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MELROSE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7th, 2022 @ 7PM

Pursuant to An Act Relative to Extending Certain State Emergency Accommodations signed into law by Governor Baker on July, 16th, 2022, this meeting of the Melrose Historical Commission was conducted via remote participation

CALL TO ORDER

This regular meeting of the Melrose Historical Commission was called to order by Chair Kate Monea at 7:02pm. Members present in addition to Chair Monea were Vice Chair Tom Champoux, Secretary Kimberly Marolda, Joe Hunt, Kate Roberts, and Shane Egan. One member of the public was present, Erin Kirby.

ORDERS OF BUSINESS

The first order of business was to approve the previous meeting's minutes from November 7th, 2022, which were universally approved by the Commision following correction of an address from 28 Greenwood St. to 128 Greenwood Street.

Second order of business was to open up the forum for comments from the public for which there were no immediate comments.

DISCUSSION

I. *Historic Home Signage Program:* Joe Hunt presented a draft of program parameters, to which Shane Egan expressed admiration and approval of the presentation.

a. Vice Chair Tom Champoux asked if there was a potential for options of plaque style for homeowners to choose from, or if there should be only one option for consistency.

b. Chair Monea inquired as to the price differences between the plaques, to which Hunt agreed to inquire about.

c. Chair Monea asked if there was a consensus on preference between listed years of eligibility (built on or before XXXX date to qualify), or if it is preferred by Commission members to maintain a blanket eligibility parameter of a building being 100 years old. Hunt stated that by maintaining a blanket 100-year parameter for eligibility, the Commission could avoid having to annually update eligibility details. Egan asked if the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) had any guidelines such a program would need to follow; Hunt replied that he did not find any in his research. Chair Monea expressed that eligibility parameters appear to be something set at the

local level.

d. Next steps are for Hunt to source potential vendors for sign creation and cost estimates; a list of resources to assist homeowners with researching their houses will also need to be updated. Cost of homeowner participation will also need to be established, as well as the aesthetic of the signage itself (look of sign, details listed, placement of sign on the house). An application and verification process will also need to be created to ensure that all details are correct and appropriate for the signage once approved, in addition to a guideline for applicants detailing the program. A design vendor will also need to be vetted to determine cost and aesthetic, in addition to channels for advertisement once established. Chair Monea will continue to research with the City as to what kind of program approval is necessary.

II. *High School Internship Program:* Shane Egan had previously drafted a proposal to connect with the Melrose High School to establish a photography internship, which could be utilized by the Commission to update our archives with interior / exterior photos of historically significant buildings. Egan informed the Commission that the current High School principal had included the program request on the list of potential projects for the school to approve, which will be vetted and voted upon after the holiday season concludes. Egan agreed to follow-up with the principal in Q1 2023.

III. *Site Documentation Processes:* Kate Roberts presented and reviewed historical guides for photography in addition to an architectural survey form (Form B) from the Massachusetts Historical Commission which can be copied and adjusted for MHC use.

IV. *Research Your Home Night Planning:* This event has not been in effect since pre-pandemic.

a. The Melrose Public Library is no longer a venue option as it is currently under construction. Chair Monea inquired as to whether anyone had suggestions for other public spaces where the event could be held. Vice Chair Champoux stated that more options would be available if we were to request attendees bring their own laptops for research at the event, such as schools or places of worship. Egan suggested that the Commission begin to research venue options sooner rather than later.

b. Egan suggested that our first event should coincide with the unveiling of our Historic Home Signage Program, and Kate Roberts added that we could potentially offer a discount on the Signage Program for any eligible attendees. Chair Monea stated that there will also be a donation box present at these events for attendees to consider.

c. Egan also brought up the need to utilize that aforementioned list of research resources during these events, and that both MACRIS and the Registry of Deeds should be included to assist with homeowner history in addition to architectural and development details.

d. Chair Monea suggested that the Commission aim to schedule our first event in March 2023, and should strive for 2 events per year.

e. Chair Monea recommended that lecture-style presentations should be avoided and challenged the Commission to brainstorm ideas as to how to make the event more

immersive for attendees.

V. *Website:* The City page would be our ideal primary site moving forward, and any other sites would need to be removed or migrated to the City site in order to streamline materials.

a. Chair Monea presented a mock-up of a new design that can be applied to our WordPress site, which is currently being developed.

b. Vice Chair Champoux stated that he had reached out to the City to update their site with current Commission information, but the site has yet to be updated; he also mentioned that he has secured a web domain and has volunteered to continue building the site but will need assistance.

c. Roberts volunteered to assist, and Chair Monea reiterated that she will continue to transfer over blog posts from the previous site

VI. *Social Media Projects:* Jim Bennett, former Commission member and chair, currently submits content to the Commission social media accounts and has invited current members to contribute should anyone be interested. Chair Monea and Vice Chair Champoux are the only current Commission members with log-in credentials to the social media sites, and posts must go through them to ensure quality and consistency. There is no set social media schedule for postings or any other campaigns currently in place; all posts are currently ad hoc.

a. Chair Monea reviewed current content and encouraged the Commission to brainstorm other ideas for content, including more short-form concepts to keep with the current trends of social media use.

b. Roberts asked Egan if any of his posts on his personal Melrose-specific historical FaceBook page ("Old Time Melrose") could be transferable to the Commission's social media sites, to which Egan replied with other ways the Commission site could be more proactive with posts that have proven to be popular on his own site. Examples included holiday-specific posts and blurbs about local events and how they tie in to the City's history.

c. Chair Monea mentioned that since the Commission currently has many projects underway, it is advised to keep our social media use as is regarding frequency and content of posts, but should use it in the future to leverage our projects as they become more formalized. Examples included the High School internship program, Research Your Home events, future architectural surveys, and the promotion of our website once live.

d. Secretary Marolda mentioned her two previous ideas (photographic walking tours and future architectural surveys) and how they can be used in the future as the seasons permit.

VII. *Other Business:* 128 Greenwood St., upcoming historical workshops, and moving away from virtual meetings

a. Chair Monea touched base on the 128 Greenwood St. development proposal, as Mayor Brodeur had expressed gratitude towards the Commission for their letter of support. The City is currently waiting to hear back from the developers regarding the scaling back of their project's scope.

b. Chair Monea introduced upcoming free workshops organized by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, encouraging any interested parties to sign up. If there is interest in joining the listserv for these workshop announcements, Chair Monea would be happy to provide the link to join.

c. Chair Monea made the suggestion to resume in-person Commission meetings moving forward, and asked if there was any opposition from present members. There was no opposition. Hunt mentioned the possibility of various rooms available within City Hall that can be used as meeting space when needed, to which Chair Monea responded that she will investigate options.

NEXT MEETING

Chair Monea reminded the Commission of the next scheduled meeting date of January 9th, 2023, at 7pm. This meeting will be held in-person at City Hall pending room reservation; a message will be sent to all Commission members including the location, the agenda for the upcoming January 9th meeting, and the minutes for the December 7th meeting for review.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Monea at 7:42pm.