

Chelsea Heritage Mural

Briefly describe your organization's audiences and mission:

Chelsea Prospers is the City of Chelsea's downtown initiative to advance neighborhood vitality. With a focus on economic development, Chelsea Prospers engages district stakeholders including residents, business and property owners, community leaders and visitors to build a vision and coordinates local efforts to advance Chelsea's downtown. Projects include small business assistance, a façade and signage program, district marketing, special events, public art and other placemaking efforts.

Briefly describe the activity that will take place:

The Chelsea Heritage Mural will be a painted mural on aluminum panels measuring approximately 80 feet long by 12 to 15.5 feet high (total area roughly 1,120 square feet) installed on the Fifth Street side of the wall of the property 472 Broadway, Chelsea, Massachusetts. With a concept and content developed through a community-driven process, the mural will be designed and painted David Fichter. The artist is known for a distinctive, realistic style that features the people, architecture and other details reflective of the mural location.

Outline how you plan to market your activity and the timeline you intend to follow.

PHASE ONE: Development of Theme and Imagery, Preliminary Design

June to October 2020

The themes of the mural will grow out of community conversations on the shared history of Chelsea. Imagery will include the people and places that mirror the city to itself. The artist will work with a Steering Committee of representative community members to develop a design that is inclusive of the identity, diverse experiences and rich history of Chelsea.

City staff will schedule three brainstorming meetings of the community members appointed to the Steering Committee and the artist to develop a body of imagery for the mural. These meetings can be held remotely. The staff will work with the Steering Committee and other members of the Chelsea community to collect photos and other reference images that the artist can use to create the design. It is hoped that Steering

Committee members will connect with their networks via phone calls and other means to solicit additional input.

The artist will create a preliminary design for the Steering Committee to review and respond with feedback. With that input the artist will create a final, full color design for approval.

The City of Chelsea will facilitate a contract with the artist and property owner for the creation and installation of the mural as designed.

PHASE TWO: Final Design and Painting

November 2020 to June 2021

The artist will enlarge and paint the mural design in his studio on approximately 30 aluminum panels. The panels will be Max Metal panels HD are each 3 mm thick and 4 feet by 8 feet. The panels and will be purchased by the artist from Grimco. The paint will be acrylic Nova Color paint. This paint is preferred by the artist because the pigments are able to resist ultra violet light which can fade certain colors.

Progress will be documented and shared with the community via photos by the artist. There may be a site visit to the artist's studio by the Steering Committee.

PHASE THREE: Installation and Community Celebration

July to September 2021

The completed mural, under the artist's direction, will be mounted on the Fifth Street wall using strips of pressure-treated 1 x 4's mounted vertically every two feet. Once installed, the artist will apply two protective coats of Golden MSA varnish, a covering that facilitates the removal of graffiti and helps to filter out ultra violet light.

The mural will be dedicated and recognized with a community celebration on the site.

What benefits will this activity bring to Chelsea and its residents?

A mural on this location will serve to awaken a plain wall and create visual interest. It can help to define Bellingham Square and builds upon a cluster of other murals in the area. This block is a primary pathway for students to and from the Williams School and can serve as a means of communicating the city's history and identity. A major piece of public art in this area signals positive change in the area and bolsters other, ephemeral art activities through special events.

Public art, at its best, holds a mirror up to a community, forming and holding a collective memory. This mural will be a means to articulate a shared visual language, identifying specific architectural elements, people, and images that define Chelsea.

David Fichter's style of mural making is rich with naturalistic local detail, one that is clearly understood and accessible to all. His process is one that prioritizes community input in the content, with each mural reflective of the neighborhood in which it is installed.

Are you partnering and/or collaborating with other organizations?

Representatives from community organizations will be sought to serve on the Steering Committee. Those with visual resources that could contribute to the design will be sought out specifically such as the Chelsea Public Library, Cary House, Chelsea MA Photography Club, and GreenRoots (they've a number of strong photographs on file). The Bellingham Square TDI group, a team of business and property owners and neighborhood stakeholders anchored by a program of MassDevelopment and focused specifically on this block of Broadway, is expected to be a key partner.

How will the Heritage Celebrations Grant be acknowledged?

Instead of a donor acknowledgement as a sign within or beside the mural we'd seek to include it creatively within the design. David Fichter's murals often wryly include credits to the team within them. The grant program would be credited in all print and promotional materials related to the project such as press releases, posters and banners at the community celebration, etc.

How will you measure the success/impact of this activity?

How the public embraces the mural will be the singular measure of success. It's not easily quantifiable but considerations such as how many people choose to pose in front of it, how many times it is reproduced for other purposes (like for personal facebook banners, on the covers of reports) demonstrate affection for the work of art. The most lasting impact would be if passersby come to recognize and remember particular elements within the mural and hold them as defining characteristics of the city.

Past works by David Fichter



Port Stories Mural- Hampshire St. Cambridge, MA



Port Stories Mural (detail)



The Potluck- Central Square Cambridge



Union Square History Murals (Webster Ave.) Somerville MA

