

**When will public art return to Crown Point? Officials say not until a**

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TOPICAL URGENT

# When will public art return to Crown Point? Officials say not until a summer without COVID-19

Mary Freda  
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"The Tooth" is one of the Seward Johnson sculptures that has been put on display in Crown Point over the years.

John J. Watkins, file, The Times

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CROWN POINT — Summer days in the city are usually bookmarked with a trove of statues around the square.

This year, however, the lifelike statues are noticeably absent as the three-person Art in Point Project Committee continues its hiatus.

Councilwoman Carol Drasga, who has been on the committee since its inception, said the committee took a break from displaying work from American artist Seward Johnson after the 25-foot "Embracing Peace" statue went up at the Crown Point Sportsplex in 2018.

"We have used, I think, the best of the Seward Johnson," Drasga said. "I think we really went out with a bang with the nurse and the sailor. So that, I think, was the year we decided no more Seward Johnson because you just couldn't beat what we had done."

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 Crown Point's legacy bricks given new life with courthouse patio project

 Hubinger adds Monet garden to statues at courthouse

 Kissing Couple statue arrives in Crown Point

In 2019, the statues weren't displayed to allow the city to focus on Bulldog Park opening, **according to previous Times reports.**

Initially, the group planned to take a year or two off to examine other options and give sponsors a break. Then, the coronavirus pandemic hit.

Now, Drasga isn't sure when public art might grace the square again.

Typically, Johnson's statues would be displayed beginning in April and taken down in the fall. As soon as the statues left, Drasga said the committee would begin planning for the next round.

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"Nothing is fast with this stuff because there's waiting lists on different figures, and then there's cost," Drasga said. "There's some fabulous art out there, but my goodness is it unaffordable to bring into the community ... some of the art that is great, isn't really in our budget either."

 Seward statues chosen for Crown Point's art project

 Crown Point's Art in Point presents the Wall of Heroes

 Crown Point's seasonal Seward Johnson statues come down Thursday

While waiting lists, a huge time commitment and cost play in a role in the hiatus, Drasga said the coronavirus also will dictate when public art might reappear in the city.

"I certainly love the public art, and it's certainly not a dead issue. It's just an issue that I think has got a lot of things that need to align before we sign up again to do it," Drasga said.

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"COVID is the biggest problem we've got right now, and ... who knows what that's gonna do in the future. We need a guarantee summer of no COVID, and who knows when that will come."

Drasga later added the committee would want to ensure they had a summer with "absolutely no restrictions" prior to even considering a public art project.

📄 Crown Point's seasonal Seward Johnson statues come down Thursday

📄 Giant tooth gives Crown Point visitors something to chew on

📄 Crown Point seeks sponsors for public art exhibit

Councilwoman Laura Sauerman, who also sits on the committee with Kim Geisen, said finding a replacement for the Johnson statues will be "a little bit tricky."

"The Seward Johnson project was pretty unique in that it offered municipalities a chance to have that interactive art, where it's outside and they want people to be touching and taking pictures," Sauerman said. "Most places — even if they let you use their art — they want it housed in a building and temperature controlled, things like that."

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 **C.P. looking to bring Common Man (sculptures) to city** When will public art return to Crown Point? Officials say not until a summer without COVID-19 | Latest Headlines | nwitimes.com

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Sauerman said while the committee ran out of choices within Johnson's collection, "we certainly enjoyed using a lot of them that seemed appropriate for Crown Point."

Although the committee is not meeting at this time, Sauerman said anyone with suggestions for the project can email her at **lsauerman@crownpoint.in.gov** or **cdrasga@crownpoint.in.gov**.

**Gallery: Artist Seward Johnson's "The Tooth" is implanted at the Crown Point Sportsplex**

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