

Manassas Historic Resources Board
June 4, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
Regular Meeting
Manassas Museum

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Rob Fisher at 7:00 p.m.

Determination of a Quorum:

A majority of the board is present

Board Members in Attendance: David Button, Lyshawn Dean, Rob Fisher, Connie Gilman, Robert Keller, Mark Olsen, Jill Pascale, Don Wilson

Honorary Board Members in Attendance: None

Board Members Absent: None

City Council Member Liaison: Michelle Davis-Younger, Council Member

Museum Staff in Attendance: None

Community Development Staff: Elizabeth Via-Gossman, Director, Lisa Sievel-Otten, Communications Coordinator

Other in Attendance: None

Approval of Minutes of May 7, 2019:

Mark Olsen moved to accept the minutes as written, and Dave Button seconded the motion. The chairman opened the floor for discussion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair's Comments:

- Rob Fisher noted that the new boards and committee term limit will have a gradual implementation.
- He reported that he was impressed with the Planning Commission's Comprehensive Plan Update meeting on Parks, Culture and Recreation, and with attendance at the Heritage Railway Festival.

Council Comments:

- Michelle Davis-Younger reported that Council Member Ken Elston has resigned, and that Council will likely appoint his replacement before a special election is held.
- She noted that Council is still working on the implementation of term limits, and that she is looking forward to appointing more board members as a member of the Appointments Committee.
- She promised to mention the Jennie Dean Memorial Update in her remarks at each Council meeting.

Parks & Recreation Committee Liaison:

- Bob Keller reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee has begun its review of the Comprehensive Plan Update parks, culture and recreation chapter.
- He noted the good turnout at the recent community cookout in support of the Greenleaf Open Space initiative in the Lee Manor subdivision.

Director's Report: Elizabeth Via-Gossman

- Ms. Via-Gossman reminded members whose terms are up this month to reapply if they wish to remain on the Board.
- She distributed an updated budget on Jennie Dean fundraising, with a target date of September 1 to contract with the foundry for fabrication of the Jennie Dean statue.
 - The relief sculptures at the base of the statue may be fabricated and added later as funds allow. They might also be a good sponsorship opportunity for donors.
 - The GoFundMe page for the Jennie Dean Memorial Update has been published by the Museum Associates and is linked on the Jennie Dean web page.
 - Don Wilson reported that a Jennie Dean High School alumnus suggested that more online information be linked to the kiosk at the Jennie Dean Memorial. Liz Via-Gossman noted that the kiosk will eventually be updated as part of the project. He also requested that the Jennie Dean Memorial Update web page contain a link to Jennie Dean High School yearbooks from 1949-1966 that have been posted on the Prince William Library RELIC page.
- The FY20 budget has been approved and includes the Museum addition and improvements to the Jennie Dean Memorial at Dean Park in the FY21 CIP budget, which will still need to be funded in the FY21 budget.
 - A space study will move forward this fall to determine Museum storage and curator space needs.
 - The Jennie Dean matching funding in the budget is \$175,000. We are proceeding with a minor site plan for the plaza.
 - Funding for the Annaburg Manor park was also included in the FY20 budget, and safety issues will be addressed before it is opened as a park.
 - The Harris Pavilion summer season, which is now being managed by the division, has added new programs, and staff will soon add bistro tables. She noted that if you text the word Gomanassas to 888-777 you can receive texts about Pavilion and other Parks, Culture and Recreation events.
- The Manassas Volunteer Fire Company Museum sent a letter of interest in restoring and relocating to the Old Town Hall. She noted that staff will work with the museum on its relocation and cross-promote it.

Committee Report: No Reports

New Business:

2040 Comprehensive Plan Update – Parks, Culture and Recreation Final Draft Review

Discussion:

- The FY21 budget enhances GMBL ball fields. If they were moved to Jennie Dean Park, there wouldn't be room for as many fields.

- The museum would be more inviting without the wall in front.
- Members are invited to a June 26 report-out community meeting.
- Over the summer the Update Committee will incorporate the input and put together a single draft of the plan; later in the year the Council will hold hearings on the draft, and it should be adopted next spring.

Strategic Planning Process and Timeline Overview

Discussion:


- The Museum addition will incorporate ideas from the previous museum/library study which focused on creating space for storage and changing exhibits, and expanding community space for meetings and events.
- A storage option might be to create an open space where visitors might see the curator, staff or volunteers working on conservation and the collection.
- We need to tell the Civil War stories that are unique to Manassas, and not the National Battlefield's stories.
- A larger meeting space would allow more outreach programs, speakers, conferences, and visiting groups.
- More exhibit space would allow more of the collection to be seen, such as seeing railroad artifacts during the Heritage Railway Festival.
- The Payne Gallery at the Railway Depot should be better identified.
- Should the store have more room?
 - Does the store take up space that could be used for exhibits?
 - Should the store offer a coffee or wine bar or vending machines? How would that affect staffing?
 - Putting tables on the plaza might encourage more people to linger with takeout.
 - We might sponsor food trucks for events.
 - The store's current mandate is to sell more "Made in Virginia" products.
- Children's interactive space is important.
 - Moving the playground to the front of the building—in a location where it would not impact events on the lawn—might bring more people to the building.
- The driveway should have sign enhancements for pedestrians and vehicles.
 - Signage for handicapped accessibility needs improvement.
 - Banners on light poles should be extended to the Museum side of Prince William St.
- The wooded areas in the back of the Museum might be enhanced with trails.
- Old Town Hall, the Manassas Cemetery and Annaburg Manor are not part of the Museum system's historic sites, but should be added.
 - Historic sites need to be maintained and have better signage.
 - We need to consider how to interpret the sites.
- The Moore Green slave cemetery and the Thurman cemetery (which contains Revolutionary and War of 1812 veteran and Fewell family graves) on the Glen Gery property need to be protected as properties are redeveloped.
- The Board needs to consider what stories we should tell during the City's Sesquicentennial in 2023.

Close of Business:

Rob Fisher asked for any other business. No further business was brought forward. The next meeting is scheduled for July 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

Dave Button moved to adjourn the meeting and Bob Keller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 8:35 p.m.

via 

Rob Fisher, Chairman



Date