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Communication from Ann Arbor Public Art Commission (AAPAC) regarding the West Park Art Sculpture

In February of 2010 an RFP was issued for the procurement of an artist/contractor to design, produce and install a piece of artwork in the re-vitalized West Park. In March 2010 a committee of four reviewed thirteen applications, conducted four interviews, and selected Mr. Traven Pelletier. Mr. Pelletier proposed creating two steel sculptures' to be installed in the area of new seat walls. These two 11' high steel sculptures entitled "TREEform" were installed this fall in West Park. The total contract was for \$10,000 and was funded by Ann Arbor's percent for art program as part of the city's renovation of West Park. This public art project complements the overall plans for the renovation which addresses storm water issues and creates new pathways, improved access to the park, renovated parking area, and built concrete seat walls into the hillside to accommodate better viewing of events at the park band shell.

The park was chosen for public art because it is centrally located and serves a broad section of the community. The installation is in keeping with the natural environment theme of the park's renovation and the overall goals of the project. The city will dedicate the sculpture as part of the grand opening for West Park, expected sometime in the spring of 2011.

Pelletier was chosen through a competitive process following a call for art to Michigan artists. In designing the pieces, Pelletier found that the huge old oaks were the most inspiring natural elements in the space. "The sculptures were designed to be large enough for people to sit under and enjoy while not competing too much with the overall area as a theater space. They are meant to "cap" the audience area and create a tie between the surrounding natural elements and the band shell, both in form and color. The colors were chosen both to be striking and beautiful in the sunlight on the hillside, as well as to play with an earth-tone and a metallic color that would unify the symmetry of the industrial material, the playfulness of the piece in the theater space, and the natural theme of a tree's form." Pelletier specialized in fine art, sculpture, and landscape design and has received numerous grants for his community ecological arts projects. He lives and works in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and is co-owner and designer at Lotus Gardenscapes, Inc.

Pelletier enlisted the help of many local businesses to create the piece. Lotus Gardenscapes donated both equipment and stone to integrate with the bench area. Rich Cox of [Orion Auto <http://oriona2.com/>](http://oriona2.com/) in Ann Arbor, donated his time and space to fabricate the piece collaboratively with Traven and another local artist [Tad McKillop <http://www.tadmckillop.com>](http://www.tadmckillop.com). Dave Palermo of Palermo's Collision in Whitmore Lake created a unique and beautiful

copper fade color scheme and painted both pieces. Nick Lawler of [SDI <http://www.strudesign.com/>](http://www.strudesign.com/) in Ann Arbor provided structural design and drawings for fabrication. [A-1 Roll <http://a1roll.com/>](http://a1roll.com/) of Mount Clements MI provided rolling facilities and expertise to create the bent tubular steel for the piece.

The West Park sculpture represents one of the early projects undertaken by AAPAC for a commissioned artwork. Through this project, much groundwork was laid for writing and issuing requests for a proposal of this nature, as well as defining the selection processes to be undertaken by the AAPAC review task force, and the development of a contract for an artistic creation and installation of the work. In addition to AAPAC commissioners and Connie Rizzolo-Brown, Chair AAPAC Projects Committee; the following staff assisted with this project: Amy Kuras, Parks Planner; Connie Pulciper, Systems Planner; and Katherine Talcott, Public Art Project Manager (contracted).

AAPAC was founded in November 2007. AAPAC's mission is to bring to the City of Ann Arbor public art that improves the aesthetic quality of public spaces and structures, provides for cultural and recreational opportunities, contributes to the local heritage, stimulates economic activity, and promotes the general welfare of the community.

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