



DEC 27 2019

FREDERICKSBURG  
CIRCUIT COURT

- 7A. Slave Auction Block Relocation Plan – Mayor Greenlaw & Councilor Frye
- 7B. Livestream Work Sessions – Councilor Graham
- 7C. Downtown Greens – Councilor Frye

**Slave Auction Block Relocation Plan (D19-311).** Mayor Greenlaw explained that the Council voted to remove the auction block and that the regulation and process must be followed because it was a historical item. She said there were many steps that needed to be taken before handing it over to the museum. Mayor Greenlaw said the process would still need the input from the community.

Councilor Frye addressed the comments made during the public comment portion of the meeting. He added that the decision of what to do with the slave auction block was up to the Council. He said the City would be glad to give HFFI the plaque back that was in front of the block because the plaques did not tell the story of the block.

Mr. Baroody reviewed the process that got the Council to the decision they were at. There were discussions and community meetings held by the International Coalition for the Sites of Conscience (ICSC). The Council's desire was to tell a more complete story and the ICSC was hired to help. The ICSC presented a final report to the Council and in addition the Council assigned the Memorials Commission with the task of reviewing the tourism brochures, the tour scripts, the video to make sure the language was there to tell a more complete story. Mr. Baroody noted that at the June 11 meeting the Council voted to remove the auction block from its location to the Fredericksburg Area Museum.

Historic Resources Planner Schwartz reviewed the preliminary planning process and this process would include a number of steps to ensure that Fredericksburg could interpret and understand the historic significance of the block. There were recent archeological investigations of the block which resulted in the findings that the block was not individually

eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, but it was a secondary resource associated with the United States/Planter's Hotel.

Ms. Schwartz added that because the block was a historic object located within the City's historic district the proposed relocation plan would also be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB). The review should include both the relocation plan for the block and the plan for alterations to the corner of Charles and William Streets. The Memorials Advisory Commission (MAC) will be responsible for planning the interpretation of the site and implementing the recommendations of the ICSC. Ms. Schwartz recommended that at member of the ARB serve as a liaison to the MAC.

Ms. Schwartz stated the after consulting with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) staff and the ARB prior to relocation of the block, it would ensure that the process would reduce the chance of adverse impacts on the historic significance of the district. She said the City would rely on Fredericksburg Area Museum's (FAM) expertise in the display and interpretation of the block inside its facility but it was recommended that the block's historic association with the Planter's Hotel be made clear and that the sandstone be protected.

Ms. Schwartz also added that if a ceremony was desired, city staff, the MAC, the FAM, and others as determined appropriate would work together to plan the ceremony, schedule the events plan for street closures and distribute information to the public.

Public Works Director King assured the Council that the public works department had the capability to move the block from the sidewalk. He said they have the equipment and the expertise to do so. He said the block was not as deep into the ground as they thought and he was confident they could extract it safely. He said a Dovetail Archeologist

would be working alongside them. After extraction of the block they would place it on a custom made crate to transport it to FAM.

Mayor Greenlaw clarified some misconceptions that the block was being gifted to FAM. She clarified that the block was not going to be a gift to FAM but it would be loaned to them to display. Another concern that the Mayor addressed was access to the block and she said that would be part of the agreement.

Councilor Kelly asked if the plans would be reviewed and approved by a preservation organization before the removal takes place and Mr. Baroody said Nancy Moore with MAC and Michael Spencer from the University have looked at the document and made some edits.

Councilor Kelly asked if all the questions from the Museum had been addressed and Mr. Baroody said he had spent several hours working with Ms. Poore and he believes they have been answered but he would let Ms. Poore answer that question.

Councilor Kelly said for the record he was not thrilled that this was taking place and he asked if the block would be removed before there was a plan on how the block would be presented. Mr. Baroody said they were working closely with the museum and they were preparing to accept the block and they were preparing for a long term display.

Ms. Poore, Executive Director of the FAM said they were in discussions, she said there was a process in placing items in the museum. The Museum's Collections Committee would meet to go over the plan. She said they Committee does not usually get involved with loaned items but due to the sensitivity of this item the FAM Board thought it was necessary for them to be involved. She said they have a long term and short term plan for the block but she had to get a structural engineer to determine where the block could be located in the museum. She said the best place for it would be on the main floor and they need to know the size and they would have to have a case built for it. She added that the community would be

engaged as they interpret the piece. Ms. Poore said all Fredericksburg students and teachers are free to the museum but it was a challenge to get the schools to go on field trips but she would keep trying to work with them. She said they will need to work with the Memorials Commission to make sure the stories were integrated.

Councilor Frye thanked Ms. Poore for working with the City. He said he understood the unknowns were hard. He said this was the being of telling Fredericksburg's African American story.

Councilor Frye suggested that maybe at some point the block could be loaned to the National African American Museum for display.

Vice-Mayor Withers made a motion to move forward with the relocation plan; motion was seconded by Councilor Duffy and passed by the following recorded votes. Ayes (6). Councilors Greenlaw, Withers, Devine, Duffy, Frye and Graham. Nays (1). Councilor Kelly.

**Suspension of the Rules.** Councilor Frye made a motion to suspend the rules in order to meet past 11:00 p.m.; motion was seconded by Councilor Devine and passed by the following recorded votes. Ayes (7). Councilors Greenlaw, Withers, Devine, Duffy, Frye, Graham and Kelly. Nays (0).

Councilor Frye said he respected the work of the museum although he knows it will be a lot of work as the stories are gathered. He thanked Ms. Poore and the Council for what they were doing for the future.

**Livestream Work Sessions.** Councilor Graham explained that there were a lot of robust conversations in the work session and many people cannot make it to the work sessions. Mr. Graham stated that he would like staff to look into live streaming the work sessions. He asked that staff to bring a plan to Council in August.