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Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives
September 26, 1978

Comr. Henry Geldzahler
Department of Cultural Affairs
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Re: National Urban Conference on the Arts

Dear Commissioner:

Your office has been in touch with me concerning your proposed conference, about which Mayor Koch wrote to me this week. I would be pleased to participate -- both to share some of New Haven's experiences and to borrow whatever I can from the experiences of other communities.

May I suggest that special invitations to the conference be extended to the persons on the attached list of the membership of the National League of Cities Task Force on the Arts, of which I am Chairman. All of them are strongly committed to a vital role for the arts in city government and in city life. Our Task Force is staffed by Bette Treadwell of the National League of Cities whom you should contact. We have found Michael Newton of the Associated Councils of the Arts very helpful in planning conferences and other educational sessions. Another person who has been a very valuable resource to us is Ms. Louisa Kreisberg, the new Director of Public at the Museum of Modern Art.

The outline of discussion issues for the conferences is an impressive one -- it embraces the central concerns that local governments have with the arts. Items 2, 5 and 7 are of particular interest to me.
September 26, 1978

I enclose a brochure indicating what we have been doing with CETA in the arts in the City of New Haven. I would welcome further information regarding the conference.

With my best wishes,

Mayor

FL:bb

cc: Michael Newton
    Ms. Louisa Kreisberg
September 14, 1978

Hon. Frank Logue, Mayor
City of New Haven
City Hall
New Haven, Connecticut 06508

Dear Frank:

I am writing to invite you to a conference on Thursday and Friday, December 7 and 8, 1978 in New York City, at which municipal arts administrators from major cities in the country, together with several mayors, can discuss urban issues and the arts. The recognition that in the great urban areas of our country the arts are central to the city and the city is the center for the arts has given us the impetus to create a forum for city arts administrators.

For some time now my Commissioner of Cultural Affairs and I have been giving much thought to the idea of beginning and continuing a dialogue with other cities on this topic. We feel that there are many issues of mutual concern which a joint effort of the larger cities would help resolve.

Our cities have a number of problems in common. We have diverse communities and understandable competition for insufficient resources between small emerging arts organizations and larger more established groups. Emphasis on critical services such as police, fire and sanitation frequently obscures the importance of the arts' contribution to our cities. Arts services for special constituencies such as youth, senior citizens and the handicapped are often planned by organizations in the arts.

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs has discussed their plans to convene a meeting in New York City with administrators throughout the country and we were delighted with the enthusiastic response. The initial discussions have given us the strong feeling that such a conference would be meaningful at this time, particularly in light of President Carter's new Urban Policy.
We are planning all-day meetings and seminars with panel discussions. We would be honored indeed if you would address the group or serve on one of the panels, as you wish. We are enclosing a copy of the proposed Discussion Issues for your information.

In addition to the meetings, we have arranged for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on Saturday morning, December 9, to host a special preview of the King Tutankhamen exhibition, which will be opening officially soon thereafter. We also expect to offer other activities that we trust would be interesting and enjoyable. I would also like you to be my guest at a cocktail reception at Gracie Mansion on Thursday evening, December 7.

If you would let Commissioner Henry Geldzahler, Department of Cultural Affairs, know if you plan to attend, his office would be happy to give you full details regarding the conference, airfares and hotel accommodations. They will also be happy to make any reservations you ask them to. His address is 830 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021. Telephone (212)360-8125.

We look forward to greeting you in New York in December.

Yours sincerely,

Edward I. Koch
M A Y O R
NATIONAL URBAN CONFERENCE ON THE ARTS
December 7 and 8, 1978

DISCUSSION ISSUES

CULTURAL AFFAIRS - VITAL NEW DIMENSIONS IN CITY GOVERNMENT

1. Role of Municipality.

   The role of the municipality in the arts has grown and changed since the federal government has assumed increased responsibility in arts funding. The mechanisms for funding and servicing the arts differ from city to city. Many municipalities are reassessing their role in the arts with an eye toward strengthening it. A description of different structure models will focus on the benefits of each.

2. Working Within City Government.

   Many city agencies are involved in one way or another in the arts. Local employment agencies allocate CETA funds. Parks departments schedule outdoor programs. Public works agencies provide operational support. Human services, youth, handicapped and senior citizens' programs are frequently handled by separate agencies as are present programs. Coordination of arts services often require contact with the full dimension of city service agencies. Coordination of services on the local level will be explored as an effective mechanism for more effective utilization of resources for the arts.

3. Planning for the Arts - An Important Aspect of Planning for a City.

   While it is widely recognized that the arts have an impact on economic development, neighborhood stabilization, open space planning and service delivery, the arts are frequently overlooked by city planners. Involvement of municipal arts departments or councils at critical stages of planning can be beneficial to the arts as well as to city planning departments. Discussion will focus on how arts agencies and city planning departments have worked together to develop plans which recognize the arts as a vital aspect of urban living.

Henry Geldzahler
Commissioner
4. **Budget-Making Process.**

   Competition for municipal funds pits arts agencies against critical city services. How arts agencies have fared in the competition of city-wide priorities differs in each municipality as does the justification for funding. Exploration of revenue sources and percentages of tax-levy funds spent on the arts, special taxes and other municipal funding programs will be discussed.

5. **Inner Cities and the Arts.**

   Urban centers frequently have in common larger, older established cultural institutions which in recent years have come into competition with emerging ethnic and community arts organizations for finite resources. The importance of the arts as it affects "quality of life" is more and more recognized by low/moderate income populations as a critical service enhancing housing, sanitation and other aspects of community living. How municipalities have supported arts activities in low income neighborhoods and housing projects, etc., will be explored.

6. **Community Development - Funding Source for the Arts.**

   The Community Development Block Grant Program which replaced a number of categorical grants has been utilized by some cities to increase arts programs. A report on the uses of CD funds for the arts and specific eligible projects will be presented.

7. **CETA Employment Programs.**

   Large cities with heavy unemployed populations have been the recipients of CETA funds from the federal government. Programs employing artists as well as personnel for arts institutions have been established throughout the country. A report on the problems and successes of these programs with respect to unions, training, public service contributions, finding employment in the private sector and an evaluation of the contribution the CETA program is making to the arts organizations as a whole will be discussed.

8. **Economic Impact.**

   Cities across the country have discovered that economic development is a good reason for funding of the arts. We will explore what incentive programs, justification, economic formulas and direct and indirect spending estimates have been utilized to determine the impact of the arts on tourism, corporate retention and industrial and residential investments.

Legislation recently proposed to make available federal funds through HUD for the stabilization of neighborhoods in communities through arts programming facilities and services would institutionalize a mechanism originated in our cities. Examples of successful projects abound. How can we, as cities, convince the federal government to make a larger investment in this idea?

10. Federal Sources for the Arts.

Many cities have been successful in working with federal agencies on funding for the arts. These agencies have included HUD, HEW, GSA, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, (Department of the Interior), EDA and others. Examples of projects funded by non-arts agencies will be described and discussed.

11. The Emergence of a National Urban Policy.

Urban leaders around the country have been vocal in expressing urban policy, mainly in terms of revitalization, housing, equality for minorities, job development and vital services. The fact that our urban centers are also our arts centers can determine a role for the arts in all of the above issues. While it seems clear at this juncture that the arts will be a factor in federal policy, municipal arts agencies can play a meaningful role as this policy develops and takes shape. We will explore the specific role we can play in encouraging the federal government to strengthen its urban policy in relation to the arts.