

# Arts and Culture Commission unveils fresh version of duck painting

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BRISTOL – The elegant ducks adorning the electrical box in Forestville’s Quinlan Park have been given a new lease on life.

Members of the City Arts and Culture Commission, and other community members, gathered at the tiny park at the intersection of Broad and Central streets Saturday to unveil a fresh version of James Gaffney’s painting.

Several years ago, Gaffney decorated the box with ducks, in honor of the city’s annual duck race in the nearby Pequabuck River, in a setting reminiscent of French post-Impressionist artist Georges Seurat’s famous work “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte.”

However, the painting had become weathered and chipped with time so the commission members took a photograph of the original work, blew it up, and then had it laminated to the box.

Gaffney’s work was part of a beautification effort going on in Bristol at the time, said Councilman Greg Hahn, commission liaison. “It’s such a beloved part of this corner here we wanted to do something to make it right.”

The commission teamed up with the Broadview Fund at Main Street Community Foundation, and Sign Pro Inc., to restore it “so it could stand the test of time, and so we could enjoy it for much longer,” Hahn said.

“What is wonderful about this is that we have community members who support the arts with their generosity, and we have our local artists, like James Gaffney, who create these beautiful pieces of artwork. His studio is right around the corner in the old Sessions Clock factory building and he does beautiful work,” said Lindsey Vigue, commission chair.

Susan Sadecki, foundation president/CEO, praised the Broadview Fund founders Bob Alim, Bob Boudreau, and Kevin Prior, “who established this donor advised fund for exactly things like this today. They have been champions of the greater Bristol community for many years, and arts and culture in particular is a passion of theirs.”

“We’re humbled at the Main Street Community Foundation to be able to work with donors who want to support these really important community projects -- and thanks to the Bristol Arts and Culture Commission, you are awesome!” Sadecki said. “I’m a born and raised Bristol girl so to have an arts commission in Bristol is so important to me.”



Photo by Susan Corica Members of the City Arts and Culture Commission, and other community members, gathered at the intersection of Broad and Central streets in Forestville Saturday to unveil a fresh version of artist James Gaffney’s painting of ducks on the electrical box there. From left are: Councilman Greg Hahn, “Wally the Duck,” Councilwoman Brittany Barney, and Gaffney.

Gaffney was pleased with his painting's fresh look. "I walk by this every day and it was a bummer seeing it get chipped and everything so when Lindsey 'do you want to redo it and we'll remake it?' I said 'why not!'"

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