

Cultural Commission Minutes: May 16, 2019

Call to Order: Kellie Williams called the meeting to order at 7:31 am

Roll Call: Kellie Williams, Ron Crick, Meryl Brown, Julia Cozad-Callighan, Angelique Racki, Mark Halx, Melissa Libert, Jeff Crabill, Jamie Mathy

Staff Attendance: Jim Mack, Samantha Stills, Ann-Marie Dittmann

Minutes Approval: Minutes of April 18th, 2019 were approved as submitted. All members voted "Aye."

Staff Reports

Events Update:

Ann-Marie:

- She just added two shows to the BCPA lineup. Josh Gracin; a Country singer, on June 2nd and Little Black Dress; a girl's night out show, on June 15th.
- The New Season Announcement is August 14th on the BCPA stage with heavy appetizers.

Old Business

Cultural Commission Ordinance Proposal:

Jim: The presentation on the Cultural District Boundary Ordinance was pulled from Council Agenda. The biggest reason for being pulled was there was a question asked of why the Arena was not included in the boundaries. The City Manager wants to sit down and discuss this question and then once it is settled and discussed, the proposal will be out back on the Agenda for May 28th, at which time everything will move forward as planned. Jim asked the commissioners to be there to help support the presentation. Jim asked that the Commission answer this question and get clear reason and answer at this meeting so there is clarification should anyone ask at Council meeting or in the time leading up to Council Meeting.

Jamie, Jeff and Ron reviewed primary reasons that arena is not included:

- Community Development Department (former director Tom Dabareiner) advised the commission to start small. City Planner, Katie Simpson, also recommended to start with a small footprint and advance later. Both advised that it is much easier to add to the boundaries later. It is much more difficult to retract/get smaller at a later date.
- There are a number of areas/building that are not included within the formal boundaries. For example, the library. The area becomes very large and hard to manage when you include everything. Starting small, with a focused walkable area, and finding and achieving success, then growing from there, is the recommended direction.
- There is a group lobbying to have the arena as part of the warehouse district. The vision is to encourage bars to condense to this area where it would make more sense since the area has fewer residential areas and is pretty empty after hours.
- The arena, much like the library, does not fit the recommendations for a small, pedestrian-friendly, walkable boundary. The arena is also not open regular hours, whereas the focus on the district would be for a pedestrian-friendly experience with open businesses and things to do and look at during much of the day and evening.

- The Commission met with Katie Simpson multiple times and did research in the past 18 months. The Commission did a lot of planning, finding information and using Community Developer and City Planner expertise to guide the boundary decisions.

Jim: asked Jeff and Jamie if they would be able to make comments as council members the night of proposal to Council.

They both confirmed they would be able to.

Ann-Marie: it makes sense that Ron be there on the night of Council, since Kellie will be in Spain.

Kellie: encouraged all other members to go and do a public comment to speak in support of the proposal.

Jamie: stressed to Commissioners to make sure to comment on financial side of wanting grants, seeking grants and funding.

Jeff: The big question that is always asked is "Will this cost the City money?" And the answer here is no. The Commission is trying to go out and get money through grants and bring it back to the City.

Ron: asked how long the Cultural Commission has been around.

Jamie: replied with 11 years.

Ron: asked why these boundaries were never figured out prior to this point, in all the 11 years?

Jamie: stated the Cultural District originally started as a unit to serve and run the BCPA solely. It has changed over time, now becoming the Cultural Commission who wants to create a Cultural District. The past 18 months the focus has shifted to helping flourish the community and be proactive.

Kellie: The Friends of the BCPA will be at this Council Meeting to comment and show their support as well. The local artists were asked to come and support the proposal as well.

Jamie: stated he also gets asked why do the documents and proposal state this district will be the first piece. Will there be more pieces or what does this mean? In the wording that was used it is suggested in the future adding on to this district. It is important to let people and community know that the Commission have talked about how other districts are run and where we see our future wanting to go. It is best to start small and add to district down the road. There was discussion about other districts having sub-satellites to other districts and this could possibly be a route to look at in future.

Jamie: Public comment is only 3 minutes. So everyone should prepare and plan to only talk for 2 to 2 ½ minutes to ensure their points are touched on and talked about rather than running out of time.

New Business

Organization List:

Kellie: restated that she sent a list of organizations to all the Commissioners emails and only a couple got back to her. She stated she would re-email to Commissioners but any notes and info on organizations from everyone is

what she is looking for. She asked Commissioners to re-check the list of organizations and add notes then send back to her.

Jamie: gave a few changes he noticed on the list for Kellie to notate.

Kellie: brought up internships again and asked if the Cultural Commission still thinks an intern would be beneficial.

Mark: stated all students have graduated or gone home for the summer, so now is not the right time. The Commission could probably look into it again in the fall semester when students are back.

Jim: stated he has a meeting with the intern coordinator and will let the Commissioners know what he finds out after this meeting.

Mark: It is important that we know exactly what duties and tasks we want the intern doing. What data we need researched etc.

Ron: stated he sees the intern as an initial thread to people seeing the Cultural Commission as a resource that can be used within the City. To be able to keep this momentum going would be awesome.

Cultural Commission Conference:

Kellie: brought up the Cultural Conference discussion. She asked Commissioners if anyone had thoughts on this topic as to who should be invited, what would theme and discussions be etc. Would it be an annual event? What is the purpose? Do Commissioners even like this idea?

Jim: stated he pushed this idea up the chain last week and it was very well received. Higher ups wanted it to be an annual conference. There were questions of for what purpose that were asked. What is the goal was asked? Culture is a huge broad word. Church, beer, sports, restaurants, food, art, music, entertainment, etc was all mentioned. Would all these things be included? This all needs to be decided before this idea is moved forward.

Julia: stated it would be neat to bring someone in to speak at the Conference. Just asking people to come to a group meeting once a year doesn't really encourage people to come. Bringing an expert in to talk about something to draw people's attention would make way more sense.

Jamie: Having a speaker talk about the vision process for the City would be interesting to tie into the City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan.

Julia: stated she would be willing to help coordinate getting speakers to come yearly.

Kellie: stated it would also be neat to bring galleries in and let them have a voice to talk.

Mark: posed the question.... Would this strictly be for cultural arts, or is this talking about all things the word "culture" entails.

Jim: stated this is the very question he was asked and explained earlier. He was at a loss as to how to answer this very question and this has never once been discussed in any of the meeting attended by Jim. What is the true vision of the Cultural District?

Jamie: stated he is not sure this has ever been stated or discussed in any meeting he has ever attended either.

Jim: if this very question has not been asked or resolved. Maybe it needs to be before moving forward with this conference.

Mark: asked if the wording or name could be changed to say Cultural "Arts" district. Otherwise where do the limits stop.

Angelique: stated she loves the word "Culture" and everything it stands for. The Commission needs to preserve the word in its entirety. We should not just be limiting it to the arts.

Julia and Meryl both agreed on this point.

Jamie: assumed the Cultural Commission was originally centered around only the arts aspect since it was to strictly run and operate the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts.

Angelique: asked if in the future we are hoping to add more and add sub-pockets would churches, and bars, and entertainment entities be included? It adds to exactly what we stated our future vision is.

Jeff: The conference can be broad and cover a variety of topics. It doesn't have to be limited to only art related things.

Mark: clarified however, that isn't that the point. What exactly is the Cultural Commission's vision? Who do we ask to speak if there are no boundaries and we include anything and everything the word "Culture" suggests. Which brings confusion as to what the Cultural Commission's goal is overall.

Meryl: The purpose of the conference needs to be very clear because "Culture" is very different for everyone. Will conference just be a sound board to other things. Or is it to draw more business to this downtown area?

Ron: The Conference needs to be looked at, at this time as a starting point. The Conference establishes credibility. Start small and add later as things grow.

Mark: The district was created for Cultural "Arts." Why did we not use the word "Arts?"

Kellie: it was assumed and implied.

Kellie: Asked the members if they should vote to change the name to Cultural "Arts."

Meryl: if name is changed it poses exclusion of groups of people or businesses and the Commission does not want to do that if it is trying to grow in future.

It was decided by a majority to leave the name as it and not change it.

Meeting Adjourned: Adjourned at 8:32am, 1st Jamie Mathy, 2nd Meryl Brown.
Next Meeting: June 20th, @ 7:30am

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