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Approved Minutes

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board Meeting

November 18, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Board Members

Present: Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan, Daniel Yang, James Mc Clean, Rep. Jerry Hertaus, James Garrett Jr., Rep. Mike Freiberg, Elaine Fink, Alicia Belton, Dr. Kate Beane

Absent: Sen. Sandy Pappas, Sen. Carla Nelson, Don Grundhauser,

Quorum present? Yes.

Proceedings

Meeting Kick-Off

- Board member roll call
- b. Question of the day - What is your favorite place in the Capitol area?
- c. Introduce Laura Dotson as new CAAPB staff person
- d. Agenda overview

CAAPB Board Minutes

Lt. Gov. Flanagan postponed Sept. 18th Minute review to the next meeting on Dec. 1st.

Commemorative Works Discussion (Part 1 of 2, continued Dec 1st)

Public Engagement Task Force Report:

Task Force Chair Carl Crawford presented the major themes found by the Task Force. Some of these themes included the following: people are proud of the Capitol, people do not feel represented by the current art & monuments, over half of survey respondents did not feel welcome, the public is divided on how to handle Commemorative Works going forward.

The Task Force found that the public's perceptions ranged from positive feelings about aesthetics and/or historical significance, to neutral experiences with protests, to negative feelings stemming from poor accessibility and feeling unwelcome.

Angelica Klebsch, a consultant who collaborated with the Task Force, presented a summary of data

collected during the public input process. There were over 6,500 comments gathered. She noted two particular points:

- 65% of survey respondents expressed a desire for some form of change at the Capitol.
- A frequently mentioned idea was to make the Capitol a more public space which would host non-governmental events.

Task Force member Christina Woods spoke on the need to include and elevate Native peoples' perspectives on Commemorative Works.

Task Force member Alicia Belton presented priorities for the CAAP Board based on the perspectives that were collected. The big picture priorities were to:

- be explicitly welcoming and inclusive to all communities;
- focus on commonalities between Minnesotans;
- present accurate and complete historical narratives; and
- represent diverse experiences and communities in the Commemorative Works on display.

There was discussion between Board member James McClean and Exec. Sec. Merritt Clapp-Smith regarding increased transparency about Board meetings and continuing to livestream meetings post-pandemic. Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith agreed that continuing to livestream meetings in the future would be beneficial.

Decision Process Advisory Task Force Report

The major recommendations of the Task Force were presented by Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith. The recommendations included:

- updating the Commemorative Works policy;
- increasing accessibility of application forms and FAQs;
- reviewing the policy and artwork collection every 10 years with public input; and
- obtaining legislative appropriation for the CAAP Board to support implementation of updated policy.

Board members Dr. Kate Beane and Daniel Yang, and Commissioner of Administration Alice Roberts-Davis expressed their appreciation of the Task Force's process and inclusivity as well as the leadership of Dr. Gwen Westerman.

Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith provided an overview of the (1) conditions for addition of a new Commemorative Work, and (2) conditions for modification or removal of a Commemorative Work. Also described were the evaluation criteria for modification and/or removal, and the proposed composition of the review committee for modification or removal of Commemorative Works.

Board Questions and Discussion on proposed rule amendments:

- Board member Elaine Fink expressed concern about the rule that anyone desirous of removing a Commemorative Work would be responsible for funding the removal.

- James Garrett Jr. agreed with Ms. Fink and added that there is also a racial equity element to the issue.
- Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith expressed hope that funds might be raised via fundraising campaigns.
- Lt. Gov. Flanagan emphasized that this process is new and ongoing, as no process for removal or modification had previously existed.
- David Kelliher (Minnesota Historical Society) reiterated the nationwide lack of process for removal or modification of commemorative works.
- Lt. Gov. Flanagan requested that the CAAP Board research how funding is acquired in similar situations nationwide.

There was also discussion regarding the challenge and logistics of the small CAAP Board staff undertaking the responsibility of reviewing commemorative works on a 10-year cycle.

Department of Administration FY 22 Funding Requests

Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith explained that every two years the Dept. of Administration submits a list of capital funding request to the Legislature. Under MN statute, CAAPB is required to review the requests and submit comments to the Minnesota Management and Budget . Clapp-Smith has reviewed the items and sent a copy of her comments in the Board packet. She stated that the CAAP Board provided explicit support for the Dept. of Administration’s list of funding requests, except for the Maryland Facility Parking Ramp which is not in the Capitol area, and the Ford building demolition.

Ford Building Demolition Funding request; CAAPB’s Comprehensive Plan:

Wayne Waslawski, Director of real estate and construction services at the Department of Administration, explained Admin’s request for funds to demolish the Ford building, and reasons they want to proceed as quickly as possible.

Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith stated that the CAAP Board’s Comprehensive Plan does not align with the Dept. of Administration’s demolition funding request for the Ford Building. The Comprehensive Plan specifies that before any activity occurs at the site, there should be a study of reuse scenarios for the site and the adjacent area examining a range of options from building reuse as part of a larger development to all new development with the building demolished. Admin does not plan to conduct this study before the demolition request, for reasons it identified in December 2019 and shared with the Board this Fall.

Since proceeding with demolition prior to a reuse study conflicts with approved policy and intent in the Comprehensive Plan, the Board cannot technically support the current demolition funding request, and demolition cannot proceed. If the Board wanted to approve demolition, it would need to amend the language in the Comprehensive Plan related to a reuse study for the Ford building, site, and surrounding area. A Comprehensive Plan amendment process takes six months or so and involves a number of steps.

Due to the disconnect between the Comprehensive Plan and the Dept. of Administration plan to seek funding to demolish the Ford building in the upcoming Legislative session, Admin’s capital request includes language stating that building demolition can proceed without a reuse study “notwithstanding” the stipulation for the study in the Comprehensive Plan.

Board members discussed a letter it received from the Frogtown Neighborhood Association expressing discontent with the lack of community engagement regarding the future of the Ford Building. Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith disputed the letter’s assertions that the community has not been engaged in planning conversations for the area. She referenced an email that CAAPB staff sent to the Board which outlined

dozens of community engagement events that occurred over the past few years in preparation of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.

There was continued discussion about the role of the Comprehensive Plan, the CAAP Board, and the Dept. of Administration in decisions regarding the Ford building and site. A couple of Board members expressed regret about potential demolition of the Ford building but stated that it did not seem historically or architecturally significant enough to retain in this situation, given funding and architectural reuse constraints.

Regarding the Ford Building demolition, Exec. Sec. Clapp-Smith clarified that the “notwithstanding” language, which will be ruled on by the Legislature as part of the capital request, would enable demolition to proceed without a reuse study. Therefore, no action formal action is needed by the Board at this meeting.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.