



Lenox Cultural District Steering Committee Minutes

Monday, June 1st, 2020, 9am, via conference call

Attendees: Beth Tracy Gamble, LCC; Derrick Holt, Color of the Berkshires; Amy Lafave, Lenox Library; Gwen Miller, Town of Lenox; Marybeth Mitts, Lenox Select Board; Rebecka McDougall, The Mount; Deirdre McKenna, Lenox Chamber of Commerce; Hilary Field Respass, BUTI; Cassandra Sohn, Sohn Fine Art; Laura Brennan, BRPC

Absent: Maureen Gamelli, Andrea Goodman, Jenn Nacht; Eileen Mahoney

- I. The meeting was called to order at 9:05am. The group members each were offered the opportunity to share updates regarding their own or their organization's specific situations.

Amy L. shared that the Library's Storywalk is coming up shortly, and that they continue to update their website and Facebook account with COVID-19 resources. An employee is back from furlough and they will soon begin offering curbside pick-up. Looking at PPE and other requirements for opening to the public. Lots of details to work out, but going in a positive direction.

Derrick H. has been offline due to family medical issues. Encouraged people to call on him if they need help.

Cassandra S. is planning to reopen on June 12th. Has already been offering curbside services such as printing and framing orders. Sales inquiries are starting to pick up.

Beth G. shared that there is a Lenox Cultural Council meeting on June 2nd. They have received a number of requests to move activity to virtual operation or delay to next year.

Marybeth M. shared that there is a Special Town Meeting on June 11th at LMMHS at 7pm. regarding Phase 2 of MA reopening. They are looking at developing a new bylaw extending food and beverage services to outdoor spaces. The Annual Town Meeting has been moved to June 25th at 7pm, and elections will be on June 29th.

Rebecka M. indicated that the Mount is currently operating as a public park, with lots of use. They are working on reopening operations and timing. Sculpture Now will not be happening this year. Derrick suggested that they may want to look into working with Andrew DeVries, who has permanently left his downtown gallery space.

Hilary R. shared that 75% of BUTI students would be eligible to come back next year. They are collaborating with BSO on some online festival activity. She is hoping that some locals are using the grounds. Opening the grounds "officially" in a public park capacity would be more difficult.

Deirdre M. indicated that the Lenox Farmers Market would be starting up for the season on June 5th, and they are looking into incorporating music later in the season. They will also be opening the Visitors Center in about one week.

II. E-newsletter

Beth Tracy Gamble described her work on a recent e-newsletter to stakeholders, which contained information about the cultural district as well as a list of names of the Steering Committee. It went out to 129 recipients, with one unsubscribe and one new subscribe, and a 53% open rate with 12 clicks on the links contained within the message. She would like to expand the sign up form to ask for first and last name and organization name. The Lenox Chamber has added a signup link to our landing page. Beth would like to have a regularly scheduled date each month when this goes out. She shared this issue of the e-newsletter with staff at MCC. She also contacted Adam Davis at Shakespeare & Co. to request that they identify a representative to the Cultural District Steering Committee.

III. Community Stakeholder Meeting and Potential District Projects in 2020

The group discussed the upcoming community stakeholders meeting and determined a date of Monday, June 29th at 4pm based on the results of a Doodle Poll. The purpose of this meeting is to update our stakeholders on activity over the last year, and to discuss potential activity in the coming season. A few people will need to be prepared to help lead the meeting.

The group would like to have some program/activity concepts to present to attendees on the 29th. There is potential to develop both outdoor and virtual activity. Potential projects discussed included: live musicians during outdoor dining (particularly if there is some street closure to allow for additional outdoor dining), behind-the-scenes tours of historic sites, virtual video tours of various sites, virtual content engaging artists and performers, and building an aggregated list of cultural activity and/or recorded tours and interviews on the Cultural District landing page, which is housed within the Lenox.org website. Deirdre confirmed that she would be able to load additional content and links into that page, and also that they would be able to partner with the District to help push the content out since the District does not yet have a wide following. This concept will be presented to the Community Stakeholders on June 29th. Those with contacts for individual artists as well as store owners/restaurant owners will reach out to these contacts prior to June 15th to see if they have existing digital content or would be interested and willing to create content for the aggregate page. There may be some funding in the Cultural District budget to either promote the existence of content or help with video recording.

IV. Next Meeting: The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on Monday, June 15th at 9am