



Brian Standing, President of Friends of Sid Boyum gives a tour of Boyum's former home June 29, 2018.

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Madison to consider installing Sid Boyum sculptures along near east side bike path

By **Abigail Becker** Jun 29, 2019 2 min to read

Madison's near east side could feature three additional sculptures created by the renowned local artist and sculptor Sid Boyum.

The **Friends of Sid Boyum**, with support from the Marquette Neighborhood Association and the Madison Community Foundation, are asking the city to install three sculptures on city property along the Capital City bike path.

Karen Bassler, secretary for the Friends of Sid Boyum, said the pieces and their accessibility to the public are a part of "making Madison feel like Madison."

“We want the public to be able to appreciate these,” Bassler said. “We don't want them destroyed or hidden away from somewhere.”

Under the **resolution** that will be introduced to the City Council Tuesday, Boyum’s “Cowboy,” would be placed near Amoth Court and Eastwood Drive. Boyum’s “Red Pagoda” and “2-D Lion” would be installed near the 300 block of South Livingston Street.

Jack Kear, co-chair of the Marquette Neighborhood Association’s Arts Committee, said the lion sculpture is purposefully placed near the location of a **sexual assault** that occurred on the bike path in 2015.

Kear said the lion’s “ferocious” spirit is meant to consider the victim of the



Sid Boyum's "Cowboy"

Courtesy of the Friends of Sid Boyum

assault.



Sid Boyum's "2-D Lion"

Courtesy of the Friends of Sid Boyum

Some of Boyum's quirky works — like the **Man-Eating Mushroom** along the bike path by the Harmony Bar and Grill or the **Polar Bear chair** in Elmside Circle Park — are currently distributed throughout the Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Yahara neighborhood as part of a previous effort to conserve his work after he died in 1991.

Including the three works outlined in the resolution, there were 29 sculptures left in the backyard of

Boyum's former house, Bassler said. His **residence at 237 Waubesa St.** was recently sold. Bassler said the Friends of Sid Boyum, an organization created to conserve Boyum's art and legacy, has found homes on private property for about half of the sculptures and a few will remain at the house.

Madison Arts Program Administrator Karin Wolf said the path from Boyum's death to a secure future for his works was a winding road, requiring tenacity and the dedication of community members to preserving Boyum's work.

The preservation of his work symbolizes the endurance of the creative spirit, Wolf said.

"I feel like we're in challenging times, and it's a victory for the creative spirit," Wolf said. "It's a victory for the people," Wolf said.

Wolf described Boyum's offbeat works as "comic, little middle fingers to the status quo." The works

represent a creative spirit that was embedded in the neighborhood, she said.

“(Boyum’s work) offers us a relief from the tedium of the absurd times we live in,” Wolf said.

Ald. Marsha Rummel, District 6, said she is "thrilled" Boyum's "quintessential outsider art" can be featured prominently in public spaces.

"Art on public land helps build community, it reflects history and adds to the visual interest of places," Rummel said.

Funding for the upkeep of the sculptures will be paid for by an endowment fund, which is housed through the Madison Community Foundation, that was started by the proceeds of selling Boyum’s house. Bassler said it is important that the pieces did not end up in private collections or as private pieces but are displayed with the public in mind.

“(Boyum) never sold anything,” Bassler said. “We really want these to be public art.”

This article has been updated to reflect that the Madison Community Foundation is providing financial assistance through the form of an endowment fund. All funds for the restoration, moving and ongoing maintenance of the sculptures are through fundraising efforts by the Friends of Sid Boyum.