

NO: R137

COUNCIL DATE: June 13, 2016

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE: June 7, 2016**
FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture **FILE: 7800-01**
SUBJECT: Recommended Artwork for West Village Park and District Energy Plant

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommend that Council:

1. receive this report as information; and
2. authorize staff to work with artist Erica Stocking to realize the creation and installation of the sculpture “Blanket” as the public art component for the West Village Park and Energy Plant, all as generally described in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with background information regarding the proposed West Village Park and Energy Plant sculpture proposal titled “Blanket,” and to obtain Council approval to undertake this public art project.

BACKGROUND

West Village Park and Energy Plant site is located on 133rd Street south of 104th Avenue. The goal for the park and a district energy plant is to be integrated into the community and enhance the public realm of this developing high density neighbourhood. The project team agreed the incorporation of public art would help meet this goal and recommended an artist in residence to work collaboratively on the development of an artwork concept (Phase 1) and to produce the proposed artwork (Phase 2). Support for this approach to the public art for the West Village Park and District Energy Plant was unanimous by the Public Art Advisory Committee.

The Artist-in-Residence Erica Stocking, was selected as a result of a competitive process, and was recommended by a selection panel that included:

- Penny Priddy, Community Advocate and Surrey Resident;
- Stefan Aepli, Francl Architecture
- Jeff Cutler, space2place, Landscape Architect

Advisors:

- Jim Adams, Public Art Advisory Committee.
- Waleed Giratalla, Project Engineering, City of Surrey
- Jason Owen, District Energy Engineering, City of Surrey
- Patrick Klassen, Parks Planner, City of Surrey

At its meeting on October 8th, 2015 the Public Art Advisory Committee received the selection panel's recommendation, and voted unanimously to recommend to Council that artist Erica Stocking be contracted for this project. Council supported staff's recommendation on October 20, 2015, as outlined in Corporate Report R206 (Appendix "I").

About the Artist:

Erica Stocking has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Emily Carr Institute, and maintains a studio practice reflected in exhibitions at a number of public art galleries. Her other public art projects include "Yellow Fence" at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, "Window Display" at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and "Geyser for Hillcrest Park", a permanent public artwork made for the City of Vancouver, and most recently, a commission for the Britannia Library in Vancouver. She is a recipient of the Vancouver Mayor's Art Award for public art.

Funding:

The budget for production, fabrication and installation of the sculpture "Blankets" for West Village Park and Energy Plant is \$84,950. Funding for this project resulted from 1.25% of the construction cost of the energy plant and park construction. This complies with the City's Public Art Policy.

The Artist's Phase 1 Research Activities:

As the project's artist in residence, Erica Stocking has conducted research and development for the artwork concept, working collaboratively and in consultation with the West Village Park and Energy Plant team. She has also engaged and consulted with community members including the strata of the tower that borders the site and other nearby residents, met with teachers at Kwantlen Park Secondary School, conducted community engagement processes at the Surrey Central Library, made numerous site visits to see how residents use the park site now and become familiar with the general area, undertaken research into energy plant functions of energy plants, and the role the plant and park will play in creating a sustainable and positive neighbourhood.

The artist's creative process contributed the concept of using the carbon crystal and its distinctive hexagonal molecular form as a unifying aesthetic element for the park. This idea has been very well received by the team, and will be evident in the landscape design of the park, and will be used to provide opportunities for park users to learn about the carbon cycle and sustainability goals of the energy plant and the city.

Her concept for her specific sculptural contribution will be distinct but complementary to this design element, and proposes to centre on the idea of the energy plant serving as a contemporary "hearth" of the neighbourhood. She intends for her work to provide a symbol for warming and caring for local residents.

DISCUSSION

On May 30th, 2016 the project team of Francl Architecture and Space2Place Landscape Architecture, Jim Adams from the Public Art Advisory Committee, and the City representatives from Parks, Engineering and Public Art, met with the artist and positively received, and unanimously recommended to the Public Art Advisory Committee, the artist's proposal "Blanket" (working title) be implemented for the West Village Park and Energy Plant.

The sculpture proposes up to four blanket-shaped sculptures be installed on the four emission stacks on the roof of the energy plant. Each sculpture will be designed and fabricated to express the form of an actual blanket in different configurations also expressing energy: wrapped, draped, folded and tossed. The sculptures will be constructed out of either fiberglass or metal and finished to resemble a 'real' blanket. They will be secured to the top of the stacks as designed and approved by an engineer. Concept of "Blanket" is attached in Appendix "II".

The blanket surfaces will be designed using the colours found in the industrial setting of the plant, and may, for example, echo the colours of the various pipes and boilers used inside. It is anticipated, for example that the main colours used will be grey, white, red, green and yellow which are used to identify hot and cold water, fuel lines and other conduits. The form and surface of the sculpture will be designed and tested to be understood as a woven blanket from a distance.

This artwork responds to the service and intention of the Energy Plant: to provide energy and warmth to residents in the City Centre neighbourhood. The sculpture also serves as a creative symbol of a "hearth" and its service as the community gathering and nurturing centre. It provides a contemporary expression of the history of the hearth. The artist intends the artwork to communicate the sentiment of hearth and home across a neighbourhood and activate a connection between the District Energy Plant and Park and the interiors of residents' homes.

Blankets are created and used by cultures around the world. The artist will draw on her research on the symbolism of blankets and how they are used by various cultures, for the sculpture's final form and design. In addition to the permanent sculpture, the artist has also proposed creating a series of actual blankets that would be distributed in the neighbourhood to residents. These actual blankets would carry the story of the artwork and the actual experience of "warmth" throughout the neighbourhood. Each blanket over time, as it continues to travel across time and geography, like the heat generated by the Energy Plant, will generate its own stories, uses and associations. The artist writes that each shared blanket is a "spark [that] creates its own 'fire' and would be a reminder of the service of the City and the plant to its residents. It can be used as a picnic blanket when it is warm out, cover one up when snuggled alone, and it can create a physical bond between two people sharing a blanket. The different postures of the blanket on the stacks evoke this varied usage. How else might you use a blanket?" The artist writes: "*Blanket* evokes a sense of warmth without using fire. Perhaps a contemporary hearth does not involve fire at all, but is the sharing of space. In a simple way, this artwork translates the piping of the building as a carrier of warmth in a materially and visually tangible form." Examples of woven blankets from around the world are attached in Appendix "II".

Public Art Advisory Committee Endorsement:

On June 2, 2016 the Public Art Advisory Committee met and received a presentation on the public art proposal for the West Village Park and Energy Plant "*Blankets*," and received the recommendation of the project team. The PAAC voted unanimously to support Erica Stocking's public art concept, and recommend to Council to support staff to undertake a contract with the artist to proceed to realize this artwork.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed artwork supports the socio-cultural and environmental pillars of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly, the following action items:

- SC6: Building Cultural Awareness in the Community;
- EC9: Quality of Design in New Development and Redevelopment; and
- EN13: Enhancing the Public Realm.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council authorizes staff to work with Erica Stocking towards the creation and installation of the sculpture "*Blanket*" for West Village Park and Energy Plant, all as generally described in this report.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Appendix "I" Corporate Report R206:2015 Recommendation for West Village Park and District
Energy Plan Public Art

Appendix "II" Concept of "Blanket" and Examples of Woven Blankets from Around the World



CORPORATE REPORT

NO: R206

COUNCIL DATE: October 20, 2015

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor and Council** DATE: **October 9, 2015**
FROM: **General Manager, Parks Recreation and Culture** FILE: **7800-01**
SUBJECT: **Recommendation for West Village Park and District Energy Plant Public Art**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommend that Council:

1. receive this report as information; and
2. authorize staff to work with artist Erica Stocking to perform the role of the Artist-in-Residence for the West Village Park and District Energy Plant public art project, all as generally described in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with background information regarding the proposed West Village Park and District Energy Plant public art opportunity and to obtain Council approval to retain an artist to undertake this public art project.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation of this report complies with the City's Public Art Policy. The implementation of the public art project is guided by the Public Art Master Plan.

BACKGROUND

West Village Park and Energy Plant site is located on 133rd Street south of 104th Avenue just west of the new civic core in the heart of a developing high density residential neighbourhood (**Appendix I**). The goal is for the park and a district energy plant to be integrated into the community and enhance the public realm. The project team agreed that the incorporation of public art, as demonstrated in the Vancouver's False Creek Energy Centre public art project, would help meet this goal.

The Artist-in-Residence will work with the project team to envision the artwork's location, theme and form which potentially could influence the design of the building and the park. The City has engaged the consulting architecture firm Francl Architecture Inc. and Landscape Architecture firm Space2place Design Inc. to work with City staff from Engineering, Parks and Public Art.

This will be a two-phased artist in residence opportunity. Phase 1 includes: research of the operations of the West Village Park and District Energy Plant site and the neighbourhood; development of multiple concepts for public artwork opportunities and concept testing process using a community charrette process. Phase 2 is the development of the supported concept as recommended by this community engagement process, and the Public Art Advisory Committee review process, through to completion, as a permanent public art work for the building and park site.

This approach to the public art opportunity for the West Village Park and District Energy Plant was unanimously supported by the Public Art Advisory Committee.

Call for Letters of Interest and Selection Process:

Due to the advanced schedule for this project, the City's Public Art Program recommended a directed call to five professional artists experienced in working collaboratively with a project team.

Research to establish the prequalified artists list included the following factors:

- Previous collaborative, public art project experience with at least one commissioned and completed public art work;
- Quality of recently completed major art projects, demonstrated adherence to schedules, deadlines, project requirements and budgets;
- Experience working efficiently, collegially and collaboratively with design professionals such as architects and engineers, civic agencies and community stakeholders in design and execution;
- Ability to create artwork appropriate in concept, materials and scale for the identified opportunity; and
- Availability for meetings, presentations and project involvement in design process within the required schedule.

Selection Process:

A Call to available pre-qualified artists for Expression of Interest was issued to five candidates who demonstrate the level of skill in creating public art and experience with the work and methodology of collaboration with a project design team including:

- Jill Anholt
- Rebecca Bayer
- Germaine Koh
- Stephanie Robb
- Erica Stocking

The Public Art Advisory Committee unanimously approved these prequalified artists, as well as the voting members of the selection panel at their meeting on September 17th. The approved short-listed artists attended an information meeting on September 29, 2015.

A selection panel to evaluate the artist candidates was convened and included the following:

Selection Panel Members:

- Penny Priddy, Community Advocate and Surrey Resident
- Stefan Aepli, Francl Architecture
- Jeff Cutler, space2place, Landscape Architect.

Advisors:

- Jim Adams, Public Art Advisory Committee
- Waleed Giratalla, Project Engineer, City of Surrey
- Patrick Klassen, Parks Planner, City of Surrey.

On October 5th, each of the five prequalified artists made a presentation of their proposal explaining their approach, their deliverables, their methodology and schedule of activity. The evaluation criteria included rating their artistry, experience, expertise, and potential to collaborate effectively as part of the project team, as well as the value of their proposed methodology, deliverables and timeline. As a result of this process, the Panel unanimously voted to recommend to the Public Art Advisory Committee the artist Erica Stocking for this commission.

DISCUSSION

About the Artist:

Erica Stocking is a resident of Metro Vancouver, and has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Emily Carr Institute. She has an active studio practice, and has produced numerous exhibitions since she graduated in 2004. Among them is a group exhibition "How Soon is Now" at Vancouver Art Gallery and two solo exhibits at Artspeak and a solo exhibit at the Richmond Art Gallery. Over the years her practice has included a number of successful collaborations that demonstrate her capability to creatively meet the various demands required of an Artist-in-Residence.

In 2009, Erica completed the public artwork "Yellow Fence" for condominium developments at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby and in the same year was awarded the Vancouver Mayor's Art Award Emerging Public Artist for "Window Display" at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Her most significant public art achievement is "Geyser for Hillcrest Park", a permanent public artwork made for the City of Vancouver in 2012, in collaboration with Vanessa Kwan, as well as facility staff, Parks Board members, and various engineers.

She states "I approach public space with the spatial and emotional sensibilities of an artist. My interest in public and private space has been to understand where I end and the world begins. My job as an artist is to ask philosophical questions in visual form - who am I in the world? How do I exist - emotionally, bodily, and intellectually? And what is my connection to the rest of the world?" The full artist profile is attached as **Appendix II**.

Funding:

The total Artist-in-Residence budget is \$99,950 to be divided into Phase 1 - Research and Art Plan (\$15,000) and Phase 2 - Art Project (\$84,950) inclusive of all costs. Two payment schedules will be

based on deliverables for Phase 1 and Phase 2 to be outlined and agreed upon by the City and the selected artist.

Schedule:

Subject to Council approval of the recommendations of this report, it is expected that the artist will begin work in late October, 2015 and conclude with the installation of the artwork by January, 2018.

Public Art Advisory Committee Endorsement:

At its meeting on October 8th, 2015 the Public Art Advisory Committee received the selection panel's recommendation, and voted unanimously to recommend to Council artist Erica Stocking be contracted as the artist for this project.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed artwork supports the socio-cultural and environmental pillars of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly, the following action items:

SC6: Building Cultural Awareness in the Community;

- EC9: Quality of Design in New Development and Redevelopment; and
- EN13: Enhancing the Public Realm.

CONCLUSION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommend that Council:

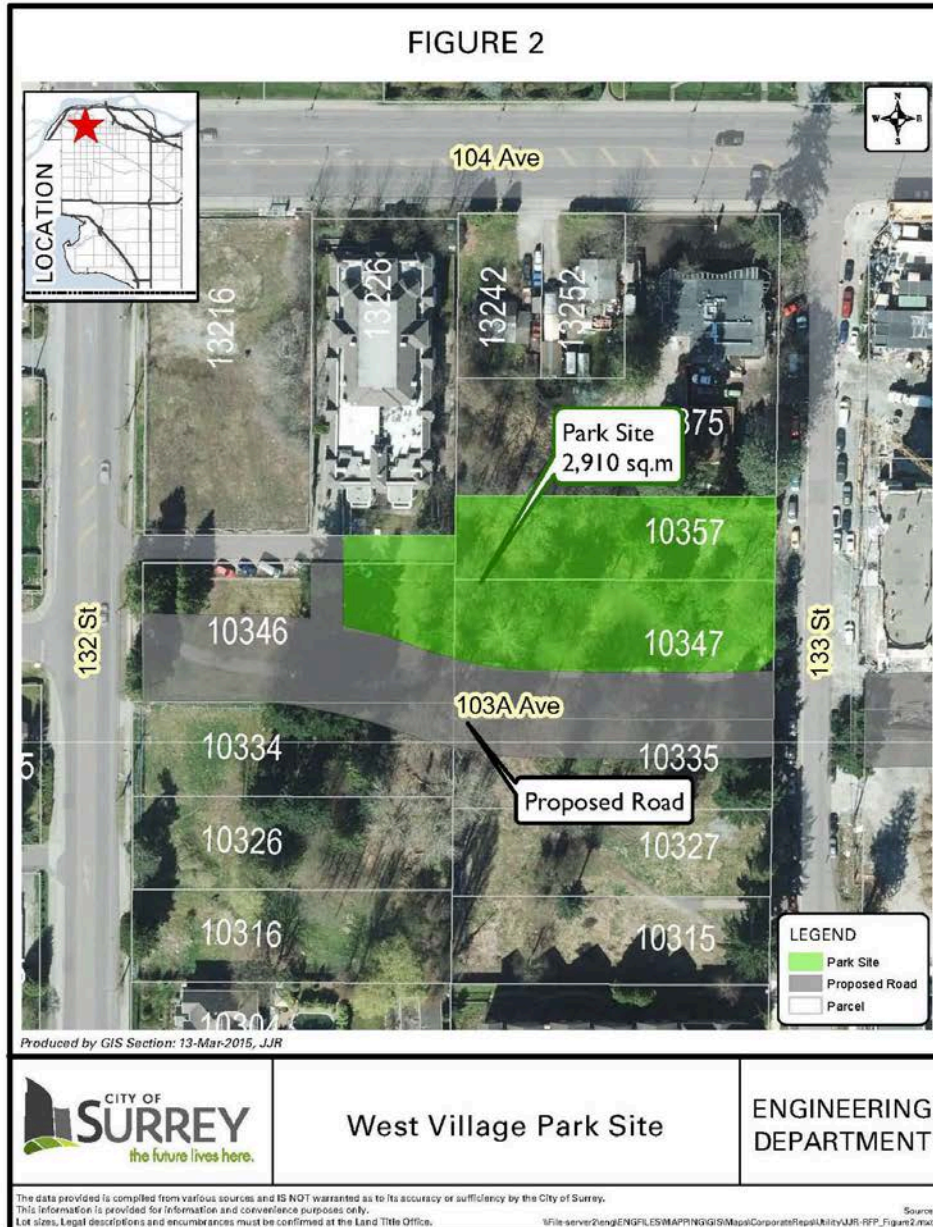
1. receive this report as information; and
2. authorize staff to work with artist Erica Stocking to perform the role of the Artist-in-Residence for the West Village Park and District Energy Plant public art project, all as generally described in this report.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Appendix I - Location of the West Village Park and District Energy Plant Site
Appendix II - Profile Erica Stocking

Location of the West Village Park and District Energy Plant Site





Profile – Erica Stocking

Artist Statement - In my past work I have used architectural spaces as a context to examine a collapsed duality of how we experience the world. In my recent work I am currently exploring how our bodies are vehicles for experiencing the world.

My work evolves from a desire to find a sense of place in the world, investigating inherent and manufactured value, the drive for connection and notions of place. I usually work with the transformation of found materials or situations as entry points into a space. This is not always something tangible; sometimes it is an idea or source material.

Approach to the Project

Through research, learning and creative envisioning I would determine the site, theme and form for potential artworks while productively contributing to the discussions regarding the overall look and feel of the West Village Park and District Energy Plant.

I am interested in this moment when a person meets the world. We walk out of our homes and encounter... people, places, systems, ideas, culture. Somehow we have to negotiate that with who we are or who we think we are. The project site is fascinating to me in this regard as it functions as an outdoor space for a number of future residents who may not have a private outdoors, so it becomes a place where an individual is both home and not at home. This relationship to home is complicated further when considering that the District Energy Plant is heating the resident's home. So to find oneself at this public park, is also to find oneself at the hearth of an expanded home.

With very qualified and creative professionals already developing the project, I see my job as Artist-in-Residence as existing in the cracks:

In the places that there is gaps in understanding, fearfulness, the places that are uncomfortable to go with questions and possibilities. In a way, I stand in for the public, undergoing the same process of understanding the unique benefits of having an energy plant as part of 'my' local park space.

Throughout the residency I would make visible the research I conduct and the tools I develop to understand this unique relationship between Park and Plant. Through metaphor, symbols and actions, this information will be communicated with the team as well as with the public. An organized charrette would be useful towards the end of November to communicate the research and directions undertaken to date, and also to identify other areas of importance to the community I may have overlooked.

My research is one of expansion and contraction: following tangents picked up in conversation, spending time on site, understanding what the district energy plant is and how it is functioning, combining, editing and fleshing out these areas. Through this, clarity in understanding the opportunities for integration of art into the park will emerge.



"Window Display" by Erica Stocking. Site Specific Artwork for group exhibition "How Soon is Now" at Vancouver Art Gallery in 2009



“Geyser” for Hillcrest Park, by Erica Stocking and Vanessa Kwan, Completion 2012. Commissioned by The City of Vancouver Public Art Program \$278,000 budget

“Geyser” was generated in response to the local oral histories of water in the neighbourhood, the interplay between civic and neighbourhood spaces and the green initiatives of the building. The “geyser” is connected to the greywater system in the building, and only “erupts” when there is a demand for potable water in the system during the dry summer months. In this way the civic fountain becomes a natural geyser making visible one element of the community’s water usage.

“Yellow Fence” consists of 15 powder coated stainless steel gates. It articulates the space between public and private. A yellow construction fence enclosed the HUB building during construction; it was the first definition of access between public and private space on the site. The artwork is a sequence derived from this original construction fence.

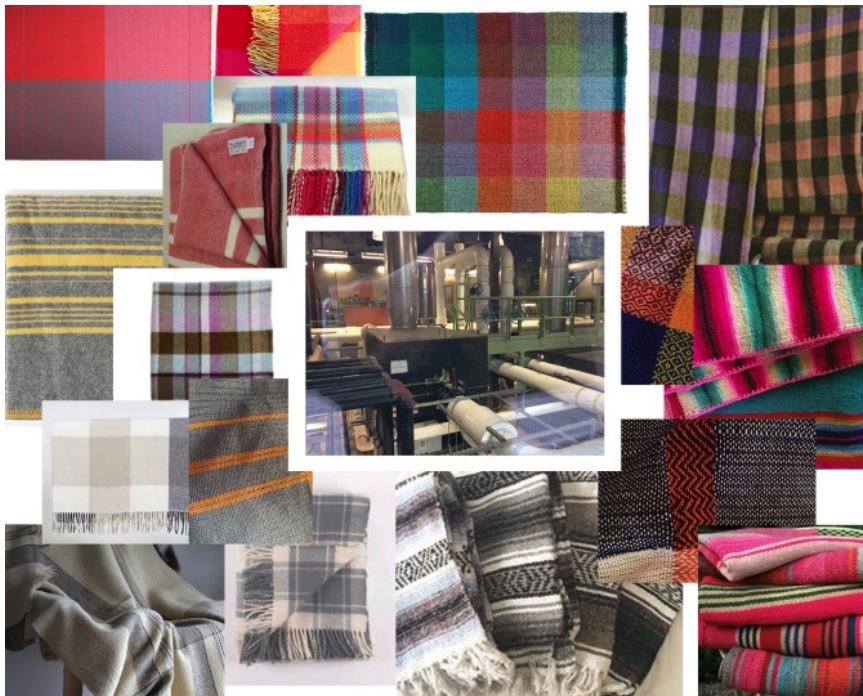


“Yellow Fence” by Erica Stocking, Site Specific artwork for the HUB building at UniverCity, SFU Burnaby in 2009. \$55,000 budget

Concept of "Blanket" and Examples of Woven Blankets from Around the World



Final form of the blankets will be determined in consultation with an engineer



Examples of woven blankets from around the world