



---

## Public Amenities Committee Summary

---

**August 12, 2009**

**10:30 a.m.**

**Conference Room 391**

**Committee Members Present:** Lehmann, Madison, Johnson

**Other Council Present:** Robb

---

*Agenda: Walnut Twig Beetles & Thousand Cankers Disease  
Denver County Cultural Council 2009 Funding Report; Re-appointments  
Update on McNichols Building (Carnegie Library) rehabilitation planning  
Denver Office of Cultural Affairs Federal Stimulus Funds Programming*

---

### **1. Walnut Twig Beetles & Thousand Cankers Disease**

Jude O'Connor, Director, Natural Resources Division, Parks & Recreation Department, reported on Thousand Cankers Disease, which is similar to Dutch elm disease. It is spread by tiny insects that attack the twigs of black walnut trees. Trees decline from the outer twigs toward the trunk. The disease has spread across the eastern and southeastern states into Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Foresters expect to lose about 90% of the trees.

The disease was first noticed in the Rocky Mountain region several years ago in northwest Boulder. By then end of this year, Boulder will have lost 70% of its black walnuts. Colorado Springs will lose its last one this year.

Recently, Denver trees have started showing signs of infestation. Denver's parks and parkways have 500 black walnuts; 4,000 to 5,000 are on private property. Black Walnut trees have dark, blocky bark and long, almost fern-like leaves containing about 13 leaflets. The fruit is encased in a very thick, dark green husk. Most of the trees in Denver were planted by squirrels.

At this stage, it can't be controlled, but it can be contained by ensuring diseased wood is not transported. People are encouraged to call Forestry if they think their black walnuts may be infested. A diseased tree's leaves will start "flagging", or yellowing at the top and turning brown as the disease works its way down into the trunk. There is no known preventative care, and because it is a fruit tree, insecticide spraying is heavily regulated.

Forestry is considering requesting an ordinance allowing it to impound diseased trees, but not yet.

## **2. Denver County Cultural Council – 2009 Funding Plan and Re-Appointments**

### Committee Action

The Committee approved filing resolutions re-appointing Bernard Karshmer and Chrissy Deal to the Denver County Cultural Council (DCCC).

### Summary of Discussion

Jane Potts, Program Administrator, and Harriett Hogue, DCCC secretary, reported that the Council disbursed \$1,582,673 in Scientific & Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) funds to 98 Tier III organizations, 8.5% less than in 2008. Sixteen organizations received more funds than in 2008; 68 received less; and 14 organizations received DCCC funding for the first time.

DCCC continued its support of ArtReach's Arts Benefiting Kids after school program. The \$70,241 supports hiring local artists and scientific or cultural professionals to participate in the program.

Discretionary funds were awarded for technical assistance (\$29,134) and organizational and program collaboration (\$50,000). These programs have provided scholarship funds for organizations to attend seminars on non-profit management and brought about exciting new shared programs.

SCFD revenue year to date is 15.6% below 2008. This is concerning to all, but particularly to the Tier III organizations, to which the SCFD funding represents a larger portion of their annual budgets. They are also faced with rising rents for office and production space. Denver also has a severe shortage of venues for small production organizations.

The Committee approved resolutions re-appointing Bernard Karshmer for a term expiring on September 30, 2011, and Chrissy Deal for a term expiring September 30, 2012.

Councilwoman Lehmann thanked Ms. Potts and all members of the DCCC for all of their work on behalf of Denver's Tier III organizations.

## **3. Update on McNichols Building (Carnegie Library) rehabilitation planning**

Amy Mueller, Mayor's Deputy Chief of Staff, and Jim McIntyre, Purchasing, reported on efforts to restore the historic Carnegie library building to its original glory, which could cost at least \$15 million. A request for proposals from private partners was issued in August, with responses due September 4. Responses will be evaluated on their vision, financial stability and general qualifications. Review will be a public process. The plan is to make a selection and have a partner on board to participate in the initial demolition of the interior elements added in the 1950s (the maze of interior walls, the mezzanine level, dropped ceilings) and opening up the covered windows in preparation for the building's use as an anchor venue for the Biennial of the Americas in 2010.

Jan Brennan, Denver Office of Cultural Affairs Program Administrator, said the Biennial of the Americas, to be held in Denver for seven weeks between June and August 2010, will bring together 32 countries to raise awareness of the remarkable cultural diversity across the western hemisphere. The privately-funded event is being managed by a non-profit organizations created for this purpose. The Denver Zoo, Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Art Museum, to mention just a few institutions, are very excited and are planning related programming during that period.

Civic Center Park and the McNichols Building will be the hub of the Biennial. This is an opportunity to leverage private funding to renovate and reuse the building to help activate the park. On Sept. 1, the Landmark Preservation Commission will be briefed on the plans. Private fund-raising is underway. Several grant applications have been submitted to organizations, such as Save America's Treasures;

state government programs, such as the Colorado State Historic Fund; and the federal American Recovery & Reinvestment funds identified for green buildings and energy efficiency.

#### **4. Denver Office of Cultural Affairs – Federal Stimulus Funds Programming**

Jan Brennan, Denver Office of Cultural Affairs Program Administrator, said the National Endowment for the Arts is distributing American Recovery & Reinvestment (ARRA) funds, and the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs (DOCA) received \$250,000. These funds will support jobs in the cultural and scientific sectors, a large portion of Denver's economy.

DOCA will return \$25,000 to the local population by providing discounted tickets, which benefit local institutions by helping them sell tickets and build audience. The other \$225,000 will be used for grants to other groups identified through a process. The organizations qualified to receive Scientific & Cultural Facilities District, including Denver's Tier III groups, provided a good pre-qualified pool. Applications had to identify the positions that would be funded and what impact that would have on the organization. Priority will be given to those with employees laid-off in the last six months or those that probably would otherwise have to be let go in the near future.

DOCA received 34 applications totaling \$594,405. Two types of requests predominate: 1) funds for specific positions, such as education coordinator; and 2) funds for 15 musicians or 10 dancers for more outreach at schools and other events.

The money has to be awarded in about 50 days, and meticulous reporting is important. The City has an ARRA funding website for tracking the funds.