

Press Release

Large Bas Relief Mural Needs a New Home.

October 16, 2020

Prepared by the City of Waukesha Public Art Committee and Landmarks Commission

The City of Waukesha is home to a diverse collection of public art pieces and historic landmarks, making the city a vibrant and interesting place to live, work, and play. A new city hall is currently under construction and is expected to open in Spring, 2021. The current city hall, originally built in 1967, is scheduled for demolition beginning in February of 2021.

Incorporated in the stairway design of the current city hall is a concrete bas relief sculptural mural by Franklin Boggs entitled "Waukesha". Franklin Boggs (1914-2009) was a painter, muralist and sculptor. He was a graduate of Fort Wayne Art School in Fort Wayne, Indiana and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. He was a graphic artist with the Tennessee Valley Authority, and a WWII correspondent artist. Boggs served as Professor and Art Department Chair at Beloit College, teaching there from 1945-1979.

This art piece is approximately 12 feet wide by 16 feet tall and consists of forty to fifty individual concrete relief pieces. Each piece represents a different attribute of the city and the overall shape represents the boundary of the city at the time of installation. The concrete pieces, each weighing approximately 100 to 150 pounds, are affixed to the concrete wall with metal fasteners. The entire art piece weight is estimated at two thousand pounds.

The mission of the City's Public Art Committee is to provide public art access and opportunities to city residents and to preserve significant art access in the city. The Landmarks Commission's mission is to preserve the historic character of the city. Based on those missions the Council charged both boards with providing a recommendation for an appropriate future for the Boggs bas relief.

The committees have met to research the artwork and have discussed several options. Knowing that the individual pieces can be removed, one option includes finding a new installation site for the artwork. To that end, the committees are seeking a potential new home for the artwork as well as funding assistance for the removal of the piece from the current city hall. If you, or your company have any interest in assisting with the preservation of the piece by providing a new installation location, purchasing the piece, or assisting financially in the removal and storage of the Franklin Boggs bas relief, please contact Charlie Griffith at 262-524-3529, e-mail cgriffith@waukesha-wi.gov.

(see attached photo)

