Memorials Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 15, 2011
3:30 P.M.
2nd Floor Conference Room
City Hall
715 Princess Anne Street

The Memorials Advisory Commission met Wednesday, January 15, 2011, beginning at 3:35 p.m. in the conference room of City Hall.

Commission Attendees:

Emerson, Claudia	Absent
Garnett, Richard	Present
Huff, Benjamin Josiah	Absent
Lloyd, Marilyn Holasek	Present
McDaniel, Richmond	Present
Pates, Jim	Present
Pederson, Debbie	Absent
Pederson, Jerry	Absent
Warlick, Conrad	Present

Meeting Minutes:

Chairman Pates asked that the minutes be revised stating that *he thought someone had volunteered to send a letter to City Council, to date however, no letter had been drafted and Mr. Pates asked a volunteer to write the letter and Commissioner Lloyd volunteered to contact Commissioner D. Pederson and offered to work with her to write the letter* Commissioner McDaniel moved approval of the December 15, 2010 minutes as amended; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Lloyd and passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Mary Washington Monument – Chairman Pates presented an update on the Mary Washington Monument property. This property on Washington Avenue site was donated to the City in 1966 on condition that it be used and maintained in perpetuity as a park and memorial to Mary Washington. He

read the letter to Council that he had drafted per instructions of the Commission at its December 2010 meeting. The letter stated that the City had accepted the property back in 1966 and had created an Advisory Board of Regents, as required by the deed of gift. The Board of Regents had become defunct by 2000, at which time the Council voted to fulfill its obligation to have an advisory committee by transferring its duties to the Memorials Advisory Commission. Nothing, however, had ever been done to effectuate the Council's action. The letter asked the Council to affirm its earlier action and to amend the City Code to merge the two committees.

The Commission discussed the draft letter and presented no objections. Commissioner Garnett said he would be interested in knowing if the George Washington Boyhood Home Foundation would still like the property. He said that under the deed, he believed the public had a right to the property as well as the City. Commissioner Warlick said he thought the Foundation was only interested when its director lived in the Lodge.

The Commission also discussed the condition of the Gordon Family Cemetery on the property and the vandalism in the area. Commissioner Garnett stated that Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities Director Bob Antozzi remains in contact with the Gordon family. He said Franklin Daniels lives in the Lodge and is an employee of the Foundation. Chairman Pates said he had spoken with the City Manager, who indicated he did not think City Council would have a problem with the Memorials Commission assuming the duties of the Advisory Board of Regents. Commissioner Lloyd offered to call Isabel Gordon Swift to see if she is a member of the Gordon family, whether she is involved with the upkeep of the cemetery, and, if so, what its status is. Chairman Pates said the Commission would be the perfect group to help raise funds for the upkeep of the property.

Letter to City Council on the Naming of City Streets – Chairman Pates recalled that the Commission had previously discussed the idea of whether the Commission's charter intended for it to have a role in the naming of City streets. It was noted that the Commission had had input on street naming in the past, although the streets involved generally were part of City projects. Chairman Pates said he believed the public should have input on the naming of all city streets, regardless of whether or not they involved public or private development. He asked whether someone from the Commission would volunteer to draft a letter to Council. Such letter would say that the City Code directed the Commission to develop appropriate means of recognizing the contributions of leading citizens and that it specifically referred to "the naming of public facilities or streets" and that the Commission would be prepared to assist with this task.

The Chair suggested that Council might want to consider amending the City Code to state that anyone submitting a site plan, general development plan, or

other proposal involving the dedication of public streets would be asked to consult with the Commission regarding appropriate names for the streets. He suggested that the Commission might get a limited number of days to respond and if it didn't respond, then the applicant could move forward without delay. This would also include City projects.

Commissioner McDaniel indicated that he had concerns with putting something in the Code on this because he felt that the Code was already cumbersome enough. He said he would prefer something informal so that the naming process would not delay development projects. Commissioner Garnett disagreed, suggesting that the Code simply set a timeframe on a response from the Memorials Commission. Commissioner McDaniel said it should be a really quick timeframe. Chairman Pates said he thought the process should be strictly consultative and that it should not delay any application.

Commissioner Garnett moved approval for Chairman Pates and Commissioner Lloyd to draft a letter to City Council suggesting the Commission be involved in the street-naming process; motion was seconded by Commissioner Warlick and passed unanimously.

Criteria for Wall of Honor – Chairman Pates noted that the Commission had previously discussed a need to set formal criteria for nominations to the Wall of Honor. He indicated that the original criteria back in 1998 suggested that a minimum number of signatures were needed to nominate an individual, that candidates be deceased, that they be former residents of the City, and that there could only be a limited number of nominees each year.

Commissioner McDaniel suggested that the Commission adopt the following criteria:

- Candidates shall be selected based on their extraordinary contributions to the City (not surrounding areas).
- Did the person make Fredericksburg "a better place"?
- How many people were impacted and to what degree were they impacted by this person's contribution?
- Persons shall be nominated by a living personal contact (i.e, historical figures would be excluded). People deceased more than 50 years would not be considered.
- No more than 5 people would be selected per year. No minimum number to be selected.

Commissioner McDaniel said the reason for excluding historical figures was that he felt nominees should be individuals that the public knew and recognized.

Commissioner Pederson (absent) had also submitted her recommended criteria as follows:

- The nominee must have performed "creditable service" to the City for more than 20 years through volunteer work.
- The period of time for such service was from 1900 to present.
- The nominee could be either living or deceased.
- Any living person having "verifiable information" about a nominee's accomplishments could nominate a person, except no self-nominations allowed.
- Candidates who had been found guilty of a crime would be ineligible.

At this point, Commissioner McDaniel had to leave. Due to lack of quorum no action could be taken.

Chairman Pates offered to rewrite the criteria and the remaining Commission members suggested the following criteria to be drafted for a vote at the next meeting.

- The person being nominated should have been deceased for at least one year.
- The person should have been a resident of the Fredericksburg area have made significant contributions to the welfare of the City.
- No more than five persons nominated per year.
- No person to be nominated by a family member.
- Persons should be nominated by a living personal contact.
- Persons could be nominated by the public or any member of the Commission.

Commissioner Garnett also suggested that more needed to be done during the ceremony for the families. He said some of the families come from out of town and the ceremony is sort of a letdown. Chairman Pates agreed that the Commission could look into doing something more elaborate.

Other Business:

Chairman Pates said he had spoken with Mr. Cameron about forming a Memorials Fund to be used to honor people in various ways. He said he would be willing to be the first contributor.

Chairman Pates also asked were there any ideas for getting better attendance at Commission meetings. He said he would place that item on the April agenda for discussion.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting was scheduled for April 20 at 3:30 PM.

Adjourn Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was declared to be officially adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

(Gerald Pederson)

Claudia Emerson, Acting