

City of Franklin Civil War Historical Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 14, 2020—8:00 AM
Meeting Minutes

Present: Steve Bacon, Rich Buckner, David Eagan, Rachael Finch, Sam Gant, Sam Huffman, Pam Lewis, Mary Pearce, Clay Perry, Bob Ravener, Alan Simms, Alderman Scott Speedy, Tim Stillings, Megan Weisinger, Blake Wintory

Staff Present: Amanda Rose, Brian Walker, Kelli Gibson, Kelly Dannenfelser, Maricruz Fincher

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Finch called the virtual meeting to order at 8:05 AM and took official roll call.

RESOLUTION 2020-63

Consideration of Resolution 2020-63, “A Resolution Declaring That The Civil War Historical Commission Shall Meet On May 14, 2020, And Conduct Its Essential Business By Electronic Means Rather Than Being Required To Gather A Quorum Of The Members Physically Present In The Same Location Because It Is Necessary To Protect The Health, Safety, And Welfare of Tennesseans In Light Of The COVID-19 Outbreak”

Chair Finch asked for a motion for Resolution 2020-63. Mr. Gant moved to approve Resolution 2020-63. Mr. Buckner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 15-0.

Chair Finch read an announcement regarding limited public access, as follows:

- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this meeting will be a virtual meeting. The public may call 615-550-8420 to listen to the meeting and make comments during any public comment period. The public may also email comments to planningintake@franklintn.gov to be read aloud during the meeting. Emailed comments will be accepted until 1 hour prior to the meeting. The meeting video will be available for public viewing 24 hours following the meeting on the City of Franklin Facebook and YouTube accounts.

MINUTES

Approval of the March 12, 2020 Minutes.

Mr. Buckner moved to approve the March 12, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Simms seconded the motion, and the motion carried 14-0. Ms. Lewis lost connection and therefore did not participate in the vote.

ITEMS

1. Discussion of Potential Memorandum of Understanding between Save the Franklin Battlefield and the City of Franklin Parks Department Regarding Historic Cemeteries Restoration.

Ms. Rose stated the item is the draft memorandum of agreement between Save the Franklin Battlefield and the City of Franklin Parks Department. Ms. Rose stated that we need to add a signature block for Save the Franklin Battlefield and that there are a few red line items that need changed as well and this is only a draft. Ms. Rose stated the proposal was brought forward by Ms. Lewis to have a pass-through entity that could collect donations from the public that could go toward cemetery restorations, specifically the City Cemetery and the Rest Haven Cemetery, which the City owns and maintains. Ms. Rose stated both cemeteries are on the National Register and very important to City history. Ms. Rose explained she and Mr. Walker have worked together to seek input from the commission on the best way to provide preservation and maintenance for the cemeteries. Ms. Rose stated the cemetery subcommittee has been doing a great job on providing input and Save the Franklin Battlefield has been so generous as a non-profit organization in our community to volunteer to serve as a pass-through. Ms. Rose stated it is a very simple agreement that states that Save the Franklin Battlefield would receive the donations earmarked for the preservation and maintenance of these cemeteries and the funds would be given to the City of Franklin to complete those identified improvements. Ms. Rose stated those improvements would be identified in the Parks Master Plan or in the City's Historic Cemetery Preservation & Maintenance Plan. Ms. Rose stated improvements are limited to the following:

- burial marker restoration;
- iron work improvement;
- dry stack stone wall maintenance;
- burial marker cleaning,
- implementation of new fencing, walls, and signage; and
- other restoration efforts and ongoing maintenance.

Ms. Rose stated which the City would decide how the earmarked funds are utilized and that all work would be completed by the City. Ms. Rose stated that Save the Franklin Battlefield will only disperse the funds to the City to complete the work. Ms. Rose stated that Save the Franklin Battlefield's representative to the commission, Mr. Huffman, is present to speak to the proposal and that the document is on the agenda for discussion only, as it has not been vetted by all the proper channels. Ms. Rose requested to know if anyone had any questions.

Ms. Pearce requested to know if work would come before the Historic Zoning Commission.

Ms. Rose stated some of the types of items that would require historic zoning review but stated that not all the items will.

Ms. Pearce stated maybe a sentence should be added for work to be done in compliance to the Department of Interior's Standards for Restoration and Rehabilitation.

Ms. Rose stated she understood that and appreciated the comment.

Mr. Stillings asked if the effect of our vote would be to get it to the Board of Mayor and Alderman for a recommendation.

Ms. Rose stated yes, it would have to go to the Board of Mayor and Alderman.

Ms. Rose stated she would like to know if Mr. Huffman had any comments to add.

Mr. Huffman stated he had a couple comments and stated the resolution looks fine to him and he and Ms. Rose would have to meet sometime to see how the payments would be transferred to the City. Mr. Huffman stated they were glad to help in anyway.

Ms. Rose asked Mr. Huffman if the arrangement should include how the payments are made.

Mr. Huffman stated no.

Mr. Gant stated he thought the resolution was excellent and is very much in favor of doing this.

Mr. Huffman stated their board did vote in favor of this arrangement in a prior meeting and noted they already have received one donation.

Ms. Rose stated once the signature block has been approved and we can move forward with the document for a vote.

Ms. Lewis stated she is happy it is moving forward.

Ms. Lewis asked about adding a sign to the cemeteries about dogs.

Ms. Rose offered to discuss that during subcommittee items on the agenda.

Ms. Fincher stated Ms. Rose presented her this draft MOU to her a few months ago and she has been the reason it was delayed.

2. Subcommittee Progress Reports.

- **Public Outreach/Interpretation**

Ms. Finch stated she worked with Ms. Rose to send the members of this commission some questions on how we wanted to move forward on the cell phone audio tour. Ms. Finch requested to know if anyone had any questions about this. Ms. Finch noted they are still needing some transcripts for Hard Bargain and the McLemore House and requested to know if anyone would like to volunteer to transcribe those two stops.

Ms. Rose noted Alderman Speedy has transcribed two stops already.

Mr. Stillings asked if you listen to the audio and just transcribe to text.

Ms. Rose stated yes and explained the reason for needing those.

Mr. Stillings stated he would do those two transcripts.

Ms. Finch stated the subcommittee agreed the Masonic Lodge should be added to the audio tour and several others have been suggested to be added as well. Ms. Finch stated that she will provide that text. Ms. Finch stated that two additional stops can be added and that the subcommittee has been discussing those options.

Ms. Lewis stated she sent Ms. Rose some notes on suggestions. Ms. Lewis went over a few of her notes she sent Ms. Rose about including a stop for the Fuller Story signs, Collins Farm, and for the monument to the enslaved. Ms. Lewis suggested that Eric Jacobson may want to expand or rewrite the stops for Carnton and the Carter House. Ms. Lewis stated she mentioned to WAKM about being able to clean up the Harlinsdale audio to be able to keep Mr. Jim Hayes being the one who recorded the audio.

Ms. Rose and Ms. Lewis discussed some audios that needed to be shortened and revamped due to Guide by Cell statistical information.

Ms. Lewis suggested a short introduction about Franklin itself, like a Franklin 101.

Ms. Rose agreed.

- **Wayfinding Signage**

Mr. Buckner stated they did not meet in April but did send out a questionnaire to the members asking some important questions as we move into working on the historic core. Mr. Buckner stated there were a lot of responses received. Mr. Buckner stated if you haven't filled out the questionnaire it would really be helpful. Mr. Buckner stated this would be a topic at the next meeting. Mr. Buckner stated their next move is to move into the Historic Corridor and that will be the focus for most of the rest of the year. Mr. Buckner stated they were pretty much on schedule.

Ms. Rose asked Mr. Buckner if he'd like to share the questionnaire and invite discussion now.

Mr. Buckner stated the following was the questions asked:

- What is your definition of the historic core? Certainly, it includes the "historic district," that area around the square (including the Masonic Hall and the Visitor Center). Should we also include Columbia Ave down to Carter and Lotz House? Does it include McLemore House and Fort Granger from downtown? Should it be extended to include Carnton from downtown as well as Carter House?

- What types of transportation should we address in our wayfinding planning? Automobile certainly but walking wayfinding is important, do you agree? How about bicycling?
- How do we address wayfinding to parking for vehicles and bicycles (if necessary)?
- Should public transportation be a consideration?

Ms. Weisinger stated she found the first question interesting about including the Historic core. Ms. Weisinger stated she knows that includes the Historic District, names, streets, etc. and she would like to see historic homes included. Ms. Weisinger stated she thinks it helps in visitor's perspective and feels it helps connect the entire Civil War history to a larger area in Franklin rather than just saying, "here is our Historic District." Ms. Weisinger stated she thinks the City does a great job with transportation signage but has a question about the cycling signage.

Mr. Buckner stated that bicycling signage came up in some of his reading and he wanted to talk to the commission about it to simply address it.

Ms. Pearce stated bicycles have to comply with regular transportation standards so unless there is a designated bicycle trail or roadway, she thinks staying out of that would be the proper thing. Ms. Pearce stated she would designate anything inside Mack Hatcher as the historic core.

Ms. Rose stated that is kind of how it has been handled, basically "inside Mack Hatcher" and "outside Mack Hatcher." Ms. Rose stated inside Mack Hatcher requires more of an analysis. Ms. Rose stated Mr. Buckner has done a really great job.

Mr. Ravener stated he agrees with historic homes and inside Mack Hatcher, but as someone who wants to promote walking and biking, he feels we are not anywhere near where we could be in creating a more pedestrian environment. Mr. Ravener stated he didn't think there were any parking stations for bicycles.

Ms. Rose stated that we'd like the signs to be adaptable enough to be able to add vehicular or bicycling parking to them if needed at a later date.

Ms. Dannenfelser stated Ms. Lewis has been able to rejoin.

Ms. Lewis stated there may be satellite parking where people park offsite and shuttles or buses bring them into downtown.

Ms. Dannenfelser stated they are looking at paving the property on Fifth Avenue North for parking.

Ms. Rose stated that the Wayfinding subcommittee also talked about this area being an excellent location to sign for the Historic Cemeteries.

Ms. Weisinger requested to know when that would be done.

Ms. Rose stated the project is slated for spring or summer or happening very soon.

- **Historic Cemeteries**

Ms. Rose stated the Historic Cemeteries Subcommittee was supposed to meet today and apologizes that it cannot. Ms. Rose stated it is just not a good idea right now to convene to clean burial markers for the demonstration we wanted to give and have moved that to September. Ms. Rose stated she and Mr. Walker talked and wanted to know if there were any suggestions to keep the momentum moving.

Mr. Walker stated from a signage standpoint, we have put together a draft of Cemetery Rules and Regulations and was open to any suggestions on amendments. Mr. Walker addressed Ms. Lewis' earlier comment on pets in the cemeteries and how the Rules and Regulations can address that.

Ms. Rose stated that the commission can uniquely provide expertise to the Parks Department and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on how to preserve and maintain these cemeteries. Ms. Rose stated the Parks Department would like to move forward with creating Rules and Regulations because it is really important to post those for the public to see. Ms. Rose this would be a good time to look these Rules and Regulations and see if there is anything that needs to be worked on, amended, or supplemented. Ms. Rose said they would need to be printed and installed in the cemeteries.

Ms. Pearce stated she would suggest removing pine trees and planting more traditional Middle Tennessee trees.

Mr. Stillings stated the Boy Scouts, specifically the Eagle Scouts, have asked for a volunteer projects with which to assist.

Ms. Lewis requested to know if information can be added to these signs to provide direction to people who are interested in donating money to the cemeteries.

Ms. Rose stated she would talk to Ms. Fincher later offline.

Mr. Gant stated the Parks Department should be commended for the great work.

Mr. Perry requested to know if there are any plans to install a barrier between the parking lot and that side of the cemetery.

Ms. Rose stated she and Mr. Walker met with Engineering to discuss how the parking lot would tie into the cemetery to make sure it was going to be appropriate and seamless and know what kind of material would be used.

Mr. Walker stated a barrier or landscaping is not part of the paving project right now but will be looked at later date. Mr. Walker stated a decorative fence has been discussed as a barrier.

Ms. Rose stated that would have to be discussed more, as it would involve the Historic Zoning Commission and the Civil War Historical Commission.

The stone wall was discussed on the north side.

Mr. Simms stated he was curious about the landscaping and thought it included landscaping.

Ms. Rose stated the Engineering Department is not bidding it out with the paving from her understanding from the last time she discussed it with Mr. Holzen, but she stated it would include the installation of landscaping as a separate billing through the Parks Department.

Mr. Simms stated he thought he saw on the drawing some type of walkway from the parking lot to the cemetery.

Ms. Rose stated there would be some type of paved walkway provided.

Ms. Rose requested to know if looking at the Rules and Regulations are worth looking over for a summer project.

The commissioners agreed.

Ms. Rose noted that there would be no Historic Cemeteries subcommittee meeting today.

Mr. Simms stated he wanted some clarification on number 20.

Ms. Rose read number 20, which concerned clean up of vases, flags, etc.

Mr. Walker explained number 20, stating when things become old and deteriorated, the Parks Department would do a cleaning to remove tattered things.

Ms. Rose stated this is why we need feedback, to provide more clarity.

3. Consideration of Federal Line Marker Subcommittee Members.

Ms. Finch thanked all the subcommittees for their hard work.

Ms. Finch stated this item was discussed extensively.

Ms. Rose stated that Mr. Stillings apologized that he had to step off the meeting due to a conflict.

Ms. Rose stated she did talk about this and the City would like to see some BOMA support on proceeding with this proposal. Ms. Rose stated that the commission voted to set up a subcommittee at the last meeting but that the members were not yet selected. Ms. Rose stated that the subcommittee's purpose would be to determine if there is still funding and how that funding would move forward into the next year, determine the cost of the project, and to take a conceptual map to the BOMA for consideration that shows locations on public property and those on private property requiring easements. Ms. Rose requested to know who wanted to be on the subcommittee.

Mr. Gant stated he is very interested in this moving forward and that by all means we need to have our Alderman representative on this committee.

Mr. Huffman suggested Mr. Eric Jacobson join this subcommittee. Mr. Huffman stated that he is willing to serve if needed and suggested doing some promotions and education on what we're trying to accomplish.

Alderman Speedy stated he would serve.

Mr. Gant stated he had a concept drawing of the proposed marker to share.

Ms. Rose stated she would be happy to share that.

Mr. Gant stated he would send to Ms. Rose.

Ms. Rose explained the process ahead with TDOT and the City.

Discussion ensued about the high-level support needed from BOMA that would be followed then by detailed analysis of signage afterward.

Mr. Buckner stated he is willing to serve on the subcommittee.

Mr. Perry moved to make a motion to create Federal Line Marker Subcommittee with Mr. Huffman, Mr. Gant, Mr. Jacobson, Alderman Speedy, Mr. Buckner, and Rachael Finch as members of the subcommittee. Ms. Pearce seconded the motion, and the motion carried 12-0, with Mr. Bacon, Ms. Lewis, and Mr. Stillings having left the meeting early.

4. Parks Department Updates.

Mr. Walker stated they have been awarded a Federal Preservation Grant regarding the preservation of ironwork at the cemetery and will be talking to some folks from the State this afternoon.

5. Organizations Announcements.

Ms. Pearce stated the Spivey House will be demolished in a couple of days, but the flooring will be going into the McLemore House. Ms. Pearce stated the African American Heritage Society received a grant for \$25,000 from the Tennessee Historical Commission for the exterior of the McLemore House, and during this pandemic, they have raised another \$25,000, and they have

another \$20,000 committed. Ms. Pearce stated they are working with Ford Classic Homes and Bill Powell to do the exterior work.

Ms. Dannenfels noted there had been no call-ins and no emails from the public.

6. Adjourn.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Acting Secretary