



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT**  
**THE MARYLAND - NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM:** Molline Jackson,  
*Public Art Coordinator*

**PROJECT:** 4824 Edgemoor Lane  
 SITE PLAN No. 820210040, SKETCH PLAN No. 320200020

**DATE:** February 8, 2021

*The **4824 Edgemoor Lane** project was reviewed by the Art Review Panel on **July 8, 2020 and January 13, 2021**. The following meeting minutes summarize the Applicant's presentation, the discussion during the meeting, and recommendations regarding the public art for the public benefits package. The Panel's final recommendations will be incorporated into the Staff Report and strongly considered by the Planning Board prior to the certification of the Site Plan and/or prior to the release of the first building permit. Should you have any additional questions and/or comments please feel to contact the Public Art Coordinator.*

**Members of the Applicant's Team & Art Review Panel:**

Matt Folden (Down County Lead Plan Reviewer)  
 Stephanie Dickel (Down County Regulatory Supervisor)  
 Shawn Weingast (Applicant)  
 Jeff Huntington (Artist)  
 Bill Bonstra (Applicant's Architect)  
 David Post (Applicant's Landscape Architect)  
 Pat LaVay (Applicant's Engineer)

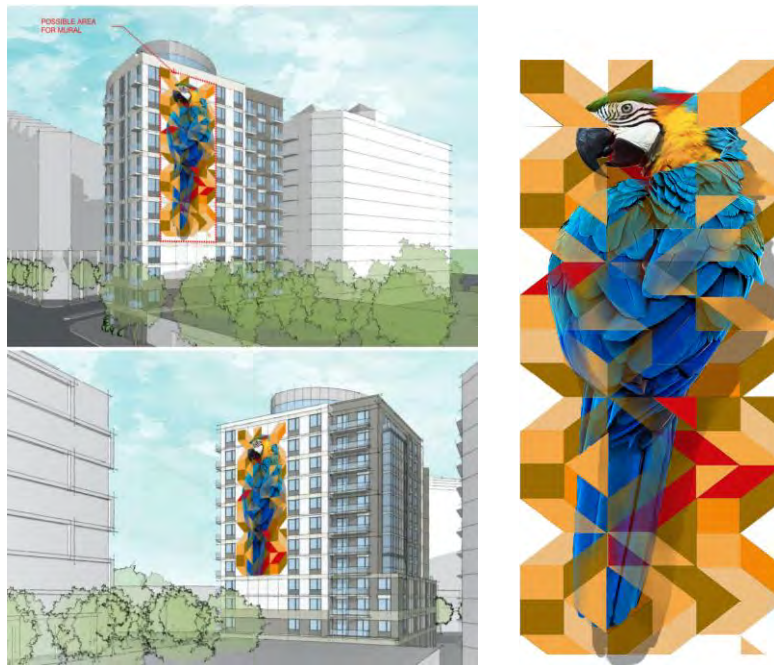
***(Art Review Panel & Coordinator)***

Suzan Jenkins & Sierra Smith (PATSC Manager)  
 Charles Bergen (Panelist – Public Artist & Architect)  
 Christina Farley (Panelist – Attorney)  
 Claudia Rousseau (Panelist – Art Historian, Curator and PATSC Representative)  
 Francoise Carrier (Panelist – Attorney)  
 Hiroshi Jacobs (Panelist – Architect & Public Artist)  
 Lee Goodwin (Panelist – Attorney & Artist)  
 Mansur Abdul-Malik (Panelist – Real Estate Developer)  
 Molline Jackson (Public Art Coordinator)  
 Valentina Nahon (Panelist – Architect & Museum Curator)

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### **Summary of the Applicant's Presentation:**

1. The submitted proposal (optional method of development) will construct 76 units (89,000 gross square feet, 12-stories or 118 feet tall) multiple family building located at 4824 Edgemoor Lane Bethesda, MD 20814.
2. The Applicant is requesting the approval of 12 out of 20 public benefit points for providing a mural (public artwork) that is roughly 2,970 square feet (33 feet wide x 90 feet tall) on the western façade of the residential building.
3. Upon the initial meeting with the Art Review Panel on July 8<sup>th</sup>, the Applicant has worked closely with the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) to meet the following criteria of the CR Guidelines (page 56)
  - a) Achieves aesthetic excellence.
  - b) Ensures an appropriate interaction between the art and the architectural setting in terms of the scale, materials, and context.
  - c) Encourages public access (maximum visibility from the street edge) and invites public participation.
  - d) Encourages collaboration between the artist(s) and other project designers early in the design phases.
  - e) Contributes to a collection of commissioned art that is unique and fosters a positive community identity.
4. The Macaw 2 (**Image A: The Macaw 2 Mural – public artwork**) is a collaborative project between Jeff Huntington (artist) and Pipkin Creative (public art administrator). This collaboration allows the artist to focus on the design and execution while Pipkin Creative handles all the other administrative logistics (e.g. communications, timeline, equipment, permits, and material procurement).



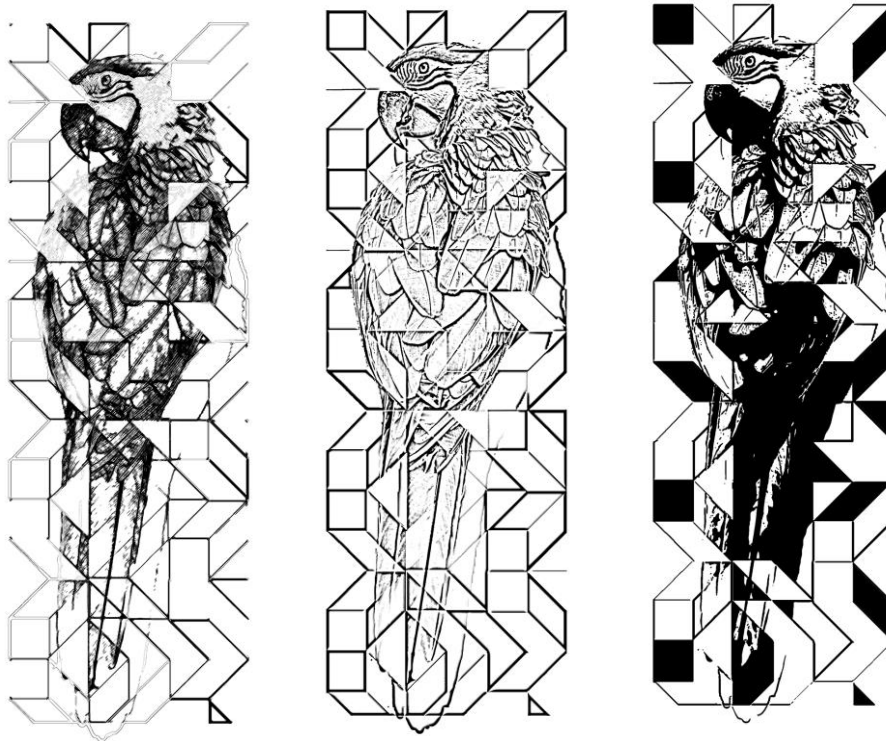
**Image A: The Macaw 2 Mural (proposed public artwork)**

5. The artist will also work closely with the Applicant's design team to integrate the artwork into the building features and materials (i.e. multiple colors of thin-brick material).
6. The Macaw is a beautiful tropical bird that originates in South America. The selection of a non-native species intentionally introduces a surprising display of bright colors to showcase the beauty of nature. The mural is a reminder to all viewers of our connection to the earth and offers an experience to see an image like this, referencing the natural environment at a large scale on a wall which otherwise would be a blank surface without windows.
7. The large scale of the mural creates energy and appreciation for the new building at this location, but also is a subtle nod to "otherness."
8. This mural will be a unique and original work of art that aesthetically represents dynamic movement, juxtaposed to a traditional yet modern building design. A core theme of this artwork is balancing the cold rigidity of the concrete, steel and glass with the uniqueness or pleasant surprise that public art offers to all viewers.
9. In order to ensure greater visibility and also be welcoming to most viewers, the placement of the public artwork starts at the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the building (the upper two thirds of the proposed building), mostly noticeably seen along the western façade traveling east on Edgemoor Lane from Arlington Road toward the Metro bus terminal.
10. In general, the project is highly visible along a curving Woodmont Avenue as approached from the north, as well as being visible from the neighborhood (toward the west) and from the Metro (toward the east).
11. The Art Review Panel did receive some **community correspondence (Attachment A)**, regarding the visible impact on the neighboring property, maintenance and conservation of the proposed artwork that has also been factored into the following discussion points and Panel recommendations.

#### **Discussion Points:**

1. This Site Plan application was submitted in November 2020 and will be presented to the Planning Board in early April 2021.
2. The proposed mural on the western façade of the building is appropriate considering the alternative of having a simple blank wall. The geometric and abstract design concept of the Macaw 2 mural will be well-integrated into the building's architecture such that the mural could have a 3D effect that expands beyond the boundaries of the flat building façade and create the illusion of push and pull with the windows.
3. The artist will also mentor youth artists in the installation and development process. Having the opportunity to mentor youth artists throughout this construction process does provide a better solution to not having public art incorporated in this project.
4. The Applicant will document the story of how the mural is installed in collaboration with the design team and youth artists. This information will be made available to the public in addition to the mural, which further supports the Applicant's ability to achieve aesthetic excellence (CR guidelines criteria mentioned above).
5. The Macaw (non-native tropical bird) provides a unique learning opportunity for viewers. The public art at this location resolves the issue of the blank surface on a new modern building within a community that has requested more murals. The Applicant is using the mural to work with the community and youth as a part of the construction process to make a noticeable statement to visitors.

6. The Macaw 2 mural is expected to last approximately 10-years and comes with a maintenance and conservation agreement for 1-2 years. Restoration of this mural could increase the useful life to roughly 20-years.
7. The Macaw 2 image is recognizable and creates a strong identity that could be turned into a logo (**Images B, C & D below**). The draft logo sketches below were provided by Applicant and will be used to brand this development. The proposed mural has been reviewed by the BUP and is consistent with the CR Guidelines (criteria 3e above)



**Images B, C & D – DRAFT Logo Sketches**

**Panel Recommendations:**

The following recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report as conditions of approval.

1. The Art Review Panel supports the approval of 12 out of 20 public benefit points for providing a mural (public artwork) on the on the western façade of the proposed building.
2. The Art Review Panel supports the selection and approval of the original design of the Macaw 2 mural (Image A above). This mural is a creative solution for the blank space, will be integrated into the architecture, and creates more energy in the overall design of the proposed building. Please see Image A above.

3. In addition to the mural, the Art Review Panel supports the documentation and mentoring of youth artists whenever feasible (e.g. workforce development). This story could be shared with the public in the form of signage or QR code.
4. Appropriate signage should be clearly visible, specifically identifying the title of the mural, artist's name, materials, completion date, and overall dimensions.
5. The Art Review Panel also supports the use of the Macaw 2 mural image as a logo for the new building.
6. The Certified Site Plan must contain site details that clearly indicate the overall dimensions, prescribed materials, necessary lighting fixtures, footers, and fasteners to ensure adequate safety and proper inspection of the artworks by the AHCMC and Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS). This information will be derived from engineered drawings, certified by a structural engineer.
7. The Developer and Artist(s) will execute a maintenance agreement and show proof of secured funds in escrow account for annual maintenance. This will ensure the longevity of the mural for not less than 10-years. The secured funds will also ensure that when the property changes hands that the necessary funds are passed along to the future residents / owners of the public artwork. The maintenance agreement and escrow funds will be documented and shared with DPS and Montgomery County Planning Department prior to the issuance of the first building permit. This recommendation also seeks to resolve the concerns expressed in the **attached community correspondence**.
8. Prior to final inspection of the public artwork, the Developer must submit to the Public Art Coordinator with the Montgomery County Planning Department at least three images of the artwork on-site and information regarding the 1) associated project number, 2) title of the piece, 3) date of completion, 4) description of materials used, and 5) address. This information will be added to the existing inventory of the public artworks throughout the County ([mcatlas.org/art](http://mcatlas.org/art)).
9. The Developer must comply with the implementation section of the Art Review Panel Policies and Procedures.

Attachment A – Community Correspondence (dated December 10, 2020)

**Jackson, Molline**

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**From:** Penny <pennydash@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 10, 2020 3:37 PM  
**To:** Jackson, Molline  
**Cc:** Folden, Matthew; Mencarini, Katherine; Dickel, Stephanie  
**Subject:** : Comments for Art Review Panel regarding proposed mural at 4824 Edgemoor Lane - Site Plan Application 820210040

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Ms. Jackson,

Thank you for the opportunity to express concerns on the proposal by developer, Acumen, of the high rise condominium at 4824 Edgemoor Lane in Downtown Bethesda, to install a mural on the west facade of the building. I am writing as a member of the Committee authorized by the Board of Directors of The Chase at Bethesda, the condominium adjacent to the new Edgemoor development.

First, we would like to bring to the attention of the Art Review Panel the concerns of the Chase with respect to installation and maintenance of any art mural placed on the West facade of the new Edgemoor condominium.

The developer's plan would erect the Edgemoor condo on the property line with the Chase. Therefore, a mural on the west facade would require developer to enter adjacent Chase property or encroach on Chase air rights to access the west side of its building. Assuming the developer were to install a mural without utilizing Chase property, a major concern is how would the art be maintained over the years? Inevitably, the mural would sustain wear over time and require restoration work. But that too would require access to the outside of the Edgemoor building, again involving Chase land or air rights. Accordingly, prior to approval of this installation, the developer should be required to provide to the Art Review Panel confirmation of any legal authority that it has to enter the Chase property to install and/or maintain the artwork.

Beyond that, as developer's interest in the building concludes, when all units are sold, any maintenance will be in the hands of the owners of the condo units and their Board of Directors. As the new condo owners will not see the mural, it will provide no benefit to them. It is unclear whether there are or can be placed any legally binding guarantees on the new owners and their condo board that they will budget for and properly maintain an art mural on the outside of their building. As a prerequisite to approving a mural to be installed, the developer should be required to demonstrate the manner in which the new condo unit owners and their Board of Directors will be legally bound in the future to maintain properly a mural on its west facade. Otherwise, any mural will inevitably become an eyesore in the future.

Second, adjacent to the west side of the new development is the outside recreational areas of the Chase, including a swimming pool, tennis courts and grilling/picnic areas. In other words, the area is completely open, unobstructed, to the west, and highly visible to Chase residents enjoying their outdoor amenities all spring, summer and fall. We do not consider this artwork as an enhancement for Chase residents, but rather a detraction in the use of our space, and oppose it on that grounds.. Nevertheless, should developer be permitted to proceed with this art installation, then the Art Review Panel should provide the Chase residents with a meaningful opportunity to provide input into any proposed art mural.

Thank you again for the opportunity to raise concerns about the proposed artwork mural for the above-referenced development.

Sincerely,

Penny Dash  
 Committee of the Board of Directors  
 The Chase at Bethesda Condominium  
 Reply Reply All Forward



## THE TEAM

Lead Artist Jeff Huntington is teaming up with Pipkin Creative to manage operational elements of the mural project, from submission to installation. This collaboration allows the artist to focus on the design and execution while Pipkin Creative handles all administrative, communications, timeline, equipment, permits, and materials procurement. This team brings decades of experience to the project, with dozens of mural installations completed to date.

## APPROACH

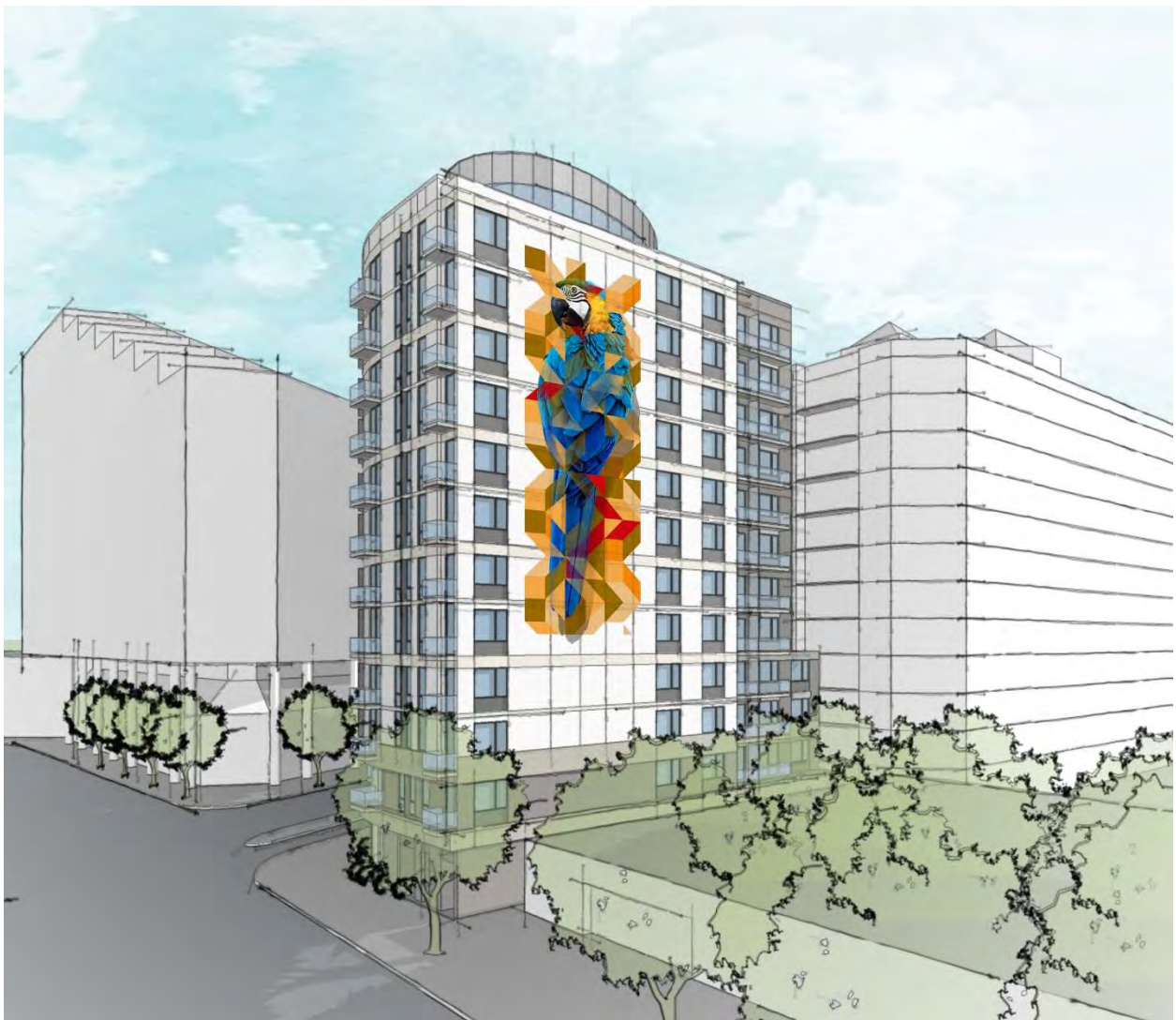
Introducing nature into the landscape is the guiding inspiration behind the submitted designs. Given the scale of the building, and the challenge of integrating a human connection to the architecture and design at 4824, a showcase of nature at its most resplendent was chosen as a possible design direction. This reminds the viewer of our connection to the earth, and the awe and beauty of experiencing the natural world on a larger than life scale. As humans living in urban environments where flora and fauna can be elusive, Jeff is bringing the natural world to us, in an oversized and monumental fashion. Scale is important, and creating energy, appreciation, and contemplation is achieved with these designs. As well, this direction also satisfies the Art Panel “Goals for Public Art”: engaging on multiple levels and accessible by all. These designs are also unique and original works, with a style and aesthetic representing dynamic movement, a juxtaposition of traditional art techniques and urban street art.

## ARTIST STATEMENT - Jeff Huntington

As a youth, I was inspired by the seventeenth-century Dutch realist painters as well as New York’s graffiti artists of the 1970s and ‘80s. I received a formal art education and later became an adjunct professor of Fine Art at the Corcoran College of Art & Design and the George Washington University, teaching Old Master techniques as well as contemporary approaches to painting. I’ve become interested in the transformative nature of street art and the effects it can have on a community – the ability to function as a universal language that transforms a public space into an interactive open-air art gallery/destination that drives conversation and promotes city pride. My practice often focuses on representational themes punctuated by a dynamic movement, or glitch, created by data manipulation; a juxtaposition between traditional painting and urban street art, applying conventional principles through a broad range of contemporary systems designed to deliver the medium and concept onto a surface in the most efficient way. Unpredictable and sometimes changing parameters – surface material/textures, scale, climate, risk – often necessitate a variety of methods, materials, and equipment which leads to problem-solving tasks (field adjustments) inherent in the layers and complexities of the creative process. I equate this aspect of street art to the “hero’s journey” myth: the call to adventure, revelation (death & rebirth), and ultimately, the return. Each painting starts the cycle anew. Facing the challenge of transformation is a driving force in my work.

## MACAW 2

The selection of a vibrant tropical bird is an effort to showcase nature at its acknowledged design best: a shocking display of color and beauty from the tropics. In a world of extreme reactions to almost everything, the selection of a "non native" species is a subtle nod to appreciation and respect for "otherness" in some ways. Jeff was interested in exploring the limits, selecting native species is a bit overdone and common. Thus the tropical bird. Yes, this may be a bit deeper than most will go, but when exploring using nature as a core theme in balancing the cold rigidity of concrete, steel and glass, it made sense to take the concept to a logical extreme.







## MACAW 2



