



Town of Chapel Hill

HISTORIC TOWN HALL COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 22, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.
City of Raleigh Museum
220 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC 27601

Meeting Minutes

Members: Council Member Sally Greene (Chair), Moses Carey, Joel Curran, Richard Ellington, Josh Gurlitz, Commissioner Penny Rich, Alan Rimer, Lee Storrow and Chela Tu

1. Opening

a. Roll Call

Members Present: Council Member Sally Greene (Chair), Moses Carey, Richard Ellington, Josh Gurlitz, Commissioner Penny Rich, Chela Tu

Members Absent: Joel Curran, Alan Rimer, Lee Storrow

Staff Present: Megan Dale

Staff Absent: Travis Myren

2. Public Comment

3. Business

a. Tour City of Raleigh Museum

b. Discuss Museum Operations

Background: Ernie Dollar, Director of the City of Raleigh Museum, will meet with the committee to discuss details of the city's museum operations.

Action Item: Begin discussing local museum operations and potential benefits, challenges, and questions of locating a museum in Historic Town Hall.

➤ Action Taken: Following a tour of the museum, the committee received and discussed a presentation from the museum director. No action was taken.

The City of Raleigh (COR) museum is located in the historic Briggs Hardware Store building and occupies the first floor and basement level of the building. Other tenants include Preservation NC and the Raleigh Urban Design Center, a division of the Planning and Development Department. The building is not owned by the City.

The museum began as a nonprofit organization, and the City assumed operational control in 2012. Personnel and operating costs are budgeted through the Parks and Recreation

Department. The former museum board was retained as a Friends group and focuses on fundraising for exhibits.

The exhibit space, which is on the first floor, is about 5,000 square feet. The full first floor including the lobby area is about 7,000 square feet. The main entry space is reserved for temporary exhibits on specific topics created in collaboration with community organizations. Other rotating and permanent museum exhibits are on display and focus on Raleigh's history.

The museum's branding - "Raleigh Then, Raleigh Now, Raleigh Next" - has helped the museum plug into community conversations about the present day and future of Raleigh. The presentation discussed the importance of considering how a museum might be used by the Chapel Hill community as a space to talk about current issues in historical context. Town departments could also use a museum as a place to engage the community or offer educational programs. The presentation also noted the importance of planning for the museum's fiscal sustainability.

The committee discussed that a museum in Chapel Hill might consider focusing on storytelling rather than procuring and maintaining a large collection of artifacts. The committee also discussed that a hybrid museum/ visitors center could function as a connector, directing visitors to community organizations and sites of interest in Chapel Hill and the county.

Other points of discussion included

- potential funding sources for a museum in Chapel Hill
- the importance of understanding and communicating the return on investment for downtown businesses and the community
- the need to involve community members and community organizations in building a museum
- various implications involved in the selection of a name for the Chapel Hill institution, depending on its mission/ vision (museum; history center; cultural hub; etc.)
- the possibility of using a museum to tell the story of the Historic Town Hall building as it relates to Chapel Hill development and to discuss current planning initiatives

4. Public Comment

5. Adjournment

Meeting Materials

Presentation by Ernie Dollar, City of Raleigh Museum Director

Opportunity Statement: The Inter-Faith Council for Social Services is proceeding with plans to vacate Historic Town Hall. A recommendation is needed regarding the future use and occupancy of this building.

Goal: A Historic Town Hall Committee will represent the interests of the Town of Chapel Hill and Orange County to consider the opportunity to renovate the Historic Town Hall building at 100 West Rosemary Street as a Visitor's Center, a History Center, or both for possible occupancy by the Chapel Hill and Orange County Visitor's Bureau, Chapel Hill Historical Society, and/ or Chapel Hill Museum.

Public Charge: The Historic Town Hall Committee pledges its respect to the public. The Committee asks the public to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner, both with the Committee and with fellow members of the public. Should any member of the Committee or any member of the public fail to observe this charge at any time, the Chair will ask the offending person to leave the meeting until that individual regains personal control. Should decorum fail to be restored, the Chair will recess the meeting until a genuine commitment to this public charge is observed.