

**Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force**

July 31, 2017

Minutes

Members present: Councilor Ali, Matt Suslovic, Merita McKenzie , Blanca Santiago

Members absent: Herb Adams, , Danielle Conway, Dawud Ummah, Daniel Minter, Regina Phillips

Staff present: Troy Moon, William Needelman

Welcome and introductions:

Councilor Ali called the meeting to order.

Review and approve the minutes from July 10. All in favor.

Bill talked about the history of the Amethyst Lot and the proposed Portland Landing project.

Program: 3 elements: Youth Sailing, Transient Berthing (water taxis, public tie ups), Open Space. Resiliency is secondary element.

Merita asks about the pilings

No need to remove pilings at this time because they don't interfere with proposed uses

Design encompasses Moontide Park which is constructed of contaminated dredge spoils. Need to now deal with the spoils – the project would seal it off and create more opportunities for use.

The landforms are intended to protect the land around them from storm surge and sea level rise. They also provide sheltered areas.

Central area to provide vehicle access to support the primary functions. It isn't a parking lot but there would be short term parking for drop offs / pick ups. Could also serve as

Planned to be called Portland Landing – marine use, typical in towns up and down the coast use the name Town Landing

The design is the result of a year long process. There's a Fisherman's Memorial contemplated but the concept of a stand alone monument was not popular. A functional approach /



environmental art approach was preferred by stakeholders. The place is a destination – relationship with water a major factor.

Working with the State to perhaps adjust the ROW but nothing in the proposal would be a barrier to future rail.

Councilor Ali – Maine Lobster Union consulted, proponents of a fisherman's memorial as well.

Matt – asks Bill to describe other development in the area.

Bill described the hotel under construction, as Wex, and Portland Company. Much development interest

Blanca – How did the naming come

Bill – the stakeholders involved, which was inclusive to include India St. and MHNO

Councilor Ali – His idea not to change the name from Portland Landing but to dedicate a part of the space to recognize Dr. King.

Bill – Fishermans Monument would be in the traffic circle. Fixed, stand alone monument may not work in other parts of the space. The Marine use is a key part of the design. Public art discussed this in detail.

Councilor Ali – asks for further explanation of public spaces. Asks about the event space.

Bill – Moonide Park has space for about 500 people. Other areas designed to be calmer, allow people to find quiet space amongst the dunes

Matt: Funding?

Bill: Up to Council, There is money to expand the concept being present to something that could get a permit. Step after that would be funding. Earliest it could happen is 2020

Councilor Ali – maybe some benches or a bust, possibility of adding recognition.

Bill – suggests discussion with Public Art Committee and Parks Commission but Council has final say. Concerned that the marine component is so predominant that it may overshadow the civil rights element. Would not want civil rights to be seen as an afterthought.

Blanca – there has been a thoughtful process who have already made many recommendations. It doesn't sound like there is an absolute no here but we should keep our options open.

Matt – appreciated the discussion of keeping the theme around the marine use. Two possible connections that could be had. Resiliency is theme championed by MLK. Another referent would be the slave trade, recognize that darker side of history

Councilor Ali – there is also a brighter side, as African Americans came via the sea.



Bill – stakeholders will be coming together this fall.

Merita – will need to use imagination to tie everything together thematically. Her family visited the area regularly. Like that there are many public componets. A park within the Portland Public Landing seems feasible. Asks how the Cleeve Statue was placed.

Bill – a donor offered the bronze statue of “European founder” of American cities. The City declined it. Mr. Spague, a descendent of Mr. Cleeve, took the statue and placed it on his property

Councilor Ali – what’s the desire of the committee?

Merita – There are many other areas around the East End – sees the renaming as conflicting but there are historical elements in the area that could tie it in. Keep it Portland Landing but describe what happened there.

Councilor Ali – not advocating for changing the name. Likes that it will be very busy and there could be a place to let people know about the history.

Bill: Trade has been the most important part of the area – Could be an opportunity to tell the story and recognize the diversity involved in that trade.

Bill – no design schedule set. Going to Parks Commission and EDC

Councilor Ali – Will continue to meet to discuss

Blanca - what about Congress Square?

Councilor Ali – will be connecting with the new ED of Congress Square.

Matt: thinks the area has potential.

Future Meetings:

Troy and Blanca have conflicts on Aug 14. Meeting cancelled. Rescheduled for August 24 at 4 PM.