

CAMBRIDGE ARTS COUNCIL
MEETING: March 11, 2014, 6PM

START: 6:12 pm
END: 8:00 pm

MINUTES

Lori Damon called the meeting to order, minutes to be reviewed and approved digitally following the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

Recruitment of New Members

The board discussed the need for new members to reflect the community broadly in age, gender, and diversity. Lori D. has several suggestions and board to think about others such as those that have been involved as grant panelists or submissions. Jason will send draft to board for review and input of names. Lori and Jason also committed to following-up and setting meetings with the individuals suggested by members to date. Jason also provided a hardcopy of the current CAC member list with terms, noting that second terms for Matt W. and Phyllis B. would be completed in June and September respectively.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Agency Staffing Update

Jason gave update that interviews for marketing position underway and very close to final selection. Jason emphasized that several candidates have excellent qualifications. The most appropriate match is the candidate with the skills and comfort level in working with a city department, municipal policies, in the public sector. Also needed is a strong voice and skill set for creative marketing to support cutting-edge programs and develop strategies for the use of social media and new technologies.

Foundry Works Building

Jason summarized update from City Council meeting on 3/4/14. New City Councilors are in process of getting oriented and up to speed on the history and opportunities connected to the facility. There is general clarity that city plans to retain the building, but the big issue is use. The City Manager reported along with Community Development and the City Assessor on 6 potential outcomes related to the Foundry. Relative to the potential for arts use and non-profit programming the Arts Council wants to ensure that there is a solid community feedback process. Luis commented that the follow through for the 100% STEAM proposal will need careful monitoring to ensure that all of the parts are included fairly and to make it meaningful to the community. Members recommended that it would be helpful for the Arts Council to speak with Kathy Born and Margaret Drury at the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority to clarify the broader context for the redevelopment of the facility. Jason agreed to follow-up and set a meeting with the Redevelopment Authority. He also suggested potential partners in outreach and input from the immediate neighborhoods could come via East Cambridge Planning Team and the East Cambridge Business Association.

Members continued to discuss the changing balance of development across the city and the recent outcry at the latest community planning meetings on the dramatic increase in residential construction in the Fresh Pond area. Jason discussed the role of the Cambridge Residents Alliance to encourage groups across the city to share information. Diana L. emphasized the need for the voice of new Cambridge residents to give feedback on new development. Luis and Diane L. encouraged the Board to look into the online feedback from residents on Mindmixer connected to Twining Properties and the Mass+Main engagement (<http://massandmain.mindmixer.com/about-this-site>) for the former Quest properties in Central Square.

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Members also discussed the NY Times article on “Hypergentrification” and the need for new ways to engage with community.

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/30/movies/tracing-urban-change-in-brooklyn-from-kotter-to-girls.html?_r=0

Cambridge River Festival

Jason and the Board continued discussion from last meeting on the new location for the 35th Cambridge River Festival. The announcement with the full explanation was released on March 5th and is included in the meeting information packet. Jason reviewed specific layouts and locations underway with members using draft maps of the new festival footprint. Members agreed that the layout is very exciting and program elements seem to be well located, especially having vendors located down the center of Mass Ave. so businesses are well-connected with the event. Diane N. suggested a map scale comparison with the river site to clarify that the space needs are met, but also as a communications tool for city officials who need further explanation on comparing sites. Diane N. also noted the thoughtful consideration being planned for keeping nearby public parking sites open for the event while using more remote private sites for vendors and support needs. Diane L. highly recommended a provisional kitchen concept with family recipes and traditional cooking. Phyllis encouraged Pacific St. café to participate given their close proximity to the new festival site and World of Food area on Sydney Street.

Members also discussed opportunities beyond the festival including tumblr with photos and Cambridge historic neighborhood profiles.

OTHER BUSINESS

Several upcoming events and sector-related information were indicated as part of the agenda and members were also encouraged to share information they have about items that the group should be aware of.

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 6:00PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Present: Phyllis Bretholtz, Luis Cotto, Lori Damon, Aliyah Gary, Diane Lempel, Diane Norris, Jason Weeks, Executive Director

Absent: Lori Lander, Ann Lawson, Stella McGregor, Matthew Weinberg

Respectfully submitted, Diane Norris, Secretary, CAC