

HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

May 10, 2018

8:00 a.m.

Town Hall

100 Ann Edwards Lane

Committee Room, 3rd Floor

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Gutowski, Chairman; Patrick Morrissey, Vice Chairman; Robert Macdonald, William Ray and Heidi Schless

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Brittany Lavelle Tulla

ALSO PRESENT: Walter Brown, Consultant

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Luly, Planner

Mr. Gutowski called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Macdonald moved for approval; seconded by Mr. Morrissey. All present voted in favor.

II. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Macdonald moved to approve the March 2018 minutes; seconded by Mr. Morrissey. All present voted in favor.

Mr. Gutowski stated that the April 12, 2018 minutes were sent out yesterday evening and he would like to defer their approval until the June meeting, until Commission members have had time to review them.

Commission members agreed.

III. Public Comment

Mr. Brown stated that he was brainstorming for next year's Black History Month (BHM). He has a report that was published by Avery Institute in conjunction with the College of Charleston. He said it is relevant, because it speaks to the issues that are prevalent in the Black community, which are education, housing, health, economics, etc. He said that he thought something as powerful as this should be the kickoff. He spoke to people in the community, Dr. Bernard Powers has officially retired from the College of Charleston. He said if the Commission decides to do something like this, he has agreed to be the moderator. Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane is one of the writers of the report and she has also agreed to participate. He said Armand Derfner who is a Civil Rights Lawyer, has also agreed. He added that John White, the Dean of Addlestone Library has also agreed, as well as Senator Marlon Kimpson. He said these are all powerful individuals. He said to follow it up with Gullah and the rest of the presentation would be on Gullah. He said there is a group called Ranky Tanky, a jazz quintet that is headed by Charlton Singleton who is a professional musician from the Ten Mile black community. He said what makes this group so unique is that they have taken the Gullah language and translated it into music. He thought this would be one hour and then follow up with Michael Moore, because when the Commission had Michael Moore last time, there was miscommunication which led to a disaster at Long Point Missionary Baptist Church. He said no fault of the Commission's but there was no follow through. He said by next year, he feels confident that the International African American Museum would have reached their goal and likely would have broken ground by that time. He said the third would be the Black Communities. He knows people in the Old Village that can tell you how it was 50 years ago. He said they may not necessarily be a part of the settlement community, but they do know the history. He said he thought about Remley's Point, Greenhill,

Snowden, Philips and the Ten Mile communities. He said that the Ten Mile Community was the most prominent of them all, because certain things happened there. He said in 1948, Lucian Pinckney came to the Old Village and someone mentioned "college". He did not have any idea what college was about; however, he had four children and sent them all to college, which began the cycle in the Ten Mile community of black children going to college. He said the first one in Ten Mile to attend college was Allen Pinckney who became a PhD in micro-biology and taught at New York University. He passed away last year. He said prior to the formation of the Heirs Property Group they realized that if anything happened to their parents and there are seven or eight siblings, what will happen to their property. They decided amongst themselves to get the property in one person's name. He said in the Ten Mile Community there are not arguments when the elders die, as to what will happen to the property. He said they then began to dress, purchase vehicles, save money and also became involved in politics. He said that this was a very progressive community. He said he thought the last would be the Plantation Singers. He said as he looks at what Mr. Wright was proposing, a lot of this would be like the watch night service. He said in every black community east of the Cooper and in Charleston, this is something the black communities have and is natural.

Mr. Macdonald asked if he could make a recommendation about the Gullah program. He asked to consider Heather Hodges who is the executive director of the Gullah Geechee Commission and is doing a lot of work up and down the lowcountry from North Carolina to Florida in terms of documentation programming involving the community. He said since it is a Gullah evening, she would likely be a better resource.

Mr. Morrissey stated that with the different communities, such as Ten Mile, and the history, he said we need to capture this before different people pass or the history disappears. He said the Commission has gone to the middle schools and suggested scheduling different meetings in different neighborhoods, contacting people ahead of time in order to have them speak on the record. He said it would not be a full blown oral

history, but to capture some elements and have a meeting focused on a specific area. He said if there are certain attributes to that neighborhood that make it a special place, that we capture it on the record. He said this would not necessarily be a part of Black History Month, but to rotate some of the meetings and capture some memories before they are gone.

Ms. Schless asked for clarification, because Mr. Brown mentioned five different items. She asked if it would be Avery/College of Charleston Report topic as one, then the Gullah/Michael Moore as a second night, the Black Communities 50 years ago for the third night and then the Plantation Singers on the fourth night.

Mr. Brown responded in the affirmative, but not necessarily in that particular order. He said the report he has is powerful and thought it could be the kickoff. He said if the Commission decides to take this route, he could spare the expense of the reproduction of the report, since there is ample time.

Mr. Gutowski stated that he also has the report on a thumb drive.

IV. Review and Approval of Primus Historical Signage

Mr. Gutowski stated that he would like to review and approve the Primus Historic Signage. He said the developer is ready to begin working on the signs. He said he distributed the information to Commission members yesterday. He said he only received it from Mr. Doug Bostick yesterday as well.

Mr. Morrissey stated that on the write up, there is a reference to Butler's Creek at Boone Hall Plantation as the northern point of the Christ Church line. He said he has seen that reference to Butler's Creek. He said in some maps it is Wampancheon Creek and in current parlance, they call it Boone Hall Creek, but believes it is simply because of its proximity to Boone Hall Plantation. He said he does not know the genesis of Butler's Creek, so he would like to see either a footnote or ask Mr. Bostick to confirm that this is what it was called at the time the

Christ Church line was built. He said in the Jim Capers section, the Commission has discussed previously the June 15th of that year, it does not indicate the year and doubt it is his birth.

Mr. Gutowski stated that he has this corrected and Mr. Bostic will be sending a correction.

Mr. Morrissey suggested that it would be better to close the narrative, since it is focused on Mr. Capers, to talk about his Alabama Society, The Sons of the American Revolution paragraph and include the reference on “free your slave troops” further up in the narrative when it is mentioned that he begins service as a Revolutionary War soldier, so the note ends with Mr. Capers, not on general history.

Mr. Gutowski asked where Mr. Morrissey would prefer it be moved.

Mr. Morrissey said he would move it up to the end of the first paragraph where it discusses enlisting.

Mr. Macdonald stated that the first one on the Christ Church Line appears very long for a plaque.

Mr. Gutowski stated that they will be installed similar to Oyster Point where there will be panels with pictures, similar to Breach Inlet.

Mr. Morrissey asked if Mr. Bostick will be sending the art that is going to be utilized.

Mr. Gutowski said he will have discussions with Mr. Bostick. He said what took so long is apparently the contractors that were doing the work changed and the new contractor was not aware of the relationship to the Town’s Historical Commission and had done their own rendering. He said he put a halt to that now and Mr. Bostick is again working on it.

Mr. Gutowski said on another subject, his wife picked up a postcard that was in her doctor’s office that was distributed in Park West. He said there are a series of panels being erected along Park West Boulevard between the Recreation Center and the swimming pool. He said it is 13 panels honoring soldiers who have passed in 9-11 through 9-11-2018.

He asked staff if there is a format or process on how these are approved. He said Mr. Luly will be reviewing it.

Mr. Gutowski said that it is on the main boulevard along the walking path. He said they are having a dedication ceremony on May 26th at 8 a.m.

Mr. Morrissey asked who is on the dedication ceremony.

Mr. Luly said it is sponsored by www.operationvetfit.org

Mr. Morrissey stated that it may be a public road; however, if it is similar to any large development, the maintenance is done by the HOA.

Mr. Gutowski stated that getting back to the Primus information, he would like to receive the Commission's comments on the information regarding the Primus panels by the end of the week. He said he will follow up with Mr. Bostick and share the Commission's concerns.

Mr. Luly stated that the approval of the panels is tied to their contractor's building permits; therefore, he suggested approving with conditions and comments, so that the contractor will not have to return again in another month to be formally approved. He said this would be an opportunity to use the One Drive to circulate the text with edits.

Ms. Schless stated that the Commission was mandated to approve these panels and since they are proposing a whole different format than our typical historical markers, she believes the Commission needs to see the images and panels prior to the Commission's approval.

Mr. Morrissey stated that he drove through Primus recently and said there are trails and gravel down, which he believes is supposed to be the Christ Church Line portion. He said there is no berm and more swamp, but he would like to know where the two signs will be located.

V. Staff Update

Mr. Luly stated that the Commission asked him to set up a "Drop Box" online in order to share documents more efficiently. He stated that he

has accomplished this, and Ms. Schless was able to edit the test document. He said when working on Ms. Schless' action plan and edits are required, instead of utilizing a print copy, they can be added to the "One Drive". He stated that he would share a link with Commission members. He said any documents that Commission members would like to share with other Commission members or receive edits and/or comments on, please send to him and he will upload them. He stated that this allows Commission members to edit at home or at their leisure.

Ms. Schless added that the Action Plan is one document and any commission member may edit and change the portions they are responsible for and review any other portion. She said any other documents that may need review prior to the next meeting, can be uploaded to the One Drive for any comments or suggestion. This will allow the meeting process to be more productive and efficient.

Mr. Luly stated that there are no plans for an intern this year in the Planning Department. He said if the Commission has any large project ideas, he would be happy to present them to management to see if the potential is there. He said in reference to the History Room, Legal Counsel will have the donation forms ready in time for any official opening. He said they are still waiting on furnishings.

VI. Committee Reports

HISTORY ROOM

Mr. Morrissey stated that their combined inputs were submitted to the Town who has sent them off to Ms. Poplin for edit. He said as per Lauren Sims, the Town's project manager, the Commission will have another opportunity to review the revised version of the panels when they come back. He asked about the historical quilt.

Mr. Luly stated that Ms. Poplin came by to pick it up and ensure it fit on the new quilt display stand.

Mr. Morrissey stated that the quilt or the quilt stand have not yet been returned to the Town. He asked if the Charleston Library Society has made any progress on the first group of Town minute books.

Mr. Luly stated that they were only starting the process now.

Ms. Schless asked if it was the Commission's purview to make the decision on the naming of the room as the Archive Room instead of the History Room. She said the verbiage would be going on the new rack cards, so she wanted it to be consistent.

Mr. Morrissey stated that in order to maintain the timeline, he suggests referring to the room as the History Room and within the History Room the Town Archives will be maintained.

Ms. Schless stated that officially, in the bylaws it is referred to as the Mount Pleasant Special Collection, which consists of archives, artifacts, etc., so she would like to continue with what has been utilized. She said what she is saying is, in the Archive Room, you may find the Mount Pleasant Special Collection.

Mr. Morrissey stated that he finds this amenable and may refer to it as the History Room and indicate that it contains a special collection and in the description of the special collection, include the term "archives".

Mr. Macdonald said a few weeks ago Margaret Corkran and Pat Sullivan spent time inventorying the materials in the room. He sent a copy to Mr. Luly. He said Mr. Shortridge had previously completed an inventory of the boxes and it appears there are boxes missing between Mr. Shortridge's inventory and the one recently completed. He said they were not able to complete the inventory, but plan to return and finish.

Mr. Luly stated that he went to the Six Mile location where the boxes were previous stored and did not find any additional boxes. He said that he will continue looking.

Mr. Macdonald stated that it could be the box they were not able to complete and will ask them to do a more thorough search.

Mr. Morrissey stated that the boxes are numbered 1 thru 10 and then there are other names, such as “plastic container #1 and #2”; however, the boxes labeled 1 thru 10, are somewhat mis-numbered.

Mr. Macdonald stated that he will email Mr. Morrissey the notes he has from Mr. Shortridge’s inventory list.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Ray stated that he does not have anything to report at this time.

Mr. Gutowski asked if Mr. Ray has had the opportunity to meet with Ms. Tulla, as she will be assisting on Communications. He said that she was ill and unable to attend today’s meeting; however, suggested Mr. Ray contact her to discuss the Communications portion.

Mr. Gutowski stated that there was a request that he sent to Mr. Ray and Ms. Tulla regarding an individual who operates a radio station and would like to do some of the Quick Fact Fridays. He said that Ms. Tulla did reach out to the individual and suggested Mr. Ray follow up with Ms. Tulla on this.

Mr. Gutowski stated that this gentleman reads the QFF’s and thought that if he read them on the air, it would help promote the QFF’s.

Mr. Luly stated that it is the station that broadcasts from the Charleston Library.

LONG POINT ROAD SCHOOLHOUSE

Mr. Macdonald stated that progress is being made and research indicates that the building was built in 1924 and are still reviewing Charleston County School District records. He said this appears to be the state of this building. He said there was another schoolhouse built earlier, whether on that site or not is unknown. He said Grant Gilmore’s group from the College of Charleston is going out to reconfirm the measurements of the building and Freddie Jenkins who heads up the Snowden Community is obtaining estimates to move the building to the Snowden Community Center. He said all this work is in progress and once the estimates are known to move the building, the group will

strategize on how best to raise that funding. He said the recent purchaser of the property is planning to build a health center there for Alzheimer's and is very willing to participate in this effort so there is growing interest in the community to have the building moved. He said in the research, Snowden was named for John A. Snowden who was a private in the Massachusetts 54th and killed in the Battery Wagner Battle in 1863. He said there is some question what that information is based on. The connection between John A. Snowden, who was born in Pennsylvania, entered the Massachusetts 54th in Boston. He said the connection of John A. Snowden to the Snowden Community is unclear.

ORAL HISTORIES

Mr. Macdonald stated that he had lunch with Mr. Shortridge to discuss Oral Histories. He stated that he has Mr. Shortridge's folders and indicated how discouraged Mr. Shortridge was not being able to receive responses from Avery. He said it was unclear as to where some of the information on the oral histories exists. He said he will follow up with Avery on this. He stated that Mr. Shortridge did not have a list of potential interviewees and he has called Mary Julia Royall to ask her to recommend some people to interview. He said there is no mechanism to do the interviews; however, he will be speaking with Carrie Taylor at The Citadel on their Oral History program to see if they have an interest in working with the Historical Commission to move our oral history project forward. He said The Citadel is going to be presenting an Oral History workshop to the African American Historic Settlement Community on May 19th at their headquarters at 9 am to 2 pm at 440 Venning Street with lunch provided. He said this is encouraging that the work of interviewing the elders in the settlement communities is proceeding with the help of The Citadel.

Mr. Macdonald stated as follow up on Mr. Brown's discussion of Black History Month, Mr. John Wright, President of the African American Historic Settlement Community has made a proposal for a collaborative program with this commission for Black History Month.

John Wright, 145 Rose Lane, said that he appreciates the fact that the Town was acknowledging Black History Month and there were events planned around it. He said in his years attending the events, he would like to see the youth more involved, steering them in the right direction. He said the events he attended have been for adults and feels it should go in another direction involving the youth. He said he sent a proposal to Commission members and another proposal will also be sent from Ms. Velma at Wando High School. He said she has accomplished an excellent Black History Month event and at school, all the students attend. He said the students were very energetic and the event lasted approximately an hour. He said the event he sent to Commission members was an event that was done at Long Point Missionary Church. He said one of the ladies that coordinated this event is also a Board Member of the African American Historic Settlement Community. He advised her that it would be a great event if it was held for a separate audience and in an independent venue where more residents are able to attend. He said it was a great event put on by the youth who were excited about doing it. He said he would like to help the Commission promote Black History Month and feels that the Commission should look at public engagement to ensure the history continues.

Mr. Macdonald asked why these programs need to be restricted to Black History Month which can be done throughout the year. He asked if there is a way for this group to put together a budget. He stated that the youth would have to organize it and would assume that the Historical Commission would collaborate in helping promote this event. He asked Mr. Wright to have the group put together a proposal, naming the principals, along with a budget that would be needed. He asked Mr. Wright to think beyond Black History Month.

Mr. Wright stated that his reason for suggesting Black History Month is because the Historical Commission has a budget and is funded by and represents the Town of Mount Pleasant. He stated that there should be public collaboration on the Black History Month events. He said because it is a month where Black History is honored, he does not understand

the collaboration between Black History and church and believes it should be a public event in a public venue.

Mr. Macdonald stated that the question is determining the cost for putting this on. He said the budget for this Commission is very limited; however; he asked Mr. Wright to determine how it will be done, who would put it on and how much it will cost, and then the Commission will determine how to promote it.

Mr. Wright stated that they recently had their Board meeting and the board members were concerned about the letter that was supposed to go to the Mayor about a moratorium. He asked if the Mayor responded to the letter. He said some of the Board members have concerns about the moratorium and how it may negatively impact some of their permit processes

Mr. Luly stated that staff has not seen a response.

QUICK FACT FRIDAYS

Ms. Schless stated that QFF's are going very well and being submitted ahead of time. She said it makes the process so much easier.

RACK CARD

Ms. Schless stated that she put together a draft of the rack card. She said it is only text and added some images at the bottom. She would like comments from Commission members about the style of the text. She said she would still like to change some words but wanted to make sure that the message is what the Commission would like to see. She stated that she would email it out to Commission members and ask Mr. Luly to put it up on the One Drive for comments and/or edits from Commission members.

Mr. Morrissey stated that he would not make reference to the "recently celebrated our 180th", so the card is always current.

Ms. Schless stated that for the Cresco Award, there is not much for the public to see about it online, so the draft indicates what residents can do to help preserve and bring awareness to the history. She stated that

there are things that are not ready at this time, such as the History Room, but it will be listed on the rack card anyway. She is currently working on estimates for the two-sided printing and will also look for better images. She minimized the Historical Commission but showcased what is available to learn about the history of Mount Pleasant.

Mr. Gutowski asked if Ms. Schless would also include in the budget estimates, rack card holders. He said the hotels and the Visitor Center have them, but other places do not necessarily have the rack card holders.

Ms. Schless stated that she would have the draft put up on the drive and asked Commission members to provide their comments over the next week, so she is able to get it out for a mock print up. She said she will upload a final draft onto the One Drive again once the mock print up is complete prior to sending for final printing.

Mr. Gutowski stated that one way to introduce the rack cards to the schools is when they have “Back to School” nights in the fall in September. He said in some of the schools, they allow a table with information for newcomers, which would be a good place to place the rack cards. He asked when Ms. Schless anticipates having them printed.

Ms. Schless stated that since they are attempting to use the current budget, they would like to have it completed in the next month. She said the Commission approved up to \$3,000 so the amount would depend on the cost of the design and the printing costs.

VII. General Discussion – Items of Interest

Ms. Schless stated that there have been some emails with the Senior Center and they would like to have the Historical Commission back in July. She said they would like to hear more about the things that the Historical Commission has available. They requested a shorter history presentation.

Mr. Gutowski stated that Mr. James Clary will also be speaking at the Senior Center in July. He said it will be about the soldiers that were stationed on the Christ Church Line.

VIII. Adjourn

Mr. Macdonald moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Morrissey. All present voted in favor.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 8:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Ashe
May 10, 2018