



Memorials Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

Conference Room, City Hall, 715 Princess Anne Street
Fredericksburg, VA

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

Commission Members Absent: Betty Massey, Tina Morris

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

City Manager, Tim Baroody, requested that the Memorials Advisory Commission take the lead in discussions and implementation of the history of African Americans in the City of Fredericksburg. This special meeting was called to discuss this request with Mr. Baroody and the commission members.

First, Mr. Baroody reported on the following:

REI consultants have recommended how to proceed with restoration, repair, and maintenance of the city's historic assets (i.e., Meditation Rock, the Mary Washington Monument, the Gordon Cemetery and the area around them). The city has set aside \$50K for this project.

The sale of the Caretaker's Cottage is moving ahead with the creation of an RFP with the appropriate deed restrictions recommended by the commission.

The city estimates that the cost to clean interpretive signs is \$3K and this work will be done by July.

He then began the discussion regarding the MAC role for the Black History of Fredericksburg. First, the Council decided to leave the auction block in place so that decision will not be part of this discussion. [NOTE: this decision has been overturned and the auction block is now to be removed and installed in the Fredericksburg Area Museum as of June 11, 2019]. How to interpret it and tell the stories need to be discussed and implemented. The consultants hired to begin these discussions made recommendations for signs, scripts for the trolley tours, brochures at the Visitor Center and on the city website (see Pages 12-16 of Phase I of their report attached). \$250K has been set aside by city council for this project.

Nancy Moore stated that the commission will not weigh in on the questions of the auction block. She suggested a committee be formed consisting of individuals interested in the project including members of the Black community who know the stories, teens, professionals and others with expertise in various fields. She suggested Ed Jones as a possible facilitator. The committee will be tasked with finding out what stories people want to hear.

Mr. Baroody said that the city staff will assist in any way needed and recommended that Erik Nelson, Kate Schwartz and a representative from the Visitor Center will volunteer to serve on the committee.

Nancy Moore strongly recommended that we all read the consultants' report, the city brochures, the interpretive panels, the tour scripts, and watch the city's video at the Visitor Center before the next meeting.

Michael Spencer suggested that a creative methodology would need to be established.

Pauline Felder said that she and her husband have already been in research mode for ways to tell the stories.

There was discussion regarding how to identify the stories. Suggestions included going into the schools and getting the youths' perspective, looking at the overall history of Blacks in the city in a timeline, talk to different generations, form two committees—one to do the research and one to implement it.

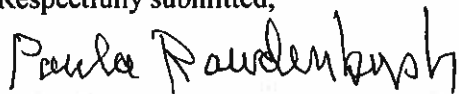
Mr. Baroody stated that since this is a very big project, the committee may want to start by choosing two stories and follow through to the implementation stage to maintain the momentum started by the consultants and to show that something is being done.

Nancy Moore reported that there are currently 5 applications for the 2019 Wall of Honor with 2 more possible.

The next meeting will be held on July 24 at 4:00.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Raudenbush". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Paula Raudenbush, recording secretary