

Building walls may become light show

A local artist bids to turn civic center into a kaleidoscope.

By LAURA AMMERMAN
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As the sun moves across the sky, Mark Fuller wants the walls of the South County Civic Center to notice.

The West Palm Beach artist has proposed decorating two outside walls, those that face Jog Road, with a grid of prism-like acrylic forms that would bend sunlight into a continuously changing display of color.

"Basically the walls of this building are going to turn into a kind of a kaleidoscope throughout the day," he explained.

The color, shape and size of the designs would change as the sun rises and sets.

At night, solar-powered light emitting diodes, or LEDs, would give life to the display. Wave-shaped slots cut into the sides of the forms also would mimic wave designs on some of the center's interior and exterior walls.

He said the project would be able to withstand the weather and would be built to handle 140 mph winds.

The county's Art in Public Places program solicited artists' ideas to create "Welcome Walls" at the center, which is west of Delray Beach, then reviewed presentations from two artists and selected Fuller's late last month.

County commissioners still have to approve the design. If they do, Fuller would receive \$73,500 to implement his idea and the project should be completed in late summer or early fall. The board is expected to make a decision within a month, said Elayna Toby Singer, the county's Art in Public Places administrator.

Fuller presented his idea to the public at a meeting at the center Tuesday and Singer sought feedback from the handful of residents and county employees who attended.

Carol Klausner of Delray Beach said she loved the idea, but wondered whether the additions would distract drivers.

"If I were driving along and this building started to show up in all its magnificence, I think it would be very distracting," she said. "Could there be a possibility of signs in the general vicinity for people to slow down?"

Andre Clegg, 33, of West Palm Beach, does maintenance work at the building and said he's an artist too. After the meeting, he said he likes the design because it points to the future and represents diversity.

"It's a real strong statement because, I mean, the way the building looks now is part of the old, the past, but the way it's going to look in the future, it's part of the future, it's part of the new age," he said. "Just like the world is made with a lot of different people, a lot of different colors, I mean those colors represent everyone as one, so that's the way I look at it."

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Courtesy of Mark Fuller

Artist Mark Fuller proposes covering two walls of the South County Civic Center with a grid of prism-like acrylic forms that would create a kaleidoscope effect.