

Common Council Testimony
April 14, 2009

Good morning. I'm David Fantle with VISIT Milwaukee. I want to thank President Hines and the entire Council for devoting the time to discuss this important public arts project for Milwaukee.

As the sometimes vilified person behind the bronze Fonz, I want to weigh-in on the proposed project for East Wisconsin Avenue.

In discussing the Fonz several months ago with Dan Keegan from the Art Museum, he used a word that still resonates with me – texture.

A great city, which I believe Milwaukee is, needs a lot of texture. And texture comes with a large variety of both traditional and non-traditional art pieces that surprise, delight and provoke conversation; and make our city more interesting for citizens and visitors alike. The more texture, the more art pieces for people to experience, the better.

We're never going to reach unanimous agreement on any one piece of art. Because art, by its very nature, often defies simple characterizations.

I do know that the term "old school" has been used to describe Ms. Zweig's planned project for Milwaukee. Well, call me old school because old school to me conjures up a time – before the Internet and before crass and rude anonymous blog postings, when we as a respectful and civilized society, could meet over a cup of coffee or beer, look each other face-to-face and have an intelligent and respectful debate on everything from public arts to politics. That's what old school means to me.

In conclusion, I hope the Common Council moves forward in improving Ms. Zweig's project and that we can add a new prestigious public art project to our city streetscape.

Thank you!