



# *City of Tarpon Springs, Florida*

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## MEMO

March 21, 2023

To: Mark LeCouris, City Manager  
From: Diane Wood, Cultural & Civic Services Director *DW*  
Re: Public Art Committee (PAC) Sponge Docks Location for BOC Approval

### **Board Request:**

The Public Art Committee requests the approval of the geographic location for the installations of a public art sculpture by artist Stephen Oliver who was awarded the contract for the Black Heritage Project.

### **Location for Approval:**

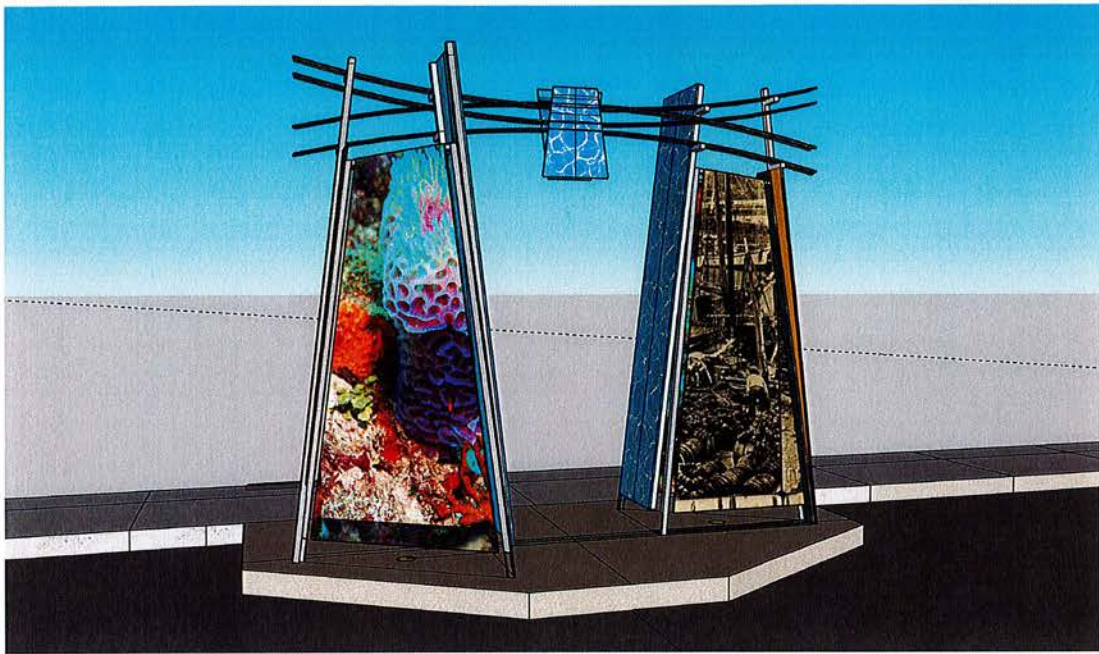
#### **1) Sponge Docks Site – City Marina, 100 Dodocanese Blvd.**

Location specifics - The sculpture will be located at the end of the parking lot for the City Marina, Visitors Center and Harbor Master Office. The sculpture will be specifically located on this 11-foot area between the two palm trees.

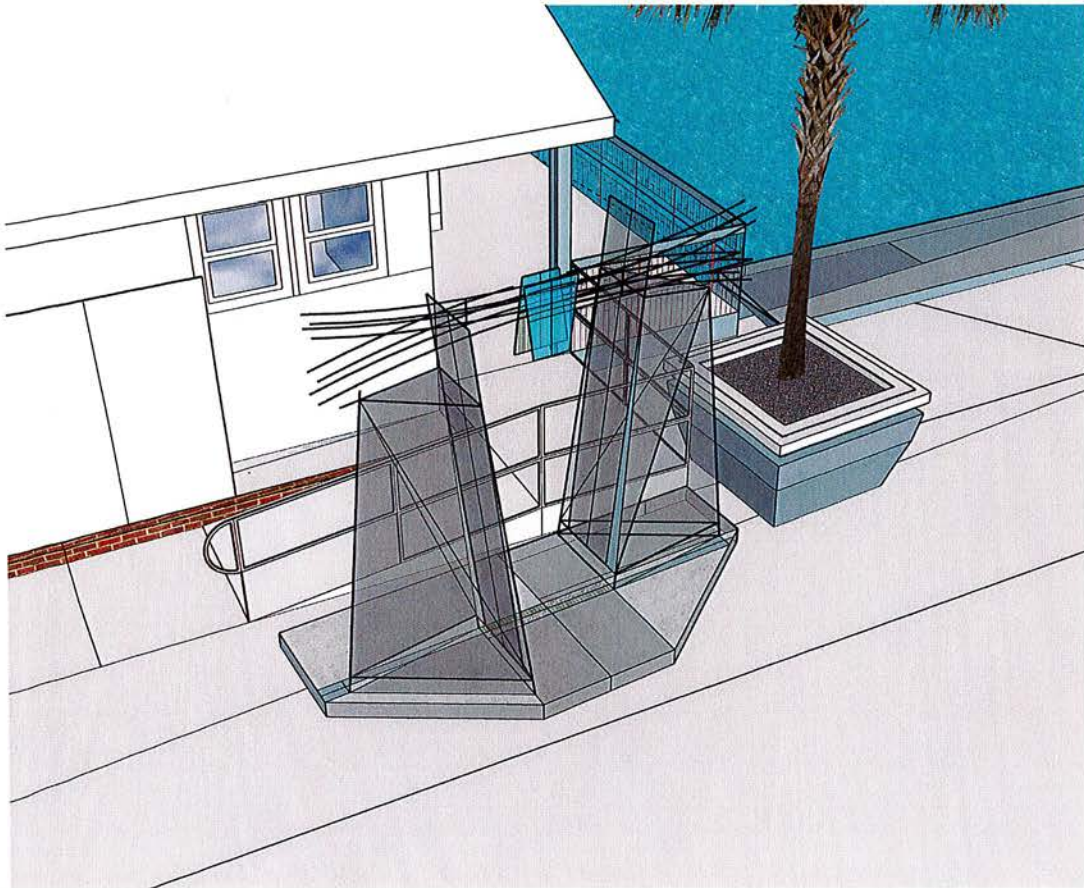


**Recommended Site for Installation of sculpture *Onward Together***





Close up view of Sponge Docks sculpture *Onward Together*



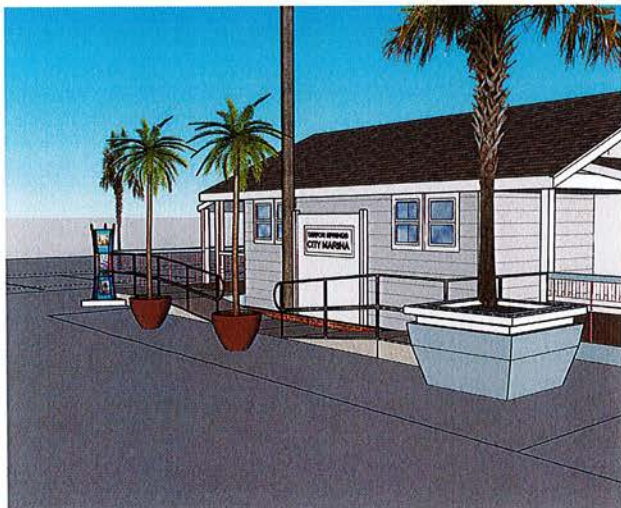
Location NOT recommended for sculpture – in front of Visitor's Center

"The image above is one of the location options we eliminated. The front of the Marina building is too crowded and risky with the traffic flowing through to have a larger sculpture viewed appropriately in the round. You could also have people trying to view the sculpture from the parking lot with traffic flowing and parked cars backing up into them. The smaller sculpture replacing the dolphin, on the other hand, would work!" – **From Artist Stephen Oliver**

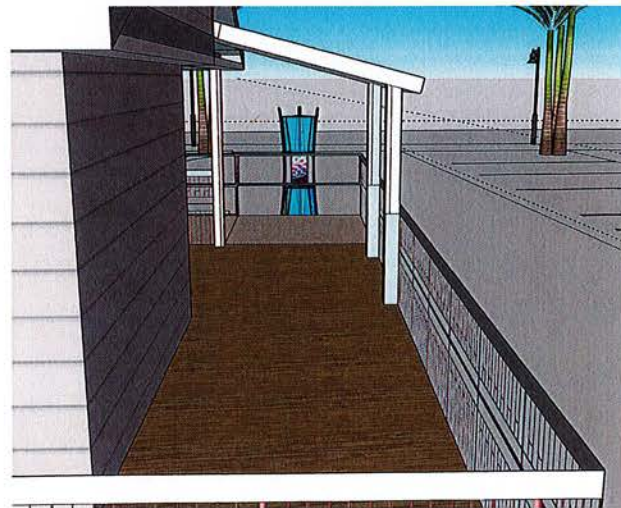




**Recommended – a complementary wayfinding sculpture to replace the dolphin sculpture in front of the Visitor Center to capture the public’s attention.**



**View from front of Visitor’s Center**



**View from back of Visitor’s Center**

“I should explain that the wayfinding piece will help direct people to the larger sculpture by using similar shapes and forms as well as an image of black spongers. Staff at the Chamber will also be able to direct people when they ask about the piece up front or when tours come through. All that can be augmented by Diane's marketing and from that perspective, might actually be a nice boost for the sponge docks in general. The piece will also have elements that make people aware of the Union Academy sculpture and things that represent the broader offerings of Tarpon Springs. I will have a Helmeted diver or sponge boat in there too to emphasize the connection between Greek and earlier black spongers and the docks in general. The middle of the sculpture uses the colors and patterns of sponges as an intriguing colorful abstraction. This will make people curious and likely surprised at what a sponge actually looks like before they are harvested.” – **From Artist Stephen Oliver**





**Recommended layout of sculpture *Onward Together* and wayfinding/introductory sculpture.**

In addition, we propose that a staked aluminum sign be placed near the trolley stop to direct the public to the public art installation and Visitor's Center.





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## MEMO

March 7, 2023

To: Mark LeCouris, City Manager  
From: Diane Wood, Cultural & Civic Services Director *DW*  
Re: Public Art Committee (PAC) Sculpture Locations for BOC Approval

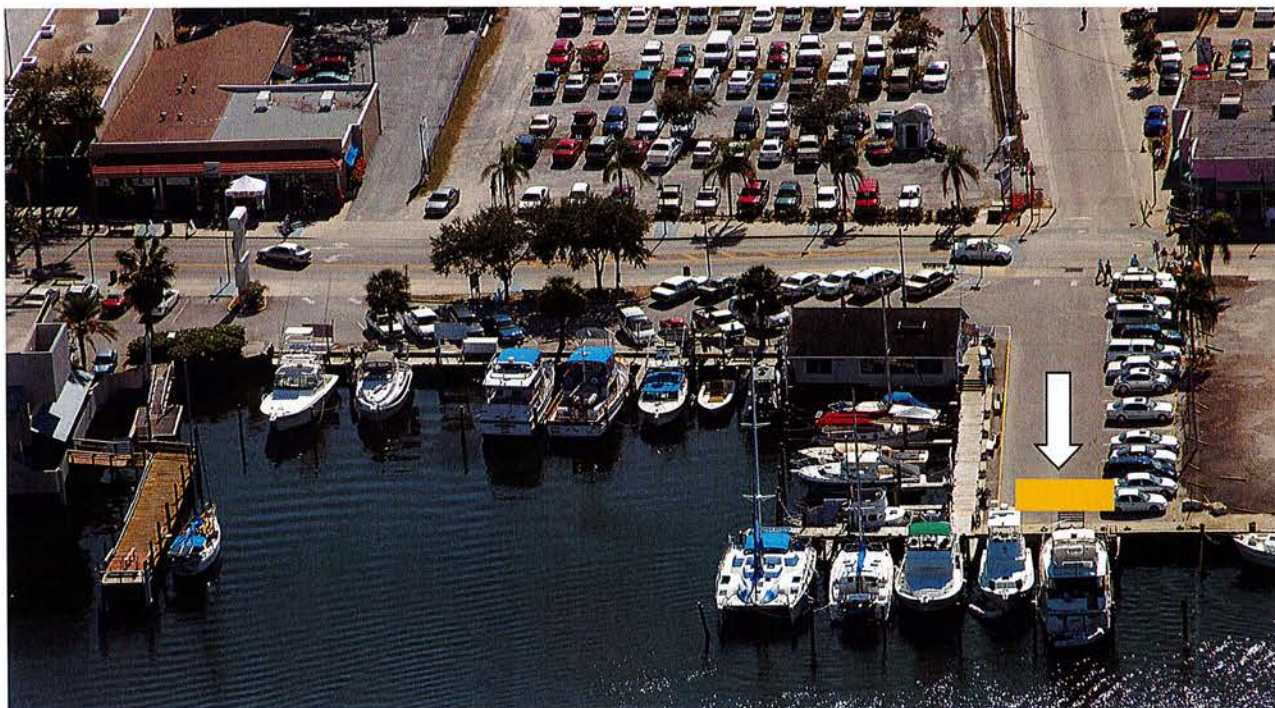
### **Board Request:**

The Public Art Committee requests the approval of the two geographic locations for the two installations of public art sculptures by artist Stephen Oliver who was awarded the contract for the Black Heritage Project.

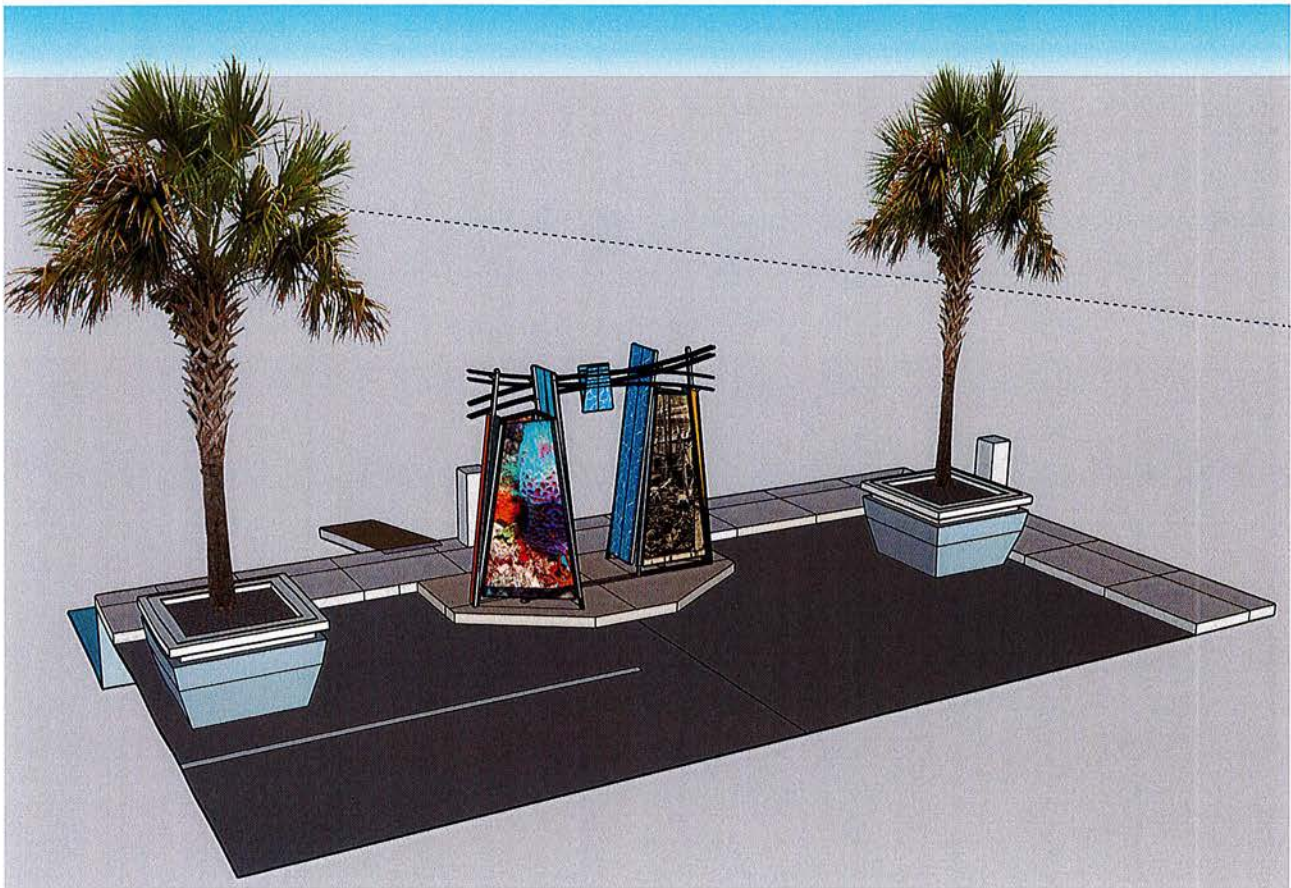
### **Locations for Approval:**

#### **1) Sponge Docks Site – City Marina, 100 Dodecanese Blvd.**

Location specifics - The sculpture will be located at the end of the parking lot for the City Marina, Visitors Center and Harbor Master Office. The sculpture will be specifically located on this 11-foot area between the two palm trees.





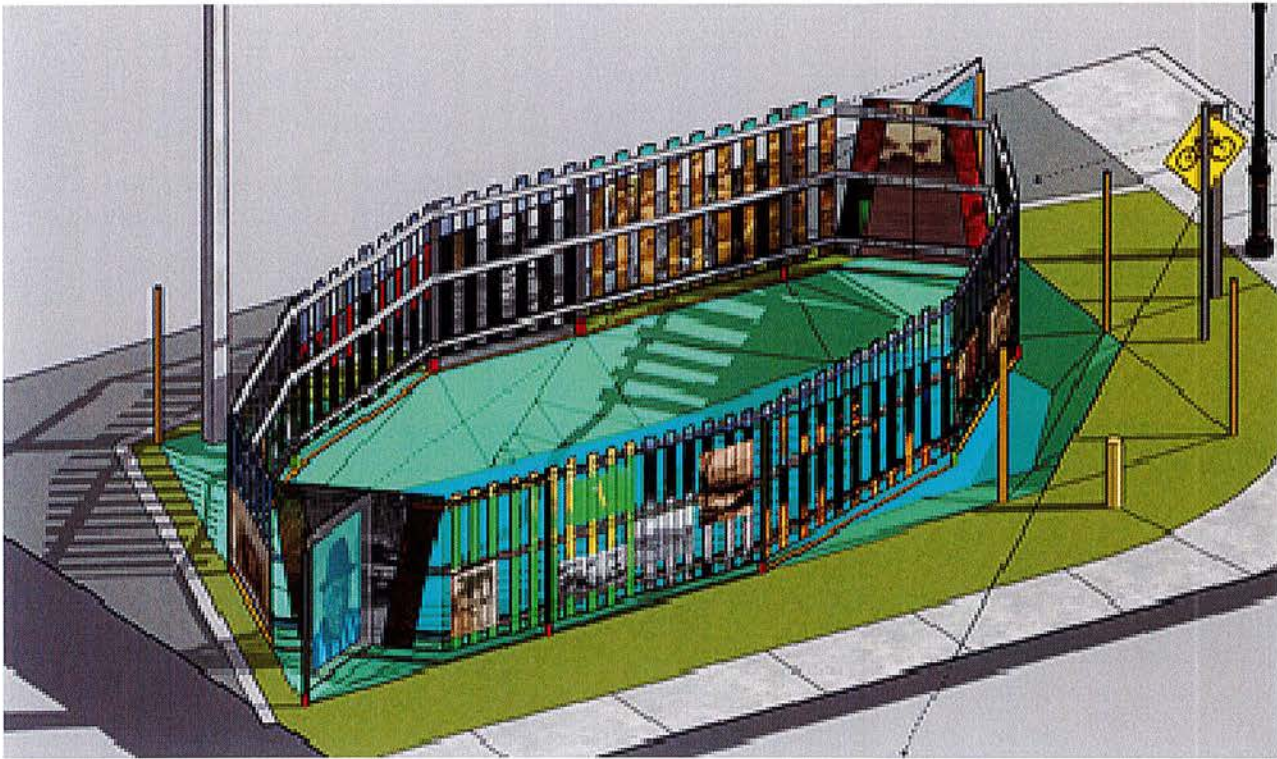


## 2) Union Academy Site, Corner of MLK Drive and Grosse Ave.

Location specifics - The sculpture will be located in/around an area that serves as a drainage area for the adjacent parking lot of C.A.P (Citizens Alliance for Progress). This sculpture replaces the enclosure currently provided by a chain linked fence and will be a colorful and attractive asset to this significant corner in the heart of Tarpon Springs black community.







## Project Background

### Board Approval:

The Board of Commissioners approved the Public Art Committee's Black Heritage Project at the **August 23, 2022**, meeting to purchase artist Stephen D. Oliver's two sculptures *Onward Together* and *Forward and Upward Together* for the total sum of \$135,000.

**Project was awarded by Public Art Committee vote on June 8, 2022, meeting to:** Stephen D. Oliver, 2516 11th Street South, St. Petersburg FL 33705 after a call to artists on Café (an artist project website) and an extensive review of fourteen submitted proposals by the Black Heritage Project Selection Committee consisting of: Tina Bucuvalas, Annie Dabbs, Rod Davis, Milton Smith, Lynn Whitelaw, Teresa Wilkins, Nikolette Henderson and Joan Jennings.

### Artist Background Provided by Stephen D. Oliver:

I am a multimedia artist with backgrounds and degrees in both architecture (NJIT) and furniture design (RISD). I have an extensive background in design, construction, and multiple mediums in the context of public art and exhibit creation. During my graduate school years at Rhode Island School of Design and afterwards, working for numerous museums, I undertook exhibition design and coordinated all aspects of community engagement in the creation of public art by resident artists. In the past I have worked with the Convergence International Sculpture Festival in assisting the installation of public art by numerous artists. I also exhibited my own work during this festival and more recently won a sculpture competition in Gulfport Florida (2014) and secured a commission for a touring interactive public art piece through Creative Pinellas (2021). For the last 15 years, I have been immersed in studying black history and have applied my knowledge to the design and construction of a traveling theatre set for a play titled 'How did you Get Here?', sponsored by Maine Humanities and The Maine Center for Contemporary Art. I was also fortunate to design a Museum of African Culture in 2007 in Portland Maine and currently assisting design for their new space. I have more exciting work in development that aims to give a very intimate perspective of African contributions to America during the colonial era, through tracing and reconstructing the obscure history of a man who began life in this country as a slave yet interacted & occupied spaces assigned to prominent figures in American history.

Mr. Oliver has acquired the insurance specified by City Attorney Thomas J. Trask, Esquire and has signed and had notarized the artist agreement as required.

## **Scope of the Work:**

**Title of Artwork and Location(s):** Tarpon Springs Public Art Committee's *Black Heritage Project*

1) Sponge Docks Site (Dodecanese Avenue – City Marina) *Onward Together*

2) Union Academy Site (Corner of MLK Drive and Grosse Ave.) *Forward and Upward Together*

**Time of Completion:** 1 year from commencement of contract/procurement of required insurance.

**Design and Construction Fee:** \$135,000

**Payment Schedule and Terms:** Payment as follows:

33% at onset of Design Development \$45,000 (PAID)

33% at onset of installation \$45,000

34% upon completion and acceptance by the City \$45,900

## **General Description:**

The Tarpon Springs Black Heritage Project is a public art project devised by the Tarpon Springs Public Art Committee to celebrate the role that African American/Bahamians had in the development of the sponging industry and the community that arose from their historical presence. The project is divided between two city owned sites: the Sponges Docks and the Union Academy neighborhood.

### **Site #1 Sponge Docks - Dodecanese Avenue - Visitor Center and City Marina**

#### **Title: 'Onward Together'**

This sculpture highlights the role which African America/Bahamian spongers had in the historical development of the sponging industry including their collaboration with Greek spongers/divers.

**Size/Dimensions/Structural Considerations** - The Finished sculpture will be approximately 12 feet wide, 4 feet deep, and 11 feet tall. The design and shape of the sculpture and its components are meant to provide maximum strength against wind by utilizing structural triangulation, allowing for wind to pass through and around components, and by securing components together with multiple connections to each other and the ground. The sculpture forms a gateway through which to both view the dock area and physically pass through while viewing the sculpture in the round. The sculpture can be viewed from both Dodecanese Avenue and waterfront sides.

**Materials** - The sculpture will consist of 3016 Stainless Steel Armature and hardware secured to concrete slab/pilings with stainless steel anchors. Connections will be mechanical/and or welded. The armature will be clad with multicolor digitally printed exterior grade resin panels which are UV resistant and stronger yet lighter than glass. These architectural grade panels may be both opaque and translucent where needed for visual impact of internal lighting and effects of interaction with sunlight. The resin panels will be cut into appropriate sizes and shapes by material supplier and/or artist.

**Installation specifics** - The site work will involve minor excavation and a pouring of slabs or positioning of plinth(s). Electrical connection for interior LED lighting of this sculpture can be achieved by connection to existing adjacent electrical service (preferable) or small solar array. Construction barrier fencing will be provided during site work and installation.

**Maintenance** - The sculpture is designed to shed moisture and resist excess accumulation of organic matter. Wherever possible space/spacers will be provided between adjacent/attached elements to encourage drainage, quick drying of moisture and minimization of condensation. Example: Resin panels will be installed with gaskets, washers, or standoff spacers when attached to structural frame or each other to permit drainage and avoid condensation between layers. Additionally, washers and spacers will be composed of either be 3016 stainless steel or marine grade plastic to avoid electrolysis/corrosion/vulcanization. Maintenance according to material fabricators specifications will



be provided including basic cleaning and removal of potential graffiti. Again, the intent of each design decision is to minimize maintenance and cleaning. The artist will secure a sample cleaning and graffiti removal products and simple instructions recommended by the supplier of exterior grade resin and Mr. Oliver is happy to review it with City officials/maintenance crew.

**Site #2 Union Academy - corner of Martin Luther King Drive and Grosse Avenue:**

**Title: 'Forward and Upward Together'**

This sculpture continues and expands upon the theme of the role of African America/Bahamian had in the sponging industry while enabling a more comprehensive survey of elements of the community that evolved as a result.

**Size/Dimensions/Structural Considerations**

The finished sculpture will be approximately 40 feet long on the two long sides, 5 feet – 15 feet wide on the two short sides and vary between 3-8 feet in height along its length. The long side dimensions of the sculpture may be modestly adjusted to comply with the visibility triangle required by the local building code at corner intersections. Additional plantings may be incorporated into the site design which comply with 3feet maximum height within this visibility triangle if needed to protect perimeter of rain garden area. The design and shape of the sculpture and its components are meant to provide maximum strength against wind by utilizing structural triangulation, allowing for wind to pass through and around components, and by securing components together with multiple connections to each other and the ground. The 'sidewalls' of this picket fence-like enclosure may be tilted inward to deflect wind and afford triangulation between the two sides of the sculpture. Additionally, the 'picket-like cladding' makes the surface areas of the sculpture permeable to reduce wind load. A gate for maintenance access purposes only by C.A.P/City/Artist will be incorporated into the design. The public is constrained to view this sculpture from its perimeter on all sides.

**Materials** - The sculpture will consist of 3016 stainless and galvanized steel armature and hardware secured to concrete pilings with stainless steel anchors. Connections will be mechanical/and or welded. The armature will be clad with multicolor digitally printed exterior grade resin panels which are UV resistant and stronger yet lighter than glass. These architectural grade panels may be both opaque and translucent where needed for visual impact of both natural and artificial lighting from adjacent light post(s) that exist on the site. The resin panels will be cut into appropriate sizes and shapes by material supplier and/or artist.

**Installation specifics** - The site work will involve minor excavation in the catchment area so as to minimally disturb existing 'rain garden' plantings. The intent is to replace the existing outer perimeter of grass with a low maintenance ground cover. Between this ground cover and 'rain garden' plantings of the interior catchment area will be a gravel band along the base of the sculpture. This gravel band will incorporate landscape cloth to resist weed growth and is meant to minimize any organic matter splashing onto the base of the sculpture during rainstorms. Within this gravel band, pilings will be positioned for structurally fastening the sculpture to the ground at numerous points. Pilings will consist of poured concrete with tops close to ground level. Stainless steel fasteners will be imbedded in these pilings. Three to four bollards will be installed to protect the sculpture from damage and will be positioned with respect to an existing light pole and fire hydrant so as to feel congruent. It would make sense to install bollards while pouring footings and before sculpture is erected. A security camera will be provided for in coordination with C.A.P. and ideally located in the existing light pole/electric service at the site. Construction barrier fencing will be provided during site work and installation.

**Maintenance** - The sculpture is designed to shed moisture and resist excess accumulation of organic matter. Wherever possible space/spacers will be provided between adjacent/attached elements to encourage drainage, quick drying of moisture and minimization of condensation. Example: Resin panels will be installed with gaskets, washers, or standoff spacers when attached to structural frame or each other to permit drainage and avoid condensation between layers. Additionally, washers and



spacers will be composed of either be 3016 stainless steel or marine grade plastic to avoid electrolysis/corrosion/vulcanization. Maintenance according to material fabricators specifications will be provided including basic cleaning and removal of potential graffiti. Again, the intent of each design decision is to minimize maintenance and cleaning. Mr. Oliver will secure a sample cleaning and graffiti removal products and simple instructions recommended by the supplier of exterior grade resin and is happy to review it with City officials/maintenance crew.