

1. 8-11-22 Flat Iron Task Force Meeting

Documents:

[8-11-22 FLAT IRON TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES.PDF](#)
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LARRY HUSHOUR
Mayor

JASON POIRIER, Council President
PAMELA REED, Secretary
KARL MUNDER
LYNNE GALLETTI
STEPHEN DOMOTOR



Flat Iron Task Force

LARRY VALETT, Chair
MIKE EACHO, Vice Chair
DIANN LINTON, Treasurer
ADELE CONNOLLY, Secretary
LYNNE GALLETTI, Liaison

Commission Members:

CHARLES BECK
RICK DYE
LEE HAIGWOOD
NIKKI JEFFRIES
OLIVIA KUEHNER
JIM MOLESWORTH

FLAT IRON TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 11, 2022 - 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance
 - a. Called to order at 7:05 pm by Mayor Hushour
 - b. 26 residents in attendance including Mayor Hushour, Councilmember Galletti, Councilmember Domotor
2. Mayor's Initial Comments
 - a. Concept of Task Force
 - i. Mayor Hushour gave the background on starting the task force and hoping to have at least 1 more meeting before the Town Council meeting on September 12.
 - b. Rough Mission Statement
 - i. "To Preserve and Restore the Flat Iron Building" to include immediate action to determine if the building is structurally sound and can be renovated.
 - c. Council Liaison – Councilmember Galletti will be the Liaison to the Task Force reporting back to the Town Council
3. Overview: Background and Current Status Report – Larry Valett
 - a. Larry gave a brief history of the building
 - i. the town purchased the building because they were going to widen Main Street – so it was going to be torn down but not because it was a "safety hazard", however, the Council voted unanimously in 1959 to keep the building and not tear it down
 - ii. There have been many interests to save the building over the years
 - iii. Preservation Maryland is a facilitator for the State of Maryland. They connect municipalities with grant fund opportunities. They help the state of Maryland assess worthwhile projects. They are not a biased 3rd party, they have been watching and ready to assist the Town of Mount Airy for several years in regard to this specific building. In 2016, Zach Peters identified 1.5 million potentially available for this project
 - iv. 3 engineering reports have been done, the last one of which was pro bono from preservation Maryland – none have said to condemn the building
 - v. 3 concerns of the Town Council – building integrity, pedestrian safety, vehicular traffic safety
4. Critical Task Force Initial Objectives – Mayor Hushour
 - a. Town Council voted 3-2 in May to tear down the building within 6 months
 - b. Town Council wants to know if building is in imminent danger of falling down, is the walk through plausible? Is it reasonable? Is the overall structure sound enough to be preserved for its intended use.
 - c. Task Force needs to organize, form subcommittees, fundraise, the approximate cost of a full structural analysis is \$15-\$30K, need to have a plan to go back to Town Council to either pay for the entire study, half the study?
5. Public Comment
 - a. Jimmy Linton – There was \$40K just spent on another study for alternatives on what to do with the building – why? It's been studied and done in the Mount Airy Vision Plan – 10% of the fire company calls in the last year went up Park Avenue – he has been collecting data – that was approximately 235 calls last year – he's against closing Park Avenue because that would add on another minute to response times to Senior house, Lorien,

- anyone living in that area, The Fire Company never said it should be closed, they never had a meeting to say it was ok to close park avenue, it would be catastrophic to close it
- b. Larry Valett – the plaza to the right of the building would be a new open plaza, it is owned by Frank Illiano who owns the lot, he is on the plaza design subcommittee
 - c. Wendi Peters – what really makes a thriving downtown – volunteers and different facets of the town coming together – this project brings together the organizations, public and private and the community – it brings a destination site to town – highlighting the history, the town, the amenities...towns around the State area capitalizing on bringing people together and working together on projects just like this – if we want to encourage the walkability of the down town – this project does that. Capitalizing on the history bring the economic development
 - d. Adele Connolly – fundraising has started - ghost tours, t-shirt sales, candles, agrees with Wendi that we need volunteers, we appreciate Mount Airy’s history and we want to preserve it
 - e. Jim Molesworth asked how does Preservation Maryland pay their employees – Larry Valett-they are nonprofit, they have huge fundraising campaigns
 - f. Mayor Hushour said that in the Charettes for the vision plan, they said they were not getting rid of the Flat Iron building
6. Subcommittee formation, “core” member selection
 - a. Mayor Hushour went through the list of subcommittees and asked members to sign up, he made a list of members who want to serve on the task force: Larry Valett, Mike Eacho, Adele Connolly, Nikki Jeffries, Olivia Kuehner, Rick Dye, Charles Beck, Lee Haigwood, Jim Molesworth, Diann Linton
 7. Election (or Selection) of Chairman, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary
 - a. Nominations/Elections: Chairman Larry Valett, Vice Chair Mike Eacho, Treasurer Diann Linton, Secretary Adele Connolly
 8. Monthly Action Plan & Goal prior to next meeting
 - a. Mayor Hushour: First step is the task force needs to get together information to bring to the Town Council on 9/12 that the Task Force is moving forward, hopefully have an estimate of the cost, money raised, Steve Domotor said what he heard was the TC would like the task force to come forward with grants that could pay for the first step – the full structural analysis
 - b. Wendi Peters asked what action was taken by the Town Council – Mayor Hushour said the Town Council decided they were not going to take legal action against the Mayor, The TC President said he would like to see if the task force can come forward with action and get a full structural analysis done of the building, Wendi Peters asked how much \$\$ was in the budget for the Flat Iron Building, there was a discussion of the purpose of the \$200K, Steve said it was to follow through any action taken by the council
 - c. Mary Hushour asked what if the task force comes forward and asks for \$\$ for a matching grant will TC have to approve? Adele – someone who has grant writing ability needs to be on that committee, Mary H – the pavilion was a bond bill – can a bond bill be done for this? Wendi Peters – there are enough resources for preservation, possibly not with the administration changing, elections coming up, etc.
 - d. Ghost tour 8/19-8/20– sold out. The Historical Society has already earmarked that money for the Flat Iron campaign.
 - e. Lee asked Steve about the meeting with the State DOT, Steve said mainly asking for lower and same speed limit all along Main Street, Wendi P said be careful getting the town involved in Main Street issue with the state as they have pretty much left our Main street alone
 9. Set date for next meeting
 - a. Larry Valett wrapped up the meeting, asking everyone to get their name on a subcommittee, a master email will be set up, the subcommittees can get started asap, Mary Hushour reminded everyone to keep track of their volunteer hours – for “in kind” contributions
 10. Close/Adjourn
Meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm

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