

# Island News

## Sundial sculpture moving forward for Village Green

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The Village is finalizing a contract with a Miami-based artist to adorn the Village Green with a sundial described as both working and poetic.

Key Biscayne's Art in Public Places Board gave its OK to the project at a Tuesday, February 7, meeting, authorizing Village staff to negotiate an agreement with artist Jim Drain that will go to the Village Council for final approval.

Art in Public Places consulting artist Cesar Trasobares expects negotiations to take about two weeks, after which he said more information will be available about the construction plans and schedule.

On the 7th, Art in Public Places Board got a final look at the project, titled "Pleated Gnomon."

Trasobares said the artist highlighted the sculpture's artistic meaning: "Jim called his sculpture a 'poetic instrument' as he presented the final design to the board."

Trasobares added the design the board approved is Drain's original concept with slight tweaks.

When the sculpture was presented to the Council last year, local leaders expressed some safety concerns, which Drain was able to address to Art in Public Places' members satisfaction.

"[Drain] decided to streamline the floor plan of the composition by removing the two small benches closest to the central component. Two larger benches remain on each side of the central components, and these correspond to shadow locations," he said. "Also, the sculpture site is now east of the playground area in the southern axis of the Village Green, and all the edges of the stainless steel components will be rounded."

Those changes mitigate the main concerns Council members brought up.

The original plan was to place the sculpture near the Village Green tot lot, but local leaders were worried kids would be tempted to climb the piece, which could lead to falls and injuries.

Local leaders also suggested placing benches too close to the sundial would present a climbing hazard, and that sharp edges could prove especially dangerous.

By addressing those issues, Drain can now bring the Key a vertical artwork described as "fitting with the play, observation and learning activities that take place in that corner of the park."

According to information from the artist and the Village, the sculpture is meant to have dynamic, changing colors and shadows.

"Pleated Gnomon" will be built out of

stacked blocks of white marble terrazzo embedded with solid rods of colored glass and will sit atop a base that can double as a bench. Through the day, the sun will illuminate the rods, "creating a matrix of shimmering dots of colored light" that will be reflected onto stainless steel pleats separating each column of stacked terrazzo. At night, LED lights will be used to continue the effect.

The project will be an accurate sundial - Drain worked with Florida International University astronomy Professor Dr. Walter Van Hamme to design the piece, and Van Hamme will advise on the installation so "Pleated Gnomon" is properly aligned to the sun.

### Other news

Meanwhile, in other Art Board news February 7:

- The board authorized Trasobares to continue developing cultural education programming to present to the Key Biscayne community.

- Committee members tabled a discussion about their next public art installation, for which the Council already set aside \$77,000 worth of Village funding.



Rendering courtesy Village of Key Biscayne

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