



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD AGENDA
556 W MAPLE
Thursday, March 3, 2016
6:30 PM**

***Mission Statement:** The Birmingham Historical Museum & Park will explore meaningful connections with our past, in order to enrich our community and enhance its character and sustainability. Our mission is to promote understanding of Birmingham's historical and cultural legacy through preservation and interpretation of its ongoing story.*

1. Roll Call

2. Introduction of Guests

3. Approval of the Minutes

A. Minutes of February 4, 2015

4. Unfinished Business

A. Agenda Structure

5. New Business

- A. Strategic Plan Update for 2017-2020: Goals Review
- B. Strategy for Park and Landscape Planning

6. Communication and Reports

- A. Director Report
- B. Member comments
- C. Public comments

7. Adjournment

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Draft



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, February 4, 2016
6:30 PM**

Members Present: Russ Dixon, Tina Krizanic, Marty Logue, Gretchen Maricak, Kate Montgomery, Caitlin Rosso, Jeff Wilmot

Student Members Present: None

Members Absent: None

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: None

Mr. Dixon called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of January 7, 2016**

MOTION: by Krizanic, seconded by Maricak:

To approve the minutes of January 7, 2016.

VOTE: Yeas, 7
Nays, 0

Unfinished Business

A. The Museum Board took up the matter of the museum name change.

MOTION: by Montgomery, seconded by Logue:

To approve a recommendation to the City Commission to change the name of the museum from The Birmingham Historical Museum & Park to **The Birmingham Museum**.

VOTE: Yeas, 7
Nays, 0

B. The Museum Board discussed their individual reviews of the videotaped presentation for the Board of Ethics. A copy of Coco Siewert's handout with basic parliamentary information was made available as a reference guide. Director Pielack reminded the board that the Public Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act were the first considerations regarding board activities, and parliamentary procedure was adaptable as

determined necessary by an individual board. Mr. Wilmot reminded the board that any personal device used by board members, such as a home computer or cell phone used for email or texting, is subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Dixon would like the Museum Board to reconsider his recommendations for agenda structure that were shared in the board packet for January 7, 2016's meeting. He has concerns about the need for flexibility to introduce new items into the board meeting at the outset of the scheduled meeting. Director Pielack advised that agenda items are best determined by the board at the previous meeting so that she can research, provide information and packet materials, and so the public understands what the business of the meeting will include in order to participate if desired. Any new items or concerns would be appropriate during Board Comments, but then would be added to the agenda for the next month if the board wished to take up the matter. The Museum Board will review Mr. Dixon's specific agenda suggestions at their March meeting, and Director Pielack will re-supply that material in the March board packet.

Communication and Reports

A. Director Pielack shared updates to the Director Report. The emphasis for the Museum Board during 2016 as mentioned to the City Commission is the review and update of the current Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. Beginning in March, the Museum Board will be asked to begin that process. Regarding the WiFi and landscape update, a brainstorming session with local native plant experts was very informative and supportive of using native plants in the landscape. A sensitive design that also preserves the historic features in the grounds could serve as a model for residents and an interpretive opportunity. The question of whether handicapped parking may be available on Willits Street and Michael Dul's park concept plan of 2009 were mentioned for follow-up. The bell project is due to go out for bid soon.

B. Mr. Dixon made announcements regarding Leni Sinclair's recent Kresge award and a film and upcoming 50th anniversary for the Grande Ballroom, October 7-8 2016.

D. There were no public comments.

Mr. Dixon adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.



Leslie Pielack <lpielack@bhamgov.org>

Agenda Sequence Suggestions

1 message

RussWDixon@aol.com <RussWDixon@aol.com>

Thu, Dec 17, 2015 at 6:48 PM

To: lpielack@bhamgov.org

Hi Leslie!

As we discussed, what follows are my suggestions regarding the agenda sequence. Implement as you see fit, any remaining items can be reviewed by the Board. Please include my entire text in the electronic packet of materials for the Board as I want them to understand the method to the "madness". I suspect it could be listed under "Member Comments", "Russ' Agenda Reflections".

Dear Board Members:

Subsequent to Coco Siewert's Ethics Seminar presentation, and the adjustments we've made to the agenda sequence; I thought it may be timely to reorganize the agenda somewhat. Basically it's to create a structure that allows the quick business to be completed early in the meeting, leaving the remainder of the meeting for the open ended discussions that take up many meetings. I know the Board expects my suggestions to be abstract and idea based; but in this instance I will disappoint. These proposals are all "lifted" from other city agendas. While some of this will be infrequently used, when it's identified in the agenda, board members know when to bring items up. (And having spent years doing agendas and minutes for construction meetings, a concise agenda facilitates minute taking.)

Call To Order *(From the Parks & Recreation (P&R) and City Commission (CC) agendas. Helps clue the secretary to record the official start of the meeting.)*

Roll Call *(Nothing new.)*

Introduction of Guests *(Since this is rarely used, I'd eliminate it as a stand alone item. The P&R Board, which frequently has guests, doesn't even have this in their agenda.)*

Announcements & Introduction of Guests *(Pulled from the CC agenda. As an example, this is the opportunity for Gretchen to note her art exhibit, or Marty to note she has five more tickets to sell for the luncheon, or the Chairman to note a resignation. I think these are better made at the start of the meeting, with everyone's full attention, than at the end when everyone's putting on their coats. It's not meant to replace Board Member Comments, it's not meant to start a discussion. It's also an opportunity for the Director (if she thinks it's more timely) to note that the Museum will be closed Saturday because the city's shutting off the water to the building for repairs.)*

Review of the Agenda *(This comes from the PB, and Coco explained it in her presentation. This is the opportunity to add something that's been omitted, or to change the sequence because someone has to leave early.)*

Unfinished Business *(Nothing new.)*

New Business *(Nothing new.)*

Study Session Items *(From the PB. I just reviewed this with Coco. This is where we discuss the name change or other items that take months to finish. Puts it at the end (as we've been doing) so the imperative items are not shortchanged.)*

Communication and Reports *(About the same, but delete "Public Comments".)*

Meeting Open to the Public for Items not on the Agenda *(From the CC, the P&R Board, and all the other*

agendas I've reviewed, this is a stand alone item. If we want to engage the public, their comments should be encouraged by a line item of its own, and not a subparagraph or an afterthought.)

Next Regular Meeting (From P&R.)

Adjournment (Finally!)

Thanks for indulging me, Russ

DATE: March 3, 2016
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Strategic Plan Goals Review

At the February 4, 2016 meeting of the Museum Board, it was decided that a review of the 2013-2016 would begin promptly in order to revise and modify the existing plan before the end of 2016.

The first step in that process would involve reviewing the four Goals of the existing plan. (Following a determination about the goals, the central objectives for each goal would be next, followed by a review of activities and tasks. This process would be more involved and potentially take a number of months.)

Suggested Resolution:

To approve the 2013-2016 Strategic Plan Goals for the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan:

Goal I: Enhance community access, appeal, and engagement, resulting in increased utilization of BHMP and broader appreciation for its cultural contribution to the region

Or

Goal I: _____

Goal II: Provide stewardship and management of the museum's collection of artifacts, archives, and buildings, in accordance with established professional museum practice.

Or

Goal II: _____

Goal III: Assure financial stability and sustainability and increase the capacity of BHMP to serve its mission through enhanced fundraising, board development, leveraging relationships and volunteers.

Or

Goal III: _____

Goal IV: Define a unified message and marketing plan by using a variety of marketing media to further develop the museum's brand and to increase awareness, interest, and attendance.

Or

Goal IV: _____



City of Birmingham

Birmingham Historical Museum & Park

2013-2016 Strategic Plan

2013-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN

APPROVED:

CONTRIBUTUORS

Museum Director: Leslie Pielack

Museum Assistant: Connie Locker

Museum Board Members: Russ Dixon, George Stern

Museum Friends Board Member: Catherine Tuzcek

Strategic Planning Consultant, Marilyn Opdyke, The Opdyke Group

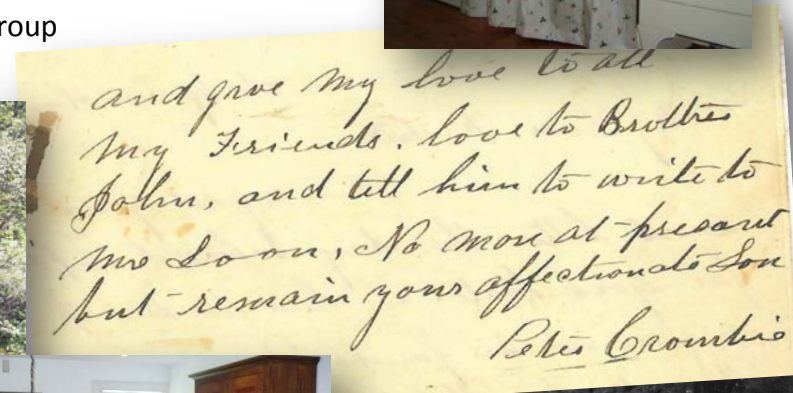


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND PROCESS: In 2008, the Birmingham Historical Museum & Park adopted a strategic plan for the period of 2008-2013. It was created as a reflection of the prevailing favorable economic conditions, museum needs, and focus group input. However, during the past five year period, significant changes have occurred in the museum's funding and operations. In addition, an in-depth study was undertaken to assess the museum's collection stewardship (the American Alliance of Museums/Institute of Museum & Library Services Museum Assessment Program, or MAP) and to make recommendations for enhanced collections care. A complete report of was provided to the museum in July of 2012.

Accordingly, a comprehensive review and revision of the expiring strategic plan was deemed necessary, and the target time period for the new plan was shortened from five to three years. A consultant was used to help guide the museum through the process to assure the most efficient and complete bottom-up approach, and to integrate a wide variety of input in the new plan. These included an electronic survey, facilitated focus groups (local cultural organizations, commercial/retail business interests, and schools, families and churches), an open public meeting, and a two-part retreat of major stakeholders, composed of city officials, the Museum Board, museum staff, Friends of the Birmingham Historical Museum & Park, and the Baldwin Public Library director.

The resulting 2013-2016 Birmingham Historical Museum & Park Strategic Plan represents this broad effort to respond to community expectations, professional museum standards, the current and anticipated economic climate, and the museum's organizational needs now and in the future.

MISSION AND VALUE: The Birmingham Historical Museum and Park is a unique cultural asset that connects us to our past and brings value to our present and future. Its mission is to foster a greater appreciation and understanding of the Birmingham area's unique heritage by collecting, preserving, cataloguing and exhibiting cultural material relevant to Birmingham's story, and by providing engaging and entertaining educational experiences that promote this story to visitors of all ages.

GOALS: The goals of the strategic plan as identified by planning participants fall into two groups, as follows:

Mission-Related Goals

- Community access, appeal, and engagement
- Stewardship and professional management of the collection

Infrastructure/ Support Goals

- Develop organizational capacity, financial stability, and sustainability
- Develop the museum's message and image

The Museum Board has the role and responsibility of planning, implementing, and providing oversight of the Birmingham Historical Museum & Park's Strategic Plan.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions apply to this outline.

***Goals:** Goals state where the organization will focus its energies over a defined time frame. They can be short or long term in nature, depending on the decision of the group. Goals are not necessarily directly measurable but provide a broad view or concept of the priorities established by the organization.*

***Objectives:** Objectives are shorter-term milestones that support the individual goals. Each goal should have at least two objectives that will tangibly move the organization toward reaching that goal. Objectives are concrete, measurable and focused on results.*

***Strategies:** Strategies are specific actions or steps that lead to the accomplishment of the objectives. They are action-oriented, short-term, and include the specific "what, by when and by whom," components.*

***Team Leaders:** Those individuals or small teams charged with a coordinating role, keeping the focus of a particular goal on track.*

Goal I: Enhance community access, appeal, and engagement, resulting in increased utilization of BHMP and broader appreciation for its cultural contribution to the region.

- Create a sense of “place” through experiences, amenities and utilization of the grounds
- Enhance utilization of the buildings and the collection
- Enhance utilization of the park and outdoor space

Goal Team Leaders: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director; Catherine Tuczek, Museum Friends Board

OPPORTUNITIES

Currently,

- BHMP is viewed as a well kept secret
- The museum has limited appeal to our target audiences

We believe we can improve the appeal to current audiences, engage new audiences and increase visitation and participation in the experiences we offer.

THREATS

- Our current vague image in the community
- Limitations in funding, staffing and open hours
- The challenges presented by our location and signage limitations
- The perception that we are not exciting or visitor friendly

If we do not improve our engagement with the community, we run the risk of becoming irrelevant and losing the opportunity to enrich the quality of life in this region.

Goal I (con't):

Objective A: Develop and implement strategies and programs that actively engage the community and make history and heritage more relevant in their lives

- A.1** Coordinate annual on site local-history based school tours with current school objectives through the Birmingham Public Schools Curriculum Coordinator
- A.2.** Meet quarterly with the other cultural organizations to share ideas, develop a cultural calendar for Birmingham and to partner on events and programs
- A.3** Enhance our web presence and utilize technology to engage more actively with visitors
- A.4** Explore the possibility of taking interpretive exhibits to the schools/out to the public
- A.5** Develop an annual “signature event” that draws people to the museum
- A.6** Develop at least one partnership event with the PSD each year
- A.7** Explore collaborative approaches with Baldwin Library to document and interpret its historic artifacts

Objective B: Establish the museum and park as a valued destination and place to encourage community connectivity

- B.1** Explore the feasibility of opening the buildings for public and private events or meetings on a restricted basis
- B.2** Make Wi-Fi available in the park and buildings

Objective C: Develop an interpretive plan for both buildings. Enhance utilization of the collection by engaging in dynamic and changing events, activities, programs and exhibits that keep an historical context but draw in more people and encourage returning visitation.

- C.1** Better define our core products at the buildings
- C.2** Clarify our key target audiences
- C.3** For each target audience brainstorm and develop at least one new event, exhibit or program at the museum, or that can be taken to the audience at their location
- C.4** Enhance exhibits through use of technology and hands-on/dynamic interactive opportunities
- C.5** Enhance signage and exterior appeal

Goal I (con't):

Objective D: Develop and implement an interpretive plan for the park. Better utilize the park to share local heritage, engage visitors, connect them to the museum site, and keep them coming back.

- D.1** Better define our “products” for the park, in conjunction with Parks Dept. staff
- D.2** Enhance the outdoor space and grounds; improve seating and add Wi-Fi
- D.3** Connect to the Rouge River Trail with a resting stop and interpretive information
- D.4** Provide information in the park that increases awareness of the museum buildings and site
- D.5** Explore the feasibility of utilizing the park as an event or music venue

Goal II: Provide stewardship and management of the museum’s collection of artifacts, archives, and buildings, in accordance with established professional museum practice.

This goal is necessary to preserve the tangible objects in the museum collection for the future and make them more available through exhibits and other forms of access by the community. It will enable more comprehensive and engaging opportunities to connect Birmingham with its history.

Goal Team Leaders: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director; Connie Locker, Museum Assistant; Catherine Tuczek, Museum Friends Board

OPPORTUNITIES

These issues were identified as top priorities in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) report shared with the Museum Board in July, 2012.

Currently, the museum is challenged by the following:

- Inadequate staffing and supplies; lack of effective and appropriate storage for artifacts and archives
- Incomplete or lacking written policies and procedures and ineffective climate and environmental control that put the entire collection of the museum at risk
- Incomplete/inaccurate collection records, incomplete digitization, and ineffective organization of the collection that limit utilization and access by staff, researchers, and the general public
- The presence of inappropriate or unnecessary objects in the collection that do not support the mission require professional care but drain needed resources that are needed for the rest of the collection.

We believe that with increased resources, we can improve the overall care of our artifacts through improving our records, storage, and organization, while simultaneously digitizing the collection, making it easier to use and access. Proper safe storage and implementation of protective policies will help ensure the collection will be preserved for the future.

THREATS

- Limited funding for paid professional personnel and museum-grade equipment
- The needs of the collection are not well understood outside the museum staff

If we do not implement changes, the collection will continue to be at risk of environmental damage and irreversible deterioration, misplacement, inaccessibility, or will be rendered otherwise unusable, resulting in the irreplaceable loss of the museum’s most valuable assets.

Goal II (con't):

Objective A: Improve storage organization and environmental controls

- A.1** Create a storage organization plan based on assessment of the current collection's needs and the available space and storage furniture/supplies
- A.2** Assess environmental conditions and develop a plan to improve or correct deficits

Objective B: Improve efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility of object records and documentation

- B.1** Develop and implement a plan for correction, completion, and updating of existing object records and objects waiting for accession (the formal process to accept objects into a museum collection)
- B.2** Create digital and hard files of object records and develop/enhance finding aids
- B.3** De-accession inappropriate or unnecessary objects in accordance with museum standards and revised museum accession policy and procedures
- B.4** Create digital images of collection items for purposes of documentation and access

Objective C: Develop and implement collections-related policies and procedures for collections management, future acquisitions, de-accessioning, disaster preparedness, the museum's hands-on/use collection, building maintenance, and other collections-related policies and procedures in accordance with accepted museum standards

- C.1** Create appropriate written policies and procedures manuals
- C.2** Integrate policies and procedures with other relevant city departments
- C.3** Develop methods for orienting staff and volunteers to pertinent policies and procedures
- C.4** Review policies and procedures on an annual basis and revise as needed

Objective D: Provide increased digital access through exploring online or other virtual exhibit/access options

- D.1** Develop a virtual exhibit and digital access plan that reflects current museum practices and standards, and reflects the needs of the museum collection and its users and visitors
- D.2** Explore and implement web and other information technology options for improved access

Goal II (con't):

Objective E: Seek professional training opportunities for museum staff to provide ongoing collection management skills development and effectiveness

E.1 Identify training opportunities for paid and unpaid staff to enhance collections care

E.2 Provide opportunities for paid and unpaid staff to attend up to two professional programs per year

Goal III: Assure financial stability and sustainability and increase the capacity of BHMP to serve its mission through enhanced fundraising, board development, leveraging relationships and volunteers.

Goal Team Leaders: Leslie Pielack, Museum Executive Director; Connie Locker, Museum Assistant; George Stern, Museum Board Member; Catherine Tuczek, Museum Friends Board Chair

OPPORTUNITIES

Currently,

- BHMP receives approximately 70% of its funding from the city and 30% from donations, grants and other revenue sources
- City funding has decreased each year since 2009
- Staffing has been reduced from 1 full time Director and 2 part time professionals with paid summer professional interns to 1 part time Director and 1 part time professional

We believe we can increase our fundraising efforts and better leverage our board members, volunteers and partner organizations to increase our ability to serve our mission.

THREATS

- Lack of staff to effectively supervise/ manage volunteers
- Lack of stable/sustainable funding sources
- Continued limited city funding

If we do not take action on this goal, we severely limit our ability to effectively manage the collection and further engage the public in meaningful ways. It will also impact the number and frequency of exhibits and programs we can offer and limit our ability to implement this strategic plan.

Goal III (con't):

Objective A: As a collaborative effort of the Museum Board and Museum Friends develop a comprehensive fundraising plan for the BHMP (including a “case statement” clarifying the what and why of giving) that increases contributions to both operations and the endowment fund

- A.1** Develop and implement a strategy for increasing planned giving and bequests
- A.2** Develop and implement a strategy for attracting large/major donor contributions
- A.3** Host at least one major fundraising event per year
- A.4** Develop and implement strategies for increasing membership in the Friends to broaden the base from which to enhance annual giving

Objective B: Engage in Board Development by clarifying expectations and further developing the skills of the Museum Board and seeking new members with complementary skills

- B.1** Develop position descriptions and clarify expectations, responsibilities, and authorities
- B.2** Evaluate needed skills, identify opportunities, and develop a plan for identifying appropriate potential Museum Board candidates
- B.3** Create a board development plan including workshops, training programs, etc., for skills refinement including fund raising and effectively leveraging relationships
- B.4** Collaborate and delineate the respective roles of the Friends and the Museum Board

Objective C: Increase the personnel capacity of the organization by increasing professional staffing, leveraging volunteers, and utilizing partner organizations to help staff specific events, exhibits or programs

- C.1** Evaluate skills, expertise, and specific roles needed for effective and efficient operations
- C.2** Increase paid professional staff as appropriate
- C.3** Develop a comprehensive volunteer program that incorporates job descriptions, organizational structure, recruiting and training plans and on-going management of volunteers

Objective D: Initiate a grant-writing effort in conjunction with the Friends to identify key opportunities for collaboration, and develop an account to provide potential matching funds for increased leverage

Goal IV: Define a unified message and marketing plan by using a variety of marketing media to further develop the museum's brand and to increase awareness, interest, and attendance.

Goal Team Leaders: Russ Dixon, Museum Board; Connie Locker, Museum Assistant

OPPORTUNITIES

Currently, BHMP faces several challenges that limit its ability to locate and connect with its audiences, such as:

- lacking a unified message and a recognizable brand
- being under-marketed
- has limited staff resources to build and maintain the museum's presence in the community
- has poor signage that contributes to confusion regarding the museum's location and hours of operation
- no on-site parking

We believe we can improve the current environment by developing and clarifying our message and to increase awareness of the museum and its services to a wider audience.

THREATS

- lack of expertise and financial resources
- competition with other local organizations for patronage of events and programs
- lack of a local central advertising mechanism to get the word out to the community

If we do not take action on these issues, our exhibits, events, and programs will continue to be under attended, and the community will be unable to take full advantage of everything the museum has to offer to enhance quality of life. Important opportunities for community engagement will be missed. Without proactive change, the disconnection between the greater community and the Museum will increase over time, making improvement even more difficult in the future.

Goal IV (con't):

Objective A: Identify and utilize free and low-cost marketing resources maintained by specific target audiences, such as city publications, local schools, senior groups, and other community organizations.

Objective B: Identify our key audiences and explore and enhance the image the museum presents to the public through independent and collaborative projects and partnerships that strengthen our ties to the community

Objective C: Develop a Marketing Plan to clarify the museum's message and brand, utilizing survey data, innovative marketing strategies, low cost resources and micro-marketing concepts.

DATE: March 3, 2016
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Strategy for Park and Landscape Planning

Pond Area, Historic Resources and Public & Municipal Requirements

In the past year, funds have been received from the Rosso Family Foundation to assist in removal of aggressive invasives in the pond area near Willits Avenue, and to pursue possible design for incorporating native plants in their place. A brainstorming meeting also took place on January 28, 2016 with a number of local native plant experts, the parks manager, and Birmingham residents who are knowledgeable about using natives in park settings. Tina Krizanic of the Museum Board, and Karen Battersby of the Friends board were also part of that meeting. There was enthusiastic support for introducing these natives and utilizing this opportunity for interpretive education and furthering the museum's mission, while highlighting the natural resource we have in the pond.

While the immediate vicinity of the pond was the focus of this discussion, it is important to understand how this project interfaces with an overall plan for the park and general municipal requirements for public spaces. In particular, the museum grounds are part of the historic Allen House site and within the Mill Pond Historic District; this fact should also be addressed in an overall approach to city objectives and public use to ensure that historic features of the landscape are properly protected and preserved. Also important are the physical requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which was revised in 2012, and how they would be implemented in any treatment of the landscape.

Previous Planning for Park Landscape

In 2009, a ten-year preliminary Master Plan was developed with the Museum Board by Michael Dul & Associates, landscape designers. The plan included a 'wish list' of desirable elements felt to be important by the Museum Board, and cost estimates exceeded 1 million dollars. At the time, it was hoped that park bond funds would be available to pay for the plan. However, park bond funding was not available, and the recession's impact on funding such projects has altered expectations. Some components of the plan have led to specific construction projects (e.g., the 2010 ramps to the Hunter House and Allen House, and the Allen House porch improvements and door modifications for barrier-free access in 2012). Both were accomplished almost entirely with federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which support ADA projects.

Other components of the Dul plan were only conceptual in nature, and were subsequently changed (e.g, the Hill School Bell Structure was originally sited at the top of the Rouge Trail, but was changed to the plaza between the Hunter and Allen Houses with significant community input. Mr. Dul was part of the group that participated in the changed concept discussion.)

Funding for final design and construction has been provided by private sources and grass roots fundraising.

Limitations of the 2009 Dul Plan

The plan as originally developed was preliminary and conceptual only. It incorporated ideas that may need revision or are no longer a priority, and it lacked some of the elements that are presently seen as important. For example, providing public WiFi was not a consideration at that time, but now our digital needs have developed in new ways, making this a key focus of public programming and access. Furthermore, adequate funding has been supplied through the Birmingham Bloomfield Cable Board grants to provide it. However, another important element was missing altogether from the Dul preliminary park Master Plan: no survey of the historic landscape features was made, and no provision made for their protection or interpretation. In addition, how the museum's park figures into city objectives (such as providing a walkable community), and whether the museum plan should incorporate the Rouge Trail corridor plan were not identified or incorporated.

Summary and Recommendations

At this time, it seems appropriate for the Museum Board to consider the best overall plan and strategy for the park going forward: in particular, how it would align with the current review of the museum's Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. This strategy could identify general concepts for the park, suggest how phased approaches, such as improvements at the pond, could be handled, and make additional recommendations.

The first step in that process would be a survey of the existing historic features of the landscape (Allen House), with recommendations as to protection of those resources. This survey should meet minimum standards relating to historic landscapes and structures as provided for in the guidelines from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Landscapes through the National Park Service and/or the State Historic Preservation Office. Such a survey may be performed by a contracted expert or by the city's Historic District Study Committee (if directed by the city commission). From there, an overview of how the park can help accomplish museum and city goals, what the ADA impact of any design or plan would be, and how best to get public input should be developed. This overview would be a revised and more complete park Master Plan, but still conceptual and preliminary in nature, to allow for flexibility. Such a plan would allow discrete, phased work to take place, and in a more comprehensive form, would be more likely to generate funding support through grants or private donations.

Suggested Resolution: To establish an overall strategy or preliminary Master Plan for the museum park that incorporates identification and protection of its historic and natural resources, that integrates planning with city goals and other public access requirements, and that is aligned with the museum's mission and ongoing Strategic Plan implementation.



LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE

MICHAEL J. DUL
& ASSOCIATES, INC

212 DAINES STREET
BIRMINGHAM
MICHIGAN 48009

P 248 644 3410

F 248 644 0819

Info @ mjdul.com

Historical Museum
Birmingham, Michigan

PROJECT

Preliminary

Master Plan
Landscape Development

SHEET TITLE

1" = 16'-0"

SCALE

PROJECT NUMBER: 0919
DRAWN: W. Sisker
CHECKED: J. Papadoulas
DATE: October 1, 2009
REVISIONS: December 14, 2009

L1

Memo

(248) 530-1682

To: Tom Markus, City Manager
From: Bill McElhone, Museum Director
Date: August 5, 2010
Re: Birmingham Historical Museum & Park Phase 2 Master Concept Plan

As the Birmingham Historical Museum & Park continues to moves forward on its long range planning, a brief review of the establishment and evolution of the Birmingham Historical Museum & Park as the community's primary keeper of its rich heritage will provide context for the emerging plans. In 1969, a bond proposal was approved by voters to purchase Marion Allen's 1928 house and the surrounding four-acres of property for the establishment of a museum and historical park. The following year, the 1822 John West Hunter House, Birmingham's only National Register Historic Building, was added to the site. Gradually over the next 20 years the much anticipated opening of the community's local history museum was completed with the May 19, 2001, ribbon cutting ceremony. Initially, after the opening, a tremendous amount of energy, time and available resources were committed to the active pursuit of establishing and implementing nationally accepted professional "best practices" standards for the management of the Museum and its historic resources. As these initiatives for a better museum were being realized, it was clear by 2003 that a well-developed inclusive master plan was necessary to elevate both the Museum and Historical Park's civic presence. Phase 1 Museum & Historic Park Master Plan in general sought to establish a more welcoming setting for the historic structures, and expand the use of the historical park's built and natural features.

In 2007, the construction of the first phase enhancements focused on the dramatic transformation of the Museum & Park's south facing side fronting Maple Avenue. These improvements changed the look and feel of the site from its former "residential appearance" to establish a campus-like setting to encourage a more "walkable" design more suited for the gathering of individuals/groups. The focal point is the History Plaza that now clearly links the Allen and John West Hunter houses. The "walkable" environment was furthered facilitated by the deliberate inclusion of several barrier free elements including a bus/passenger drop off ramp, wider sidewalks, and a visitor entrance with both a power door operator and platform lift. These

improvements go a long way in providing greater capacity to serve a more diverse audience. The combined improvements have resulted in a more inviting entrance area for the Museum's two buildings and have set the stage to make further improvements to the rest of the Historic Park.

The Phase 2 Museum & Historic Park Master Plan continues the work begun in Phase 1, and seeks to meet several strategic objectives identified in *The Strategic Plan for the Birmingham Historical Museum & Park (BHM&P)*, approved by the City Commission on August 11, 2008, which seek to develop greater awareness, recognition and presence of the BHM&P as a civic and cultural resource. Strategic Objective "2A" identifies the urgent need to install well-designed and well-placed signage clearly identifying BHM&P as a cultural venue. Strategic Objective "2B" furthers the desire for greater visibility by developing a comprehensive site plan that incorporates improvements to create many more opportunities for both the active and passive enjoyment of the historical park including the natural setting of the adjacent Rouge River corridor and trails.

The Phase 2 Museum & Historic Park Master Plan is complete, and it is much more comprehensive and ambitious in scope than the Phase 1 Master Plan. The plan calls for extensive well reasoned improvements to the entire Historic Park including a "tweaking" of elements completed during Phase 1. The following concept items have been identified in the Phase 2 Museum & Historic Park Master Plan:

- new main sign
- barrier free handicapped accessible walking path on the lower north side of the park
- children's rock garden
- pads for public art
- fountain or sprayer feature for the park's pond
- cleaning up of overgrowth surrounding the pond
- installation of park benches and tables around the pond and throughout the park
- two handicapped parking spaces along Willets
- installation of bike racks
- expansion of the Allen House rear patio
- installation of linking path from Allen House rear patio to History Plaza (funding from Community Development Block Grant)
- expansion of the History Plaza to the north to create a dramatic overlook for the park with pergola/trellis feature
- removal of picket fences for 24" high serpentine garden wall
- reconfiguration of the History Plaza to provide a more direct walkway from Maple Road crosswalk to the Museum's main entrance
- barrier free ramp for the Hunter House (funding from Community Development Block Grant)
- school bell monument/trailhead located west of the Allen House (private funding being sought)

- other initiatives that educate and promote ecological and natural environmental features of this outstanding outdoor resource.

Over the past year, the Phase 2 Plans have been reviewed by the Museum Board (formerly Historical Board), Planning Board (March 24, 2010) and the City Commission (at the January 23, 2010 Long Range Planning Meeting). Further reviews were made by Engineering, Building, and Planning departments. It is anticipated that future improvements will be undertaken over a period of ten years as private funds are raised to do so. The plan is to be considered a concept plan. Specific elements, prior to implementation will require further study, and review.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION: TO APPROVE THE MUSEUM BOARD'S RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT THE BIRMINGHAM HISTORICAL MUSEUM & PARK'S PHASE 2 MASTER PLAN AS A CONCEPT PLAN TO PROMOTE THE GREATER AWARENESS AND USAGE OF BOTH THE HISTORIC AND NATURAL /BUILT FEATURES OF THIS UNIQUE COMMUNITY RESOURCE.

DATE: March 3, 2016
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Director Report

Museum Name Change—On March 14, the museum name change recommendation and the mission statement change will be presented to the commission for their consideration. If approved, the ordinance language will be changed to reflect the name change.

Budget Review—The city manager will be recommending funds for re-branding consultant and for signage at the museum, as well as a minor increase in staffing to provide for two part time museum assistants and one 10-hour program assistant. The city commission will be reviewing the budget in April.

Park Wi-Fi Improvements, Invasives, and Pond Plantings—Changes at the WiFi provider/vendor have delayed the construction and implementation of the WiFi project somewhat. We still expect to have a plan in motion by the spring construction season, and to incorporate a native garden design accordingly.

Archives room— Now complete; collection materials are being relocated to their new homes. Intern staff is working on processing the Jack Steelman collection.

Bell Project—The Historic District Commission reviewed the project as a courtesy review on February 17 and enthusiastically support it. The RFP is now almost complete. The posting will go to statewide listings (MITN; Michigan Inter-governmental Trade Network and CAM; Construction Association of Michigan). In addition, RFP information will be posted on a new public notice webpage being developed by the city. There will be a mandatory pre-bid walkthrough with the architect and city staff in mid-March; final bids would be due approximately the end of March (exact date TBA).

The Friends have approved a plan for commemorative brick pavers at the bell site, to be interspersed with standard pavers called for in the construction design. (See attached proposed plan.) Engraved pavers will provide additional opportunities for personal commemoration and will help raise funds for the Friends. The plan reserves pavers for the Rosso family as major donors of the project. It will also provide for pavers to commemorate Birmingham Public Schools superintendents, should the school board wish to donate funds accordingly. Other pavers will be available on a first come, first served basis. Funds will be charitable contributions and will go to the Friends. The most efficient way to proceed is to sell as many of the commemorative pavers as possible before construction begins, so they can be all placed at that time. (However, it will still be possible to add them in at a later date.)

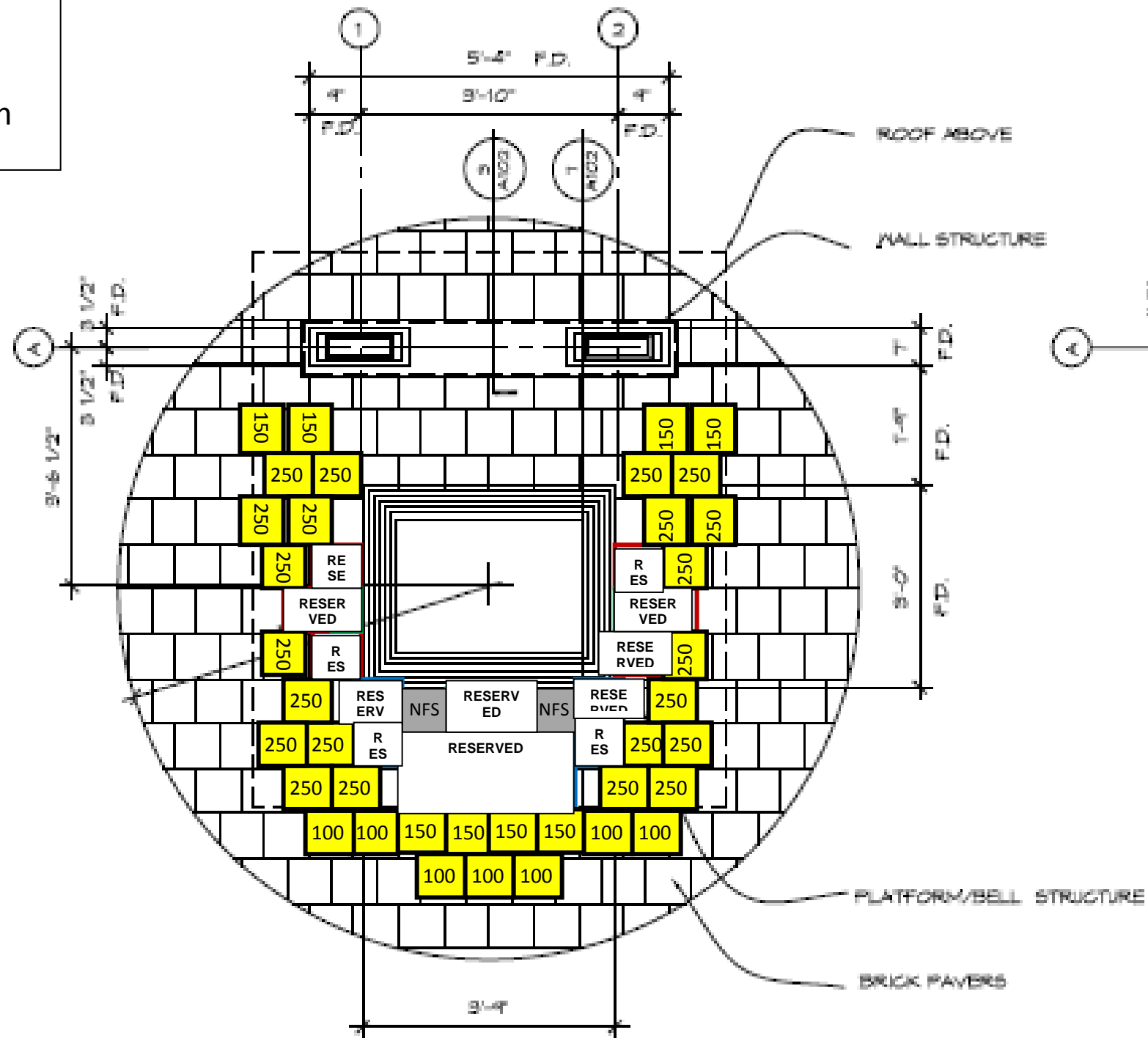
Friends

Hill School Bell

Brick Paver Commemorative Program

8 X 8 Pavers noted in yellow to be available for engraving as fundraiser;

Pricing depends on location. Donations for engraved pavers would go to Friends.



Samples of 8 x 8 Engraved Brick Pavers

