



**ARTS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION & PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2025**

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The Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee will conduct a meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Second Floor, Columbia, SC 29201. Members of the public may view the meeting online at [www.columbiasc.gov](http://www.columbiasc.gov). Please contact the City Clerk's Office at (803)545-3045 or [cityclerk@columbiasc.gov](mailto:cityclerk@columbiasc.gov) if you have questions regarding this meeting.

The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey, At-Large, Chair  
The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr., District II  
The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, District I

**CALL TO ORDER**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. September 23, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation, & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes
2. October 21, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation, & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes

**COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

3. Vista Neighborhood Association's Public Art Placement Project - Mr. Barton Walrath

**ADJOURNMENT**



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**MEETING DATE:** December 9, 2025

**DEPARTMENT:** City Clerk

**FROM:** *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

**SUBJECT:** September 23, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation, & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes

**FUNDING SOURCE & ORIGINAL BUDGET:**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- **#a:** AHPP\_MN\_092325 (DOCX)

**HISTORY:**

10/21/25	Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee	DEFERRED
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**ARTS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION & PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The Arts, Historic Preservation, & Philanthropy Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey, Chair called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. and the following members were present:

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Arrived</b>
Tyler D. Bailey	Chair	Present	
Edward H. McDowell	Member	Present	10:19 a.m.
Tina N. Herbert	Member	Present	

Upon a motion made by Ms. Herbert and seconded by Mr. Bailey, the Committee voted unanimously to amend the agenda to include the Lincoln Tunnel North Entrance Mural Project as **Item 3**.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. August 5, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion made by Ms. Herbert and seconded by Mr. Bailey, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the August 5, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes.

**COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

2. Vista Neighborhood Association's Public Art Placement Project - Mr. Barton Walrath

Mr. Barton Walrath, Vista Neighborhood Association provided an overview of the Lincoln Street Tunnel art project, which envisions a three-block art walk between Lady Street and Taylor Street, with one block being the tunnel itself. The project aims to create a welcoming gateway at the south entrance for pedestrians and cyclists coming from the Vista and heading toward Finlay Park and the Vista Greenway. Approximately \$200,000 has been committed to public art installations over the next one to two years. The project is being developed in collaboration with local artist Clark Ellison.



**ARTS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION & PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**

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There was discussion about preferences between chain-link fencing and an archway; public safety concerns related to emergency access; the importance of including the Vista Guild in ongoing conversations; site limitations due to underground utilities; and coordinating the design to match the tunnel entrances.

3. Vista Guild North Tunnel Entrance Project – Ms. Abby Anderson, Executive Director / Vista Guild

Ms. Abby Anderson, Executive Director / Vista Guild described the murals planned for the north entrance of the Lincoln Street Tunnel. In August, a meeting was held with One Columbia to discuss issuing an Request For Quote and collaborating with various artists, including the artist selected for the Finlay Park mural, in order to develop a cohesive design. This project aims to visually connect the upcoming Rainbow Forest light installation through Finlay Park to the tunnel.

Ms. Pamela Zeljak, Public Art Administrator for One Columbia explained that three local artists have already been invited to submit bids and are currently developing their concepts for the project.

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Ms. Herbert, there was consensus of the committee to endorse the Vista Guild North Tunnel Entrance Project for City Council's consideration.

There was discussion about cohesiveness of upcoming public artwork projects and ongoing conversations with artists.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, MMC, CPM  
City Clerk



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**MEETING DATE:** December 9, 2025

**DEPARTMENT:** City Clerk

**FROM:** *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

**SUBJECT:** October 21, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation, & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes

**FUNDING SOURCE & ORIGINAL BUDGET:**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- **#a:** AHPP\_MN\_102125 (PDF)



**ARTS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION & PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2025**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Second Floor, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey, Chair called the meeting to order at 10:23 a.m.

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>
Tyler D. Bailey	Chair	Present
Edward H. McDowell	Member	Absent
Tina N. Herbert	Member	Absent

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- September 23, 2025 Arts, Historic Preservation, & Philanthropy Committee Meeting Minutes - *Deferred*

**PRESENTATIONS**

- The Creative Culture Art Expo Update - Mr. Rashawn Merrick, Founder / The Creative Culture Brand – *Received as information*

Mr. Rashawn Merrick, Founder / The Creative Culture Brand announced the upcoming sold-out Creative Culture Art Expo, Lipstick and Hair Show, taking place on October 25, 2025 at Trustus Theatre. Founded in 2020, the expo now attracts over 370 attendees and supports artists across South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina. The event highlights lectures from artistic directors, brand managers, and influencers. He shared his goal of empowering artists to build sustainable careers locally through education, collaboration, and creative opportunity.

There was discussion about increasing local artist involvement; securing a permanent location; tracking visitor data; identifying revenue and funding sources; and ensuring model diversity from multiple universities.



**ARTS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION & PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2025**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, MMC, CPM  
City Clerk



**MEETING DATE:** December 9, 2025

**DEPARTMENT:** City Clerk

**FROM:** *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

**SUBJECT:** Vista Neighborhood Association's Public Art Placement Project - Mr. Barton Walrath

**FUNDING SOURCE & ORIGINAL BUDGET:**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- **#a:** VNA Public Art Application (PDF)

**HISTORY:**

**09/23/25  
INFORMATION**

Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee

RECEIVED AS

Mr. Barton Walrath, Vista Neighborhood Association provided an update on the Lincoln Street Tunnel art project, which envisions a three-block art walk between Lady and Taylor Streets, with one block being the tunnel itself. The project aims to create a welcoming gateway at the south entrance for pedestrians and cyclists coming from the Vista and heading toward the renovated Finley Park and the Vista Greenway. Approximately \$200,000 has been committed to public art installations over the next one to two years. The project is being developed in collaboration with local artist Clark Ellison and Pamela from One Columbia, both of whom served on the advisory committee for the Vista Guild's public art plan.

**Councilor McDowell arrived at 10:19 a.m.**

There was discussion about preferences between chain-link fencing and an archway; public safety concerns related to emergency access; the importance of including the Vista Guild in ongoing conversations; site limitations due to underground utilities; and coordinating the design to match the tunnel entrances.

3. Vista Guild North Tunnel Project – Ms. Abby Anderson, Executive Director / Vista Guild

Ms. Abby Anderson, Executive Director / Vista Guild shared about the murals planned for the north entrance of the Lincoln Street Tunnel. In August, a meeting was held with One Columbia to discuss issuing an RFQ and working with various artists, including potentially the artist chosen for the Finley Park mural, to create a cohesive design. This project aims to visually connect the upcoming Rainbow Forest light installation, approved last August, through Finley Park to the tunnel. The committee also acknowledged receiving a letter from Pamela and Xavier at One Columbia regarding the project.

Ms. Pamela Zeljak, Public Art Administrator for One Columbia explained that three local artists have already been invited to submit bids and are currently developing their concepts for the project.

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Ms. Herbert, there was consensus of the committee to endorse the Vista Guild North Tunnel Project.

There was discussion about cohesiveness of upcoming public artwork projects and ongoing conversations with artists.





PUBLIC ART PLACEMENT APPLICATION

1. Name of ~~individual~~, organization, ~~or event to be commemorated~~:

Vista Neighborhood Association in collaboration with One Columbia

2. Title of Artwork:

Gateway feature artwork at south entrance to Lincoln Tunnel

3. Attach a sheet describing the significant contribution (s) this individual, organization, or event has made in the community (no more than one-page)

4. Location, date, and time of unveiling ceremony (if approved):

*The placement of public art within the City's right-of-way shall adhere to the City of Columbia encroachment ordinance process.*

South entrance to Lincoln Tunnel on approx 6/30/26

5. District Council Member Sponsors: Councilman McDowell & Councilman Brennan

At-Large Council Member Sponsor: Councilman Basly

FOR STAFF USE:

Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee:  Endorsed  Rejected

One Columbia Review:  Approved  Rejected

Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee:  Endorsed  Rejected

Public Works:  Approved  Rejected

Parks and Recreation:  Approved  Rejected

Support Services:  Approved  Rejected

Public Safety:  Approved  Rejected

Public Art Placement Application  
Attachment 1 – Letters of Support

- 1a Vista Neighborhood Association
- 1b Arsenal Hill Neighborhood
- 1c Congaree Vista Guild
- 1d Councilman Brennan
- 1e Councilman McDowell & Councilman Baily

**From:** Carolyn Leedecker caleedecker@gmail.com  
**Subject:** VNA tunnel art project letter of support  
**Date:** July 22, 2025 at 9:56 AM  
**To:** Pamela Zeljak pamela@onecolumbiasc.com  
**Cc:** Bart Maria Walrath wallycom@aol.com, Charles Leedecker chleedecker@verizon.net

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**Dear City of Columbia Arts, Historic Preservation and Philanthropy Committee:**

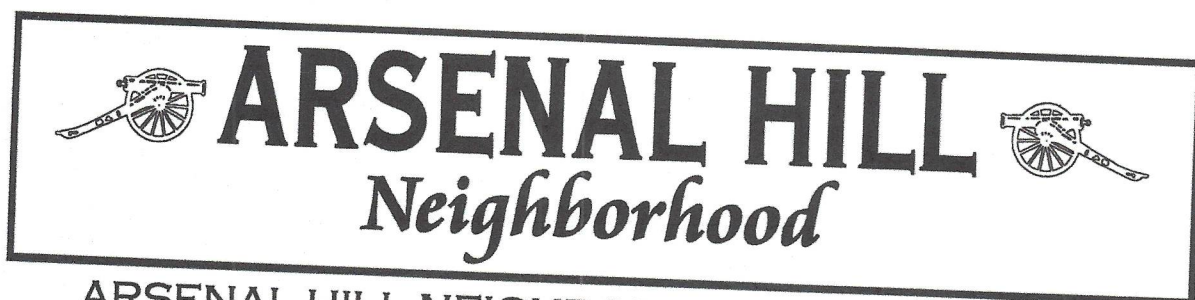
The Vista Neighborhood Association (VNA) is fully committed to its planned art installation on the south entrance of the Lincoln Street Tunnel which is a gateway not only to the tunnel itself but also to Finlay Park and the Vista Greenway.

The art installation will provide a new aesthetic and community experience for locals and visitors alike. In so doing, it will contribute to the vibrant, art-centered identity of the Vista and support the City's goal of providing more public art to the downtown area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**Carolyn LeeDecker**  
President, VNA



ARSENAL HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
ADD AN ADDRESS HERE

July 30, 2025

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to confirm that Arsenal Hill Neighborhood Association wholeheartedly supports the Vista Neighborhood Association's proposal to add a gateway feature at the south entrance to the Lincoln St pedestrian tunnel. This will further enhance the city's greenway path and help encourage the public to use this connector from the Vista to reach the revitalized Finlay Park and Columbia's other downtown neighborhoods beyond.

Please reach out if there are any questions or further action needed

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Matt Varner", written over a horizontal line.

Matt Varner  
Vice President AHNA  
803 787-8865

c: Susan Skinner – AHNA President



July 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Congaree Vista Guild, I am writing to lend community support for the proposed public art project by the Vista Neighborhood Association. The Congaree Vista Guild enjoys working on public art pieces with the Vista Neighborhood Association (VNA) and look forward to continued neighborhood support on this project.

The VNA is looking to add a gateway feature to the south side of the Lincoln Street Tunnel. With the upcoming lighting installation in the tunnel, we are hopeful that this project will enhance the lighting piece and create a more vibrant neighborhood.

The Vista Guild is hopeful that the City will support this piece and allow the VNA to continue their great work with public art around the Vista district. Please let me know if you need anything further.

Sincerely,

Abby Anderson  
Executive Director  
Congaree Vista Guild



CITY OF COLUMBIA  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL

August 11, 2025

Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee:

I am pleased to offer my full support for the Public Art Placement Policy application submitted by the Vista Neighborhood Association for the installation of public art at the Lincoln Street pedestrian tunnel in the Vista by local artist Clark Ellefeson.

As a member of Columbia City Council, I have had the privilege of witnessing the positive impact that public art can have on our community. This project was first envisioned by Congaree Vista Guild in its Public Art Placement Plan. The Vista Neighborhood Association now applying for installation demonstrates residents and businesses working together to improve their community.

This gateway feature at the south entrance to the Lincoln Street tunnel will welcome pedestrians, cyclists, and other users to the soon to be installed rainbow forest lighted tunnel, Finlay Park and the Vista Greenway as well as reflect the Vista's vibrant character and objective to be a walkable arts focused community.

Again, I am proud to support this application

Sincerely,

Will Brennan  
District III

Public Art Placement Application  
Attachment 2 – Artist & Artwork Description

Vista Neighborhood Association and One Columbia have selected a well-known and respected local artist, Clark Ellefson, principal designer and owner of Lewis+Clark, a local business in the Vista for our public art project at the south entrance of the Lincoln Street Tunnel.

The work of Lewis+Clark has earned showings in a number of exhibitions within museums that include the Miami Museum of Modern Art, Salon de Mobile, The Victoria and Albert Museum, the Chicago Art Institute, and the Columbia (SC) Museum of Art, with works in the permanent collections of the Chicago Art Institute, the Columbia (SC) Museum of Art, and the South Carolina State Museum.

Clark is pictured below with his recent Columbia, SC public art addition to the 5 points area.



This proposed public art will be a **gateway feature** marking the south entrance of the Lincoln Street pedestrian tunnel in the Vista.

The goal of this project is to create a striking and meaningful gateway that welcomes pedestrians, cyclists, and others using the Lincoln Street Tunnel, Finlay Park and the Vista Greenway. The piece will complement the Rainbow Forest Lighting Installation to be installed in the tunnel and enhance the visual identity of The Vista, reflect the neighborhood's vibrant character, and support the area's objective to be a walkable, arts-focused community. Additionally, the feature will contribute to the safety and comfort of visitors by incorporating effective and creative lighting.



CITY OF COLUMBIA  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL

August 14, 2025

Arts, Historic Preservation & Philanthropy Committee:

On behalf of Councilman Bailey and myself, we support the Vista Neighborhood Association's application to install public art by local artist Clark Ellefeson at the Lincoln Street pedestrian tunnel. This project is more than a visual enhancement it is a catalyst for economic growth, cultural vibrancy, and community pride.

Public art is a proven driver of tourism and local commerce. By creating a distinctive gateway at the south entrance of the Lincoln Street tunnel, this installation will draw visitors toward the Vista Greenway, Finlay Park, and the soon to be completed Rainbow Forest lighted tunnel. The result will be an enriched pedestrian experience that encourages people to explore, dine, shop, and linger in the Vista benefiting both local businesses and our city's economy.

Beyond its economic impact, this project reinforces Columbia's identity as a city that celebrates creativity, inclusivity, and community collaboration. It honors the Vista's longstanding vision of being a walkable, arts-focused destination, while fostering partnerships between residents, businesses, and cultural organizations.

We fully endorse this initiative and believe it will leave a lasting mark on our city's cultural landscape, inspiring residents and attracting visitors for years to come.

Sincerely,

*Edward H. McDowell, Jr.*  
Edward H. McDowell, Jr.  
District II

*Tyler D. Bailey*  
Tyler D. Bailey  
At-Large Member