

**STAFF REVIEW OF
CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION**

Applicant: Hemphill Smith Arts Foundation Care of Mark Paul Smith and Max Meyer

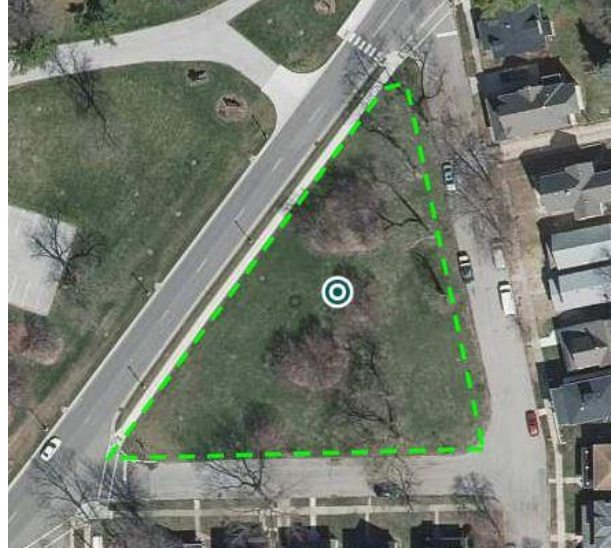
Case No.: HPC 4-22-24-2

Subject Property: Triangle shaped parcel of land bound by Garden St., Swinney Park Place, and Jefferson Blvd. owned by the City of Fort Wayne Board of Public Works.

Legal Description: Spc 88.3 S Of N 314 Nw Cor Garden & Jefferson St

Historic District: West Central Historic District

Date of Review: April 22, 2024



Cultural Resources Survey Information:

Rating:	N/A	Style:	N/A
Use:	Land	Condition:	N/A
Construction Date:	None	Integrity:	N/A

Work Proposal:

Installation of a metal sculpture created by Cary Shafer is an interpretation of an original painting by Jo Ellen Hemphill Smith. Installation of sidewalks and municipal lighting, and installation of West Central limestone signage facing west.

Staff Comments:

The triangular parcel of land being reviewed is bound to the east by Garden St., to the south by Swinney Park Place, and to the northwest by West Jefferson Blvd and is owned by the City of Fort Wayne Department of Public Works. Originally, this piece of land would have been part of the Swinney family homestead which would become Swinney Park. With the extension of West Jefferson Blvd. through the park c.1935, this parcel of land became separated from the original homestead/park.

According to aerial photography, the trees along Garden St. and Swinney Park Place existed prior to the construction of West Jefferson Blvd. but the clusters of trees in the middle of the parcel were planted in the mid-1990s. The proposed project's plans will not require the removal of any trees and the artist and applicant intends to work directly with the Department of Public Works to develop the site and sidewalks around and to compliment natural features.

The applicant has proposed, along with the support of the West Central Neighborhood Association, to erect a monument to artist, long-time neighborhood leader, and former member of the Fort Wayne Historic Preservation Review Board, Jody Hemphill Smith. The premise for the sculpture is based on an interpretation of an original painting of amaryllises by Jo Ellen Hemphill Smith. This sculpture and the accompanying West Central Neighborhood sign are being designed and created by West Central Artist and dear friend of Jody Hemphill Smith, Cary Schafer with the support of Max Meyer, applicant, and Jody Hemphill Smith's husband, Mark Paul Smith.

For many years the West Central Neighborhood was the home to the Fort Wayne Art School, which was just a few blocks from Jody Hemphill Smith's home for many years, also known as "The Castle Gallery". This long association has given the neighborhood the reputation of an artist colony and home to the arts which are still strongly represented by a large number of resident artists, galleries, and the Arena Dinner Theater. This reputation, along with the historic character of its buildings and historic designation, has given the neighborhood its unique character and atmosphere. The proposed

statue and neighborhood signage seem to continue and celebrate this tradition.

As referenced in *Preservation Guidelines for Historic Districts – 2.1 Site Features and Plantings* (2008).

“Site features and plantings not only provide the context for the buildings of the historic districts; they also contribute significantly to the overall character of the districts. The elements of district setting include features that form spaces, including topography, setback and siting of buildings, vistas and views, and plantings such as hedges, foundation plantings, lawns, gardens, and trees; features that define circulation, such as walkways, driveways, and parking areas; features that articulate or develop a site, such as accessory buildings, fences, walls, lighting, terraces, waterways, fountains, patios, sculptures, arbors, pergolas, pools, furniture, and planters; and public features and facilities such as streets, alleys, sidewalks, curbing, and streetlights.”

The concern of the Commission is if the placement and permanence of the limestone and concrete portions of the proposed projects, as well as if the sculpture’s subject matter, is distracting from the historic character of the neighborhood. Please see the artist’s renderings of the sculpture and site layout below. It is important for the Commission to remember that as per City Ordinance Section 33.184 the artwork itself must be reviewed and approved by the Public Art Commission Review Committee prior to installation. Staff can provide any recommendations made by the Historic Preservation Commission to the Public Art Commission Review Committee prior to the next Committee meeting scheduled on May 1st.

In a conversation on April 11, 2024 with Nick Jarrell, Manager of Fort Wayne Right of Way, HPC Staff discussed the project and asked if there was support for all facets of the project as represented in these renderings. Mr. Jarrell confirmed his department’s support of the project as represented and added that ADA compliant ramps were to be installed to access the sidewalks towards the sculpture and that in-ground lighting was to be installed so to not distract from the artwork.

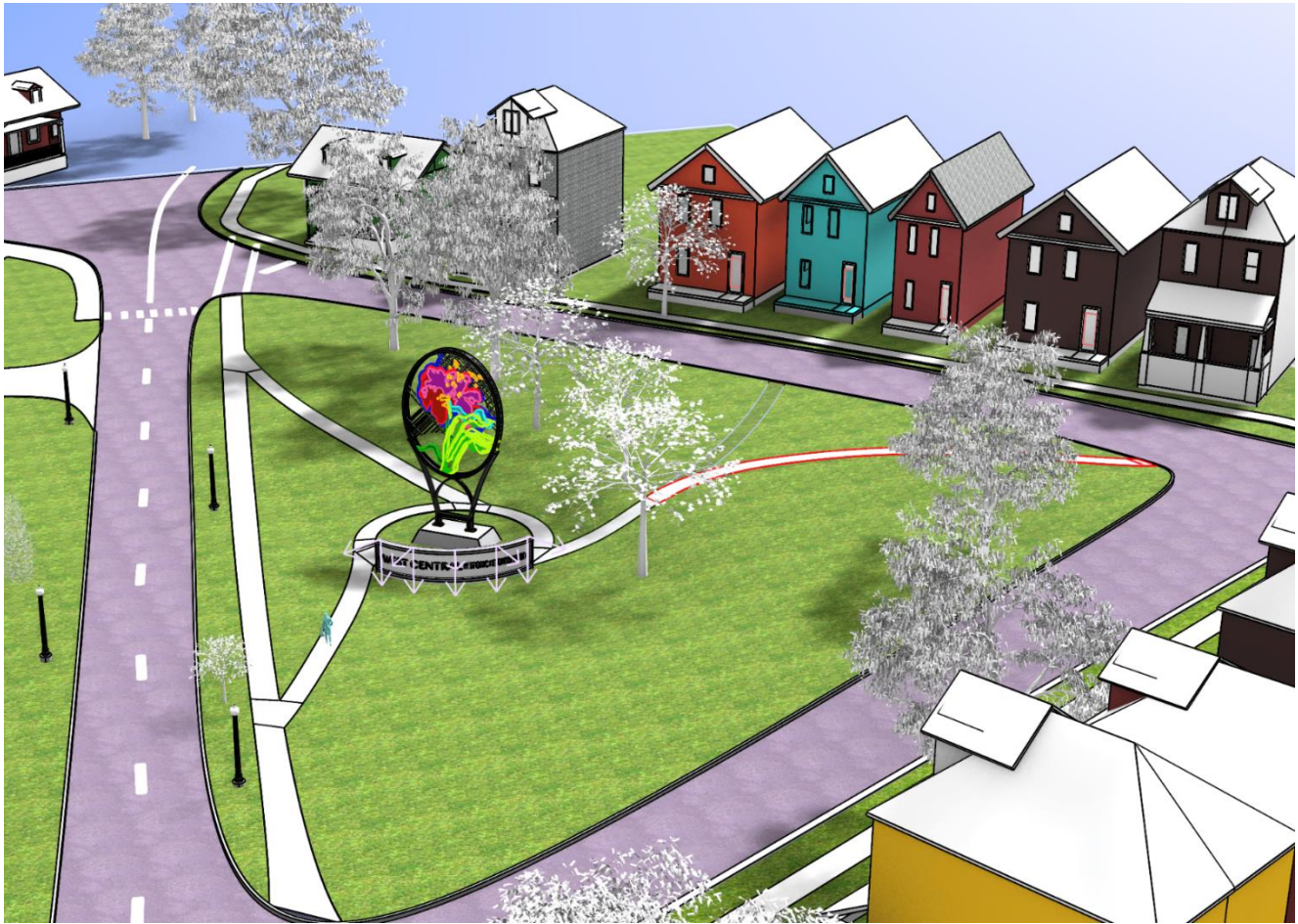
A letter of support from the West Central Neighborhood Association was also submitted. Please see below.

Staff Recommendations:

Staff recommends approval of the application for case number HPC 4-22-24-2 because the planned installation will not remove any character defining deciduous trees or other established landscaping on the parcel. The proposed sidewalks and placement do not adversely affect the historic character of the neighborhood. The lighting for the artwork, signage, and sidewalks will either be in sync with municipal lighting already installed in the neighborhood or will be hidden from public view. Staff also recommends approval because the sculpture and signage does not distract from the historic character of the neighborhood, does not present a false historic appearance, and is a product of its own time.

Approval of this application is also subject to the following conditions:

1. As applications are considered by the HPC on a case by case basis, approval for this installation shall not serve as a precedent for making determinations in future proposals;
2. Any changes or additions to this proposal must be approved by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to initiating said changes or additions; and
3. All required permits and or approvals must be obtained from the appropriate agencies or Commissions.



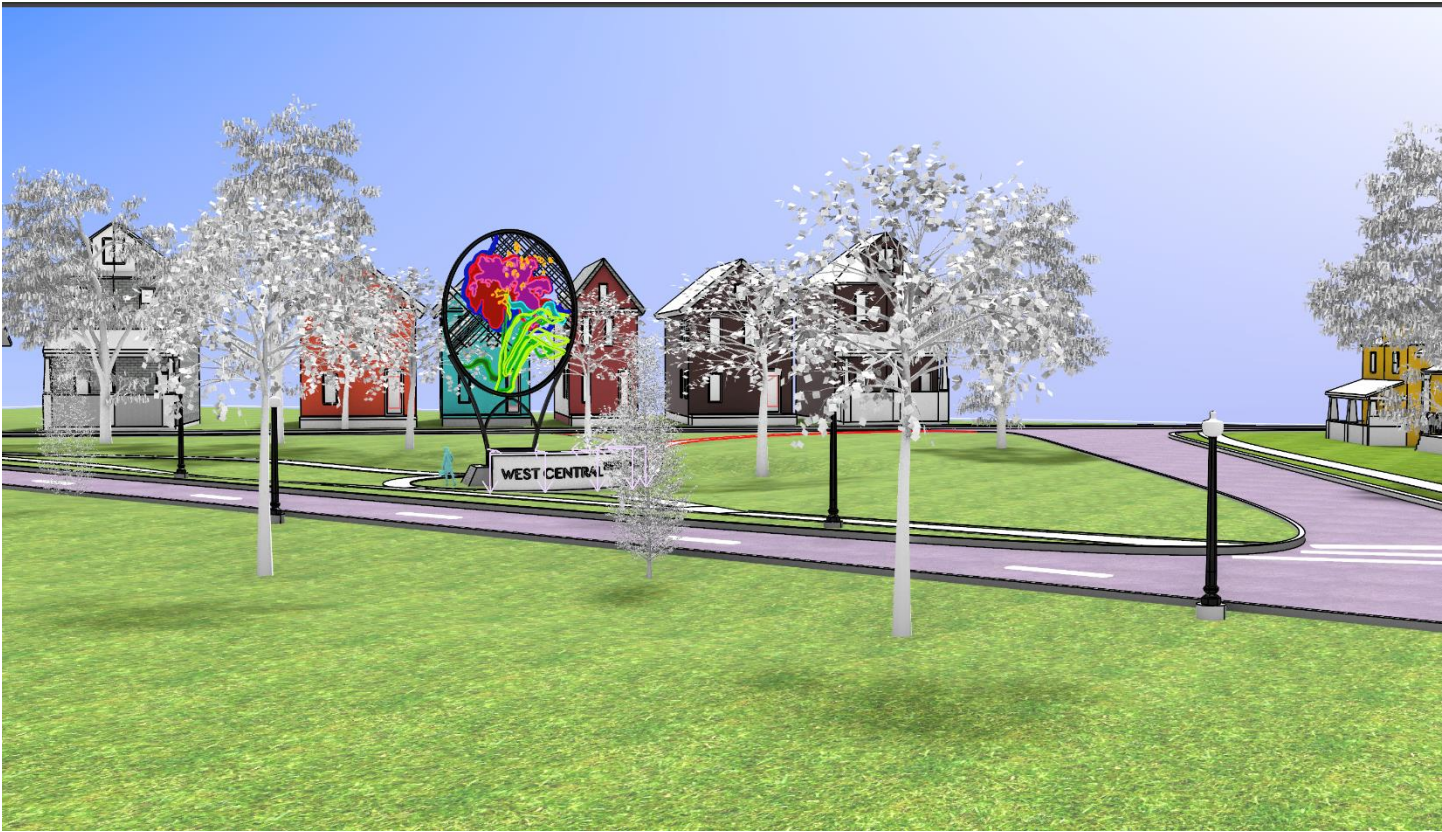
Aerial View of Parcel and Project Site



West Boundary of Parcel – Sidewalk View facing Garden St. from Swinney Park Place & W. Jefferson Blvd.



View of Parcel Approaching from W. Jefferson Blvd.



View of Parcel from Grounds of Swinney Park

Parcel Photos - Taken April 9, 2024



Southern Point of Parcel – Facing North (Swinney Park Place & W. Jefferson Blvd)



West Point of Parcel – Facing Northeast (Swinney Park Place & W. Jefferson Blvd)



NW Boundary of Parcel – Sidewalk View facing Garden St. from W. Jefferson Blvd.
(Approximate Area of Artwork and West Central Neighborhood Sign Installation)





March 13, 2024

Mark Smith
Hemphill Smith Art Foundation
1202 W Wayne St
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Dear Mark:

On behalf of the West Central Neighborhood Association (WCNA) and our Board of Directors, I would like to extend our enthusiastic support for your proposed public sculpture honoring the history of the arts and artists in West Central. As you know, a big part of our existence is for the preservation of our neighborhood's historic assets and we agree that our art history is indeed a treasure that is worthy of commemorating.

While we understand that the details of this project are still preliminary, we also support the proposed gateway location (within the triangle bordered by West Jefferson, Garden and Swinney Park Place) and the artist's current design concept and scale. We are also supportive of the addition of a West Central sign that could also serve functionally to hide the lights for the sculpture. Please understand that we are generally supportive of this entire project and not necessarily wedded to any of these specific details, recognizing they may need to change. This said we would appreciate being reapproached if any material changes are required.

Thank you for taking on this significant and transformative project and please let me/us know if there are additional ways we can be helpful in making it a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Sauer", written in a cursive style.

Joel Sauer
President, Board of Directors
(260) 433-3672