

**Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
November 19, 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, Pandora Carlucci, Roberta Trahan, Jamie Barrett, Evan Chelman, Amy Adams.

Members not present: John LoPresti.

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

Welcome

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:03 PM.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2020, and November 4, 2020. Motion by Ms. Trahan to approve the October 26, 2020 meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Carlucci; voted and approved unanimously. Motion by Chair Schoen to approve the November 4, 2020 meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Carlucci; voted and approved unanimously.

Chair's Update (Nancy)

Chair Schoen stated that today she attended another MCC Community Check-in virtual event hosted by Mr. Luis Cotto; there were 13 participants. She stated there was much validation that other districts are struggling with the same issues as Franklin regarding the difficulties businesses and restaurants have been facing and finding creative ways to help these businesses going forward. She reviewed that some ways in which communities have focused on their downtown businesses include street art and small business Saturdays. She noted available grants regarding public art and street art from the Solomon Foundation and the Barr Foundation. She suggested that the Committee may want to look into these to bring visual arts to the forefront in Franklin. She stated that check-in participants discussed using hashtags; Mr. Cotto requested districts use the collective hashtag #MACulturalDistrict. She noted the importance of capitalizing the first letter of each word as it gives the hashtag more notoriety. She stated that including a photo provides the ability to tag 10 additional people. Mr. Barrett explained that using capital letters makes the hashtag easier to read. Chair Schoen stated that participants at the check-in discussed how some communities are using firepits in their downtown area. Other ideas to bring people to communities' downtown areas include Santa, tree lightings, Christmas tree decorating contests, and window decorating.

FCD Newsletter Details

Chair Schoen stated the fifth edition of the newsletter was published; Ms. Carlucci did a great job in editing and putting it together. The newsletter had a great deal of material in it; we would like to deliver the same content in a more concise way. Ms. Anne Marie Tracey is going to meet with the Committee after the holidays to provide some ideas from a marketing perspective. Ms.

Carlucci explained that she tried to be respectful of all the content that everyone sent to her; therefore, she included it all. She noted there are other newsletter formats that can be used. She explained that the shortest article in the newsletter was about The Little Shop of Olive Oils; it only had one picture and two short sentences. However, it received five clicks on the website; no other items in the newsletter received as many clicks. Possibly, the article was so brief that readers wanted to learn more, so they clicked on the link. Chair Schoen stated that there were 117 newsletter subscribers in June; there are now 167 subscribers with a 57 percent open rate. Mr. Barrett asked if he could share the newsletter with his Franklin public school colleagues at Jefferson and Davis Thayer. Ms. Carlucci said the newsletter is sent to many school employees already. She suggested Mr. Barrett ask his colleagues at the next faculty meeting if they would like to receive it. If so, she will input the faculty email addresses into Constant Contact. Mr. Barrett said he will let the Committee know after the next faculty meeting.

FCD Partners' Meeting January 11, 2021

Chair Schoen said that she spoke with Ms. Athena Pandolf, Executive Director of the Natick Center Cultural District, who agreed to be the guest speaker at the January 11, 2021, Partners Meeting. Chair Schoen asked if the Committee should reach out to partners to ask them what they would be interested in hearing about from Ms. Pandolf. Ms. Trahan suggested sending partners a bio and a link to Ms. Pandolf's information to get them interested. Chair Schoen agreed. Mr. Chelman said he would like to know about unique partnering situations that have worked out for Ms. Pandolf in Natick. Mr. Barrett stated that Natick Center is very attractive; their Farmers' Market takes up the entire common. He asked how do we get that in Franklin. Ms. Adams stated that she has been involved in the events at Natick. She reviewed the coordination process and set up for the vendors; vendors must pay \$25 to participate. Chair Schoen noted that Natick is a well-established cultural district which has allowed them to do so much. She suggested that public art might be something that Franklin would want to look into. She stated that Ms. Tracey has added a newsletter archive area and an online brochure to the website. She noted that Ms. Tracey was given the Cultural District's background and history, as well as the mission and goals; hopefully, she also will be working this into the website.

Upcoming Virtual Events

Chair Schoen stated the Cultural District grant deadline was moved to December. She reviewed a concern from the last Committee meeting. If a partner is independently applying for a grant from the MCC, and they are also going forward with a grant from the Committee which is provided by the MCC, it may jeopardize the partner's individual grant. Therefore, the Committee will use the grant funds for a mini-series that would focus on culinary arts, musical arts, and visual arts. The culinary arts section would be provided by La Cantina Winery; owner Bob Vozzella agreed to do a tour of the winery and a 30 minutes class on great wines made in Franklin. The musical arts section would be hosted by Brent Selby, a Franklin cellist who will be performing with an accompanist. The visual arts section will be represented by Ms. Amy Adams who will provide a painting night. Chair Schoen recommended that Mr. Barrett perform at Concerts on the Common on a Friday after the Farmers' Market.

Franklin Cultural Council Grant Deadline Extended (Pandora)

FCC/MCC Grants

Chair Schoen said the grant must be applied for by December with notification of the grant being given in February. Committee members discussed and agreed the mini-series events should be held monthly for three consecutive months on Thursday nights which will give the Committee time to promote the events. Committee members discussed archiving the virtual events. Mr. Chelman said he would send some information about Facebook Live to Chair Schoen so she could forward it to Mr. Selby to address his concerns.

Franklin Cultural District Partners & Calendar (All) - Meeting to Dos

Action plan to engage partners to utilize the FCD calendar

Chair Schoen said that currently, the radio station programming information and the Historical Museum information take up most of the calendar, and the calendar blocks are very tiny. She asked how the Committee can engage and encourage the partners to use the calendar feature on website. Ms. Trahan said that if partners would come to the partners meetings, the Committee would put some time into letting partners know that using the calendar is a way that they can help themselves. She asked if the Committee could go into the partners individual websites and pull their information into the Cultural District's calendar. Chair Schoen asked who is looking at the calendar section of the website and suggested that Ms. Tracey may be able to provide that information. She noted the website calendar has been a sticking point for the Committee for a long time. Ms. Carlucci noted that the calendar used to be all library programming and now it is all radio programming. She suggested that during the partners meeting they could share the screen to show the partners how vibrant and dynamic the website is and demonstrate the calendar. Ms. Adams agreed that the radio station information should be in one place as visually it is taking up the whole calendar. Ms. Trahan asked if there was so much radio programming content on the calendar because there was not much other content available.

Develop list of topics for January 11th Partners meeting for Athena (Pandora)

Chair Schoen asked if the Committee should reach out to the partners to see if they have any questions for guest speaker Ms. Athena Pandolf. Ms. Trahan agreed it may encourage partners to attend the meeting if they have questions.

Next Cultural District Meeting Dates

Monday, December 14, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. and Monday, January 11, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

Next Cultural District Partner Meeting Date

Monday, January 11, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Trahan stated she is on the Downtown Partnership committee regarding public art and downtown murals. She asked Ms. Adams if she could paint murals. Ms. Adams said yes.

Adjourn

Motion by Chair Schoen to adjourn the Cultural District Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Barrett; voted and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary