

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Town Commission
FROM: Tom Harmer
DATE: April 30, 2019
SUBJECT: Longboat Key Arts, Culture, and Education Center Project Update and Next Steps

Recommended Action

None, informational only.

Background

As the Commission is aware, on Friday April 29th the Town received written notice from Ringling College of Art & Design (Ringling) that they have reconsidered their interest in the Arts, Culture, and Education Center project and would not be pursuing support from the Town to advance to the fundraising portion of the project.

Based on this notice we have removed the Pre-Construction Agreement from the May 6, 2019, Regular Meeting.

The Arts, Culture, and Education Center was a long-term project that was not expected to start for at least 3-5 years depending on the private fundraising necessary to fund the improvements. Our immediate priority with the Town Center is the creation of an outdoor venue for the community. Demolition of the Amore Restaurant is near completion, and we are working with the permitting agencies to approve the initial improvements to the site.

The Commission may want to enhance the planned improvements to the outdoor venue in light of the recent decision. Additional improvements may be possible, pending funding, while still keeping long term options available for a future facility on the site.

Town staff is completing the initial work associated with the demolition and recommends that we continue with the planned initial site work that should help open up the site for some basic outdoor venue purposes as soon as early 2020. While that effort is advancing, we could work with the public and the Commission over the next season to explore other, longer term, more permanent improvements, and funding strategies as necessary.

Staff Recommendation

None, Informational only.

End of Agenda Item