

TOWN OF FRANKLIN
TOWN CLERK
2019 JAN 29 9:40
RECEIVED

Franklin Cultural District Committee

Minutes of Meeting

December 10, 2018

Meeting held at Franklin Municipal Building, Room 205
355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA

Members present: Christopher Brady, Stacey David, John LoPresti, Philip Regan, Nancy Schoen, Tyler Warren.

Members not present: None.

Also in attendance: Planning & Community Development Director Bryan Taberner.

7:03 PM Commencement: Chairman Regan opened the meeting.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes.

• November 15, 2018, 7:00 PM Meeting. Motion by David to approve the November 15, 2018, Committee meeting minutes and Partnership meeting minutes. Seconded by LoPresti; voted and approved unanimously.

Updates.

• Filling Empty FCDC Seat. Regan said he has not heard from Jamie Hellen. Taberner said he talked to Mr. Hellen; they had someone they wanted to bring in, but the person turned it down. They do not want to advertise again, but they may end up doing so. There are a few other people they had thought about. He was going to talk to Jeff Nutting, but Mr. Nutting is on vacation. He suggested Regan speak to Mr. Hellen about this. Regan said he feels it needs to be advertised again. David said she thought from the last meeting with Mr. Hellen that he was going to post it again. Regan said he will get in touch with Mr. Hellen.

• Mass Cultural Council Application Status. Taberner said he talked with Luis who is assigned to the Town's application. Luis said they are going forward with the recommendation to the MCC to approve; they will be sending Taberner a report with a few small questions and then the report will go to MCC. Taberner said the one issue the consultant had was the size and the lack of walkability to the high school; however, the executive director said they need the high school. So, it will go to MCC as it is now. Taberner said MCC's meeting is in mid-January in Salem; it is about a three-hour meeting. It needs to be decided who will attend the meeting; he is going to go. Mr. Hellen was not sure if Mr. Nutting would attend. Taberner said he will ask Luis how many people usually attend. Regan said he will go. Taberner said he will let everyone know.

Sub-committee Updates.

• Partnership Sub-committee. November 15th Meeting Overview/Other: Schoen said it was a good meeting; the feedback was good and people's ears are open. David said it was a small meeting due to the snow. She said the brainstorming effort went well. Mary Olsson had good ideas; Caleigh Keating did not attend, but she has many ideas. David said the partners basically liked the ideas discussed and seemed to like the idea of tours in town. David said she will reach out to Ms. Keating who is going on maternity leave in March. Ms. Keating is trying to get all her programs done through the summer and has hired two assistant youth librarians. David said she thinks they could talk with the assistants about starting the tour ideas such as a book tour; maybe someone there could head up the tour effort. Ms. Keating said she would confirm that she wants to sit on the Partnership Subcommittee. Schoen said last summer they did a great scavenger hunt with the Farmers' Market. David said some of these things may exist, they just need to be formalized. Schoen said she thinks Ms. Olsson would be happy to be involved. David mentioned the Dean

College graveyard tour. Ms. Olsson has some knowledge and Dean has some knowledge; we can pull some of these partners together. Schoen said she reached out to all members regarding the story map. Taberner said no one has sent anything to him yet. He asked Schoen for her email list. Schoen said the email went to about 14 people; she would send Taberner the list. LoPresti asked how the tours would work. David said someone else would create it and the Committee would publicize it. She would like to have a PDF on the website so it could be downloaded. She mentioned a history tour, art tour, and ladybug tour.

David said she had an excellent meeting with Dave Drucker, Dean of Student Services, and Shannon Overcash, Assistant Dean of Students from Dean College. David said she had reached out to President Rooney of Dean College after Ms. Olsson mentioned that Dean students have gone to the History Museum as there was nothing else to do. David said she was thinking about how the Committee could help Dean find partners that would like to create events of interest to the students. President Rooney put David in contact with Mr. Drucker. David stated that Mr. Drucker and Ms. Overcash were very nice and very excited about the possibilities. She would like to do a survey. Mr. Drucker said that 88 percent of students are there for a four-year degree; 80 percent live on campus. International students comprise 8-10 percent. There does not seem to be much interaction between the Town and students, but Dean does not know how to fix that. Mr. Drucker proposed a Welcome to Dean Day and Welcome to Franklin Day possibly with clergy on campus and businesses and arts and cultural type things. David said the Black Box may be too high priced for them; Mr. Drucker said Dean does many events in which they transport the students to places; Dean is willing to subsidize some things. Mr. Drucker said the students want to go clubbing and dance. David said there has got to be some partners willing to do a clubbing night. Mr. Drucker said 25 percent of students are over 21; they will do alcohol free. Music and dancing are the top two things students are looking for. David mentioned Circle of Friends to Drucker; he said no one from Circle of Friends has ever reached out to Dean College. Warren said Circle of Friends does not need college kids there and college kids probably do not want to be there. Mr. Drucker said they are sending out a survey in February/March about Dean satisfaction and will focus this survey about off campus. He said that David should prepare questions they would like to ask the students. Mr. Drucker said there are four restaurants that currently honor Dean College Boomer Bucks. David said they should look at other restaurant partners. Taberner explained how Circle of Friends does things. David reiterated that Dean would subsidize part of a ticket price. Schoen said you have to find something the kids would want to see. Warren said a young professional in town feels the same way; these things do not exist in this town. There is not even a coffee shop that stays open late. David said she wants to do the survey to ask Dean students what they want and then put the partners in the same room and let them talk about the survey results. David stated that she told Mr. Drucker about the Taste of Art week that was coming with the food trucks. She thinks the take away from the meeting was that Dean was excited to work with the Committee. Taberner said that Paul Resten has been the contact for the Committee; they all work together and are looking for things for the students to do. David will keep everyone posted; send thoughts for the survey to her.

Committee members discussed a possible trampoline park going into the Bob's Store location. David said if that is true, the Committee should talk to them about a possible Dean night. Taberner said that he has not seen anything yet. He noted that everything fell apart regarding the Ficco and car dealership development project; the developers will be coming back in with a new commercial development. They are talking about doing some new and upscale things. He noted that Vice Chairman Halligan of the Planning Board is part of the development group. Committee members talked about the Dean Avenue apartments and Incontro Restaurant.

- Goals Sub-committee. *Business Innovation Zoning District Concept/Other:* Taberner stated he wanted to talk to Brady about this. He stated that the Clark-Cutler-McDermott building is partially empty; the trustees are trying to sell it. There is talk about local people trying to develop it. He is

looking to rezone the parcels including Moseley Mills, the building where Patti Eisenhower Dance Center is, and an area before the Fisher Street parcels including the old mill. There is a total of six or seven parcels owned by about four different people. He would like to change zoning so they can continue to do what they are doing but give more options about what they can do there; hopefully, more of a mix of commercial uses. They are trying to get them to reuse the old building and redevelop the old properties. They are looking at light industrial and commercial-business incubators. He has developed the seven bylaws that are needed to do that; he will present them to the EDC to review at their Wednesday meeting if they have time. Taberner asked if Brady and Warren, or whoever has interest working on the concepts, could meet with him to talk about the concept. He would like to have people advocating for such things at the Town Council meetings. These properties are in the Cultural District. He is hoping there will be all kinds of different things done there.

The Committee discussed the companies behind the Patti Eisenhower Dance Center building and the possible parking in the area. Taberner said the Clark-Cutler-McDermott building is 95,000 sq. ft. He talked about the types of renovations that would be needed if various types of businesses were to go in. Brady said he had a list of most of the businesses in Town; he needs to sift through them to get a baseline. He has been doing research and mentioned the MAPC group might be interesting to tap into. Taberner said MAPC can provide some help. Brady said it seems like a good resource. Warren noted the Harvest Fest and Holiday Happenings would be good things from which to establish a baseline. David said that Holiday Happenings is the new iteration from the previous Holiday Stroll; maybe Lisa can give numbers from the past Holiday Stroll and from the recent Holiday Happenings events. Warren said he would like to measure number of events; for some things it is number of people. Taberner said they do a best estimate on how many people attend. He reminded the Committee that the first full year of the Cultural District is what is measured; the baseline will be 2019. However, all previous information is good to have.

• Marketing Sub-committee. Website Development – Consultant Status/Other: Regan said the RFP was sent out to get responses from both vendors. Vera Roca is through the MetroWest Visitors Bureau; this is the vendor we are supposed to work with in Natick. CivicPlus is the organization that maintains the Town's website; it is one of the largest suppliers of municipal websites. David sent them questions and they responded. Regan said it seems the biggest hitch is the calendar feature. Vera Roca can preserve the Google calendar; this will be built in WordPress. CivicPlus has more restrictions. It will not accept Google calendar and automatic feeds due to permissioning. In order for CivicPlus to do the calendar feature, it will be full site only. If our site is a subset of the Town, then the calendar would be a full calendar of events. CivicPlus does use Drupal which is what the Town uses. He noted that Jamie Hellen expressed concern that if this is a subsite, then there cannot be any business listings. David said this defeats the purpose. The MetroWest Vera Roca site is about \$3,000 plus annual costs, basically \$3,600 to \$4,000 per year to support the website. CivicPlus full website is \$2,400 per year for hosting and \$12,000 for build. Regan said from his experience what CivicPlus is offering is more robust. Vera Roca is less expensive, but you get what you pay for. Regan said the issues are cost and calendar. If he had to choose, he would pick CivicPlus and figure out how to make the calendar work. David said CivicPlus was a better proposal, but the cost is four times budget, calendar is a sticking point, and it cannot take Google feed. However, she stated that WordPress is not great and asked if they can really do it for \$3,000.

In light of this, David reached out to her sister today who has a web development business and reviewed these issues. She asked her sister if she could do it. David passed around a document from her sister; David said her sister would create a full proposal to do this if they want her too. David said her sister could do it in Drupal and use the Google calendar and feeds. David said this is an idea if everyone feels the other proposals are not great. LoPresti asked if CivicPlus could be

told they needed to do the automatic Google feeds. Regan said he was going to push back on that and ask them about the Google feeds. He thinks for that level of customization, it would cost more than \$12,000. Taberner stated that they could develop a website and calendar and have them linked; the Town could be okay with that. If CivicPlus is selected and a totally separate website is created, the Town probably will not support it. If it is part of the Town website, then the Town will absorb the cost for upkeep. Taberner suggested to develop a calendar and link it to the Town website, then people such as Town staff can update and change things. Taberner noted a big difference in price, but if they go with the subsite development, his budget may be able to cover that cost. He said that Mr. Hellen was originally thinking about keeping everything the same for graphics and appearance; now he is thinking differently. Taberner stated that David's sister would create a conflict of interest within the laws unless her sister donated almost all of her services. The RFP would have to be put out again if the Committee would like David's sister to do this. He noted that if David's sister could do this, then 40 other companies could do this; the RFP could be put out again and many responses would likely come in.

LoPresti asked that when CivicPlus gave the quote, did they realize the Town already had a contract with them. Why are we not taking advantage of the pricing; we are not a new client. Taberner said the technical services director lined this person up. We can sit down and talk with them to see if they could do it for less. Taberner stated that if you go with CivicPlus, you would want to get everything you can out of them; features can be added to site later on. Regan said the benefit of CivicPlus is that the Town is already on it. He explained how Drupal works and the convenience of having CivicPlus already used by the Town. Committee members discussed the options. David said they need to make decisions as they are under the impression we are going with Natick. The \$3,000 would probably be paid to whoever was selected. Taberner said it is nice to get a \$3,000 grant. He has a consultant line item for the fiscal year for \$5,000. He has used about \$1,000; he has \$4,000 remaining and can use it for development of the website. If the Committee went with CivicPlus and they spread it out, they can use the money from the grant and from Taberner. Mr. Hellen is talking about getting some money over the years. No one has \$12,000 to put down on a project right now.

Reagan said he wanted to push back on the calendar feature. David said Athena wants it in WordPress. Committee members discussed the costs of both companies. David said Vera Roca was proposing to do it in WordPress. However, it was originally designed in Drupal and they are now changing it to WordPress. She suggested that maybe we could use what they already developed and work with the original in Drupal. Regan said to go back to Vera Roca and ask them to reprice in Drupal. And, go back to CivicPlus and see if they can work with the calendar and incorporate it. With CivicPlus, the funding will eventually be absorbed by the Town. Committee members discussed how the two groups were going to design the concept. Taberner reviewed how CivicPlus designed the Town website; they had a concept meeting and decisions were made. He thinks they would come to the Committee and work with them. LoPresti said these were the questions that need to be discussed. David said to push back on the price.

Committee members discussed pricing, pages, and calendar. Regan said they should look into the functional requirements of what they want and maybe they can get a better response from CivicPlus; he suggested that maybe there was not enough detail in the RFP regarding the calendar. David said she thinks they looked at the Natick website. She said the RFP was pretty clear; it talked about that they wanted a Google feed. David confirmed Regan will ask for more information. Regan said he would like to avoid issuing a new RFP if possible. David asked if only two or three companies could be requested to submit. Regan said David would have to recuse herself throughout the entire process if her sister were to submit a proposal. David said she was aware of that; she asked when a decision would be made. Taberner said there was no time requirement for a decision on his end, but maybe needed for the MetroWest group for the \$3,000

grant. David said it would be good to decide. LoPresti said having a website would be good if the Cultural District is approved; the website should be up and running by end of January/early February. Warren suggested people on the subcommittee should be able to make the decision.

Meeting Schedule.

- Regular Meetings. Regan discussed the meeting schedule; Committee members informally agreed they prefer to set the meeting schedule month by month. Taberner confirmed the MCC meeting is January 15, 2019, 12-3 PM. Committee members agreed the next meeting would be scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 2019, at 7:00 PM at the Municipal Building. The next Partnership meeting is on February 11, 2019.

- Subcommittee Meetings. Regan said there have not been many subcommittee meetings, but they need to do that now. He emphasized subcommittee meetings might be a good use of time; the subcommittee meets and reports back to the full Committee at the regular meetings. This would keep the full Committee meetings shorter and be a better use of time. He noted ideas can be kicked around at the subcommittee meetings; subcommittees do have control to make some decisions and bring strong recommendations to regular Committee meetings. Subcommittees can meet at various locations.

Other.

None.

With no further discussion, a motion was made by David to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Warren; voted and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary

