

Working Group for Confederate Monuments

Meeting Record

Location of Meeting: Hall of State Library
3939 Grand Ave
Dallas, TX 75210

Meeting Date: December 18, 2018

Meeting Start Time: 3:36 p.m.

Working Group Members Present

Buddy Apple
Arthur Gregg
Craig Holcolmb
Melissa Prycer
Joli Robinson
Jon Rollins
Albert Valtierra

Staff Present:

Jennifer Scripps, Office of Cultural Affairs Director
David Fisher, Office of Cultural Affairs Assistant Director
Mark Doty, Senior Planner City of Dallas Historic Preservation
Kay Kallos, Public Art Manager
Lynn Rushton, Collection Manager for Public Art
Chris Caso, City Attorney

Guests

John Paul Batiste, Cultural Arts Advisory Commission Chair
Alex Boyer, Fox News
Karl Chiao, Dallas Historical Society Executive Director

Working Group Member(s) Absent:

Melissa Alfaro
George Keaton
Joyce King
Newman
Coyelle Murchison
Matt Wood
Angela Young

AGENDA:

Introduction of Working Group Members

Director of the Office of Cultural Affairs reviewed the charge from the Dallas City Council:

On June 21, 2018, the Cultural Affairs Commission was briefed about the formation of a working group on Confederate Monuments to address the City Council's resolution from April 25, 2018:

That the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission shall recommend:

1. the scope for adding a full historical context to Confederate art and symbols at Fair Park and commemorating the Hall of Negro Life, including appropriate signage, markers, digital tour guides, public art, educational programming and/or exhibitions; and
2. a proper memorial of the lynching of Allen Brooks at the corner of Akard Street and Main Street to be located at Pegasus Plaza.

Review of Confederate Art in Dallas, Fair Park and Current Status

TASKS

Fair Park

- Review confederate art and symbols at Fair Park and the City of Dallas

- Review information about the Hall of Negro Life

Lynching Memorial at Akard and Main

- Charge from City Council- a proper memorial of the lynching of Allen Brooks at the corner of Akard Street and Main Street to be located at Pegasus Plaza.
- Opportunity from the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Monument Placement Initiative
- Identify the feasibility of bringing the Dallas County Lynching Memorial to Dallas from the National Museum for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama.
- Identify programming and research opportunities from the Equal Justice Initiative that can be of benefit to Dallas
- Discuss the scope of the memorial to recognize other victims of injustice in Dallas County

Discussion Topics

Fair Park-there is a need to identify the stories that have not been told about Fair Park and its history and find a way to make this a part of a more inclusive story about the Park, for example:

- The integrated Pan American games in 1937.

Lynching Monument-working with the Equal Justice Initiative to develop an appropriate historical marker for the lynching of Albert Brooks at Akard and Main Streets will bring Dallas into the national conversation about the history of injustice and recognition of victims of lynching. Working with the National Museum of Peace and Justice to bring the Dallas County marker-with the names of the two victims of lynching between 1877 and 1920 is an important part of the effort.

A recommendation was made to form two groups to address the two main topics of this working group: Fair Park and the Lynching Memorial. Others opposed this-as the group present today is small enough to work on both topics. (note: seven members of the working group were not in attendance at the meeting on December 18, 2018.)

A recommendation was made to rename the working group-Working Group for the Recontextualization of Fair Park History and the Memorial to Victims of Lynching in Dallas County, to more accurately reflect the tasks of the group.

An aggressive timeline for completion of tasks is needed to be able to make recommendations to the Public Art Committee, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the City Council by June 2019.

Recommendation to include participants from the Park and Recreation Department and the new management of Fair Park as ideas emerge for signage, exhibition spaces and other programming at Fair Park. Additional recommendation to hire professionals for signage, markers and other didactic features to ensure accessibility and professional presentation.

FUNDING for recommendations will have to be identified.

Given the current work on the Juanita Craft House and the close relationship between the civil rights events that took place there and its proximity to Fair Park-cross connections with Fair Park history should be explored

The history of Martin Luther King Jr's appearances at the Fair Park Music Hall should also be highlighted.

Concerns about placing the Memorial to Albert Brooks at the corner of Akard and Main is that it isolates this incident from related history in Dallas-others felt that having historical markers at the site of the historic event provides an understanding of how these histories are a part of our daily lives. Place matters-people should encounter history where it happened. History encountered is a powerful way to honor the lives of those remembered.

There was general support for working with the Equal Justice Initiative to develop historical markers in early 2019.

Finding descendants of individuals to be remembered adds significant context to the remembrance so they can be honored as people not just victims.

The working group should find ways to provide digital access to information about Fair Park and the monument to victims of lynching available.

Jolie Robinson agreed to be the Working Group spokesperson to make recommendations to the Public Art Committee and the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission.

NEXT MEETING DATES

- Tuesday, January 22, 2019. Location to be confirmed
- Tuesday, March 5, 2019. Location to be confirmed

Meeting Adjourned: 5:20 p.m.
Date: December 18, 2010