

## Panel chooses sculpture for space outside Madison Children's Museum

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A sculpture has been selected for the space outside Madison Children's Museum, but that's no guarantee it will be built, says the city's arts program administrator.

The committee tasked with selecting the sculpture recommended "Luminous Flux" by Portland, Maine, native Aaron T. Stephan after a 4-3 vote, but arts program administrator Karin Wolf said the mixed review could doom Stephan's proposal.

The sculpture is to be unveiled in June 2013 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Madison's Rotary Club, but it remains to be seen whether Rotary, the largest financial backer of the project, will go forward with the recommendation.

"We have three partners in this and all the pieces have to fit together," Wolf said. "From what I heard from Rotary today, I don't think they want to put a lot of money into this. If the committee's decision had been unanimous, maybe it would be different."

The stage, which sits across from the plaza at the corner of North Pinckney and North Hamilton streets, has become the wedge issue. The stage was left unfinished to allow for public art but has become an eyesore to the plaza, which is supposed to honor Rotary Club's long Madison history.

The committee met on two previous occasions to select one of four sculptures, but it asked the finalists to submit revised proposals that incorporated the stage. In Stephan's second proposal, adding the stage meant tacking on \$27,000 to the project's estimated \$100,000 cost. So the committee opted Monday to recommend his original submission.

Ald. Mike Verveer, 4th District, who was part of the selection committee, said Rotary Club would review the committee's recommendation at its February meeting.

"It seems that there's a very slim chance we will move forward with a large public art project in the near future, given that lack of enthusiasm over any of the finalists' proposals and the budget constraints," Verveer said. "We're likely going to have to set our sights lower and finish the stage."

Madison Children's Museum Executive Director and Rotary Club member Ruth Shelly could not be reached Monday night.

