

**City of Hyattsville
Race & Equity Task Force
October 27, 2020, 7:00 PM
Zoom
Minutes**

Present:

Task Force Members:

- Co-chair Andrea Dargin
- Co-chair Stacie Whitesides
- Rodrigo Blanco
- LaToya Robinson
- Joanne Waszczak
- Ashleigh Brown-Grier
- Malcolm Clarke

Council:

- Councilmember Daniel Peabody

Staff

- City Administrator Tracey Douglas
- Staff Liaison Jan Guszynski

Guests:

- Dakari Taylor Watson
- Marshall Marshall
- Angela Justice

Members Absent:

- Monica Sharma

Meeting called to order at 7:11PM by co-chair Dargin

1. Secretary position

RB moves to appoint MC as secretary, JW seconds

- No discussion, all approved

2. Mural design project

- Angela Justice with Green Owl Design describes history of executing mural project on UIP development site three years ago.
 - Mentions that several Hyattsville buildings need decoration and TLC, and when Black Lives Matter protests happened this summer, firm approached the city about doing something in the space.
 - Reached out to local artists to gauge interest in doing another mural project and considered panels that would affix to the building. However, since UIP plans to demolish the buildings in three months, other locations will need to be considered.
 - Magruder Park building is a viable option, and the idea is now to put together a cohesive design, as well as allowing volunteers from the city to participate. Since

park is planned to be renamed, mural may need to incorporate the theme of the new park name.

- TD: Also considering Centennial Park
- Angela shared some art concepts submitted by the artists that will be pulled into a cohesive theme for Centennial and Magruder Parks.

- **Questions**

- JG: Was there a discussion of a notional timeline, or any discussion for theme and messaging?
 - Angela brought this idea to the city about 4 months ago, but she did not get a response in a timely manner.
 - Initially wanted to get Hyattsville videographer to record painting of the mural
 - This would be a valuable project for the city of Hyattsville to brand it as a good place to be and a place with a lot of artistic expression.
 - Despite relevance of this, focus of the task force is the race and equity plan.
 - Thought that because committee is working on the new name of Magruder park, this would be a good thing for the committee to begin working on and new name could easily be incorporated into the art.
 - Centennial Park proposal should be taken to the council, rather than soliciting much community involvement.
 - Discussion with Mayor required for how that project will move forward.
- SW: How long would this mural be in place?
 - The mural will be in place depending on the content of the mural, how long the current administration remains in place, and other considerations, but cannot make any assurances as to lifespan of the mural.
 - DP: Councilmembers are term limited, but there is no concern about creating permanent installation in support of racial justice that is artistic in nature.
 - Council may have an appetite for something reflecting support for Black lives and racial justice.
 - Considered painting the streets.
- AD thanks Angela for involving us and helping us to keep sight of the real-life impact that our work can have. Should consider focusing on messaging that is long-lasting. Committee is interested in taking this on. Timeline for erecting mural will likely be next spring, based on weather consideration.
- JW describes how art was rotated on a safety wall in a park she has managed previously, due to graffiti and other art. Rotating art allows community to uplift art and themes that are timely.
 - TN: It would be nice if we could put something up involving or on the teen center and would like to see it moving throughout the city in different spaces.

3. Magruder Park Renaming Campaign Webinar

- Seminar will be on December 10 at 7pm to 8:30pm
- Submission card in last month's Hyattsville Reporter

4. Committee Response to Community Engagement

- Want to discuss proposed plan for engagement and driving committee forward
 - Reviewing plan and researching has been daunting, and considering ways to rejuvenate the committee while still doing the work
 - Discussed forming committee to draft RFP while still working on abstracts so that requirements will be outlined
 - Jan states that group's task would be looking at samples and coming up with potential RFPs, as well as interviewing potential consulting candidate
 - RFP would be for next fiscal year (July 1, 2021)
- Community engagement
 - Brainstorming ways that some sections of the plan can be subject to community conversations (bringing experts into community meetings and having open dialogues with community members)
 - Provide committee with background knowledge
 - New approach enables
 - Reached point where much research has been done and abstracts have been completed, which will help person who comes in to develop plan
 - Group needs to solicit information from people and be more community facing
 - Want to end with plan drafted, finalized, and enacted
 - Hyattsville residents don't know or remember that plan has been drafted, an outreach will help us to create a more holistic perspective and generate some fruitful feedback
 - RB states that as a non-expert, it makes sense to bring experts in for additional support on the plan
 - LR: it is important to make sure that we are on the same page about what the mission of the committee is, and the definitions of "race," "equity," and the combination of those terms, because there may be no consensus, and the work of dismantling racism will require expanding the committee, and we need to consider whether we are open to doing this organizing work. We need to reach out to community members and give them a voice
 - JW: Mayor kicked off committee's work by explaining the purpose of the Task Force, and to go back to the original vision and purpose by having her come and speak to us would be useful. Many cities are developing equity plans, and she shared those with us. Can rely on who wins the RFP to support us in reaching out to community via focus groups and surveys, among other things.
 - Develop subtopics in main topics
 - AB: Community engagement, with regard to the plan, is important. Queens Chapel Culture and History event included community feedback and discussion on the plan. It is important to keep other groups in the know

5. Open Discussion

- Dakari asked "what have previous outreach methods consisted of?"

- AD: we've used the usual channel, such as social media, email list servs. When we were in a phase that involved a lot of data gathering, we communicated with people who worked for the city, and got information from those parties that way. We are now moving into getting information out to the public and from the public, and will use all methods at our disposal, whether that is putting information in the green mailer, word of mouth, emails, and whatever else
- JW: in the first few years of the committee, we put questions in the "Speak Up Hyattsville" survey. Some also reached out to community members at bus stops and community events. Also invited community members to share information with us at meetings. Staff members reached out to organizations to share information with us about specific issues. Community members would prepare remarks, PowerPoints, or handouts, some based on lived experience. For the most part, we engaged professional experts rather than community members on their lived experience
- Dakari: "To Ms. Latoya's point, inclusion and diversity is paramount. Are there any youth serving on this board? PTO members?"
 - AD: the plan lacks information about education, and youth insight is a deficiency on the committee
 - DP: not sure if there is an age specification for committee members, but there are many youth volunteers in the city. Recommends reaching out to education committee chair.
 - Jan will follow up
 - JW: Since Hyattsville residents can vote in local elections at 16, they should be able to serve on committees at that age as well. Asked if Hyattsville has a formal youth advisory group/council that advised City Council.

Review agenda for next meeting

- Next meeting would be the Tuesday before Thanksgiving
 - At the moment, will work on charting out plan for how we will have fireside chats.
- JW attended the first meeting of the Police and Public Advisory committee
 - Committee wants to collaborate with us, Jan was asked to follow on whether they should meet with us sometime soon or after they've had a few more committee meetings.
 - Jan will follow up on availability for scheduling meetings for the remainder of the year.

Adjournment:

- JW moves to adjourn, SW seconds
- Adjourned at 8:30PM