

Historic Resources and Museum Advisory Board: September 26, 2013

In attendance

Board Members- Nick Fountain (chair), Barbra Freedman (co-chair), Joe Mobley, Cyrus Stacey, Edna Rich-Ballentine, Greg Paul, Al Brothers, and John Ward

PRGAB Representative: Amy Simes

City Council Liaison: John Odom

Staff- Troy Burton, Ernest Dollar, Kimberly Puryear, Brynn Hoffman, and Erin Campo

The meeting was called to order at 4:03pm.

Nick Fountain directed the board to the minutes and asked for any comments or corrections. They were approved unanimously without changes.

Troy Burton began the staff report. The majority of the work for R3 at the COR Museum is finished and staff is excited for the opening. The new trolley is in Greensboro being painted, and should arrive in the next few weeks. The work at Borden Building in Fletcher Park is finished. There are a few punch list items left: the historic sign was damaged, and 1/3 of a downspout is missing and needs to be replaced. Construction is still ongoing at the Mordecai Interpretive Center. The target date for opening is still April, 2014. The abatement took longer than expected.

Ernie Dollar gave the Museum section report. The COR Museum has become the event headquarters for Raleigh Main Event. Every week in September has been a downtown festival and the COR museum has been at the center. Two brand new exhibits are opening tonight: the first phase of R3 and the bluegrass exhibit; Seeds of Grass.

Brynn Hoffman gave the Sites section report. In October and November there are school groups every day during the week. Haunted Mordecai is coming up and also fall is a really big wedding time. There is at least one wedding at each site this weekend. Next week there will be three weddings at Tucker, two at Borden, and two at Mordecai. Rentals are a great revenue source and a way to keep people interested in our sites. Mr. Burton added that Saturday October 5th at 6pm is the ribbon cutting ceremony at Latta for the new interpretive sign. He encouraged board members to attend.

Mr. Odom asked if the site rentals were a new program. Ms. Hoffman explained that the PRCR department began running the rental program at Mordecai in 2005 and the Historic Resources Division began managing Tucker House and Borden Building rentals about a year and a half ago.

Erin Campo gave the collections report. Work on the Latta Archeological items, and Capital Area Preservation items at Mordecai are ongoing. The newsletter was sent out last week. Mr. Fountain asked if the newsletter was available online. Mr. Burton explained it was not because it was an incentive for members and volunteers only. Mr. Fountain suggested that something be used as an incentive in place of the newsletter, so that the Raleigh Register could be more widely distributed.

Mr. Fountain then moved the board on to old business. All the members of the collections' committee received copies of the draft of the board's annual report. Comments and edits should be submitted to Ms. Freedman. Mr. Fountain noted that staff has already created an annual report, and this can be a supplement to the board's report. Ms. Freedman will coordinate everyone's comments and make it presentable. Mr. Fountain asked board member's to get their edits to Ms. Freedman in the next few days.

The group went into committees at 4:27 and reconvened at 5:01pm.

Greg Paul gave the Program Committee report. The group would like to continue to work on the synergy between the various sites that we have. There was a program earlier in the year for Ravenscroft. This was a tour where the students went to Mordecai to learn about slavery, the Pope House for Jim Crow, and the COR Museum for civil rights history. Mr. Paul noted that not many schools may be able to afford that. Mr. Fountain added that the problem for the public schools is the timeframe getting the bus back to school in time. He suggested looking at whether the schools can use the activity busses instead of the regular yellow busses. Ms. Hoffman will look into this option. Mr. Fountain added that the board is starting to see the benefits of the programs feeding off each other. Mr. Burton cited a recent example of the Pope House being incorporated into the African American Cultural Celebration.

Mr. Ward asked if the trolley tour includes the Method Neighborhood. Ms. Hoffman noted that the trolley tour does not normally include Method, because they can't make it out that far in the time allotted for Trolley tours. Ms. Hoffman noted that a black history trolley tour is done in February, but it does not go to Method because there are more points of interest on the eastern side of downtown. Mr. Burton stated a potential program enhancement is adding another day of trolley service. Adding Sunday afternoon or potentially Friday are possibilities.

All Brothers gave the Communications Committee report. The group discussed formatting of the presentation of the board's annual report to the City Council. There will be a verbal presentation and a handout at the presentation. The goal date for the presentation is a November council meeting. It was noted that the report should be brief. The Communications Committee wants to create a take home packet for council. This could include tickets to for trolley rides, or other special events. The objective of this report is to show the council what they have done for preservation in Raleigh. The Communications Committee will meet at Mordecai On October 15th at 4:30pm, where they will hash out the final version. Mr. Mobley asked if there was any problem with us ethically or legally giving the council a take home package including tickets. Mr. Brothers answered there was not, and Mr. Odom confirmed. Mr. Burton noted that this will be the first advisory board report to council. He asked Mr. Odom what the councilors are looking for. Mr. Odom stated that a schedule of what is going on and information on what has changed since the city came on board. He suggested keeping it short while giving council members the opportunity to get more information.

Ms. Rich-Ballentine gave the Collections Committee report. The committee will meet on November 1st at 12pm at the COR Museum for their first meeting. Mr. Odom suggested mentioning the de-accession policy during the annual report to council.

Mr. Fountain asked if the City Attorney had reviewed the policy and gave direction on proceeds for de-accessioned items. Mr. Burton answered no. The goal of selling an item after de-accession is to direct the proceeds back into the collection program. Mr. Burton mentioned another option may be to use the Museum Friends group. When something is de-accessioned, the object could be donated to the Friends group to dispose of and any proceeds could be donated back into the program.

Mr. Fountain then moved the board on to discuss officers for next year. The group voted unanimously for the slate of Nick Fountain as chair, and Barbara Freedman as Vice-Chair.

Announcements:

Ms. Rich-Ballentine reminded the group about a tour of Mount Hope Cemetery on October 5th at 10am. Jane Thurman and Ms. Rich-Ballentine will be giving the tour. If it's raining the tour will be October the 12th. I

Friday night and Saturday September 27th and 28th Chavis Park is celebrating its 75th anniversary. Friday at 6:30pm there will be a jazz concert outside at Chavis. On Saturday from 12-4 the park will be open with rides.

Ms. Freedman noted that on October 12th the Durham City Museum will be having their grand opening. Ms. Puryear said she would pass this on to Mr. Dollar.

Mr. Fountain requested that a list of upcoming events be included at the bottom of the agendas moving forward.

There being no further business the group adjourned at 5:27pm.

The next HRM Advisory Board meeting is Wednesday October 23rd at 6pm in the Borden Building.