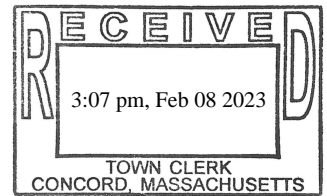


Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk of Concord, a meeting of the Permanent Monument Subcommittee of the Concord250 Executive Committee was held in the Lower-Level Meeting Room of the Concord Free Public Library, 129 Main Street on January 11, 2023 at 9:15am.

Members Present: Polly Reeve, Nancy Koehn, Christa Collins, Tooley Rogers
Guests Present: Joe Palumbo; Member absent: Gary Clayton



Call to order at 9:15 am; a quorum being present.

- 1) Voted to approve the minutes for the November 30th and the December 6th meetings.
- 2) Our Subcommittee (Committee) will propose the date of April 12, 2023 for a Public Forum to solicit input from the general public regarding ideas and related feedback on what the Monuments Committee should do. We need to determine a location and criteria for Concord250 “permanent memorials.” Polly added that there is a Committee working on a logo for the 250th, and that Jim Sherblom of Concord had come up with a working motto “Still heard round the world.” We were reminded that Acton was interested in participating in our celebration, as “Acton was Concord’s pastureland at that time, and we provided the militia.”
- 3) Polly read the notes from the November 3 Public hearing regarding the full Executive 250 meeting mission. Lots of ideas included in the Appendix 1 to these minutes.
- 4) What is a memorial? The Committee then discussed the legitimate issue of “what is a memorial? What is a monument?” Joe said that we should come up with criteria for this. Polly then described her thinking:

This issue of Monuments – what to do to commemorate Concord’s involvement in the Revolution might be described as:

Program vs Memorial

Memorial vs Monument

Permanence vs Ephemeral

She then discussed what a memorial is – stone memorial, trees, Wright Tavern renovation, Mural, etc. A “Monument” is and can be many things.

Nancy talked of listening to the movie that Gary had sent around (originally from Joe):

“Beyond Granite: The Future of the Public Square”

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYFUvaC4rBA>). She remarked that it really resonated with her as to why we put up monuments. “Time and again people in the video were saying – in different ways – ‘I know more now than I did before. And I’m glad I know this.’”

The Committee then considered the status of the “green space” adjacent to the existing stone memorials to those Concord residents who lost their lives through their military service during and after World War II. This area was originally acquired by private citizens in 1900 as part of the Town’s 125th year anniversary of the Concord Fight. Upon its acquisition,

the then derelict Middlesex hotel occupying the site was demolished. The private citizens then conveyed title to this parcel of land to the Town of Concord for municipal purposes.

Nancy said, "This space was set aside intended to be a memorial – a space for people to think about the past... and the present." Polly added to that, "We know we want to do something permanent to invite people to pause, to reflect, to consider what happened here, the effort that we all have benefited from. The effort of those past. We want to think about "place".

We then discussed how the funding for all of this might work, as well as possibly crafting a Request for Proposals for the complete project."

The Committee then discussed criteria for the monument selections. Early in this process Gary had asked Joe for criteria based on his work as a Concord Guide. Joe read his ideas:

The PROJECT is clearly in alignment with the Concord Executive Committees' charge around diversity, equity, and inclusion and the need to include contributions of people of color as outlined in the 2021 charge of the committee. (excerpted below) and attached

The PROJECT seeks to utilize the unique central location of the site to acknowledge the broad passage of human history in the area from the first indigenous residents of Musketequid through the next four centuries to the present-day Concord

THE PROJECT attempt to move beyond simplistic stories of a mythical past and works to incorporate new research and a greater understanding of events to open new windows and new opportunities to confront the past and tell fuller stories of all the people of our town.

THE PROJECT's design incorporates the natural greenspace as much as possible and seeks to provide education, awareness, and opportunities for reflection both seated and otherwise

THE PROJECT is ADA-compliant, wheelchair accessible, and accessible to the blind.

At this point members offered their thoughts regarding possible underlying goals and themes of the Committee's work. "We want to recognize a more real and a broader story than just Minutemen firing on Redcoats, than a battle between men – but the larger skein of history. As people from around the world – and locals too – come here and see these monuments – that by commemorating and reminding people of what and why things happened we can change the future.' "We want to be inclusive – this is part of our mission." And "We are at an inflection point. We must use this." And "Part of this story is that we don't have the story." "Are there people in other Concord Committees who might know more about the history of Native Americans or people of color?" "What was accomplished at the Revolution? What actually did that do?" We want to educate, to inform, and to inspire."

Action Steps decided upon:

Historians Nancy and Joe will interview new National Park Service employees in the area to see what they know about Concord history. They both also referenced a 100-page Harvard document (Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery (<https://legacyofslavery.harvard.edu/report>) that is clear and well-organized describing slavery in Massachusetts. Joe said he could send the link to the other Committee members. Joe referenced other books as well: “Unfreedom” and “Black Walden” as good sources for the early African American experience in Massachusetts. A list of Joe’s recommended readings is attached in Appendix II).

Christa will meet with Brian Rosborough (who wrote “250 Liberty Trees – a Call for Action” in the Concord Bridge – the article that Polly had circulated (<https://theconcordbridge.org/index.php/2022/12/15/250-liberty-trees-a-call-for-action/>))

to discuss details and logistics for this initiative. She mentioned the group “Speak for the Trees” (<https://treeboston.org/>) as well. This could be one of the Committee’s foci, along with other initiatives.

Polly and Tooley will assemble a criteria list for our Committee goals and for directing the discussion at our planned April 12th Public Forum.

We agreed that the next meeting on February 8th would be a hybrid meeting as a number of members will be absent.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.

Appendix 1

250th Public Forum on November 3, 2022 – notes by Tooley

Live stream of the Forum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9QyQdhOuus>

Speeches and comments

Henry Dane, Chairman

David Wood, former head of Concord Museum

Dr. Rob Monroe Asst Head of School Concord Academy – Curriculum and Inclusion – facilitator for this meeting

People who spoke up:

David Owen – Boy Scouts Scout house – the scouts are going to march on the 250 – wants to know how this will fit into (and not interfere with) other events

Arthur Walker – for the 200th – the town commissioned compositions by world famous composers – we commissioned Randall Thompson who set to music Robert Frosts “The Gift Outright”, Concord Band commissioned Normal Dellojyo to write something, and one more work was commissioned as well. This wa a great way to include the performing arts

Subcommittee chaired by Di Climer called “Art, Literature and Music”. She is interested in “who is missing here?” We have the Umbrella, Library, Museum – who else? Welcome all

A young man then asked to have the committee share current findings and ideas – so Rob Monroe picked this up and said that the committee has some ideas, but still not a unifying them, then the young speaker said we need a beautiful identity – a great logo (Pricilla Sturgess is in charge of Logo)

Jim Sherblom – “tell Concord’s story whole for the first time”. He spoke of getting the land from the Native Americans, then from the industry of Slavery and finally the Industrial Military complex – let’s reflect all of Concord’s history

Doug Ellis – reenactor, past captain of the Minutemen – “for me the purpose is unity as Americans – this is our heritage, these are the values that formed the country – let’s focus on what brings us together not divides us!” then he referenced the breakfast at the Masonic Lodge -and the Concord Minutemen – we will help out in any capacity – we make Concord special...

Rob said – “this goes for all – if you are a member of or partner with an organization – we are trying to figure out who our partners are going to be. Let us know.”

Jen Sheniman – member of communications sub-committee – and co-founder of magazine “Discover Concord” – as we get closer to event, we will be dedicating more of our magazine to celebration-related articles.

Jared Cass – referenced Concordians - Massachusetts Militia - who have supported Lincoln and marched to defend our country after the Revolution – let’s include as unifying theme – “the shot heard round the world began the process of forming the more perfect union that we are still trying to form – why not include that in the celebration?”

Dean Chadder – chair of select board in Acton – we are doing the same thing you are doing – we didn’t have the battle, but we did provide the Minutemen -Acton was Concord’s cow pasture for many years – we want to coordinate our celebration with yours in any way

Liz Cobbs – newer resident of Concord – just 21/2 years – “I hope we can bring histories forward into the present – and show how we are unifying and show how they are working – disparate histories and “how we are now” is a big part of the story. Also , “I’m on the personnel board for the town – highlighting the work that people in town are doing. I’m also in Rotary – and they might be able to help.

Rob Morrison – history teacher at the Fenn School – there are over 90 places in the US that are townships or cities that are named Concord throughout the US – “I have made it a project to visit them over the years – I’ve been to over 50 so far! I would like us to extend an invitation to them

in some way – to have the Town extend an invitation – that only thing we have in common is that these towns were established with a sense of ambition that we are coming together in a peaceful unity.

Janine Pennfield – regent of the DAR chapter of Concord – in discussion with the committee – but tonight a fire has been sparked – recently in Lexington at the unveiling of a plaque for the Lafayette Trail – hoping to invite the Lexington people...creating unity 0 the universality of this event

Diane Proctor – chair of the Communication Committee spoke up in support of unity

Brian Rossborough from Elm Street – I wish that the State Dept should be here to see this expression of unity, civility and democracy. When he heard about this he was flooded with the usual ideas -statue, dance, etc. Then he got thinking about The Liberty Tree”. They were established within the 13 colonies (borrowed idea from the Romans?) – not a tree as a protest, but opportunity to enjoy a new freedom – that Concord will remain a village and not become. Town or a City. Students could get involved to find tallest, oldest, fattest trees – if we plant 250 trees, each planting could be a celebrations of itself...

Mary Clark – referenced wonderful ideas so far stated...echoed that we want a small town celebration – we have opportunity in this time of strive of how people can pull together and of how the arts can serve us – music, plays, art – and get the young people should be involved – we are not a perfect town – and they can help to improve it.

Bill Bailey, West Concord – let’s honor the literally hundreds of veteran who have given their lives – look at our monuments – Irish names, Sicilian names – not all old English names – let’s honor all

Abby Mayette – member of the Concord Independent Battery, but not a resident of Concord, but went to school here, has family here – how can we include those others who made Concord home for a while – Middlesex, Concord Academy, etc – would like to include them

Polly Meyer – been in Concord for 25 years, and co-founder of Living Concord – a community events platform for social events here in Concord – we are doing well – weekly newsletter, several thousand followers – I would love to contribute in some way – there are so many interesting residents her in town doing such interesting work – love to get mutli-generational activities.

Mark Pauley – born in Concord, doesn’t live here now – but works here with Minuteman Media and want to document this three year process of celebration. Can’t find a lot of old images, but we plan to document this one – we will have awesome videos! We will be documenting – for all to see...

Jean Griffith from the Zoom – “Besides parades, concerts, events, really like to convey to the future (say the 300th celebration) what would we like them to know (there is a focus on history here). I love the Concord Band and hope that they are involved.

Corey Demitres – a rare young adult who lives in Concord – love to find ways to bring the young into this process – getting new thoughts out – the living Concord – rather than just history – I’m in a band – and I like the idea of bringing events – music, concerts to larger Boston area – there are lots of “creatives” in our region who would love to have such an opportunity – to have a platform to perform – also I’m an environmentalist and would like to know how the Town is going to honor recycling, carbon footprint, etc.

Joe Palumbo on the Events Committee – how to include people of all colors and backgrounds – it might be time to have a monument to people of Color, etc. we have a lot of the whites covered... this would be sending a good message – and are we making sure the events we have are free or inexpensive so all can come – like provide child care. What about a Concord Hymn for 2025 written by Amanda Gorman – wouldn’t that be great!

Victor Curran – teach Concord History course that allows you to be guide of Concord (Jane Gordon used to teach this). We tell what happened here, but I tell them Why it happened here – because people made choices to make these things happen – unifying theme or unifying spirit – love to hear about people who helped out and why they did the things that they did.

Karen Ahearn – worked for town for over 30 years – she spoke of years ago when there were non-profit organizations all over the town for a “United Nations” – wouldn’t this be a good thing to do. We could have “United Concord” instead of United Nations – and that could be the theme

Terry Ackerman – on the Select board – many good ideas tonight – most important is getting the young folks interested and invested - the young people like to be active – more than just sitting and watching – multi-player, muti-verse – I don’t know what we are, but if we can get young people involved to help us set up these types of things.

Rob ended with a thanks and congrats for good ideas. He asked that we all reach out to friends, family, neighbors, etc to get people jazzed up about this celebration

Diane Proctor – we are all stake holders in our future. As Harvard Dean, Rikesh Karuna, told freshman class this fall – “you have arrived at a difficult moment in history with the question of who we are, who we thought we were and who we are going to be in play.” Then she read the Richard Goodwin quote on the wall behind her in the Library, “At times History and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man’s unending search for freedom.” And she stated, “And that’s precisely where we are in so many ways right here in Concord and nationally. We stand at this inflection point, and the excitement of gathering to find a truthful way to celebrate the founding of our country rests with the citizens and friends of Concord.”

“Our willingness to listen carefully to each other, to communicate openly, patiently and graciously. We certainly have done that tonight.”

She quoted E.M.Forster in his epigraph for Howard’s End: “Only Connect – for it is through connecting that we create a vibrant community.” Ms Proctor finished by stating, “May we go forward with a sense of connecting. Please connect. Thank you.”

Henry Dane “I get to go to a lot of meetings, and very few of them are anything like this!” He referenced Victor’s “Why did it happen here?” And said that we are here now, so keep working on this.

Appendix II

Joe Palumbo recommended readings

Enslavement and its Aftermath as a part of Concord's Story

Books

Black Walden

<https://www.amazon.com/Black-Walden-Slavery-Aftermath-Massachusetts/dp/0812241800>

Black Lives Native Lands White Worlds

<https://www.amazon.com/Black-Lives-Native-Lands-Worlds/dp/1625344570>

Brethren By Nature

<https://www.amazon.com/Brethren-Nature-England-Colonists-American/dp/0801434157>

Other

Listing of Enslavement in Concord (attached)

1740 Concord MA Bill of Sale for a 2-year-old Girl (attached)

Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery

<https://legacyofslavery.harvard.edu/report>

This list of individuals enslaved by Harvard leadership, faculty, staff, and donors tags Jon Cuming (one of the wealthiest enslavers in town) and enslaver of Brister Freeman and yes the Cuming Building at Emerson is named after this enslaver Jon Cuming (link below ,he is on p 9)

<https://radcliffe-harvard-edu-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/1d7c27a9-132c-43ae-aad8-abb7c49c1320/AppendixI-ListofHumanBeingsEnslavedbyProminentHarvardAffiliates2.pdf>

Video

Quick teaching from the Equal Justice Initiative dealing with the overall Transatlantic Slave Trade and Boston specifically. Boston of course ties to Concord as wealthy Concordians were intimately involved in profiting of the slave trade through the supply of lumber, foodstuffs, financing, banking, and insurance..this was the main driver of the town's wealth growth through the 1700s

Boston

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtaGTLhbaU>

Overall

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jz6mB8k6kek>