK in Kansas. Committee members agreed the subtle depiction of the KKK should remain in the mural.

After receiving an update on the progress of the mural, the Committee discussed the hairstyle of the teacher in the foreground of the mural, the facial features of the male child on the right side of the mural, and the installation of the lighting for the mural prior to the mural's ceremonial unveiling.

Update on fundraising efforts. The Committee received a fundraising update on the mural from the Executive Director of the Kansas African American Affairs Commission. She noted a contract for the painting and installation of the mural was signed on July 31, 2017, authorizing Mr. Young to begin work on the mural. The contract for the mural has three phases with three payments. The Committee agreed to sign off on the mural to allow Mr. Young to receive the second phase payment. The goal for the third phase, completion and installation of the mural, is scheduled for the mural's ceremonial unveiling tentatively set for February 22, 2018. The Executive Director noted three charitable foundations are receiving funds for the mural project: Topeka Community Foundation, *Brown Mural Project SB 54*, and the Kansas Department of Administration. The amount raised, to date, is \$79,070, leaving a balance of \$30,930 to be raised. The Executive Director also remarked on recent media exposure of the mural.

Capitol Visitor Center Concerns

The Committee heard Capitol Visitor Center concerns regarding the deterioration of the county map and marble flooring in the Capitol Visitor Center, the conservation of the Overmyer murals on the first floor of the Capitol, and signage directing visitors to the main entrance and the parking garage of the Capitol.

Deterioration of the county map and marble flooring in the Capitol Visitor Center. A representative of the Kansas Department of Administration provided the Committee with information related to fracturing in the veins of the marble on the county map and throughout the flooring of the Capitol Visitor Center. The representative noted the proposed repair is to fill the voids with colored epoxy and to avoid excessive wear on the material by cleaning the marble by dusting, vacuuming, and wet mop rather than with a machine.

Conservation of the Overmyer murals. The Committee received concerns from Capitol Visitor Center staff about cracks in the Overmyer murals on the first floor of the Capitol. The Committee discussed possible solutions and acknowledged the Overmyer murals should be stabilized and conserved.

Signage for directing visitors. The Committee heard concerns from Capitol Visitor Center staff regarding signage directing visitors to the main entrance and parking garage of the Capitol. The staff relayed that visitors are often frustrated because they have difficulty finding the entrance to the building and the parking garage.

Capitol Landscape Plan Updates

The Committee heard updates on the *Ad Astra* Plaza project and expansion of the Law Enforcement Memorial on Capitol grounds, and members discussed the enactment of legislation for the Eisenhower statue on Capitol grounds.

***Ad Astra* Plaza.** The Committee heard an update from Senator Hardy and a representative of the Kansas Department of Administration regarding the *Ad Astra* Plaza project. The *Ad Astra* statue on the top of the Capitol was to be represented on a smaller scale on the *Ad Astra* Plaza, which is located on the southwest corner of the Capitol grounds. This project received approval through the legislative process years ago.

Senator Hardy stated a plaque and pedestal exist on Capitol grounds, but there is no replica of the statue on the pedestal. The replica statue to be affixed on the pedestal in the *Ad Astra* Plaza is complete and currently in Salina. Senator Hardy assumed the responsibility of fundraising and told the Committee the amount needed to complete the project is \$200,000. The Kansas Department of Administration representative noted March 2018 is the earliest construction can take place because of weather. The representative stated the Department is acting as a facilitator between the parties and no State money is involved.

Law Enforcement Memorial. A representative of the Kansas Office of the Attorney General informed the Committee there is an unfortunate need to expand the Law Enforcement

Memorial on Capitol grounds to recognize fallen law enforcement officers. Currently, the memorial has 277 names, and the names of 13 officers have been added since 2010. Because only about 40 open spaces remain, the Office of the Attorney General recommended an outer ring be added to the existing memorial. The Committee Chairperson commented the Legislature already approved the expansion of the memorial. The representative noted the final drawing of the expansion should be ready for the Committee's approval in December 2018.

Eisenhower statue. A representative of the Kansas Department of Administration provided the Committee with an update on the Eisenhower statue on the northwest corner of the Capitol grounds. Several years ago, the Committee endorsed a plan for developing the landscaping of the Capitol grounds, including the installation of a future statue on the northwest quadrant of the grounds. The representative noted there is a plaque on the northwest corner honoring President Eisenhower, which was dedicated in 2015. The representative stated private fundraising efforts have taken place for erecting the statue and the money is in hand, but enabling legislation is required before a statue or memorial can be placed on Capitol grounds. The Committee was informed the statue would be a replica of the bronze statue by Kansas artist Jim Brothers that is in the U.S. Capitol rotunda.

Artwork in Committee Rooms

The Committee heard an informational briefing on artwork in Capitol committee rooms by the Director of Legislative Administrative Services. The Director noted artworks previously placed in committee rooms were removed during the renovation of the Capitol and those pieces are in storage. The Director told the LCC he would work with the Committee and the State Historical Society to create a policy for hanging artwork in the majority of the 13 committee rooms. The Director noted the only expense would be in moving the art and hanging the pictures.

Issues to be Addressed by Subcommittee

The Chairperson said, in the past, a subcommittee of three Committee members, all from Topeka, would meet and take action on small

concerns in the Capitol. The Chairperson noted she is handling such concerns herself because other subcommittee members have left the Committee. She noted major issues would continue to be presented to the full Committee on an annual basis. The Chairperson then selected a subcommittee to consist of Chairperson Chinn, Executive Director of the State Historical Society; Frank Burnam, Director, Office of Facilities and Property Management, Kansas Department of Administration; and Melinda Gaul, Legislative Director for House Speaker Ryckman. Representative Patton will serve as an adjunct subcommittee member.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following discussion, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- The Committee directs Mr. Young to:
 - Review the facial features of the male child on the right side of the mural to ensure his features are not depicted in a cartoon-like manner;
 - Paint the teacher's hairstyle in a manner that reflects the era, but is still timeless; and
 - Leave the subtle depiction of the KKK in the background of the mural to reflect history and allow the audience to interpret the piece of art;
- The Committee recommends the Kansas Department of Administration:
 - Meet with Mr. Young to discuss and implement lighting of the mural prior to the mural's ceremonial unveiling to the public;
 - Continue to fix fractures in the marble flooring of the Capitol Visitor Center with epoxy and to monitor the flooring;
 - Update kiosk signs in the Capitol Complex with notations of "You Are

- Here” to ensure accuracy and improve the visitor experience;
- Work with the State Historical Society regarding signage for parking on Saturdays; and
 - Update the directional arrows on signs outside the Capitol Complex directing visitors to the main entrance and the Capitol Visitor Center;
 - The Committee recommends the State Historical Society:
 - Closely monitor the cracks in the Overmyer murals; and
 - Proceed with obtaining cost estimates to stabilize and conserve the Overmyer murals, as necessary;
 - The Committee recommends the Report of the Capitol Preservation Committee to the 2018 Kansas Legislature be forwarded to the Joint Committee on State Building Construction;
 - The Committee supports completion of the *Ad Astra* Plaza project, without providing any state financing for the completion of the project;
 - The Committee supports the expansion of the Law Enforcement Memorial on Capitol grounds;
 - The Committee supports the enactment of legislation for the Eisenhower statue on Capitol grounds; and
 - The Committee supports the development of a LCC policy regarding non-controversial artwork in Capitol committee rooms.