



Memorials Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 19, 2019
Conference Room, City Hall, 715 Princess Anne Street
Fredericksburg, VA

Commission Members Present: Nancy Moore, Michael Spencer, Tina Morris, Pauline Felder, John Lyles, Paula Raudenbush, Jervis Hairston

Commission Members Absent: Betty Massey, Susan Spears

Others Present: Cathy Walker of Rappahannock Arts; John Gerlach, ARB chairman and liaison to MAC for African American Heritage project; Sarah Poore, FAM; Victoria Matthews, Fredericksburg Visitor Center and city liaison to MAC for African American Heritage project; Eric Nelson, city liaison to MAC for African American Heritage project; Kate Schwartz, City Preservation Planner.

Chair Nancy Moore called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Jervis Hairston moved to approve the minutes from the July 24, 2019, meeting. John Lyles seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Interpreting Fredericksburg's African American Heritage

- a. What is being done by other community groups? Cathy Walker talked about what Rappahannock Arts is doing to promote African American heritage in her organization. They currently are collecting histories of African Americans in our area and listing events sponsored by African American groups and churches on their event calendar on their website.

Sarah Poore said that the FAM is creating events around the 400th Anniversary of the slaves' arrival in Virginia and they are gathering oral histories.

Nancy Moore stated that there needed to be a central clearinghouse for the various information being gathered by many organizations.

- b. Organizing study committee date for initial meeting, text of invitation email. (attached)
- c. Progress on removal of slave auction block. Kate Schwartz reported on the preparation for removing the slave auction block and installing it in the FAM. She said that a temporary interpretive panel will be installed when the auction block is removed and passed out copies of the draft. There was some discussion regarding the wording and Pauline Felder volunteered to take a closer look at it and make some recommendations. Kate also outlined the way the city plans to change the crosswalks in the intersection of Charles and William streets.

Nancy reminded everyone that the City was loaning the auction block to the museum. She then said that the next step was to invite a selected list of potential committee members to a meeting on October 15, 2019, at the Central Rappahannock Regional Library at 7 p.m. This meeting must be open to the public and must come from a City government email address.

Pauline Felder asked the stated purpose of the committee and Michael Spencer replied that they would gather information and identify holes in the existing story currently being told. Michael said that he is putting together a plan to present to the committee and will send a final draft to the MAC members for their input before our next meeting.

Eric Nelson suggested that the committee be given a reading list to prepare them for their task.

Victoria Matthews said that she will compile the same material that was given to the MAC members of all the current brochures and tours. Paula suggested that the current video being shown at the Visitor Center be shown to the committee at their first meeting. All agreed this was a good idea and Victoria volunteered to get the DVD and set it up at the meeting.

Wall of Honor ceremony reminder, 7 p.m., October 8, 2019 in Council chambers.

Update on Mary Washington Monument caretakers cottage.

Nancy reported that Bill Freehling has engaged the services of Realtor Suzy Stone to sell the cottage. A Deed of Easement is being drawn up and will be shared with the MAC members for input.

New Business

Request for Link Wray marker.

Erik Nelson said that an interpretive panel like the others in the city will be done to honor Link Wray's contribution to American music and his Fredericksburg connection. He is currently looking for better images to go on the panel. Jervis Hairston said he will search the Silver Company's files since they owned the Armory where Mr. Wray performed. Jon Gerlach noted that he has done a painting of Link Wray that he will share for the panel.

Erik also talked about the panel for the end of Canal Street regarding the DeBaptiste family and the ferry they ran.

Meeting schedule for 2019

Initial Study Committee Meeting for the African American Heritage project—October 15, 7 p.m.

Follow-up MAC meeting—Thursday, October 17, 4 p.m.

November MAC meeting—Thursday November 21, 4 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Raudenbush, recording secretary