



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PREPARED BY: KATHY KLEINBAUM, SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST

MEETING DATE: MAY 7, 2014

SUBJECT: INSTALLATION OF "SAN MATEO BRIDGE" SCULPTURE IN LINEAR PARK

RECOMMENDATION

Review the Civic Arts Committee's recommendation to place the "San Mateo Bridge" sculpture by Charles Ginnever in Linear Park in the Bay Meadows development and make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the placement of the sculpture in the public park.

BACKGROUND

In 2005, the City adopted the Art in Public Places ordinance, which requires new development projects either to install publicly visible art as part of the project or contribute a percentage of the cost of the project for the Art in Public Places fund. The fund finances the acquisition of public art by the City in order to promote cultural and artistic outlets and to improve the environment, image and character of the community.

As part of their negotiated Development Agreement for the Bay Meadows project, Wilson Meany, the master developer, agreed to contribute a total of \$1 million for public art to be located within the development in order to fulfill their Art in Public Places requirement. Wilson Meany plans to locate a portion of public art in the Linear Park that is being constructed as part of the project. The Linear Park is similar to the previously constructed Paddock and Community parks in that it will be developed by Bay Meadows but dedicated as a public park and maintained by the City. Any public art that is required by the Art in Public Places program and is located in a public park needs to be reviewed by both the Civic Arts Committee (CAC) and the Park and Recreation Committee before being presented to the City Council for final review and approval.

The CAC has had a long-standing goal to obtain a work of art by San Mateo-born artist Charles Ginnever. Charles Ginnever is a world renowned artist who has had works exhibited throughout the United States and Europe and is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford. Members of the CAC encouraged Wilson Meany to obtain the "San Mateo Bridge" work for the Bay Meadows project. Images of the "San Mateo Bridge" work are included as **Attachment 1** of this report. A biography of Charles Ginnever is included as **Attachment 2**.

Wilson Meany presented a proposal to the CAC at their March 10, 2014 meeting to purchase "San Mateo Bridge" and to locate it in the turf area of Linear Park. The proposed location of the work is shown in **Attachment 3**. The CAC made a motion to approve the purchase and installation of the work and to forward it to the Park and Recreation Commission for review.

Following that meeting, staff from Parks and Recreation identified some concerns about the proposed placement of the piece in Linear Park. The concerns are:

- Locating the sculpture in the middle of the turf area will make on-going maintenance of the park more difficult and will require a special mower to access the area around the sculpture.
- They have concerns about safety and liability from children climbing on the sculpture and using it as a piece of playground equipment. Turf is not considered an acceptable resilient surface to cushion a fall.

These concerns were brought to the CAC at their April 14, 2014 meeting. Wilson Meany stated that they could place a no-mow zone around the work and plant it with materials that would limit direct public access to the sculpture. Parks and Recreation staff stated that the no-mow zones in the other Bay Meadows park have been labor intensive to maintain. As another alternative, Wilson Meany and Parks and Recreation staff identified another possible location for the piece in another segment of Linear Park, as shown in **Attachment 4**.

In response to the Parks and Recreation staff concerns, the CAC made the following motion, which passed unanimously, to:

"Forward the review of the installation of the "San Mateo Bridge" piece in Linear Park to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their May 7th meeting. The CAC states that they have a strong preference for the piece to be located in the lawn area but that they have a stronger preference to make sure the piece is acquired if an alternate location in Bay Meadows is deemed necessary. The CAC has evaluated the public safety risk of locating the piece in the lawn area and does not think it is high.

The CAC prefers that the piece be located in the lawn area for the following reasons:

- The piece can be better viewed from a distance and from all angles on the lawn
- The piece would be more approachable to the public
- The lawn location allows for the interaction of light and shade over the course of the day
- The lawn location was requested by the applicant and by the artist"

Parks and Recreation staff recommends that if it is the Commission's preference to locate the sculpture in the lawn area as originally proposed and as recommended by the CAC that a fall zone space of 6' around the sculpture consisting of wood fiber material to a 12" depth be provided with provisions for sub-drainage, and bordered by a 6" wide concrete edge, all as approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation, to cushion falls from those who may climb the sculpture.

BUDGET IMPACT

Wilson Meany will be responsible for the cost to acquire and install the art work. In addition, Wilson Meany will be required to maintain the sculpture in case of damage or vandalism. Parks and Recreation staff anticipates an increased cost to maintaining the landscaping in Linear Park due to the need to replenish the wood fiber material. Staff will be exploring with Bay Meadows their interest in assuming responsibility for the upkeep of the wood fiber.

NOTICE PROVIDED

Regular Commission notification process. A copy of this report was provided to the members of the Civic Arts Committee.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Image of "San Mateo Bridge"

Attachment 2 – Charles Ginnever Biography

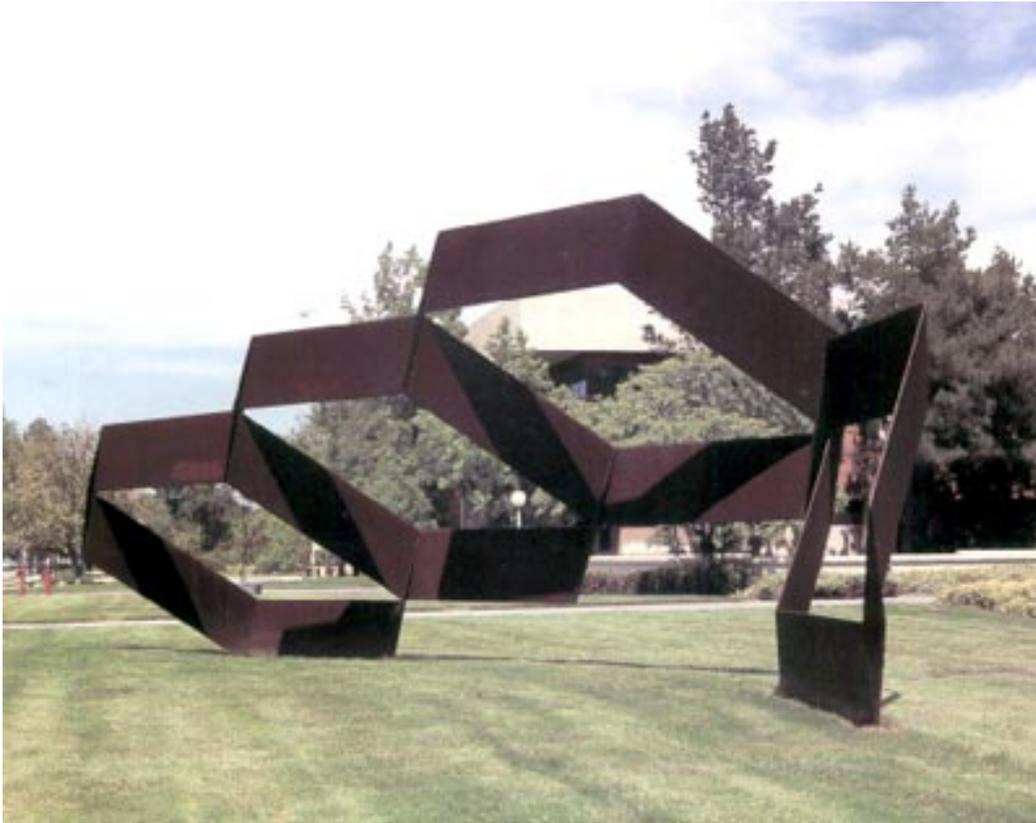
Attachment 3 – Proposed location in Linear Park

Attachment 4 – Alternate proposed location in Linear Park

STAFF CONTACT Kathy Kleinbaum, Senior Management Analyst
kkleinbaum@cityofsanmateo.org
650-522-7153

cc: **Matt Bronson, Interim Community Development Director**
Sheila Canzian, Parks and Recreation Director
Civic Arts Committee

**Attachment 1:
"San Mateo Bridge" by Charles Ginnever**



CHARLES GINNEVER

One of the most significant and little-celebrated innovations in late 20th century art: [Charles Ginnever's](#) "Rashomon" suite. ... Much important sculpture of our era has concerned itself with tensions between the bodily and mental grasp of the real. "Rashomon" goes to the heart of that matter, defying its viewers to compare its identical components by rotating them mentally.

— Kenneth Baker, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Nov. 23, 2012

In a world that prizes signature styles and instant recognition, Ginnever slows down and challenges the viewer's experience. He inculcates us with a nagging doubt, which becomes part of the pleasure of the work.

— John Yau, *hyperallergic.com*, Jan. 13, 2013

The few modern sculptors of importance, including Charles Ginnever, have provided their art with reasons for being that only it can demonstrate. Complex formal structures of striking coherence and energy, Ginnever's sculptures are something more. The foldings and unfolding of planar form mirror the work's effect of opening up unnoticed depths in the flow of mundane experience.

— Kenneth Baker, *Charles Ginnever—Rashomon*, Cantor Arts Center, Stanford, 2000

Working in heavy metal, Mr. Ginnever is lighter than air.

— Grace Glueck, *New York Times*, May 21, 1983

The reduction of the vocabulary to its essential form is one of the factors in the existential dynamics of Ginnever's work. ... These apparently geometric and minimal forms carry within them the entire memory of our civilization—our past, and our entrance to the future—and are not of an age, unless it is an imagined one: they are linked to the immemorial history of the space-time of our poetical thought. These are documents of vitalism in its pure state.

— Pierre Restany, "Ginnever, Action-Sculptor" in *Charles Ginnever*, 1987

For more than fifty years, **Charles Ginnever** has created large-scale sculptures in steel and bronze that are concerned with challenging and expanding visual perceptions. "The observer is aware that the sculptures unfold in their own time and space," write Hilarie Faberman, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, and Director Thomas K. Seligman of Stanford University's Cantor Arts Center (2000), "[and] may even begin to reexamine preconceived ideas about perception, and about sculpture as static, massive, unmoving."

In the experimental New York artist environment of the 1960s, Ginnever participated in, and/or organized several "Happenings," creating sculpture dances and performances for the Ergo Suits Carnival in Woodstock and Bridgehampton, New York, in 1962 with Eva Hesse, Tom Doyle, Peter Forakis, Allan Kaprow, and others; the Fluxus Festival at George Segal's Farm in New Jersey (1963); the Dayton Art Institute (1966); and the Windham College Carnival in Putney, Vermont (1969). In New York, he was an early exhibitor at the Park Place Gallery (though not officially a member of that group), and in the 1970s at Paula Cooper Gallery.

Creating large-scale sculptures for the outdoor environment, Ginnever began to receive commissions for his works in parks and architectural settings. Ginnever has been commissioned to create numerous public sculptures, including a General Services Administration Commission for the St. Paul Courthouse, Minnesota (1976); NEA Commission for the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1976); Knox Foundation Sculpture Competition for the City of Houston (1977); NEA Commission for the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1977); State University of New York, Albany (1978); University of Houston, Texas (1978); Virlane Foundation, K&B Plaza, New Orleans (1979); Dayton Art Institute and the City Beautiful Council, Dayton, Ohio (1980); Kanawa Arts Alliance and the National Endowment for the Arts, Charleston, West Virginia (1980); State University of New York, Buffalo (1981); Hurd Development Corporation, Dallas (1983); Hewlett-Packard Corporation, Palo Alto, California (1985); and Koll-Bernal Associates, Pleasanton, California (1987). In 1996 Ginnever's sculpture *Nike* was presented by President Bill Clinton as the President's Choice, U.S. Gift, to the APEC Sculpture Garden, Manila, Philippines.

Charles Ginnever was born in San Mateo, California, in 1931. He attended San Mateo Junior College (1949-51; A.A. degree). He studied at the Alliance Francais, Paris (1953); Università per Stranieri, Perugia, Italy (1954); Academie de la Grande Chaumiere, Paris, with Ossip Zadkine

(1953-55); and with printmaker Stanley W. Hayter at Atelier 17, Paris (1955). He returned to San Francisco to study at the California School of Fine Arts (1955-57; Bachelor of Fine Arts, 1957); and did graduate studies at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (1957-59; Master of Fine Arts, 1959).

He taught at Cornell University (1957-59); Pratt Institute, Brooklyn (1963); New School for Social Research, New York (1964); Brooklyn Museum School (1964-65); Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art, New Jersey (1965); Orange County Community College, Middleton, Vermont (fall 1966); and Windham College, Putney, Vermont (1967-74; head of the art department, 1970-71). He taught as Visiting Artist or Artist-in-Residence at Dayton Art Institute (1966); Aspen School of Contemporary Art (Head of Sculpture Department, summer 1966); Hobart School of Welding Technology Summer Sculpture Program, Troy, Ohio (1974); Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont (summer 1987 and 1996); and University of California, Berkeley (winter 1989).

Charles Ginnever's work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions, beginning in 1961 at Allan Stone Gallery, New York. Other important solo exhibitions include his 1968 New York loft installation as part of *10 Downtown*; Paula Cooper Gallery, New York (1970, 1971, 1972); Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, New York (1972); *Charles Ginnever, 20 Years—20 Works* at Sculpture Now, Inc., New York (1975, catalogue); Long Beach Museum of Art, California (1978); Max Hutchinson Gallery, Houston (1978) and New York (1978, 1980); Smith Andersen Gallery, Palo Alto (1978, 1995); ConStruct, Chicago (1979, 1981); Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, New York (1980, catalogue); Marlborough Gallery, New York (1983, catalogue); Max Hutchinson's Sculpture Fields, Kenoza Lake, New York (1986, catalogue); Esprit Sculpture Garden, San Francisco (1987); Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe (1989, 1991); Academy of Art College, San Francisco (1997); Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts, Stanford University (1999, catalogue); Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco (2001); Brattleboro Museum, Vermont (2002); and Wooster Art Space, New York (2004), among others. In recent years, special exhibitions of Ginnever's large-scale sculptures have been on view at MOVA (Museum of Visual Art), Santa Rosa, California (2003); and ART OMI, Ghent, New York (2003-05).

Ginnever's awards include a California School of Fine Arts Sculpture Award (1957); John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship (1974); National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artists Grant (1975); Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (1998); Lifetime Achievement Award from the Lee Krasner Foundation (1999-2001); Pollock/Krasner Emergency Grant (2004); Gottlieb Foundation

Emergency Grant (2004); Voigt Family Foundation, Geyserville, CA (2005); and the Vermont Art Council's Walter Cerf Award for Lifetime Achievement (2007).

In 1986 a comprehensive catalogue of Charles Ginnever's work, including a catalogue raisonne of large-scale sculptures, was published in association with an exhibition at Sculpture Fields in Kenoza Lake, New York. Other monographs on Ginnever's work include *Charles Ginnever, 20 Years–20 Works* (Sculpture Now, Inc., New York, 1975); *Charles Ginnever* (Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, NY, 1980); *Charles Ginnever: Larger-Scale Sculpture* (Marlborough Gallery, New York, 1983); *Ginnever* (Runnymede Sculpture Farm, Woodside, CA, 1993); and *Charles Ginnever: Rashomon* (The Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts, Stanford University, 2000).

In the summer of 2003, much of Ginnever's early work and documentation was destroyed by a fast-moving grass fire in Petaluma, California.

Charles Ginnever now lives and works at his farm in Putney, Vermont.

**Attachment 3:
Proposed Placement of “San Mateo Bridge”
In Linear Park**



**Attachment 4:
Alternate Location for
Placement of "San Mateo Bridge" In Linear Park
North Segment of Linear Park**

