

Commemorative Works Committee Meeting

December 2nd, 2019

1100-4th Street SW, Suite E650

4:00 to 5:00 PM

Attendees

Andrew Trueblood, Director, Office of Planning & Committee Chair

Sandy Allen, DHCD Member

Kathleen Beeton, DCRA Member

Kelsey Bridges, DDOT Member

Otto Condon, Public Member

Mike Carter, DPW Member

Maryann Lombardi, OCTFME/CAH Member

Dulce Naime, DPR Member

Lauren Dugas Glover, CAH Member

Anita Cozart, OP

Kevin Storm, OP

Chris Shaheen, OP

Jordan Chafetz, OP

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Why are we here?
3. Commemorative Works Program Today
4. Future Opportunities
 - a. Thinking Big
 - b. NCPC's Museum and Memorial Master Plan Update
5. Next Steps

Minutes

Introduction / Why are we here:

Andrew Trueblood welcomed Committee Works Committee (CWC) members and spoke about the potential for commemorative works to celebrate the District of Columbia's history, culture and diversity. He stated that the program aligned with the Office of Planning's (OP) mission to promote public life and the District's opportunity to work with the National Capitol Planning Commission (NCPC) as they update their Museum and Memorial Master Plan (2M). He stated that people may think of federal commemorative works as something made of marble, water features, and walls of names, and that the Committee can think more creatively about District commemoration in ways that use lighting, temporary memorials, or other innovative practices.

Commemorative Works Program Today:

Chris Shaheen gave an overview of the legislation that created the Committee, the review process for commemorative works, and the current status of the Committee's membership. He noted one of the public member positions is vacant and that the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments is looking for candidates to fill that position. He spoke about NCPC's 2M plan, its focus on promoting memorial sites off the National Mall and into the surrounding city, and how this approach has resulted in locating

memorials in District neighborhoods (ie. the Ukrainian Famine Memorial at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street NW).

Shaheen reviewed the current state of the District's commemorative work programs. He provided examples of historic memorials including the Metropolitan Police Memorial, DC's World War I Tree Memorial on 16th Street NW, and the District of Columbia's War Memorial on the National Mall. He also discussed four recent commemorative works that were reviewed and recommended for approval by the Committee: Chuck Brown Memorial Park (2014), Metro Memorial park (2015), Carter G. Woodson Memorial (2015), and the Marion Barry, Jr. Bronze Statue (2018). A list of 20 other projects that had been proposed or inquired about since 2001 was also provided.

Future Opportunities:

Shaheen also spoke about future opportunities to incorporate commemoration into District projects. Examples included large and small infrastructure projects, park features, and participating in NCPC's 2M plan update.

Shaheen asked each member to think about their role on the Committee, the responsibilities of the agency they represent or their area of expertise, and how that can support the Committee's work to develop a high-level vision for a program and adopt regulations to administer the program. Specific components of a vision include developing strategies for locating DC memorials, promoting innovation and cultural awareness, and funding partnerships and opportunities. Specific regulations that need to be adopted include criteria for commemorative works and the rules and procedures for running the Committee and reviewing applications. He explained OP will facilitate a working group composed of staff from District agencies that will make recommendations for the Committee to consider and shared a timeline for completing the recommendations by June 2020.

Next Steps:

Shaheen asked members to provide specific feedback on several questions related to memorials that will inform OP's guidance to NCPC at their December 9th meeting to discuss the 2M plan update:

- How can national memorials be more compatible with District neighborhoods?
- How can local communities be better engaged in the federal commemorative works planning process?
- What are clearly defined outcomes the District would like to see as part of NCPC's 2M update?

Trueblood noted this information will also inform the District's work to create a vision for a District commemorative work program. Trueblood invited Committee members to share their thoughts on the CWC and developing a District program.

Feedback on these questions should be sent to OP by noon, Friday, December 6th.

Discussion:

Lauren Dugas Glover stated the D. C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH) funds public art projects, some of which have been commemorative works tracking through the CWC. She offered that temporary public art installations should be considered by the Committee as potential commemorative works. She said CAH funds many projects that could be considered commemorative adding that the types of commemorative projects the Committee reviews needs to be better defined. Trueblood stated the CWC has the authority to define what comes to the Committee and that the Committee's work could inform other projects that are not considered commemorative works Dugas Glover stated that

public art projects generally tell a story and/or celebrate community. The community would benefit from guidance on what constitutes commemorative works versus telling a story/celebrating community.

Maryann Lombardi stated she was not sure what type of projects fall under the purview of the Committee, how communities are involved in the review process, or how to best enable communities to propose commemorative works. Shaheen explained that the commemorative work legislation defined memorials very broadly. He said the only commemorative works approved by the District were sponsored by District agencies and that each application had gone through a thorough design process that included community involvement. He said legislation also requires each commemorative work application to be sent to the affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission for review.

Dulce Naime raised the issue of groups approaching District agencies with specific memorial proposals that have nothing to do with the District of Columbia and proposing memorials in neighborhoods that have nothing to do with the person or event being memorialized. She emphasized the need to make sure memorials are appropriately located and that commemorative events be relevant to the 21st century. Trueblood confirmed that guidelines approved by the Committee will help agencies advise applicants on the types of commemoration appropriate for memorials in District neighborhoods and locations.

Dugas Glover asked about the status of the District's small park strategy offering that it could be a resource for identifying sites for commemorative works. She also added maintenance is an important element to public art projects and should be considered in the planning and approval of projects.

Lombardi stated she supported the idea of having a strategy in place that aligns all District programs to promote commemorative works.

Kelsey Bridges stated a scalable approach that defines different levels of review with different types and scales of commemoration would be helpful to promote a wide range of projects. She identified projects as straight-forward as painting streets as an option for temporary commemoration. A guide to the variety of commemorative projects groups can consider would help communities figure out what they want to do. Trueblood affirmed that guidance on scale of projects and what needs to come to the Committee is needed. Kevin Storm stated that the Committee needed to look at the "scale of time" – that the people, places, and events that are commemorated need to have "staying power".

Sandy Allen commented on the need for community involvement and defining what residents want. She stated discussing commemoration, what is doable, and establishing realistic outcomes will be an educational process.

Otto Condon stated that NCPC's 2M plan should include a Tier 3 that defines areas of the District beyond the L'Enfant Plan and that federal memorials should be encouraged to stay within the boundaries of the L'Enfant Plan. He said there was opportunity to promote commemoration within District projects more proactively, using a percentage of funds set aside at the outset of the design process. He said Business Improvement Districts (BID) have experience in sponsoring temporary projects that could be a model for temporary commemoration, that these projects typically require a Memorandum of Understanding between the BID and another party, and projects were developed to be temporary to avoid a full review by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). Trueblood affirmed the need to better define the types of projects that require review by CFA or NCPC and speculated that the third public member on the CWC could be from a BID.

Kathleen Beeton stated review processes for certain commemorative works should be streamlined. Shaheen said there were also review process in place that could be used to review smaller scale projects

that may not rise to the level of a full Committee review, such as the Department of Transportation's public space permitting process and the Public Space Committee. Beeton stated another way to promote commemorative works is through new development, specifically as a public benefit required for a Planned Unit Development. Dugas Glover stated Montgomery County, MD, has a good model for defining public benefits for new development that should be looked at. Trueblood stated there is an opportunity to be more intentional with what we ask developers to do regarding commemoration.

Conclusion:

Trueblood thanked Committee members for joining in the discussion and reminded them to provide feedback to OP by the end of the week on December 6th. Shaheen noted that a follow-up meeting will be required for the Committee to approve meeting minutes.