Introduction:

The King Liberty Village (KLV) lands is a burgeoning mixed-use development situated to the west of downtown Toronto. It is one of the most vibrant and sought after areas in the city combing a creative mix of uses from residential, through commercial and recreation.

The KLV lands are generally bounded by King Street to the north, Strachan Avenue to the east, Hanna Avenue to the west and the CN rail line to the south. To the north of the KLV lands are the former Massey Ferguson manufacturing lands, now a residential community. To the south is Exhibition Place and Lake Ontario. To the west is the Liberty Village BIA and to the east is the Niagara neighbourhood.

A formerly thriving industrial centre (indeed the former industrial heartland of Canada) the KLV lands had, by the 1980’s, become a largely vacant brownfield site as the various industries that had operated in the area relocated to outlying areas or closed. Over time, the surrounding area became home to artists and designers attracted to the former warehouses and factories as studios. As the area was historically used predominantly for industrial use, some of the public art installations in the area reflect this history, without being historicist or prosaic.

Today, the KLV lands is a multi-dimensional 45 acre master-planned community combining grade related residences, high-rise condominiums, offices, shops and services featuring a mix of heritage buildings and contemporary architecture. The area is divided into Development Blocks with 863880 Ontario Limited as a major landholder. This Public Art Program relates to 49 and 51 East Liberty Street, part of Block 2A of the development. A future public art program will be prepared when development of the final portion of this block (on Strachan Avenue) is underway.

To date, two sculpture commissions have been awarded to Francisco Gazitua. “Perpetual Motion” is a monumental steel work which acts as a gateway into the public park is based on the idea of water wheels and mechanical devices that refer to the industrial heritage of the area. His second work, “Split Rock Gap” currently being fabricated, interprets the character of trees distorted by the wind- an iconic Ontario image. This 11 meter tall work will combine stone and steel. As part of his work, Mr. Gazitua mentored Victoria Young, a Canadian artist and graduate of the sculpture program at the Art Institute of Chicago and who studied in his studio for 3 months in 2011.

Governing Documents

The Section 37 agreement specified the requirement for a “Block Public Art Plan” to be prepared as a guiding document, or masterplan, for public art within the lands owned by the developer. This King Liberty Village Block Public Art Plan was approved by Toronto City Council in June 2006. Subsequently, “Public Art Programs” were to be prepared as development of individual blocks advanced and were to provide information on budgets, locations, artist selection and timing. The Section 37 Agreement states:

2.4(b)(1)(A) The Owner shall submit to the Commissioner of Urban Development Services and the Toronto Public Art Commission for approval a public Art plan …hereinafter referred to…as the “Public Art Program”

2.4(b)(1)(B) The Public Art Program shall have regard to the goals, objectives and public art opportunities identified in the Block Public Art Plan and shall include the method(s) of selection of the artist(s) and Art, a proposed list of artists if it is not an open competition…”

This 49 and 51 East Liberty Street Public Art Program outlines the budgets, locations and selection methods with regard to the King Liberty Village Block Public Art Plan approved by Toronto City Council in June 2006. The Block Public Art Plan states: “Consideration has been given to the following criteria in identifying locations for public art:

- Locations of high visibility
- Locations which afford an opportunity to add a variety of unique and/or distinctive artworks to the public realm and reinforce the sense of "neighbourhood"; and
- Locations where the artwork can be safely interactive"

The current location/art zone comprises “Location 3: Gateway East” as indicated in the site plan from the King Liberty Village Block Public Art Plan (2006). As shown below, the proposal is to focus on the south side of East Liberty Street in the plaza and along the streetscape (within the Owner’s lands) in publicly accessible areas.

From King Liberty Village Block Public Art Plan, 2006

Location 1: houses “Perpetual Motion”, Location 2 will house “Split Rock Gap”

**Objectives of the Public Art Program include:**

To create public art projects that reinforce one another and that create a distinctive “voice” for the area.

To use the public art program to reveal, celebrate and honour the character and history of the area without being historicist.

To promote the opportunity for artists to develop works exploring the rich history (both social and industrial) of this area within a contemporary expression.

To consider opportunities for public art that permits users to engage physically with the artwork.
To create public art installations that reinforce one another and create a distinctive "voice" for the neighbourhood, when appropriate.

Locations and Public Art Opportunities

The approved King Liberty Village Block Public Art Plan specified the general “zone” within Block 2A East, south of East Liberty Street as the general location for public art. Location 3: East Gateway also referred to the city parkette on the north side of East Liberty Street. However, since 2006, the City constructed the parkette. We note that locating elements in the city parkette at the north side of East Liberty Street is problematic at this time given that this site, must be altered to accommodate future grade changes along Strachan to accommodate work being undertaken by Metrolinx. The schedule for this is unknown as is the impact on the physical form of the parkette. This area may be considered in the future bearing in mind timing and budget.

This Public Art Program identifies the “zone” south of East Liberty Street as the location for public art within Block 2A East. Block 2A East comprises two phases, 51 East Liberty Street (currently underway) and 49 East Liberty Street (to be implemented based on market conditions).

Several opportunities for public art may be implemented over the phased development. These may include:

- A series of sculptural elements within the north facing courtyard between the towers—especially defining the west edge
- An element or elements within the courtyard/ open space adjacent to 49 East Liberty Street
- A series of elements integrated into the building edge along East Liberty (both phases)—marking entrances or creating significant features at ground level
- The artists selected for the project will be encouraged to identify additional locations to extend the art, at varying scales, throughout the zone provided that such areas are publicly accessible and highly visible.

The artwork implementation will progress as the construction advances.

Please see site plan at the end of the document for visual reference.

Budget:

The budget is based on the pro forma construction costs for the development as at 2013, to be submitted to City Planning for approval.

49 East Liberty Street  $536,000.00
51 East Liberty Street  $707,000.00

Allowances:  Up to 10% for administration (project planning, artist call, selection process management, jury fees, concept fees, artist(s) travel, contracts and legal)
            Up to 5% for long term maintenance endowment
            Up to 10% for engineering, insurance, site preparation, supplementary lighting, installation of artworks, coordination through final design and construction, documentation
            75% artwork design, supply, fabrication, delivery to site

Selection Process:
A three stage competition process is proposed.

STAGE 1: Open call for credentials for artists
           Circulated via Akimbo, artpublic.com, and other outlets
           Long list presented to Owner for review and development of short list of candidates

STAGE 2: Short list of candidates provided with Opportunity Brief
           Artists develop general concepts for review by Owner/Jury

STAGE 3: Recommended candidates advance their ideas under a letter of intent to enable preliminary engineering and budget assessments to be carried out

The goal is to select 2-4 artists to work on an on-going basis with public art development as the project advances from phase to phase. This will enable the artist, Owner, public art consultants and design team to identify opportunities in a timely manner and to integrate that artwork in an effective manner.

Jury Candidates:

The Jury will comprise one representative of the Owner and 2 outside art experts one of whom must be an artist and one of whom must live and/or work in the ward.

Joanne Tod, Artist
April Hickox, Artist
Michael Goland, Artist and Ward resident
Michael Macaulay, Art Expert and former Chair of TPAC

Schedule:

TPAC Presentation: February 27, 2013
Competition Announcement: After TPAC endorsement
Phase One Excavation Start: June 2013
At Grade: March 2014
Phase One Completion: October 2015
Phase Two Start: Based on market conditions
Site Plan (Art Opportunity Locations in Red)