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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE CITIZENS OF WALLA WALLA

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I have a lofty goal. I am trying to create the greatest toy store in the world. The outside of my store should exemplify that ideal. When I moved my store to its current location, I had a wonderful opportunity to do this. The front of the property was clad with an obtrusive white façade that had no historical significance.

In April of this year, the Downtown Foundation, supposedly acting on my behalf, approached the city with a sketch of the mural I wanted to paint on this façade. It was reported back to me that the City Manager stated it would not be approved for various reasons, one of which being that it was too cartoonish. My question then was what law, code, statute or ordinance gives the city, or any other entity other than my landlord, the power to tell me what to paint on my store front? This question was purportedly relayed to the city several times.

Eventually, the answer came back to me that it was public art and therefore fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of Parks and Recreation and that I would have to sit down and talk with its director. Really?

At this point, I realized that there probably was nothing on the books that would prevent this, but if I kept going there would be.

