

AFRICAN BURYING GROUND COMMITTEE

APRIL 13, 2010

**PLANNING CONFERENCE ROOM
PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL**

2:30 P.M.

Present: Vernis Jackson, Chair; Mary Bailey, Vice Chair; Valerie Cunningham;
Councilor Christine Dwyer; Steve Parkinson (Ex-officio)

Also Present: Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager; David Moore, Assistant
Community Development Director

Absent: Suzanne M. Woodland (Ex-Officio)

Chairwoman Jackson opened the meeting and moved on to the first item, which was acceptance of the meeting minutes from November 18, 2009. Councilor Dwyer moved to accept the minutes and Ms. Bailey seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Chairwoman Jackson then recognized David Moore to provide an update on the design for the project. Mr. Moore advised that he and Steve Parkinson had recently met with Roberta Woodburn of Woodburn & Company to review final design details for the project. He said preliminary cost estimates for the project had been compiled and totaled \$1.1 million and included the construction of the streetscape work as well as the fabrication, delivery, and installation of the public art components. He said these were draft estimates and subject to change dependent upon the actual construction date. He discussed how the design team, including Ms. Woodburn and Mr. Meadows, had closely coordinated on the final drawings to insure that public art components would be seamlessly integrated upon their delivery after off-site fabrication. He advised that final details on the design work would continue to be developed. He summarized the input the Committee would still need to have on final review of the entry sculpture details and community figure details as well a petition marker and line content. Committee members briefly discussed the process of finalizing the design plans. Mr. Moore said he would coordinate with Mr. Meadows and Ms. Woodburn on the timing of the final design consultations to insure these efforts are coordinated efficiently with the Committee.

Chairwoman Jackson then recognized Cindy Hayden who provided a background on the fundraising efforts to date and strategy for moving forward. She reminded the Committee that the request to reallocate federal funding for the Riverwalk project to the African Burying Ground was not approved by HUD as it could not be without Congressional authorization. In addition, attempts to secure a separate direct Congressional allocation for this project were not successful. Ms. Hayden also advised that the City issued an RFQ for a fundraising consultant to assist the Committee in developing and carrying out a private fundraising strategy. She advised that there was only one firm that responded to the RFQ and that firm was not a good fit. As a result, staff reached out to fundraising professionals for their input as to why they did not submit and to generate ideas on how to move forward. Ms. Hayden suggested the Committee move forward with a series of focus group discussions with representatives of other

successful local fundraising projects, for example, the Music Hall renovations, the North Church Steeple Project and the Public Library. The Committee agreed that soliciting input on fundraising from individuals familiar with Portsmouth as well as the region would be a good next step and meeting dates in May were discussed. Staff indicated they would work to identify and contact individuals for the discussion.

In addition, the Committee discussed other components of a fundraising strategy: 1) how to get the message out to various events/venues and 2) developing a message that includes the African Burying Ground's historic and cultural significance. It was determined that new book marks would be developed for use by the Committee at upcoming events in the Community.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.