

Peabody Historical Commission

Minutes of July 18, 2019 Commission Meeting

The regular meeting of the Peabody Historical Commission (PHC) was held at the Peabody Institute Library Trustees Room on Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Present were Commissioners: Gerald Bellew, Michael Bonfanti, Carolina Busta, David Cronin, Deborah Eskenazi, Frank Hardy, Cheryl Millard, and Bill Power, and Vincent Raponi. Absent were: Andrew Metropolis.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Michael Bonfanti.

Motion made by David Cronin to approve the regular Committee minutes of June 20, 2019 as presented and was seconded by Cheryl Millard. A roll call vote was taken.

All in favor: Yes. Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Committee Reports

Educational Exchange Program: Frank: no changes from our last meeting. Andy & I are still waiting to meet with the Mayor about this and a new civics course.

Children's Museum: Cheryl: they've had over 5,000 visitors and are now doing different events there. It's been extended to the end of August. There was a discussion about reminding the city that the Geo. Peabody House and Leatherworkers Museum are historical. The Commission needs to get back in there in order to start filing documents. There are rumors about putting it at the mall or building an addition to the library.

Old Business

Historic House Markers: Cheryl & Debby contacted Lebel Signs in Salem for quotes. 5x13 - \$45/vinyl lettering; 10x17 \$95/vinyl lettering; \$145 hand-painted. There was a discussion about whether to use composite or wood. Dave feels using composite is hypocritical. Other communities use composite. Bill thinks there are signs in the basement of the Geo. Peabody House. When they started the program, they envisioned doing the entire district at once and did most of the street paying about \$24 for those. Mike would like to get three bids. Dianne is going to contact Kevin Kelly at DPS and Dan Doucette, Purchasing, to see if they know anyone. Mike is going to stop into the wood shop at the Torigian Center to see if they would be interested and Debby and Cheryl are going to approach Lebel signs. Mike has spoken to Mike Schulze about seeking a Community Preservation grant to help pay for downtown signs.

Motion made by David Cronin to require Historic House Markers be all wood and was seconded by Gerry Bellew. A roll call vote was taken.

All in favor: Yes. Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Request for marker – 2 Lowell Street Court: Cheryl: she never responded to my emails. There are some questions about whether or not this house meets the requirements since it has had so many architectural changes over the years.

Motion made by David Cronin that 2 Lowell Street Court does not meet the requirements for a historic marker due to the many changes over the years and was seconded by Debby Eskenazi. A roll call vote was taken.

All in favor: Yes. Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Website Creation for PHC: Cheryl talked about the Mission Statement/Duties of the Commission and a brief summary of members. There was a brief discussion about putting members' home addresses on the website. It was decided to just add their names & email addresses. There will be links to outside boards/commissions as well. Debby & Cheryl will meet with Chris Ryder to get all of the information on the website.

Commission Portrait: This will be taken by Cheryl in September at the library. Everyone should meet at 6:00 in the Trustees Room then head upstairs for the portrait.

Partnering with Boy Scouts to clean up cemeteries: Nothing's been done. Mike is pushing to let them know the PHC is available.

10 Chestnut Street Special Permit: The council approved the special permit for a funeral home. There is some controversy about parking. They know they have to keep the Historical Commission informed.

New Business

Historic Marker for Sutton House for Women: No action.

Remarks by Commission Members: Mike Bonfanti: Will look at Bill's documents, get rid of duplicates, scan & keep the rest.

Jerry: (left meeting early).

Lola: read a letter to the Commission retiring. Members asked that she reconsider, reminding Lola that she has years of knowledge and history that they would hate to lose. Mike asked that she at least stay on until the end of the year then decide.

Dave: Talked about maps from the 1930s.

Debby: All set, nothing to add

Frank: Would like to see Bill's documents backed up electronically and put in a secure place.

Andy: (absent).

Cheryl: Nothing to add.

Bill: Has a letter that they used to send to new owners of historic homes. He also brought old committee minutes, Geo. Peabody house minutes, a story about the Skarnegie (?) House/Castle; demo delay letters. There are 24 veteran's grave markers left – these were placed on the lower right corner of the graves. He feels the commission should send a letter to the owner of the Waterworks building thanking him for holding onto it until he got a suitable tenant.

Vinnie: Nothing to add.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date is scheduled for September 19, 2019 at 6:00pm at the Peabody Institute Library Trustees Room, 82 Main Street.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned 7:05 p.m.: Dave Cronin/Vinnie Raponi.