

# Silver Line public art component seeks Chelsea input

By Seth Daniel

There's been no shortage of crane sightings, backhoes, and other heavy equipment in the construction process this summer and fall during the beginnings of the new Silver Line Expansion project.

It's progress, but it's not much to look at.

However, on Nov. 4, Chelsea residents will have a chance to look at something far more appealing than a dump truck, as the state Department of Transportation (DOT) will seek input at a public meeting from Chelsea residents on 11 artists who are semi-finalists in the bid to create 22 artistic panels for the new Commuter Line/Silver Line station on Everett Avenue behind Market Basket.

Christina Lanzl of the DOT's Public Art component in the project, and a director for the Urban Culture Institute, will conduct the meeting where examples from 11 artists - three of which are from Chelsea or have an artistic presence here - will be presented to the public.

An opportunity exists for as many as four of the 11 artists to create 22 themed panels that will be integrated into the design of the new commuter rail station. The input from Chelsea residents at the Nov. 4 meeting in City Hall will be conveyed to an anonymous panel of five judges who will make the final decision.

"There is precedent for this at other MBTA stations, and especially commuter rail stations," said Lanzl. "The goal is to receive feedback from the meeting and present it to the board to help in their decision. The feedback is absolutely important in informing the committee as they pick anywhere from one to four of the finalists."

The finalists include:

- Silvia Chavez (of Chelsea)
- Miranda Updike (of Chelsea)

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• Lisa Houch (of Eastie/presence in Chelsea)

- Amy Cheng
- Ellen Driscoll
- Gary Duehr
- Leigh Hall
- Elisa Hamilton
- Joanne Kaliontzis
- Deanna Lee
- Christine Vaillancourt

The enamel porcelain panels will be two-dimensional and could contain reproductions of photography, painting, printing or any other such medium. The artists will work directly with the station architect to integrate the art into the station design - thus why the T's program is called the Integrated Arts Program.

Unfortunately, the program is very new and the other Silver Line stations won't be able to include the arts in their design.

"The design of the other stations preceded the new arts program, so it was too late to get this at all the new Silver Line stations, but it was included in the Commuter Rail Station," she said.

There will also be a separate historical component to the station(s) that is separate and apart from the Arts Program, but she said the MBTA always includes historical pieces at their stations and likely would be doing that again in Chelsea.

Meanwhile, for the Arts Program, she said she would like to have folks choose artists who have created something uniquely Chelsea - something that gives a sense of place and style.

"The goal of the program is to enhance the Commuter Rail stations and cement them to the community as well," said Lanzl. "It will need to create a neighborhood identity so everyone who comes to the station says, 'Hey, I'm in Chelsea.'"

The meeting will take place at 6 p.m. in City Hall on Wednesday, Nov. 4.