

West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee Minutes

Tuesday April 6, 2021 at 7 pm

Via Zoom

Members present: Kate Yoder, Jennifer Montbach, Margot Kimball, Ann Sussman, Ed Feather

Members absent: Lisa Evans

Guests: Terri Ackerman (Select Board), Jennifer Hurley-Wales (prospective member)

Taking notes: Jennifer Montbach, Clerk

BRANDING PROJECT

We began with the branding project overview for the Cultural District. Jen reviewed the scope of the project. Ed clarified the difference between the branding project and the brochure, which is but one element of the project. We clarified that there is no style guide as of yet.

Ed is seeking a definitive list of the businesses in the district. Ann will forward the list to Ed. Ann also pointed to the design guidelines which should be the jumping off point for the “gestalt” of the area covered by the map. Ann will reach out to the Maynard district folks so that we don’t have to “reinvent the wheel” in terms of how to choose businesses that are included and whether to include sponsorship opportunities. We will need:

1. Complete list of businesses with addresses - Ann
2. Complete list of artists with addresses - Ann
3. Non-business landmarks (e.g. BFRT, the mural) with locations - Jen
4. Parking (vehicle and bicycle) - Jen

Ed is working on the brief. He will send it around, solicit comments, and present all the comments for discussion at the next meeting. He will bring other maps to share at the next meeting.

The goal is to have the brochure/map done by the end of July, September at the latest.

MAJOR GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

We discussed the cultural district signs that have stalled. Ann will visit Billy Crosby tomorrow for a status update.

Ed will reach out to the volunteer program at BU for design/branding assistance, specifically around creating a style guide.

We discussed the distinction between CDC-sponsored events vs participating in other events run by, for instance, the business community (e.g. West Concord Day).

We discussed improving synergy and collaboration by increasing communication with the other entities in the district, such as the library, recreation department, businesses, etc. Kate suggested we plan a meeting that includes a representative from each entity. Margot suggested we could coordinate with Beth Williams at the office of tourism, who does a monthly tourism “huddle.”

Current projects:

1. Branding
 - a. Brochure
 - b. Map
 - c. Signage
 - d. Wayfinding
2. Business events that we enhance
 - a. Discover west Concord Day
 - b. Spring Business event (see May 19-22 below)
3. Events we run
 - a. Porchfest
 - b. ArtWeek (Spring 2022 at the earliest)
4. Public art

MAY 19-22 EVENT

Margot described an event that the business community is planning to encourage people to come back into the town center and into stores. This might be a regular yearly thing. Among the planned activities:

1. Scavenger hunt
2. Live music and theater -- Lisa has a performance planned at CYT that weekend. CCM has planned some outdoor performances.
3. Mural unveiling on the side of Saltbox Kitchen -- John Boynton Senior and Ben Eliot have agreed to put it on the side of Saltbox Kitchen. Margot is still looking for two \$1000 sponsors for the mural.
4. Art in store windows (an “art walk,” though that name is being disputed since this is a business initiative) -- Margot is speaking to Stuart at the Umbrella who coordinated a similar activity in Concord Center
5. Outdoor arts activities at the Art Room

There was a brief side discussion of “village” vs “junction” and the name of our committee. We agreed that it’s a long committee name. However, it is an official designation from the Mass Cultural Council, and the original railroad junction from which the village sprung is a very important part of our history. We decided to revisit the logo at the next meeting and consider connecting it to the cultural district signage.

DESIGN GUIDELINES UPDATE

Susan reviewed the vision statement and design guidelines and invited everyone to review on their own.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/16eBFZIWpeM_PfbilmI_8g73oyGG48Xac/view?usp=sharing

Next steps: Share cultural-specific feedback with Susan. She will be sharing that feedback with WCAC, which has largely built consensus on design from a business perspective

CULTURAL DISTRICT RENEWAL

The Select Board expressed its support and Marcia will submit the reports and other documentation to the MCC this spring for summer renewal.

Marcia gave an update on 13B Commonwealth Ave. (front property of Brookside Square). Sadly the architect was killed. There is a new architect involved. They will talk to our committee as well as the WCAC with the new designs. Marcia believes this group will be pleased with the new designs.

The meeting was adjourned.