

FLAT IRON TASK FORCE
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 29, 2022 - 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance
 - a. Called to order at 7:00 pm by Larry Valett
 - b. 17 residents in attendance including Mayor Hushour, Councilmembers Munder and Domotor

1. Approval of minutes
 - i. Minutes unanimously approved – will be signed and sent to Mayor

1. Mayor's Update
 - a. Went to MD Municipal League (MML) meeting last week
 - i. Spoke with Mayors Roop and Link of New Windsor and Sykesville about a grant from the Strategic Demolition Fund, for building restoration and renovation
 1. Mayor Roop was able to successfully receive this grant for 2 cycles of \$350k each
 2. They suggested Mayor contact Cindy Stone of Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); the Mayor has reached out to her and is waiting to hear back.

1. Council Liaison Report – Councilmember Galletti absent, presented by Mayor Hushour
 - a. If discussion of closing Park Avenue becomes an issue for fire trucks having difficulty with navigation, it was suggested that we talk with Jimmy Linton about running a test to see the difference in time
 - i. Barney Quinn indicated that this had been looked at before, and there was a range of 8-40 seconds delay, but it wouldn't hurt to do it again.
 - b. Welcomed Barney Quinn to Task Force – he will be very helpful when addressing engineering concerns
 - c. Also welcomed new member Marisa Tonkay, architect and talented artist

1. Chairman Update – Larry Valett
 - a. Reminded task force members to get financial disclosure forms completed and sent to Mayor via email ASAP
 - i. Mayor's office will be sending letters to core members with

disclosure form as a reminder

- b. Several subcommittees, including engineering and arts and design, are requesting access to the building – difficult due to basement door not working properly
 - i. Engineering is working on repair; in the meantime, they can contact Barney and he can open it for them.

- c. Clean up of interior of building is needed
 - i. There are some items of interest to the Historical Society
 - ii. Need volunteers, particularly those that have trucks, to move these items
 - iii. Would also need access to a garage or a shed where the items can be lined up, stacked, and looked through to determine value

- d. Steve Kraft has grant writing experience and has reached out to the Mayor

- e. Many thanks to the American Legion for their sizable donation; thanks to Rick Dye for facilitating this donation

- f. Larry has reached out to Carroll County Times reporter Madison Bateman, who previously wrote a story about the Flat Iron Building in May, to facilitate a follow up story

- g. Provided recap of Town Council meeting
 - i. Our primary mission now is to facilitate comprehensive engineering assessment, as this will be the last word on the safety of the building
 - 1. We are on track in our fundraising efforts to help pay for this assessment

 - ii. Vote to tear down the building is still on the table
 - iii. Reviewed the scope of work from the contractor, and this will answer our questions – we are asking for them to have a copy of the May restoration proposal, as well as latest engineering report, to also give them an idea of our vision for the building.
 - iv. Flat Iron is a simple building, each floor is 750 square feet
 - v. To clarify, we DO have a plan (the May restoration proposal), which includes storage space on the third floor for the town.
 - vi. Our subcommittees are at the visualization stage, not looking for fine detail right now
 - vii. In the event we are successful in moving forward, we can then run with it and hire architect to do detailed and nuance planning
 - 1. We have allies to help get grants, funding, bond bills at this point – Commissioner and Future Delegate Bouchat can help with this

 - viii. To clarify, we are NOT looking at the building becoming a

community center; rather, the plaza would be an ideal community gathering location – not looking to put in swimming pool or bowling alley, for instance

- ix. First and foremost, we need open communication between the task force, mayor and town council
- x. Per Barney, the contractor will not be drawing conclusions to tear down vs. preserve; rather, they will be giving us information on what would need to be done to preserve the building with cost estimates
- xi. We want this assessment to answer our 3 core questions:
 1. Is the building in imminent danger of collapse
 2. Is the building integrity able to sustain its intended use -as envisioned, and
 3. Is the ground floor pedestrian walk-through concept plausible?
4. Councilmember Domotor then provided clarification from council meeting
 1. Council president reached compromise with the mayor that the town would be fronting the money for the assessment with the understanding that the Task Force would reimburse
 2. They understand that grants are not possible at this stage, as long as there are plans that the building is to be torn down
 3. According to the engineering contract, which Barney will forward to TF chairman, they will prepare and make recommendations for what is needed to make the building structurally sound
 4. This will give us a baseline of the building
 5. We also want to be sure that the building will be safe if it sits for a couple of years while waiting for funds to be available for the restoration
 6. Wendi Peters respectfully brought up that it is counterproductive to have council members at this meeting who are opposed to the work we are trying to do
 1. We need to be able to facilitate open, transparent communication with Town Council

2. Council should be joining us in this effort and see that we are a serious and active task force comprised of concerned citizens
3. We want the town to be excited about this project and to see a unified front

7. Councilmember Domotor indicated he came tonight planning to observe, as he wants to have clarity on what we are doing

5. Barney indicated we should hear back from them in a couple of weeks as to when they will get started, anticipate assessment will take a couple of months to complete

6. Lee also indicated that he spoke with the engineering firm across from the Flat Iron Building, and he is willing to do a survey of the surrounding area of the building to determine how plaza can be structured.

1. He has aerial views, and will be looking to work with Larry to update the model with interior views
2. Cracked plaster at the base of the building is superficial, and it looks like the building was at one time wrapped with an extra layer of brick

7. Also asked Barney about the telephone pole by Concetta's, which is set back – could the others around the Flat Iron Building be redone in a similar fashion; indicated this could certainly be considered

xii. Current building is actually the third renovation

xiii. Encouraged the subcommittee to look at what is being done in other towns with similar buildings

1. Subcommittee Reports

a. Fundraising – Diann Linton and Adele Connolly

i. Current financial status:

1. Sales of tshirts, candles - \$529.78
2. Popcorn - \$9.00
3. August ghost tours - \$821

4. Member donations - \$700
5. American Legion donation - \$5000
6. Go Fund Me - \$2225
7. Total Raised to Date - \$9284.79
8. Also of note: \$498 was donated by 3 Historical Society members for the cost of the bus for October ghost tours, thus alleviating this expense coming out of profits

ii. Fundraising Planned (flyers attached to minutes for all fundraisers):

1. Walking ghost tours in October – 15 tours during last 3 weekends in October, 20 people each tour, expected to profit approximately \$3000 – tickets are on sale now via Event Brite, doing well
2. Bus ghost tours October 27 – 2 tours, 25 people each tour, expected to profit approximately \$600 – paper tickets on sale at Blossom and Basket Boutique (thanks, Ellie) – 15 sold for 6:45 tour, 5 for 8:15 tour
3. Restaurant fundraisers – coordinated by Mary Hushour, 2 scheduled so far, working on a third for November
 - a. California Tortilla – October 18, 5-10pm – we get 10% of sales
 - b. New York J&P Pizza - October 24, all day – we get 10% of ALL sales, including dine in, carry out, delivery, and Door Dash
4. Haunted Caboose – October 20 and 21, 7-9pm – sponsored by the Historical Society with funds earmarked for Flat Iron Task Force - \$5 donation/person at the door, cash and credit cards accepted – our volunteer “spooky” people are local high school and college students, as well as some young adults from the community
 - a. Will also be open for free, for goodwill purposes on October 26 during Spooky Trail, no spooky people but will be sufficiently spookily decorated!

iii. Other Revenue Streams being considered:

1. Letters of Solicitation to businesses and individuals – holding off on these until we see how much we get from fundraisers – may work better for restoration efforts

- iv. Comment from Frank Iliano, via Jim Molesworth
 - 1. Before we go to businesses, we should know what we're going to do with the building, even have brochure or some type of handout with plans, design, etc.
 - 2. This will give us better chance of getting donations from business

b. Engineering – Jim Molesworth

- i. Handed out same report as last month, reformatted for ease of review
- ii. Recruited people with engineering background, as they wanted to see for themselves what was going on in the building
- iii. Trying to establish our own baseline
- iv. On board with what we are doing
- v. They had heard a lot about mold
 - 1. While there is a water issue on the east wall, there is no mold
 - 2. Air conditioning now running, which helps and has removed the mildew odor
 - 3. Found one very small spot of mold on the first floor
 - 4. Second floor south wall, saw minimal moisture distress
 - 5. All water from the roof drains south, gutters have failed
 - 6. Recommend fixing gutters and rerouting downspouts, will solve water problem
 - 7. Mike Eacho pointed out that we never had any issues with water intrusion on the east wall when the museum was in the building
 - 8. Likely the structural analysis/assessment will validate much of this
 - 9. Mayor and Larry V will be distributing this report at next council meeting
 - a. Only concern is retaining wall against Park Avenue; however, stress on that wall would be addressed in Larry's updated model
 - b. Feel that the building is actually stabilizing Park Avenue
 - 10. Committee feels that, once we have an architectural design, may have to repeat engineering survey
 - 11. Next step in design would be to eyeball the walkway through the building and see if there are any walls that are not needed

12. Mock up floor plan has been sketched out, will be sent out with minutes

c. Arts and Design – Charles Beck

- i. Discussed ideas for walkway
- ii. Artwork on walls that would represent the history of the building
- iii. Would like to have access to building to go through other floors for ideas
- iv. Looking at it being more than a gallery space
- v. Barney will arrange access
- vi. Lisa Carnes presented her ideas for a logo
 1. Felt this would be good for us to have for marketing, branding
 2. Will send out to Task Force for vote on logo design

d. Government Outreach – Mayor Hushour

- i. Future Delegate Bouchat came to September council meeting, after attending August Task Force meeting, to advocate for this project
- ii. Spoke earlier about conversations with mayors of Sykesville and New Windsor
 1. Sykesville working on renovating building just outside of town limits, and successfully obtained grants through DHCD – Mayor following up on this.

e. Plaza and Streetscapes – Nicki Jefferies

- i. Trying to pull the committee together
- ii. She has started some visual concepts to possible make the walkway entrance arched
 1. Will email to group for review – will forward to Larry V to send to group, who will also send to Barney to share with engineering for assessment
 2. Added flower boxes and shutters to windows
 3. Decorate at Christmastime
 4. Need to also design back side of building to be aesthetically pleasing as well

2. Final Announcement: **Share Go Fund me page on personal Facebook pages as well as other groups** – crowd funding only works when it is widely shared
3. Next meeting
 - a. Tentatively scheduled for either October 25 or 26 – Mayor will confirm and assist with meeting location
4. Close/Adjourn – meeting adjourned at 8:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

Adele Connolly
Task Force Secretary