

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)

MINUTES

July 18, 2022

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held a meeting at the Metro Nashville Police Department's Mid-Town Precinct Community Room on July 18, 2022, with Commission Chair Lynn Maddox presiding.

Commissioners Present: Chair Lynn Maddox, Vice-Chair Linda Wynn, Menié Bell, Pamela Bobo, Jim Hoobler, Dr. Bill McKee, Laura Rost, Gerry Searcy, and Thomas E. Wood **were present.**

Staff Members Present: Executive Director Tim Walker, Dustin Summers, Jessica Reeves, and Alex Dickerson (legal counsel) **were present.**

County Historian: Dr. Carole Bucy **was not present.**

Guests Present: Dr. Lea Williams (Nashville Social Justice Sites presentation) **was present.**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME – *Lynn Maddox*

Chair Lynn Maddox called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m. after verifying that a quorum was present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *Lynn Maddox*

Chair Maddox presented the June meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Rost made a motion to approve, and Vice-Chair Wynn provided a second. The commission unanimously approved the June minutes.

III. GUEST SPEAKER – *Dr. Learotha Williams*

- a) PRESENTATION: Nashville Social Justice Sites
 - i. Dr. Learotha Williams, Jr. made a presentation on Nashville's social justice sites based on the book he co-edited with Amie Thurber that is titled I'll Take You There: Exploring Nashville's Social Justice Sites.

IV. HISTORICAL MARKERS REVIEW

- a) Bettie Mae Page
 - i. PROPOSED LOCATION: Hume-Fogg High School
 - ii. TEXT: [479 characters and spaces]
*"Bettie Mae Page
1923-2008
One of six children, Bettie Mae Page graduated from Hume-Fogg High School (1940) and George Peabody College (1944) before moving to New*

York to work as a model and actress. She became one of the most-photographed pinup models of the 1950s and retired from public life in 1957. Page became an evangelical Christian and maintained a reclusive lifestyle, though she developed an underground cult following and was hailed as a feminist icon prior to her death in Los Angeles in 2008.”

- iii. QUESTION: Commissioner Rost inquired about the placement of the marker and asked that consideration be taken for the possibility of future markers’ placement, as in the case of Dinah Shore who also attended Hume-Fogg High School.
 - iv. MOTION: Commissioner Wynn moved to have the existing verbiage approved without any alteration, Commissioner Rost provided a second, and the Commission voted unanimously in favor of approving this marker.
- b) Enchanted Hills neighborhood
- i. PROPOSED LOCATION: Enchanted Hills
 - ii. TEXT: [476 characters and spaces, REVISED]
*“Enchanted Hills neighborhood, Kings Lane
Called the “Belle Meade of North Nashville” by local newspapers, the Enchanted Hills subdivision was platted between 1962 and 1989 as one of Nashville’s most prestigious African American neighborhoods. The architect-designed “ultra-modern” houses retain striking Mid-Century Modern and Contemporary architecture. Neighbors fought for decades to preserve this unique neighborhood from development, including a 1986 effort led by resident and future state senator Thelma Harper.”*
 - iii. AMENDMENT #1: Commissioners noted that “state” and “senator” needs to be capitalized.
 - iv. AMENDMENT #2: Commissioners opted to change *“Neighbors fought for decades to preserve this unique neighborhood from development, including a 1986 effort led by resident and future state senator Thelma Harper.”* TO READ AS *“Neighbors fought for decades to preserve this unique neighborhood from development, including a 1986 effort led by Council Member and future State Senator Thelma Harper.”*
 - v. MOTION: Commissioner Wynn moved that the amended language be applied to this marker and approved, Commissioner Hoobler provided a second and the Commission voted unanimously in favor of approving this marker with revisions.
- c) Woodcuts Gallery
- i. PROPOSED LOCATION: 1613 Jefferson St.
 - ii. TEXT: [478 characters and spaces]
*“Woodcuts Gallery
Woodcuts Gallery and Custom Framing opened on September 18, 1987. Owner Nathaniel Harris leased the building from Fisk University and spent five months renovating the dilapidated building. A founding member of Jefferson United Merchants Partnership (J.U.M.P.), the business was instrumental in revitalizing the historic Jefferson Street corridor. Woodcuts was a hub for artists like Ludie Amos, Michael McBride, Phil Ponder, Gregory Ridley, Jamaal Sheats and James Threallkill.”*
 - iii. AMENDMENT: Commissioners opted to have the address “1613 Jefferson St.” removed from the text due to matters of observational redundancy.
 - iv. MOTION: Commissioner Wynn moved that the amended language be applied to this marker and approved, Commissioner Bell provided a second and the Commission voted unanimously in favor of approving this marker.

- d) COMMENT: Commissioner Bell informed MHC that they will soon be contacted about having a historical marker placed at the Boyd House.
- e) QUESTION: Commissioners inquired about the status of the previously approved Dudley Field and Samuel Smith historical markers, to which Jessica provided relative order/delivery/installation information on those and other markers.
- f) QUESTION: Commissioners inquired about the Samuel Smith lynching tree and its long-term health to which Jessica noted that the adjacent church has no plans to do anything in the area around the tree and that an arborist has stated that the tree is still healthy. Jessica went on to note that she has learned that most tree species in the Nashville/Davidson County area have a roughly 120-year lifespan.
- g) NOTICE:
 - i. Percy Priest Lake marker has been installed.
 - ii. Antioch High School marker is pending installation.
 - iii. Hillsboro High School marker is pending installation.
 - iv. Jesse DeMoss marker is pending installation.

V. DIRECTOR’s REPORT– *Tim Walker*

- a) MHC Executive Director, Tim Walker updated the Commission on the following projects that MHC is currently working on.
 - i. Historical Markers
 - ii. Nashville Sites
 - iii. National Trust for Historic Preservation Grant
 - iv. Fort Negley Park
 - v. Nashville City Cemetery
 - vi. Cemetery Survey Grant
 - vii. History of Metro
 - viii. Scruggs Cemetery
 - ix. NPS African American Civil Rights Grant
 - x. General & Research
 - xi. The Representative John Lewis Way Annual March on July 23
 - xii. Sunnyside Renovations
 - xiii. Metro’s FY23 Budget for MHC
 - xiv. Highlander Folk School
 - a) QUESTION: Commissioner McKee inquired if the Highlander Folk School tour would be open to others and encouraged MHC to invite Dr. John Peters of the University of Tennessee who has worked towards preservation on the Highlander Folk School. Tim said he would follow up with Dr. Peters.
- b) ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE: The full MHC Director’s Report is available for review upon request, if needed.

VI. HISTORIC ZONING REPORT – *Tim Walker (proxy for Robin Zeigler)*

June Metrics	June 2022	Average Monthly Goals for FY22
Inquiries	175	163

Permits	61	63
Inspections	125	158
Sign Offs Not Within an Overlay	28	
Mandatory Referral	16	

Legal Updates: Defense counsel did not appear in Court to dispute Metro's findings regarding ATM and T1-11 siding installed at 313 Broadway. Referee Hirsch requested Metro submit an order and will grant our request that the ATM and unpermitted siding be removed. An appealed decision of the MHZC regarding a violation, at 3708 Richland was upheld by the courts, but the applicant has appealed the court's decision.

July 1st was the first deadline for the Historic Property Tax Abatement Program, and the MHZC will review those applications at its July 20 meeting. Three applications were received with a total improvement value of \$23,650,000; however, the Program has a \$10,000,000 cap. After discussions last week with CM Syracuse, the sponsor of the program's enabling legislation (BL2019-3), he and Tim met with Mayor Cooper and got his support to raise the cap. We're currently working with Metro Legal and the CM to file legislation next week that will raise the cap to at least 20 million and create a separate funding source for buildings with disaster-related damage (bombing, flood, or tornado).

Earlier this month, Robin attended a College Hill neighborhood meeting with CM Taylor to educate the community on Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlays, as they've been exploring this option as a way to manage growth.

Section 106 – 12 projects reviewed in the last month

VII. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Commissioner Maddox noted that Jessica is working on the Civil Rights driving tour. Jessica noted that it will be going live soon and thanked Commissioner Wynn for her assistance in the tour's production.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

- a) Commissioner McKee made a motion to adjourn at 1:03 P.M. and Commissioner Wynn provided a second.

Respectfully submitted, July 18, 2022,

Dustin G. Summers