

**RESOLUTION 2017-07**  
**Hightstown Borough Master Plan Amendment**  
**Public Art Master Plan**

The purpose of this Master Plan Amendment is to incorporate the Public Arts Master Plan into the Borough's Master Plan. The policies and objectives outlined in this document support the Borough's wider objectives of enhancing the visual character of the Borough and promoting Hightstown as a destination. Public art will stimulate interest in the community, draw visitors to Hightstown and showcase local and regional talent.

The Borough created the Cultural Arts Commission for the purpose of promoting public art, an important objective in the 2014 Re-Examination Report. Subsequently, the Public Art Master Plan was developed to advance that objective by generating a detailed framework for integrating physical and performing art into the Borough's public realm. The Public Arts Master Plan provides the details necessary to execute the Borough's policy of bringing public art into the fabric of the community.

Public Art Master Plan

The Public Art Maser Plan articulates a process by which art will be installed throughout the Borough. This includes both visual and performance art. Incorporating art in the streetscape and public spaces of Hightstown will improve the quality of life for local residents and make the Borough more interesting and attractive to visitors.

The idea of having a Cultural Arts Commission and developing a public arts program arose out of plans to revitalize Hightstown as a destination. A successful destination must attract out-of-town visitors. Along with a vibrant commercial downtown, public art will encourage people to come, stay and explore the town. It's also a means of bringing the community together to celebrate local talent and Hightstown's multi-cultural assets.

With respect to a public arts program, the 2014 Re-Examination Report said that *"(a)ll ages should have access to the arts, with available shared venues for speaking, poetry, performance art, physical art, gallery space, etc. This could be dedicated space or revolving temporary spaces that are available short term while a landlord awaits a tenant, or alongside patrons at a local eatery. These spaces should be coordinated by a local organization such as Downtown Hightstown (DTHT) or the Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission (CAC)." (P.5 of 36)*

The Public Art Master Plan, developed by the Cultural Arts Commission, is very thorough. It includes a recommended process for establishing public places of art, identifying qualified artists and selecting appropriate art for public viewing. It also outlines a process for funding and maintaining a public arts program. As explained in the Public Art Master Plan, Hightstown's arts program will be coordinated by the CAC with oversight by the Borough's Governing Body. The proposed 'Standard Operation Procedure' offers a good initial framework for either a program

implementation ordinance or a set of Cultural Arts Commission by-laws that the Borough should develop in the near future. It clearly explains how a public arts program could operate to be effective and how the Cultural Arts Council proposes to collaborate with the Governing Body. The operation procedure proposed by the Commission is a thorough first draft, but the Commission should work with the Governing Body and the Planning Board to refine the process so the implementing ordinance or by-laws dovetail seamlessly with the Borough's other ordinances and planning policies.

The Public Art Master Plan are one of several critical documents included in the Master Plan to help implement the Planning Board's policies of improving the character of the Borough. It supports and expands upon the policies outlined in the 2014 Re-Examination Report and the planning documents that came before it. Subsequent ordinances and initiatives should take into account the recommendations in this report, refine the proposed ideas appropriately and codify an efficient process for executing a positive Public Arts Program in Hightstown.

#### CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Planning Board at a meeting held on February 13, 2017.



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Sandra Belan, Planning Board Secretary