



METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)
MINUTES

October 20, 2014

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting on October 20, 2014, in the conference room of the Historical Commission office at 3000 Granny White Pike, with Vice-Chair Jim Forkum presiding for Chair Bill McKee.

Commissioners Present: Jim Forkum, Vice-Chair; Clay Bailey, Lula Brooks, Alex Buchanan, Holly Conner, David Currey, Don Cusic, Lynn Maddox, Mark Rogers, Gerry Searcy and Linda Wynn. Bob Allen, Menié Bell, Jim Hoobler and Dr. Bill McKee were not present.

Guests Present: Former Vice-Mayor and commissioner, George Cate Jr, and Houston Runion (ITS)

Staff Members Present: Tim Walker, Paul Hoffman, Tara Mielnik, Scarlett Miles, Yvonne Ogren, and Fred Zahn.

Jim Forkum called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm, after verifying that a quorum was present.

New commissioner, Alex Buchanan, was introduced and welcomed to the commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Don Cusic moved to approve the minutes from the September meeting as written. Linda Wynn seconded the motion and the minutes were approved as written.

Encyclopedia Website Presentation – Houston Runion, ITS

Houston Runion, from Metro ITS, gave a presentation of the developing Nashville Encyclopedia website, and showed a preview of a typical article page, and described the search options that will be available. He added that information can be read in 84 different languages on Metro's Nashville.gov website. Mielnik said that several hundred more complete articles were needed before the site could go live.

SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORT – Tim Walker

Walker spoke briefly of the many historic sites that will be participating in the Battle of Nashville Commemoration events. The Historical Commission is sponsoring the advertising, which will include notices in several Civil War-related publications, including a full-color wrap for the Tennessean on December 7th, the Sunday before the commemoration weekend.

Crews from Metro Channel 3 will be filming at several of the sites that day and will make a one-hour video for the MHC to document the event and tell the history of the battle.

Commissioner Bailey reported that there will be a synchronized tolling of church bells at locations from Nashville to Franklin on Tuesday, December 16th, from 4:30 to 4:34, and that it should be advertised.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Tim Walker*

- The workload audit is in progress and would be complete before the end of October. Walker would be given a draft of their report to review and comment before it is given to the council.
- A new buyer has come forward and purchased RCA Studio A to save it from demolition. Dr. Carroll Van West will be preparing a National Register nomination for the site, and the owners plan to take the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit to assist with the restoration costs of the building.
- MHC has received a CLG Grant for National Register nominations in the Inglewood neighborhood in East Nashville and the Bluefields neighborhood in Donelson. The grant will be used to hire a consulting firm to assist in preparing the nominations.
- Commissioner Currey's design firm is designing the interpretive signage that will be installed at Buchanan Station Cemetery. The signage is funded by a grant from the TN Wars Commission through the MHC Foundation.
- The Living History Tour at the Nashville City Cemetery is scheduled for the coming Saturday, October 18. Commissioners Lynn Maddox and Clay Bailey, as well as MHC staff member Fred Zahn, are all impersonating persons interred in the cemetery.
- Walker mentioned that HNI's 2014 Nashville Nine list included Sunnyside and its outbuildings in Sevier Park. The list also includes RCA Studio A and 1812 Broadway.

HISTORIC ZONING – *Tim Walker*

Mr. Walker read the Historic Zoning report (attached) prepared by Robin Zeigler.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion was held by Metropolitan Historical Commissioners regarding the compensation of Commission employees when compared with other similar positions in other Metropolitan Government agencies.

Currently, the Metropolitan Government is in the process of conducting an external work-load audit of the Commission and the Commissioners believe that a benefit review should be jointly conducted, and would request that such delineators as public responsibilities, work load of employees, employee educational requirements, needed position expertise, as well as necessary skill level requirements be made a part of the review process. This request specifically includes the Executive Director and the Historic Zoning Administrator, both of which are open range positions, and extends to the Historic Preservationist 1 positions.

Thus, the Commission voted unanimously to request that the Human Resources and Employee Benefits Department of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County conduct a study to determine if the pay and benefits structure of the Commission employees corresponds to and is comparable with similar positions on other similar Metro governmental agencies, and if not to work with the Commission on developing a process to remove any disparity.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted November 11, 2014,

Yvonne Ogren

TO: METRO HISTORICAL COMMISSION
FROM: ROBIN ZEIGLER
SUBJECT: HISTORIC ZONING UPDATE
DATE: 11/17/2014

The MHZC has experienced a tremendous increase in its work load this year, issuing a record number of permits, extending three historic districts with one more in the works, and beginning discussions with 14 different neighborhoods about the possibility of new overlays or extensions of existing overlays.

The development pressure, high land costs, and the frequent recent alterations to the zoning code have meant that the MHZC has dealt with far more complicated projects than what they have experienced in the past; either because of innovative requests to increase density or because of unusual lots that have long been bypassed for development because of their challenges. This has not only increased the work load for staff but almost doubled the length of meetings and the time required of Commissioners to review the projects in advance. To address these changes and challenges, Staff has researched and the Commission has developed new standards and guidance for meeting the existing guidelines and has worked with the Codes and Planning Departments to create new policies for procedures. These changes also require that all 22 design guidelines be individually updated as well as staff recommendation templates.

The location and date of the Old House Fair has been set: Sevier Park Community Center on March 7, 2015.

The MHZC and the Tennessee Preservation Trust created a 6-hour accredited course for realtors, since it is imperative that they understand the benefits of historic overlays and relay this to their clients. There are many misconceptions and myths surrounding historic overlays and the MHZC wanted to assure that the "first line," our local realtors, understood how the overlays work and what they provide. The first course, scheduled for 11/24, sold out so quickly that a second date was scheduled for 11/7. (We are also giving the course in Covington, TN in November.)

Historic zoning administrator, Robin Zeigler, has been chosen by the National Trust to present at their annual conference.

In order to address the Mayor's initiative to reduce paper, all neighborhood organizations have been signed up to receive notice of the meetings via email. The MHZC is also exploring the possibility of receiving their packets online which could save the Department more than \$200 a month.

Intern, Michelle Ness from Nebraska, has been working on scanning documents and photographs. She has completed the task of scanning the official records for each meeting which is important because we had run out of space to keep these records. She has also been scanning slides which makes this information, that the MHZC and MHC staff consults regularly, more accessible and more easily shared. Previous intern from SCAD, Allison Asbrock, hopes to return for a short time over the holidays.

MHZC staff has been working at revising existing surveys for the overlays. This is crucial, since at the moment, the staff must research each building when there is a request for information about its contributory status. With an updated survey, staff will be able to provide this information more quickly.

MHZC Staff provided the MHZC with four educational sessions this year.

MHZC staff presented a series of four charrettes to gain input from the public about how projects have been handled and should be handled in terms of outbuildings, additions, infill and duplexes.

Staff is working with a consultant who is creating a new metro-wide permitting program.

Staff continues to work with the Planning Department and MDHA on projects outside of the historic overlays.