

**Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
November 4, 2020
Held as a Virtual Meeting
via Remote Access Zoom Platform**

As stated on the agenda, due to the growing concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this meeting will be conducted as a Remote/Virtual Cultural District Committee meeting. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number, or citizens can participate by using the Zoom link provided on the agenda.

Members present: Nancy Schoen, John LoPresti, Pandora Carlucci, Roberta Trahan, Jamie Barrett, Evan Chelman, Amy Adams.

Members not present: None.

Also in attendance: Bryan Taberner, Planning & Community Development Director; Judith Lizardi, Recording Secretary.

Welcome

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 6:35 PM.

Chair Schoen stated that Committee members have been looking into the definition of a Cultural District partner to provide more clarity regarding who can be considered a partner. She discussed that pre-COVID, 67 Degrees Brewing Company probably would have sponsored many events in the District. Ms. Carlucci did research on the MCC website regarding their definition of a Cultural District partner; she explained their definition. She stated that based on that information, it seems clear that 67 Degrees Brewing would fit the definition of a Cultural District partner if they could sponsor a cultural event. As a result, she suggested that the Committee have some events that the organization could sponsor.

Mr. LoPresti suggested determining the guiding pulse of who is a partner and then determine where 67 Degrees Brewing fits in. The Committee needs to review the rules and be consistent. He said that if an organization is outside of the District, the only way they can become a partner is to do work in the District. Chair Schoen stated that an organization has to produce cultural programming within the District to be a cultural partner. Mr. Chelman asked what the penalties or ramifications are if the Committee had a moment of error and called an organization that did not fit the criteria a partner. Chair Schoen stated that each Cultural District is different and has different criteria. She agreed with Mr. LoPresti that there must be criteria to be a partner, and an organization must satisfy at least one of the criteria. She noted that 67 Degrees Brewing has worked very hard to collaborate with others. Mr. Chelman stated the Committee has a focus of putting businesses together who want to be partners. Ms. Trahan read the definition of a cultural partner from the MCC website. She stated that people, places, or groups outside of the Cultural District that meet the criteria and are doing that kind of programming should be allowed to be partners. She stated that anything the Committee can do to help any business is the right thing to do.

Chair Schoen defined the criteria for an organization to be a Cultural District partner: located in the Cultural District, or produce cultural programming in the Cultural District, or collaborate to create Cultural District programming with a partner. Mr. LoPresti confirmed that an organization must meet one or more of the criteria to be a partner.

Committee members discussed how to display the District partners and non-District partners on the website with the possibility of identifying the non-District partners as collaborating partners. Ms. Carlucci said she listens to conversations hosted by MCC and at the heart of the dialogue is welcoming, including, and supporting any organization that helps people involved in the arts. She stated that the Committee has to follow the rules, but should also provide platforms for those who are struggling in difficult times by giving them an umbrella under the Cultural District. She suggested putting the criteria on the website.

Chair Schoen discussed the Franklin Cultural Council grants. She reviewed the discussion at the last Committee meeting regarding holding events related to the Farmers' Market. She stated that it would be nice to support students involved in Franklin musical programs. She noted that there are also alumni who would be willing to perform. She stated that Ms. Trahan was going to reach out to The Black Box. She noted concern that the Committee must be careful if the FSPA is applying for their own grant as it could be considered double-dipping. Ms. Carlucci said that the application date was changing from November 16, 2020, to a date in December, so there is a little more time. She noted that the Committee has a \$1,000 budget. She asked how the Committee can do this and support the Franklin Cultural Council as the Committee does not want to marginalize any partners with the grants.

Facebook Live Virtual Events

Chair Schoen said the Committee must determine ideas for January, February, and March, and a little of the Committee's budget could be used to support those ideas, possibly with a \$300 stipend. She discussed having events filmed live at a Cultural District partner's establishment featuring a local artist or performer. Ms. Adams noted her experience with free events where she painted and talked. She suggested she could do a virtual paint-night class. She stated that she could also contact a friend to share their poetry, and she knows some musicians and a jazz band trio. Chair Schoen confirmed that Ms. Adams committed to the Facebook painting event for January. Ms. Trahan stated that she would provide an event for one of the three months and would get back to the Committee with information from Raye Lynn Mercer. Mr. Barrett said he could reach out to artists, as well. Mr. Chelman suggested having an application procedure where interested artists would need to pitch an idea. Chair Schoen stated that the timeline is too short for that approach this time. She confirmed with Mr. Barrett that he would be the performer for a live event for February. Committee members agreed the event duration should be 20 to 30 minutes. Ms. Carlucci noted that the Committee is reaching out to a large audience and letting people know the Committee is there for them.

Chair Schoen discussed that the four Cultural District signs arrived. She reached out to Town Administrator Jamie Hellen; the signs will not be installed until a later time. She noted that the Committee is partnering with the Town to determine the sign locations. She requested Committee members think about where to locate the signs; this can be discussed at the next Committee meeting. She noted the signs cannot be installed on private property. Mr. Taberner suggested having the signs located at all major roads entering the Cultural District. More signs can be made by DPW if needed. He noted the older District signs will be removed from their current locations and possibly installed near the Historical Museum. Discussion commenced regarding the limited choices provided by the State on the style/design/color of the signs. Ms. Carlucci said there will be a picture and information about the signs in the newsletter. Chair Schoen suggested putting this information on the website, as well.

Next Cultural District Meeting Dates

Thursday, November 19, 2020, 7:00 PM.

Monday, December 14, 2020, 7:00 PM

Next Cultural District Partners Meeting Date

Monday, January 11, 2021, 7:00 PM.

Adjourn

Motion by Chair Schoen to adjourn the Cultural District Meeting. Seconded by Ms. Trahan; voted and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary