West Concord Junction
Cultural District Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019, 7 p.m.
Harvey Wheeler Community Center Lecture Room

Members present: Carlene Hempel (chair); Margot Kimball; Ann Sussman; Jen Montbach; Kate Yoder.

Members absent: Harry Bartlett, Lisa Evans.

Visitors: Marcia Rasmussen, director, Planning and Land Management, town of Concord.

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

A chat with Jess Muise, visual arts manager, the Umbrella Community Arts Center: Jess reported that she’s been with the Umbrella for a year as new program manager for visual arts. Previously, she worked at Artisan’s Asylum in Somerville. She explained that for the Umbrella, her work is intended to have a social, political or environmental impact. For example, she has been working on a fiber arts show on the theme of migration with 16 regional artists. It will include hands-on workshops and a pot luck dinner on Feb. 21. Highlights:

- Jess said her approach to thinking is, ‘How does an exhibition work with the business in town?’ People want experiences, she said. Partner with the restaurants, she suggested. Craft beer, food and art are often paired, she said.
- Jess has worked with ArtWeek previously on projects such as a collaborative weaving project which included a talk about the process. She was also involved in a simple do-it-yourself 3-D printing activity in which participants printed out earrings and pins.

ArtWeek planning:

- Margot proposed a runway project that involves having participants design a garb to a theme. The group liked the idea but thought it would be too ambitious for its first ArtWeek event.
- Jen suggested an event involving dividing a piece of art into multiple tiles to be handed out and reproduced artistically by people in the community. Only when the tiles are assembled would people know what the original picture was. The group responded well to this suggestion.
- Kate mentioned that her organization, the Concord Conservatory of Music, is having a bluegrass “band scramble” on May 4 that could serve as an ArtWeek event. To participate, musicians put their names in a hat, from which four bands are assembled. After a couple of hours, each group will perform a set in West Concord Union Church. The CDC decided to combine Jen and Kate’s ideas, and have an art tile event to be pre-assembled by April 26 and then revealed at the bluegrass band scramble event on May 4.
We also discussed having a public talk about bluegrass music during or before the event, as well as involving other Village businesses and constituencies to contribute to the theme.

- Margot agreed to draft a press release and spec sheet for the artwork in advance of the next meeting.
- Jen and Carlene said they would begin to brainstorm partner organizations that would create the tiles, as well as food services to coordinate with.

Other business:

- Ann wanted to talk about follow-through of her two walks in November. Carlene mentioned that the West Concord Advisory Committee has already started a process of road and sidewalk repairs with Concord Public Works and suggested Ann hook into that. She agreed to connect Ann to the WCAC member, Chair Pete DeRosa, who could facilitate that.
- The group talked about creating a Porch Fest event in September which would involve live, free music performances on Village residents’ porches on a single night or weekend. Jen and Carlene agreed to move ahead on preliminary planning for that proposal.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 5, in the basement Lecture Room of Harvey Wheeler Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene Hempel