

## METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)

### MINUTES

December 13, 2021

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held a meeting at the Sonny West Conference Center—Fulton Campus on December 13, 2021, with Commission Chair Lynn Maddox presiding.

**Commissioners Present:** Chair Lynn Maddox; Jhennifer Amundson, Clay Bailey, Menié Bell, Pamela Bobo, Christopher Cotton, Don Cusic, Jim Hoobler, Jane Landers, William McKee, Gerry Searcy, and E. Thomas Wood **were present.**

**Staff Members Present:** Tim Walker, Robin Zeigler, Caroline Eller, Jessica Reeves, Scarlett Miles, and Susie Pallas

**Guests Present:** Metro Attorney Ann Mikkelsen, Michelle Johnson, Amber Hale

Chair Lynn Maddox called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m. after verifying that a quorum was present. She welcomed new Commissioner Jane Landers and Michelle Johnson and Amber Hale from the Nashville YWCA.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *Lynn Maddox*

Chair Maddox presented the November minutes for approval. Commissioner Cotton made a motion to approve the minutes, Commissioner Hoobler provided a second, and the November minutes were unanimously approved.

#### HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Reeves*

Jessica presented the marker for Dr. Josie Wells, which is privately funded by Meharry Medical College and will be placed on Dr. D.B. Todd Blvd in front of Hubbard Hospital. There will be text on one side and a graduation photo of Dr. Wells on the other. Commissioner McKee asked for clarification about the photo caption wording. Commissioner Hoobler made a motion to approve the marker, Commissioner Cusic provided a second, and the Dr. Josie Wells marker was unanimously approved.

The next marker was presented for Blue Triangle YWCA, which is privately funded by the Nashville YWCA and will be placed at 1708 Pearl Street. Jessica stated that she received a letter of support from the property owner. Commissioner Amundson asked about the meaning of Blue Triangle in the name. Michelle Johnson said the blue triangle is the international symbol for the YWCA, and locations for African Americans were called “blue triangle branches” in the segregated South. Commissioner Bailey made a motion to approve the marker, Commissioner Hoobler provided a second, and the Blue Triangle YWCA marker was unanimously approved.

## *NCCA UPDATE – Jim Hoobler*

Commissioner Hoobler gave an updated about the NCCA.

### **The new board will take office in January.**

Jeff Sellers – President

Zada Law – Vice President

Leslee Hughes – Treasurer

Richard White – Recording Secretary

### **New Board Members**

Todd Breyer

Dr, Brandon Owen

Mary Skinner

Claudette Stager

Richard White

### **Retiring Board Members**

Terry Jackson

Madeline Artibee

John Allyn

Linda Wynn

Paul White

Randall Lantz, with Metro Parks, has committed to plant replacement trees for the Arboretum and to remove the brush pile at the back wall of the City Cemetery. In addition, the Arboretum will have new labels made for the trees, the website will be updated, and the City Sites tour app has been renewed. Ridley Wills will be autographing his books at Commissioner Hoobler's home from 2:00-4:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. Chair Maddox thanked Tim for starting the NCCA and helping it grow. Tim called out the efforts of other MHC staff and NCCA members who have been instrumental in preserving and improving the City Cemetery over the past 20+ years. Commissioner Hoobler mentioned that Sean is currently asking for bids for tombstone cleaning and repairs. The NCCA is also in the process of fundraising to relocate Judge John Haywood's remains to the City Cemetery. Commissioner McKee asked if others were buried with him and if their remains would also be moved. Commissioner Hoobler said they will do the archaeology and are hoping to raise enough money to move all remains to the City Cemetery. They currently have raised about \$10,000 of the original estimated need of \$15,000. Tim also mentioned that Sean is working with former Mayor Purcell to find a plot for him and his wife at the City Cemetery.

## *FRIENDS OF FORT NEGLEY UPDATE – Chris Cotton*

Commissioner Cotton said that the site looks beautiful with flags representing the workers who built the site and new plantings. A new board was elected at the annual meeting in November. It is a very exciting time with the start of the master plan process-- two of the community meetings have been held and the other work continues. Commissioner Cotton encouraged all commissioners to participate in the master plan process. The financials look good for the group, and Dr. Angela Sutton has recently secured two grants. Commissioner

Bailey noted the recent work by Metro Parks to clear brush and overgrowth at Fort Negley. Commissioner Bell inquired about the timeline of the master plan. Commissioner Cotton stated that it is currently in phase two, which involves information gathering. They plan to present to the MHC at the February meeting when commissioners will be able to ask specific questions to Hodgson Douglas Landscape Architects. The plan should be completed by June or July, and Tim said HDLA can present the plan to both commissions if desired.

#### *SUNNYSIDE UPDATE – Tim Walker*

The LEED application and design documents are completed and have been forwarded to Metro Procurement. A schedule has been set, which includes dates for the RFP for a general contractor going out on January 5<sup>th</sup>, the evaluation committee choosing the general contractor on March 7<sup>th</sup>, and construction starting at the beginning of April. The ability to start construction quickly will be an important consideration during the evaluation process. Tim clarified for Commissioner McKee that the road access work and building construction will most likely happen simultaneously. In response to Commissioner Cotton's question, he stated that staff will be working at the office during construction. Commissioner Bailey reiterated appreciation to the Mayor for pushing this project forward. Commissioner Bell expressed gratitude to Commissioner Bailey for his efforts.

#### *DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Tim Walker*

Tim began his report with the Preservation Awards information. Scarlett distributed nomination forms and stated that commissioners may submit nominations for [honor awards](#) (Commissioners Award, Achievement Award, Fletch Coke Award) through Friday, January 28, 2022. Plans for the awards program have not been set yet (live vs. virtual, location, judges, etc.), but we will be sure to advise the commission as those details fall into place. Scarlett will meet with the Events/Special Projects and Nominations Committees in February to review nominations. Commissioner Bell asked if committees will be restructured and new commissioners added. Tim stated that committees will be discussed at the spring retreat and Chair Maddox will name any needed before then. Council approved RS2021-1201, the Mayor's Capital Spending Plan (CSP) earlier this week. The CSP included funding for: Second Avenue-related improvements, architectural design fees for an event venue at the Two Rivers Mansion site (the event center was a recommendation in the Two Rivers Master Plan, a document funded by a Tennessee Historical Commission preservation grant that the MHC received a few years ago); purchase of 88 Hermitage Avenue, which was supported by the MHC with a letter sent to Metro Council and the Mayor's Office; and repairs to stonework at Fort Negley that includes the sally port, north exterior wall and portions of the east interior wall. In conclusion, Tim gave further details about Historic Nashville Inc.'s "Nashville Nine" annual list of endangered historic properties. Commissioner McKee inquired about the chances of the Patton Brothers Funeral Home being saved and if there is a historical marker at the site for Zema Hill. Tim said it is not eligible for the National Register and Jessica said there is not a historical marker for Zema Hill, but a profile was written for him for the Nashville Conference on African American History and Culture. Conversation continued between Commissioners Bobo, Searcy and McKee about the history of the funeral home. Commissioner Bell expressed interest in finding funding for a marker for Zema Hill. Chair Maddox asked for details about the 41<sup>st</sup> annual Nashville Conference on African American History and Culture. Caroline and Tim continue to work with conference

committee co-chairs MHC Commissioner Wynn and MHZC Commissioner Dr. Lea Williams on planning and arrangements for the event to be held Friday, February 11, 2022. We have 7 presenters lined up for this event, and as of this week have begun pre-recording their sessions with the assistance of Metro IT Services. We have secured Mayor Cooper for remarks at the event. The conference theme will be “Pioneers, Politics, and Preservation.” We are in conversation with the new National Museum of African American Music in hopes that they can provide a virtual tour. We are also working to secure entertainment for the event and are looking at TSU poetry group Soul Fire and the TSU Jazz Collegians as options, in addition to a local spoken word artist. The \$20 tickets will be available by mail and online in January. Chair Maddox highlighted Scarlett’s name change report for the renaming of Woodruff Street to David McMurry Way (BL2021-1025). Commissioner Bell asked about street name change procedures and Tim stated that this request came from CM VanReece to honor David McMurry, who was a community leader who passed away this year.

### **HISTORIC ZONING REPORT – Robin Zeigler**

Robin thanked The Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU for funding intern Meredith Funderburk’s work. Her projects included architectural resource surveys for Cleveland Park and the expansion area for the Bowling House District. She also put together a short history for the Haynes Manor neighborhood in Councilmember Toomb’s district. Meredith will be presenting her work to the MHC at the January meeting. Robin reported that the MHZC case file scanning project is almost done. Once this project is complete, it will free up office space and, more importantly, enable staff and the public to access previous design review case files quickly. Three pieces of legislation related to the MHZC were passed by Metro Council. They are BL2021-903- expansion of the Bowling House Neighborhood Conservation District; BL2021-621- a moratorium on permits within potential overlays once the application has been filed, which will provide more protection than the current legislation; and BL2021-843- creation of a Historic Signage Landmark District (HSLD). The HSLD is a new tool that allows for the landmarking of a historic sign only, rather than a sign landmarked along with a building. In addition, CM Murphy is working on legislation to require notice for any project going before MHZC. As of now, staff opposes this legislation because it would eliminate administrative permits, which account for 67% of permits issued each year. Districts and applicants appreciate administrative permits, so staff will continue to work with CM Murphy on this.

### **TASK FORCE COMMITTEE REPORT – Clay Bailey**

Commissioner Bailey thanked the task force members and stated that the committee has completed its work and hope that the result will be constructive for the MHC. The committee will distribute the recommendations in January, and the commission will discuss and vote on them at the March meeting. He thanked the Metro Attorneys for their guidance throughout the process.

Commissioner Wood asked if a letter of support for BL2021-1016, which names the landing and steps in front of the Historic Metropolitan Courthouse in honor of Diane Nash, was sent to Metro Council. Tim said it was and CM VanReece expressed her appreciation in an email back to us. At Commissioner McKee’s request, Commissioner Landers introduced herself and provided details about her work and interests. Commissioner Cotton said that Dr.

Landers was instrumental in the UNESCO designation of Fort Negley. Commissioner Bell expressed appreciation for being part of a commission with so many experienced and knowledgeable people.

Chair Maddox reminded everyone that the January and February meetings will be held on the fourth Mondays because of the government holidays. Commissioner McKee wished everyone Happy Holidays.

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Hoobler moved to adjourn, and Commissioner Cusic seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, January 13, 2022.

*Susie Pallas*