

Nags Head Committee for Arts and Culture

Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2017, 10:30am

Nags Head Town Hall, Conference Room

Committee Members Present: Leslie Erickson, Kerry Oaksmith, Peggy Saporito, Lauren Evans, Deputy Town Manager Andy Garman and Deputy Planning Director Kelly Wyatt.

Public Present: None.

Deputy Planning Director Kelly Wyatt opened the meeting and thanked everyone in attendance. The minutes of October 16, 2017 and November 20, 2017 were adopted by consensus.

Planning staff updated the committee on a conversation had with local artist and business owner Melanie Smith. Ms. Smith was open to allowing the existing wooden art mast on her property to be utilized as a test/demonstration mast when the committee was ready to do so. She requested that if the art mast was successful that she be able to select the panel painting she would want to be displayed long term and maybe not necessarily the test panel.

Deputy Town Manager Andy Garman briefly updated the committee on the number of masts within the Town and their condition. He noted that they seemed to be good condition and when the construction and installation of new wooden masts were needed that the Town Engineer, David Ryan would draw up the appropriate plans and our Town Public Works Department would install the mast and fasten the art panel appropriately. He noted that the Town may want to go ahead and install the wooden mast at the newly constructed Bonnett Street Bath house and have Kerry Oaksmith's panel hung there when completed.

Peggy Saporito informed that committee that she had inquired of many people about any information on the history of the existing art masts that exist within the Town. She was unable to obtain any information to pass along to the committee regarding the masts but those she had mentioned it to seemed very excited about the proposed art mast project and its potential.

Lauren Evans asked about the particular type of medium for the art masts and would mosaics be acceptable. After some discussion it was agreed that limiting the medium to paint would be best at this point, especially not knowing how the weight of the mast might affect its longevity. Peggy Saporito asked if anyone had researched if a protective top coat would be required. Staff noted that it hasn't been researched yet, but would be prior to our next meeting.

Committee members listed potential artists to consider soliciting for this project, they included: Rob Snyder, Marcia Cline, Red Dawn, Tracy Bell, Munroe Bell, John Silver, Rick Tupper and James Melvin.

These were the artists who live in Nags Head. Others outside of Nags Head were noted and may be considered at a later time.

The committee determined which member would be responsible for reaching out to the individual artists prior to our next meeting. Peggy Saporito suggested that a “fact sheet” of information be compiled so that when speaking with these artists any potential questions could be answered. Staff stated that they would work on this fact sheet and seek input from members Ben Cahoon and Kerry Oaksmith who were currently working on masts and gaining good experience. Kerry Oaksmith noted that the 8 ft. tall panel at times can be cumbersome whether its having to put it on a saw horse to sand or stand on a ladder to paint. Staff noted that Ms. Smith had inquired about having two different artists paint the panel, each taking one side. The committee noted that this may be a good idea and if someone wanted to do that they would not discourage it.

Peggy Saporito asked about any compensation available to the artists as they were not only donating their time but their supplies. Staff noted that they would certainly be given acknowledgement for their efforts on a placard on the painting but we couldn’t allocate a specific amount until the budget had been determined.

The committee again discussed the distribution of these masts throughout the Town. It was agreed that each panel should be displayed at Dowdy Park for a period of time, maybe a week or more, while a silent auction is being conducting for acquisition of the panels. The committee felt that instead of having business owners commission their desired piece that they could simply bid on the piece(s) that they were drawn to along with everyone else. It was discussed that a social could be held at Dowdy Park where the artists and businesses owners could mingle and enjoy themselves.

The committee briefly discussed where these art panels would ideally be permanently located. It was noted that the original idea was within the Gallery Row area only, however consideration should be given to the entirety of the beach road and between the highways. It was not decided whether to encourage the masts along US 158. Deputy Town Manager Andy Garman said that the in the future consideration could be given to the Town commissioning specific pieces for Town properties such as the Huron Shipwreck at Bainbridge Street.

The committee wrapped up the art mast discussion noting that they would like to select 8 – 10 artists to participate in the initial art mast project and that creative rights would be given to the artists but would encourage their art piece to be representative of Outer Banks culture and ideally, Nags Head. It was noted that any revenue made by the auctioning off of the are panels would go back into the budget of the Art and Culture Committee and be used to offset costs for the panels or initiate future art and culture events.

Next, the committee began discussion on the potential farmers market to be held at Dowdy Park, a monthly event held between May and October. Lauren Evans updated the committee that her event during Shop Local Saturday “Sea-Spoon” was very successful and that many of the vendors in attendance were interested in participating in a farmers market at Dowdy Park.

Leslie Erickson updated that committee that she had spoken with other music teachers and while they were interested in participating, their concern was that school would be out for a portion of the months and they would need to know well in advance of any proposed market date in order to coordinate properly. Lauren Evans noted that the little touches such as community group performances were key to the atmosphere and making people want to return, she noted that having small musical performances during “Sea Spoon” was very positive.

Leslie Erickson stated that she knew Karen and Joby Brown quite well and would be happy to discuss a little community library with them. They had previously offered to construct one of these community libraries for the Town.

Kelly Wyatt quickly updated the committee on a request from Sue Goodrich to locate a “Little Red Mailbox of Hope” at Dowdy Park. The committee was complimentary of the idea and asked that staff proceed with obtaining more details from Mrs. Goodrich on the installation.

With no additional items for discussion the meeting adjourned at 12:15pm.