

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 28, 2022

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held a meeting at the Sonny West Conference Center—Fulton Campus on February 28, 2022, with Commission Chair Lynn Maddox presiding.

Commissioners Present: Chair Lynn Maddox, Vice-Chair Linda Wynn, Jhennifer Amundson, Clay Bailey, Menié Bell, Pamela Bobo, John Bridges, Christopher Cotton, Don Cusic, Jane Landers, Laura Rost, and Gerry Searcy **were present.**

Staff Members Present: Robin Zeigler, Jessica Reeves, Scarlett Miles, Caroline Eller, Sean Alexander and Ann Mikkelson (legal counsel)

Guests Present: Carole Bucy (county historian), Richie Jones, Tim Netsch, Bea Thompson, Cyril Stewart

Chair Lynn Maddox called the meeting to order at approximately 12:02 p.m. after verifying that a quorum was present. She read a prepared statement regarding the role of the Metropolitan Historical Commission which included a response by Director Walker.

Chair Maddox's statement follows:

As the Chair of the Metro Historical Commission – I want to take a few minutes at the beginning of this Commission Meeting to review why this Commission was established. The purpose of the historical commission is to preserve, promulgate, and promote the accurate history of Davidson County. Each of us has been appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the Metro Council. We all know that along with this great honor comes great responsibility. It is imperative that we remember to always act, and to behave at all times, professionally and with the decorum expected and required by our roles.

The last two years with pandemic protocols and the last year with the work of the Task Force reviewing a citizen complaint has caused a difficult and challenging environment for the commission and the staff to navigate. Now that we are able to meet in person again and now that the Task Force has issued its recommendations – it is my most passionate and ardent wish that we enter a new space moving forward. That with a new determination and a renewed energy, we embrace our roles as Commissioners and continue supporting staff's effort in the preservation, promulgation, and promotion of Nashville's history.

I hope that all commission members will join me in this commitment to productive and professional dialogue and working relationships with each other, the Historical Commission staff, and all our partners. I have spoken to our executive director, Tim Walker, who is joining me in this commitment from the staff and he has asked that I share his message...

I appreciate Chair Maddox's statement of support and commitment to professionalism. I share in her desire to move forward in a new space that's dedicated to historic preservation and the promulgation and promotion of our city's history and culture, and I commit staff and me to do the same.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *Lynn Maddox*

Chair Maddox presented the January minutes for approval. Commissioner Cotton made a motion to approve the minutes, Vice-chair Wynn provided a second, and the January minutes were unanimously approved.

Chair Maddox welcomed Commissioner Laura Rost to the board, acknowledged the reappointment of Commissioner Cusic, and recognized guests from the Historic Zoning Commission and Friends of Fort Negley.

HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Reeves*

Reeves presented the proposed two-sided marker for United Record Pressing. Core Development funded this and two other markers, including the Dudley Park marker in the Wedgewood-Houston neighborhood. Vice-chair Wynn made a motion to approve the United Record Pressing marker, Commissioner Cusic provided a second, and the marker was unanimously approved.

PRESERVATION AWARDS – *Scarlett Miles*

Miles provided an update regarding the deadline for architectural awards nominations, which was moved to Monday, March 7, and the committee meeting for the honor awards. The Nominations and Events/Special Projects committees, which met on February 2, nominate Ridley Wills II and Brian Tibbs for the Achievement Award, Robbie Jones for the Fletch Coke Award, The DISTRICT for the Commissioners' Award, and Dr. Carole Bucy for the Leadership in History Award. Commissioner Cusic moved to approve the recommendation for the award winners. Commissioner Rost provided a second, and the motion was unanimously approved.

CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE – *Linda Wynn*

Commissioner Wynn thanked all those involved with making the conference a success and provided an overview. Commissioner Bell said she provided the feedback that she couldn't hear the music part of the conference and Eller addressed the possible issue. Chair Maddox noted that the conference had nearly 200 people in attendance.

HISTORIC ZONING REPORT – *Robin Zeigler*

Zeigler explained that public records requests will be included in their monthly reports.

Melissa Baldock and Kelli Mitchell led the MHZC's Contractors Training Class on February 24, 2022. Sixty people attended and a survey will be sent to them to collect their recommendations for improvement.

Jeff Zeitlin, with Martin Construction Company has had multiple projects in the Salemtown district. As a way to give back to the community, he donated funding for a historic marker in the Salemtown neighborhood.

The Metro-wide website was recently updated and the organization of our section was also changed. We are working with ITS and hope to have the department's pages reorganized in a more user-friendly way within the next 2-3 months.

Staff is often requested to be guest speakers regarding local preservation. In March, Melissa Baldock will give a guest lecture (via Zoom) to a New York University undergraduate class, Case Studies in Historic Preservation. Baldock will discuss the ins and out of how historic preservation is practiced in Nashville. As the students, professor, and most of the guest lecturers are NYC-based, this will be the students' opportunity to learn about preservation in a mid-sized city and the preservation of single-family neighborhoods. Robin Zeigler will be co-presenting with Phil Thomason of Thomason and Associates about the Second Ave bombing at the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) conference this July in Ohio. She will also be giving a free-to-NAPC-membership legal webinar with Associate Director of the Metro Legal Department, Lora Fox.

FORT NEGLEY MASTER PLAN UPDATE – *Richie Jones and Tim Netsch*

Sean Alexander introduced presenters for an update on the Fort Negley Master Plan: Tim Netsch, Metro Parks and Richie Jones, Hodgson Douglas Landscape Architects, lead consultant. Jones said they have worked on the project for six months and are at the end of their discovery phase, which included meeting with approximately 12 stakeholder groups. They have had two community events which resulted in 960 comments received, 140 participants and 26 memories shared. He noted each of their team members and provided context for the site. They are going to start unveiling some ideas for feedback soon. The third phase, delivery phase, will be this summer.

Chair Maddox recognized current and past Fort Negley board members who were present and acknowledged Dr. Landers for her work on the UNESCO designation. Jones provided an overview of the stakeholders, partners, and outreach, in response to questions from Commissioners Bell and Wynn. Stakeholder/partner groups include but are not limited to: Friends of Fort Negley, Fort Negley Technical Advisory Committee, African American Cultural Alliance, Fort Negley Advisory Committee, Adventure Science Center, Vanderbilt University, MTSU, TDOA, Council Member Colby Sledge, and several Metro departments including Parks, Historical, Stormwater, and Planning.

Jones expressed their hope to revise the National Register nomination to include the entire site, not just the fort, and expand the history. Alexander said they have begun discussions with the Tennessee Historical Commission regarding a potential revision.

Historic Zoning Commissioner Stewart said the exciting part is the larger vision and the opportunity to expose more of the multiple stories the site has to tell. Tim Netsch said that part of their strategy is to identify supplemental funding sources to sustain the site long term in the areas of regular maintenance, repair, and interpretation. Commissioner Cotton

encouraged all commissioners to be involved. Commissioner Bailey noted that a contraband camp cemetery in Alexandria, Virginia might help to inform the recommendation and he asked if other sites have been identified. Jones said there were and that some are good examples of how they have been maintained and others how they have been interpreted.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Bucy said that Nashville 103 is in the works for April. It will be 4 sessions starting with the end of WWII and will include the formation of the Metropolitan Government.

Chair Maddox reminded everyone about the Executive Committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow, March 1, at Sunnyside.

Commissioner Rost provided an overview of the upcoming MHC Foundation fundraiser at Fisk University, Jubilee Hall, on March 3.

Commissioner Bailey said that multiple organizations will need to work together on fundraising for Fort Negley.

Commissioner Amundson asked if there are any responses to the crisis in Ukraine.

Commissioner Cotton noted that Robert Hicks passed away last week. He was a great warrior in the literary world and also served on the Fort Negley board. Vice-chair Wynn said that he was also a member of the Tennessee Historical Commission.

Commissioner Bell spoke about the need for forgiveness and peace.

Commissioner Cusic expressed excitement about the United Record Pressing historical marker.

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Cusic moved to adjourn, and Vice-chair Wynn seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, March 14, 2022,

Robin Zeigler