MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Mark A. Hussey
Interim President, Texas A&M University

SUBJECT: CBE Recommendation: OPAS Art Sculpture

At its August 12, 2014 meeting, the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) discussed a request from the OPAS Board of Directors and student committee to reconsider the placement of a bronze sculpture on the exterior grounds of the Rudder Complex.

At the May 28th CBE Meeting, the CBE recommended that the President not approve the OPAS Art Sculpture request due to the fact that all the caveats were not met – particularly the artist’s refusal to consider rotating the sculpture 90 degrees. The OPAS Board of Directors and student committee met with the artist who agreed to rotate the sculpture 90 degrees.

Since all caveats have been met, the CBE voted to recommend the President’s approval of the OPAS Art Sculpture outside Rudder Complex.

Karan L. Watson
Provost and Executive Vice President
for Academic Affairs
Co-Chair, Council for the Built Environment

Mark A. Hussey
Interim President

cc: Sub-Council Chairs, Council for the Built Environment
July 8, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Mark A Hussey
    Interim President, Texas A&M University

THROUGH: Tom Reber
          Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

THROUGH: Luke Altendorf
          Director, Memorial Student Center

FROM: Anne Black
      Executive Director, MSC OPAS

Rachel Fisher
      Chair, OPAS Student Committee

The OPAS Board of Directors and student committee respectfully request that you reconsider your decision concerning the bronze sculpture on the exterior grounds of the Rudder Complex. We have met with the artist, Larry Schueckler’75 and he has, as suggested, agreed to rotate the sculpture 90 degrees.

This sculpture is being donated to Texas A&M University to enhance the area around the Rudder Complex where so many people visit. Art resides outside many multi-use facilities around the country and has the capacity to touch the human spirit and enhance people’s lives. The University Center Complex is a gateway to Texas A&M and, from the newest freshman to the most elderly former student, these buildings have special meaning. OPAS has been a very large part of bringing the community to this campus and enriching the lives of thousands of students over almost 42 years.

As we began this process, careful attention was paid to following the procedures and guidelines given to us for this sculpture proposal. As we have progressed over the past eighteen months, each sub-council approved the proposal. There were recommendations with each approval, some of which were represented to us as “negotiating points” and “considerations.” All but one of these was met and, on November 7, 2013 we were given, what we believed was, final approval from Dr. Loftin. He asked only that 1) the artist provide, in writing, to the DRSC, his reasons for the proposed orientation of the sculpture and 2) we provide approval by EHS regarding any safety concerns. It was our belief that we had met all of the caveats and work began on the sculpture the following week. It was a surprise that the DRSC was meeting again on this topic last month. It was never our understanding that the rotation was a mandate and there was no wording in any of the documents sent to us that it was a mandate.
This sculpture was intended to be a vehicle to salute the special enrichment of the performing arts provided by OPAS to decades of students and to the community.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

CC:  C. J. Woods  
      Larry Boleman  
      Matt Fry