CHARLOTTESVILLE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMITTEE
*Monday May 24, 2017 * 10:00 am – 11:00 am*
*NDS Conference Room * 610 East Market Street*

Members Present	**Members Absent**
Melanie Miller, Co-Chair	Liz Sargent
Edwina St. Rose, Co-Chair	Crystal McNeese
Margaret O'Bryant	
Ellen Wagner	
Genevieve Keller	
Dede Smith	
Madeleine Hawks	
Bob Fenwick (arrived late and did not participate)	

Staff

Mary Joy Scala, Preservation & Design Planner
Camie Mess, Assistant Preservation Planner
Reid Saunders, Intern

CALL TO ORDER

Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Discussion of City Council's Request for HRC's top three naming options for Lee Park and for Jackson Park

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- *Scala* discussed the materials she handed out, including the City Manager's letter of request for the HRC's top three names for each park. The list of citizens' suggestions from the web site was sorted alphabetically. There are also emails from Margaret O'Bryant, Anita Showers (Central Park), Paul Collinge (McIntire Square), Cauline Yates (*not* Sally Hemings Park), Mary Hill Caperton ((Thurgood Marshall) and Herbert Ely (War Memorial Park and War Remembrance Park).
- *Miller* reminded the committee that they do not have to make a recommendation
- *St. Rose*: I think that we should not make a recommendation. Council already has enough names to sort through, so I do not think they need more, and I do not feel comfortable recommending names.
- *Keller*: I would like it on the record that I was in favor of public comment, and it was the City Manager's office who advised that there be no public comment. If I could make a motion for public comment I would because I believe in free speech and collaboration. At the end of the meeting if the committee does not identify names that they feel appropriate to recommend, then the HRC should vote to forward no recommendation.
- *O'Bryant* recommended that the names still be discussed, although it is fine if the HRC does not want to make a recommendation. She went through the names that she submitted, six for each park (Community Park, Central Park, Queen Charlotte Park, Market Street Park, Unity Park, and Freedom Park; Court Square Park, McKee Park, Justice Park, Queen Charlotte Park, Memorial Park, and Liberty Park), and they are listed in order of her preferences.
  - o The names she chose for each were due to their neutrality and are either locational or unifying in concept
  - o Names for Jackson Park should have some association with the court
- *Smith*: I don't want to go with conceptual names that may be confusing, like Justice Park. We also shouldn't name the parks after a person.

- *Keller*: I agree that we should not use a person's name. I like the idea of Memory Park because it allows people to interpret with their own memories of a place. I also like Festival Park for Lee Park, because many people in recent times associate the park with festival space. It is not a historic name, but it is about the park's evolving use.
- *Smith:* I think we should envision a name for both parks that would work with or without the statues.
- *Keller*: I also like something with court in it for Jackson Park. I would also like to state that the historic names of these parks will always be their current names; we will still always know what they used to be called.
- *Wagner*: It should be something descriptive; I like Central Park for Lee Park because it is a central meeting place for many people. And something with court for Jackson Park.
- *Miller*: It sounds like everyone is in agreement that the park should not be named after a specific person, but a more generic name.
- *Hawks*: I think it is good that we have decided not to go with a person's name; although, I think McKee would have been a good name, because of that history. But I understand the desire to go with something more neutral. I love the idea of Memory Park for either, because it allows people to recall their own thoughts. The names might be more generic, but I understand it is to be more inclusive of the entire community.
- *St. Rose*: I think it would have been more democratic if the name were left to a public vote. I do not understand this process. The matter is one for the citizens of Charlottesville to decide via ballot referendum.
- *Smith*: I agree, but the online voting process was flawed and we can't trust these results because people could vote multiple times.
- *Keller*: This does not rise to the level of a referendum although there could be a better, more secure process for public input on the top options. I understand that this process included respondents suggesting the same names multiple times.
- *Miller*: I don't understand why this process is being rushed. We should decide if we are going to make a recommendation or not.
- *Smith*: What did we think of Freedom Park?
- *Keller*: Some people go to the court to surrender their freedom so that may not be a good idea.
- *Hawks*: Also with the history of the auction block it may not be appropriate.
- *O'Bryant:* The great thing about conceptual names is that they allow the observer to come up with their own ideas. It doesn't limit how people can view the park, and the observer is free to draw their own conclusions.
- *Smith:* What about the Charlottesville Commons?
- *Keller:* I looked that up and it's kind of a "Yankee" name, the dictionary said, most specifically New England, but Charlottesville is not as Southern anymore so I could consider it. I like the idea of a Commons.
- *Hawks*: I don't really like the idea of Central Park because it is not really the center of the City or a center for me. The idea of Common Park resonates a little more, and is a bit more welcoming.
- *Mille*r: I would like to add McKee Park for the name of Jackson Park, because it is not about the person, but it would be named after the block, which is referred to as McKee Block. And it was our first instance of urban renewal.
- *Keller*: I did look up the McKees it was named after, there is not much out there but we don't know the complete histories of the father and son and how this block evolved and became in effect Charlottesville's first urban renewal area. I think the interpretation of McKee block would be very interesting, but using it as a name could be divisive.
- ***Miller* called for a vote of making a recommendation vs. not making a recommendation. St. Rose and Miller voted no recommendation; Smith, Hawks, Wagner, Keller and O'Bryant voted to make a recommendation.**
- *Keller*: Should we include a forward about a concept name?
- *Miller*: Would that be in consensus with the Blue Ribbon Commission?
- *O'Bryant*: The Blue Ribbon Commission did not formally recommend using a conceptual name but it was brought up several times in our meetings.
- ***Keller*: Can we vote to recommend that the name Council chooses should not honor a single person?**
    o **Consensus that the parks should not be named after an individual (6-0-1, with *St. Rose* abstained).**
- *Smith*: We should include that the HRC was asked to comment on the renaming so that the name would not be something historically divisive.
- *Keller*: Should we start with Jackson Park?
- *Miller*: We want court in the name
- *Smith*: We should still consider The Commons.

- *Hawks*: It was labeled as The Commons when the area was first designed. It shows how small the original city park was.
- *Keller*: I like Courthouse Park
- *O'Bryant*: I like calling it Court Square as opposed to Courthouse.
- *Smith*: I'd like to reflect that it was the original park. The park is distinct from Court Square.
- *Miller:* Suggestions for Jackson Park are down to: Court Square Park, Courthouse Park, Memory Park, and The Commons. A running vote for the parks was taken to rank the suggestions:
  - Court Square Park: 3, 0 (1st)
  - Courthouse Park: 1, 3 (2nd)
  - Memory Park : 1, 1, 2 (4rd)
  - The Commons: 1, 2, 3 (3th)
- *Miller:* For Lee Park I took down the following suggestions: Community Central, Market Street, Unity, Festival, The Commons, Memory Park
- A vote was taken to select the four recommendations, and another to rank them:
  - Community Park: 4 (1st)
  - Central Park: 3, 3 (2nd)
  - Market Street Park: 3, 3 (2nd)
  - Unity Park: 2, 2
  - Festival: 2, 3 (3rd)
  - The Commons: 2, 1
  - ~~Memory Park: 1~~

Miller **moved, and** *Smith* **seconded, that the HRC recommend to Council the following names for Lee Park (ranked in order of preference):**
1. **Community Park**
2. **(tied) Central Park and Market Street Park**
3. **Festival Park**

And for Jackson Park:
1. **Court Square Park**
2. **Courthouse Park**
3. **The Commons**
4. **Memory Park**

The motion passed (6-0-1, with *St. Rose* **abstained).**

Keller **moved, and** *O'Bryant* **seconded, to amend the motion to add that the HRC considered a number of historic names and found none to be compelling or appropriate and acceptable at the present time, given the contentious and contested histories. The motion passed (6-0-1 with** *St. Rose* **abstained).**

Keller **moved, and** *Smith* **seconded, that** *Edwina St. Rose's* **reasons for abstaining from the vote should be sent to Council. St. Rose stated that in her opinion the HRC should not make a recommendation because the City Council already has a list of names; and Council decided to re-name the parks, so they should make the decision. The motion passed (7-0).**

None

Smith made a motion to adjourn at 11:01a.m. O'Bryant seconded. The motion passed (7-0).

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:01a.m.