



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 March 8, 2023.

Members Present: Gary Clayton, Christa Collins and Polly Reeve, Tooley Rogers - Nancy Keohn on Zoom.

Guests Present: Joe Palumbo, Historian and Concord Tourism guide; Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning & Land Mgmt Town of Concord; Beth Williams, Concord Tourism Manager; Nancy Fresella-Lee, Historian and Monuments documenter with Historical Comm.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:33AM; a quorum being present.

Minutes of the February 8, 2023 meeting of the subcommittee were reviewed and adopted as written.

A) Municipal Property, Parcel 1693, located near Monument Square with no building on it, hence it has no number. It is described as including the parking lot behind Vanderhoof's Hardware store and the driveway leading down to it, the war veterans memorial and green space around it, and the lawn area by the Catholic Parish Center. The lawn area is open, but there is a Town storm water management system - a catchment - below the lawn. This clearly posed limitations for use of this lawn. Marcia knew that it's under the purview of the Town Manager and Public Works, but not of the Planning Board or Board of Health. However, it is also within Concord's Historic District, which affects anything visible from a public way such as paving, walls, signage, less landscaping, more landscaping, etc. Also of concern is how changes fit in to existing monuments. Thus, the site is subject to overlapping jurisdiction: location; regulatory oversight; Public works purview.

It was noted that there is currently other work under way in downtown Concord, as the Wright Tavern received Concord Community Preservation funds and is proposing the restoration as well as alterations of this historic building and grounds.

Gary pointed out that whatever we do on that lawn area next to the Parish Center, it will have to be left largely open, as, over time the catchment will require repairs, etc. He explained that the catchment can take "live weight" like people or a truck, but not dead weight like a building.

Marcia stated that we should look at the whole space - even the war memorial monuments. We should think toward making a master plan for the whole site. The master planner can look at the whole site and not get boxed in by the individual constraints. The plan could even envision a second bridge over the Mill Brook. What does a Master Plan process look like, and how long would it take? The Subcommittee has the constraint that we have to produce something tangible to present during 2024-2026. To this end, Gary referenced that the 250 Executive Committee has placed on the 2023 Annual Town Meeting warrant a request for \$600,000 to provide initial support of the Concord250 celebration activities, including the work of the permanent memorial subcommittee.

B) Concord Tourism - Beth Williams described her role as the Concord's Economic Vitality and Tourism Manager - headquartered at the Visitor's Center at 58 Main St. They have a staff of 19, giving tours around town, with two "ambassadors" at the Old North Bridge. She coordinates tours with local businesses - like restaurants and shops. Beth is also on the 250th Marketing Committee, and has received a grant from the MAPC to develop the knowledge and skills to prepare and manage proposals for public art installations. Beth described the need for a gathering place in Concord for tourists and tours. They get about 50 busses per year with some 50 people per bus - these are leaf peepers, school groups and tour groups. Concord Tourism conducts private tours - between 2-5 people - Joe P. does this. They tell stories and share history. Having a place to sit and do this would be so positive. Something like a circular array of benches - in keeping with Concord's Transcendentalist roots - sort of a conversation area for people to sit, talk, eat and hear about Concord. The area could have art, history interpretive signs, perhaps QR coded history/lectures/interpretive. Even a pergola or pavillion like at Warner's Pond or Rideout Park in West Concord(?).

C) "Commemorative Tree Planting - 250 trees" - Christa, has spoken to or met with representatives of the Concord Public Works Department, The Concord Natural Resources Division, The Concord Garden Club, CCHS, and citizen activists.

- Newburyport has pursued a similar initiative - noting that townspeople can be responsible for buying trees, planting, etc, as long as they coordinate with town DPW & Water & Electric (to prevent planting over water or sewer pipes, or electrical wires.
- Concord DPW averred that Concord would need additional staff capacity to identify viable planting sites. Beth stated that the Trustees of Reservation (TToR) had to remove a large tree from the Old Manse property - maybe they could be involved in planting a new tree. Marcia suggested planting a "Witness Tree" near the Old North Bridge on TToR land.
- We need to know how much this would cost. We need to develop a budget and a funding plan.

Christa will invite key people she talked with to the April 10th Public Forum.

D) Public Forum on April 10th - Polly obtained reservation at Harvey Wheeler Center. It can hold up to 110 people, and we can project any graphics onto the wall (with a projector). Joe said that the Center also has hearing assistance devices. We will need to do a trial run there, so Polly reserved March 29th from 9:30-11:00 AM to do so. Gary will post the meeting.

How to format the meeting was discussed - Gary spoke of the need to have breakout groups to discuss the projects at hand to get feedback and give people who attend a chance to participate in smaller groups to "let quiet people's voices be heard." Nancy has facilitated many such groups at Harvard Business School, and described the process - how to set up small groups, how to phrase questions to obtain a variety of responses, how to facilitate discussion within groups, how to orient group reporting to ensure that groups present findings/opinions in an organized, but non-repetitive or overlapping way. She also stated that we should definitely go out with a follow-up post after the Public Forum - something like, "Thank you for coming...here is additional information to take away from the meeting."

Polly mentioned the criteria that we should use - really what we did use - be articulated. How does our selection of memorial project or projects work?

Gary appreciated this conversation about ideas for presenting the Public Forum, and asked that we form a small group to design the meeting more fully - perhaps with handouts, maybe written question? Volunteers? Joe, Nancy and Tooley volunteered. We should start with a succinct agenda - bullet points.

Beth said that she could put a notice on the Concord 250th Facebook page - and that all our members who are on Facebook to sign onto the Concord 250th Facebook page. We should send out communications about the PF to Beth, as she can list it on the Facebook page. She is on the 250th Marketing Committee, as is Jim Sherblom, who can place a notice in the Concord Bridge.

E) Historical Commission - Nancy Fresella-Lee has been requested by the Concord Historical Commission as a volunteer to update an inventory and condition of existing historical monuments and plaques in Concord. She provided the Subcommittee with an overview of her work to date which she hopes may eventually become, among other things, the basis for an informational guide that would be available to residents and visitors alike.

Next meeting will be on March 29th at Harvey Wheeler between 9:30 and 11:00.

Meeting adjourned at 11:11am.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Tooley Rogers