

## GREENFIELD

# Recreation Department art project adds ‘a little brightness to intersections’

By ANITA FRITZ  
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — Thanks to the Greenfield Recreation Department, a few more streets are a little more colorful with public art.

Recreation Department Director Christy Moore said with the recent help of a grant from the Greenfield Local Cultural Council, the department was able to offer stipends to three local artists — Sarah Adam, Mary Chicoine and Maricella Obando Moya — who painted electrical boxes at the corner of the French King Highway near Stop & Shop, the corner of High and Silver streets, and the corner of Federal and Pierce streets.

“We planned the project for the spring, so it was in the works since last fall, but it had to be delayed because of the pandemic,” Moore said. “We wanted to get them done before the first snow fell. There are three beautiful boxes covered in gorgeous art for everyone to enjoy.”

Chicoine, an artist and retired Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) planner, said she loved the idea for the project.

“I love turning everyday equipment into pieces of art,” she said. “The pieces remind us of our humanity and it really makes a difference in people’s lives.”

Chicoine said she painted leaves, with creatures like moths, butterflies and caterpillars crawling on them, on the electrical box at the corner of Silver and High streets.

“I love trees and nature and creatures,” she said. “They aren’t necessarily scientifically accurate, per se, but that’s not what art has to be.”

Chicoine said she admires all the public art that has been done throughout Greenfield, and she hopes to see that trend continue.

“I think everyone feels that



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The electrical box on the corner of Federal and Pierce streets in Greenfield was painted by Maricella Obando Moya.

way,” she said. “I got a lot of thumbs up and waves when I was painting. Every project is different and really captures the imagination.”

Adam, who painted the electrical box at the corner of the French King Highway with a nature scene modeled after the North Quabbin region, is a painter and graphic designer with a studio in Greenfield.

“I was honored to be part of this public art project,” Adam said. “I wanted to create a calming scene for daily commuters using bright colors to pop against the wooded background. I love the tall pines and little islands (formally the tops of foothills) that make up the

unique landscape that is the Quabbin Reservoir. I added a quote from Maya Angelou on the back to help remind us that there’s always a new day, and with each dawn comes hope.”

The quote reads, “No sun outlasts its sunset, but will rise again and bring the dawn.”

Moore said several other electrical boxes, like the one on the corner of Main Street and Bank Row, were painted a couple of years ago and the city has received a lot of positive feedback. The city has also sponsored artists who have painted not only smaller streetlight boxes, but parking meters.

“They’re just so nice to look

at,” Moore said. “We’ll keep doing more in the future, but we’ll probably wait until spring now.”

Once the artists finished the latest masterpieces, she said, the city varnished them to seal them and protect them from the elements. Moore said artists used the stipends for supplies and to pay themselves for their time.

“We want to not only inspire other artists to step up when the time comes to do more, but to inspire people as they drive or walk through Greenfield,” Moore said. “With the state of the country right now, we want to do what we can to inspire, beautify and lift people’s spirits. We love adding a little brightness to intersections.”

Moore said the project has been a wonderful collaboration of artists and city departments, including the Department of Public Works.

“It has been a fabulous job by all,” she said. “We hope that when the pandemic is over, we can offer a walking tour to highlight all of our public art, like the mural on the GCC building downtown, the parking meters, the boxes. We are a Cultural Crossroads District, after all.”

Additionally, Moore said the Recreation Department hopes to create a website to display all of the public art.

“It’s something that’s visible and creates joy for the entire community and those traveling through,” she said.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sarah Adam painted the electrical box on the French King Highway near Stop & Shop in Greenfield.



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The electrical box at the corner of Silver and High streets in Greenfield was painted by Mary Chicoine.