

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES

July 17, 2023

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held a meeting in the Community Room of the Midtown Hills Police Precinct on July 17, 2023, with Chair Linda Wynn presiding.

Commissioners Present: Dr. Clay Bailey, E. Menié Bell, Dr. Celso Castilho, Dr. Don Cusic, Jim Hoobler, Dr. Jane Landers, Lynn Maddox, Dr. Bill McKee, Dr. Marisa Richmond, Laura Rost, E. Thomas Wood, and Linda Wynn **were present.**

Staff Members Present: Tim Walker, Robin Zeigler, Caroline Eller, Dr. Adam Fracchia, Russell LeSturgeon, Scarlett Miles, Jessica Reeves, and Tara Stewart (Metro Legal) **were present.**

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

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME – *Linda Wynn*

- a) Chair Wynn called the meeting to order at approximately 12:02 p.m. after verifying that a quorum was present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *Linda Wynn*

- a) Chair Wynn presented the June 2023 meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Bell made a motion to approve, and Commissioner Cusic provided a second. The commission unanimously approved the June 2023 minutes.

III. MHC COMMITTEES – *Linda Wynn/Tim Walker*

- a) MHC committees have been restructured, and presently, there are two committees with vacancies. Members of the new Human Resources and Budget Committee are Commissioners Wynn (ex officio), Rost, Richmond, and Bell (serving as the MHZC representative). Chair Wynn asked for a volunteer to join this committee. Commissioner Maddox volunteered to serve for one month (the remainder of her term).
- b) Additionally, Chair Wynn would like another commissioner to join the Historical Marker Committee. Chair Wynn will continue to attend the meetings but will serve as an ex officio member. Commissioner Landers will be the new committee chair. Committee members are Commissioners Bailey, Bridges, Castilho, Hoobler, Landers, and Wood. Commissioner Maddox volunteered to serve on this committee for the remainder of her term.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- a) Jessica Reeves opened the floor for Public Comment. No members of the public were in attendance and requesting time to speak.

V. HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Reeves*

a) VOTE: 1811 House

Friends of Warner Parks (FOWP) is sponsoring this marker, which will be located at the Hodge House near Chickering Road and Old Hickory Boulevard. FOWP and MHC agreed to title the marker “1811 House.” Commissioner Hoobler made a motion to approve the marker, Commissioner Maddox provided a second, and the marker was unanimously approved.

b) VOTE: Joseph “Yusef” Harris 1955-2022

This marker will be located at Harris’s Alkebu-Lan Images Bookstore near the intersection of John A. Merritt Blvd and Ed Temple Blvd. The family is sponsoring the marker; Reeves worked with Harris’s friend and son on the text. The marker will have text on one side. The second side of the marker will feature an image selected by the son. The location is a former gas station site, converted to a bookstore. Harris’s son is now operating the bookstore. Commissioner Richmond made a motion to approve the marker, Commissioner Rost provided a second, and the marker was unanimously approved.

c) Dedications are being planned for the following markers: Hank Snow’s Rainbow Ranch; Washington Jr. High School (sometime in October); United Record Pressing; Patton House/J.T. Patton; and Enchanted Hills.

d) SEWAH, fabricator of the historical markers, has a new online portal which allows users to check the status of marker production.

VI. GUEST SPEAKER – *Dr. Adam Fracchia*

a) TOPIC: “Community, Commemoration, and Forensic Aviation Archaeology”

MHC staff archaeologist Dr. Adam Fracchia spoke about his recent work leading a field school for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) in partnership with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). The summer program near Versailles, France, trains students in archaeological and forensic techniques through field work at the crash site of a U.S. military aircraft from World War II.

Along with answering questions about the field school, Fracchia also provided an update on the archaeology work in progress at Sevier Park and Sunnyside.

VII. DIRECTOR’S REPORT– *Tim Walker*

a) Director Walker highlighted a few items from the July 2023 Director’s Report:

- i. Acknowledgements: Director Walker expressed appreciation to all commissioners who attended the Ernest Rip Patton marker ceremony over the weekend (7/14). He recognized Commissioner Bell for participation in the Rep. John Lewis Way Annual March (7/15). He thanked Commissioner Hoobler for attending the 48 State Tour workshop at the Nashville City Cemetery (7/11), adding praise for presenter John Appell who did an incredible job demonstrating gravestone cleaning and repair techniques.

- ii. Upcoming Event: Reminder about the Metro at 60 Reception scheduled for tomorrow (7/18) at the Historic Metro Courthouse.
- iii. Sunnyside Updates: We will hold another tour of Sunnyside for commissioners later this fall or early winter. The shell is finished, and we will soon have more information from the site investigations.
- iv. Nashville City Cemetery Updates (NCC): Hope to hire the new position, NCC Site Manager, soon. Also, someone recently damaged wiring at the Keeble building, which will be costly to repair. Parks will cover the cost from their budget.
- v. Legislation for the County Historian scheduled for third Reading at Metro Council tomorrow night (7/18); anticipate approval before the end of this Council term. The legislation will enable this board to have a role in choosing future county historians.
- vi. Commissioners' Terms: Four commissioners (Bridges, Maddox, Searcy, and Wood) have terms ending in August. Metro Code will allow terms to be held over for 60 additional days. Anticipate new appointments once the new Metro Council is in place.
- vii. Questions from Commissioners: Commissioner Rost inquired about the site anomalies south and east of structures at Sunnyside [referenced in Dr. Fracchia's presentation]. Walker explained that we had some knowledge of this due to an early site plan from the 1930s/40s that showed some other structures. Fracchia added that we know what was there in the 20th century and are trying to figure out what was there in 19th century, especially those structures associated with enslaved people. Commissioner Wood asked if the plan includes a dining structure for food trucks. Walker responded yes, the carriage house is down now but is being salvaged and will be reconstructed. Parks is in discussions about leasing the space out as a café/coffeehouse; this will be a great amenity for the park.
- viii. Commissioner McKee remarked that he saw Chair Wynn's television appearance regarding the Morris Memorial Building and thought Chair Wynn represented the commission very well.

VIII. HISTORIC ZONING REPORT – *Robin Zeigler*

- a) Citizen's Historic Preservation Academy, fall 2023: The concept resembles programs offered by other departments. The academy will focus on Metro's involvement in preservation and will cover historic zoning, National Register of Historic Places, architectural styles, and historic research. It will take place at Metro sites and includes optional tours at some locations. It will also introduce some of our partners, including Tennessee Historical Commission, Historic Nashville, and Preservation Society of Nashville. The competitive application process for the small class is now open. MHC/MHZC staff has promoted the program through council members, neighborhood leaders, connections through historic zoning, Neighbor2Neighbor, Mayor's Office Dept. of Neighborhoods, and more. Commissioners are encouraged to promote the program. Chair Wynn expressed that this is great idea and hopes it will educate citizens on how the MHC works.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- a) None

X. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Commissioner Bailey thanked former Chair Maddox for her service, which Chair Wynn echoed. Commissioner Bell thanked incoming Chair Wynn and Vice-Chair Rost for their incoming leadership and collaboration with Historic Zoning. Commissioner Bell also thanked those commissioners with terms ending for their service.
- b) Director Walker presented Commissioner Maddox with a Certificate of Merit and Service in appreciation of her service as Chair of the Commission from June 2021 to June 2023.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wynn called for adjournment. Commissioner McKee made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Cusic provided a second. The meeting ended at approximately 12:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted Monday, August 21, 2023.

Scarlett C. Miles