

Charlottesville Historic Resources Committee
Meeting Notes: Friday January 17, 2020 * 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
City Hall Basement Conference Room * 610 East Market Street

Members Present:

Alissa Diamond (Co-Chair)
Deirdre Smith
Genevieve Keller (Co-Chair)
Heather Hill
Jalane Schmidt
Jordy Yager
Madeleine Hawks (Co-Chair)

Sally Duncan
William Clay III

Members Absent:

Margaret O'Bryant
Ellen Wagner

Staff:

Jeff Werner
Robert Watkins

Guests:

Molly Conger
Jock Yellot

- Call to order:
- Approval of the agenda:
- Approval of meeting notes:
 - Notes from December 13, 2019 and January 10, 2020 approved
 - Motion to approve by Duncan, Hill seconded. (9-0)
- Education: No items
- Public Commemoration:
 - Vinegar Hill Park
 - (ref and attached handout from subcommittee.)
 - Ms. Hill noted that CODE Building developer has OK'd installation of additional posters on the construction fence.
 - Discussion of how the posters might be used/displayed elsewhere. (i.e. at the airport, etc.)
 - Follow up on December 2019 meeting discussion re: HRC providing funds for a reprint of the book of Vinegar Hill photographs:
 - i. Can the HRC provide funds for a project that will generate revenue for the Jefferson School? (For ex., should the HRC be reimbursed?)
 - ii. Can the HRC funds be given in exchange for copies of the book?
 - iii. Should HRC offer to buy books when printed? (Then donate them to schools, libraries, etc.)
 - Regarding the planned signage and markers at VH Park, questions were asked about limiting work to what has been approved or expanding the options and requesting additional find from Council.
 - Court Square Markers
 - Update on subcommittee discussions.
 - (ref and attached handout from subcommittee.)

- Discussion on addressing various themes instead of locations/sites.
- Consider coordinating work with Albemarle County's planned program.
- Questions/comments:
 - What is the value of Court Square's history?
 - Why are people visiting Court Square?
 - If I am a visitor, what can I take from it?
 - Why are we presenting this narrative?
 - Where/what is the historical significance?
 - What are the uplifting stories?
 - Acknowledge the disproportionate Euro-centric view, but do not shift entirely away from that narrative. Need balance.
 - Trying to fit a lot into a very concise story. Court Square was the block that became the City of Charlottesville. The urban plan/blueprint for the City.
 - Introduce the time span of events and places: its evolution from origin to now.
 - Provide a narrative without celebrating or denigrating.
 - Don't perpetuate myths, but don't create new ones.
 - What happened at Court Square was vital to everyone.
 - All information presented must have citations.
- During discussion staff suggested that the illegible marker at Number Nothing—and the three other similar markers (Jefferson St, Hotels, Levy Opera House)—be removed. Staff noted comments in the public and on social media that the City has failed to take action re: the markers and slave auction block plaque. Referring to Council's request for an update and to prior HRC discussions, staff requested that the committee take a vote and go on record.
 - Ms. Smith moved to allow staff to remove the existing, illegible black marble plaques. (Levy Opera House, Number Nothing, Early Hotels, and Jefferson Street.) Motion seconded by Dr. Clay.
 - Motion failed 2-6. (Yes: Smith, Clay. No: Diamond, Keller, Schmidt, Yager, Hawks, Duncan.)
 - During the discussion, the majority also expressed opposition to removing the bronze slave auction block plaque located in the sidewalk at Number Nothing.
- Publications: No items
- Public Meetings: No items
- Special Projects: No items
- Other Business:
 - HRC policy re: comments from the public.
 - Draft: At the beginning of each meeting, not more than 10 minutes will be allowed for the introduction of any guests and public comments. Speakers may speak for a maximum of ~~three~~ two-minutes and shall begin by identifying their

name and address. The intent is to allow public input; not initiate a dialogue or debate with the committee. Subsequent to this meeting segment, by majority approval the HRC may amend the agenda to allow further discussion; however the motion should also establish a time limit for that discussion. Additionally, prior to adjourning--and applying conditions above--the HRC may allow a period not to exceed five minutes for public comment.

- No formal action taken, but modifications suggested (noted above).
- Question asked is non-HRC members can serve on a sub-committee.
 - Staff replied via email on Jan 29, 2020. The HRC's Operating Procedures, indicate that this is allowed, with the understanding that such participation is only with the HRC's consent; presumably by way of a motion and a vote. (That is, someone cannot show up at a meeting and insist on being allowed to participate.):
 - *Advisory or Ad-hoc Members. The Committee may designate members as "Advisory" or "Ad-hoc" members for a particular project. Advisory or Ad-hoc members may participate in Committee discussions and Committee work, but they shall not be voting members and their attendance at a meeting shall not be counted towards that number required to constitute a quorum.*
- From the public: Jock Yellot suggested that the Court Square markers be double-checked re: facts. He noted that draft text stating Jackson Park was *white only* is inaccurate.
- HRC Annual Meeting Part II:
 - Suggestion that the HRC establish a lecture series.
 - HRC should focus on completing current projects.
 - Ms. Hawks noted the HRC must select a new chair.
 - It was noted that the HRC efforts must better involve young people.
 - What is the HRC's impact on youth?
 - Examine/better understand how youth view history?
 - Consider a history contest, reward youth entries. Prize money, etc.
 - Establish a relationship with local teachers.
 - Invite students to review the Court Square markers.
- Next meeting will be on Friday, February 14, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.
- Adjourn