



Town of Chapel Hill VARSITY THEATRE TASK FORCE

Monday, December 17, 2018 at 8:30am
Varsity Theatre
123 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Meeting Minutes

I. Opening Council Members Parker and Schaevitz

Meeting began at 8:34am.

a. Introductions

Members Present: Council Member Michael Parker (Co-Chair), Council Member Rachel Schaevitz (Co-Chair), Hardy Butler, Dan Cefalo, Justin Haslett, Emily Kass, Greg Overbeck, Sharon Rothwell, Paul Shareshian, Justin Simmons, Kaze Thomas, Don Tise, Marlon Torres, Brenda Womble

Staff Present: Susan Brown, Sarah Poulton, Ross Tompkins, Katie Murray (County)

Others Present: Katie Murray, Linnie Supal, Xilong Zhao, Kathy Atwater

b. Public Comment

None

II. Business

a. Varsity Theatre today Paul Shareshian

Background: Paul Shareshian provided a presentation on the history of the building and business. Justin Simmons from LOVE Chapel Hill Church (and Task Force member) spoke about being a tenant of Varsity Theatre.

Action Taken: No action was anticipated or taken.

b. Objectives Council Members Parker and Schaevitz

Background: An overview of the Task Force and its objectives (see below for Council charge). Goal is to return to Town Council by the end of June, 2019, with findings and any recommendations.

Action Taken: No action was anticipated or taken.

c. Meeting topics Council Members Parker and Schaevitz

Background: Discuss proposed meeting topics, areas of needed research, and existing or potential resources.

Action Taken: No action was anticipated or taken.

d. Meeting logistics

Council Members Parker and Schaevitz

Background: Identify which days and times work for Task Force members. Mondays at 8:30am seem to work for many. Afternoons past 2:00 good for one.

Action Taken: No action was taken.

III. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Meeting Materials:

- Council Resolution from October 24, 2018
- Handout presentation from Council Members Parker and Schaevitz
- Presentation from Paul Shareshian and Justin Simmons

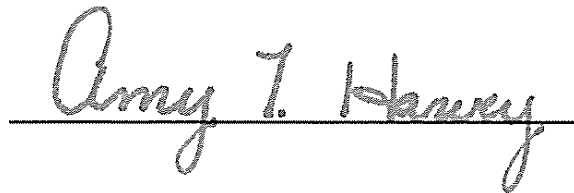
Public Charge: Consider the possible use of the Varsity Theatre at 123 East Franklin Street as a community performing arts center.

Specific Charge: Determine the following:

- What would be the vision for such a venue? What types of programming would be appropriate and desired by our community?
- How would such a venue meet community needs, reflect community values, and attract a wide range of individuals to the Downtown and what would be the economic impact on the Downtown?
- What would be the costs of this conversion for both acquisition and necessary refurbishment – and how long would it require? How would these costs be paid for and what kinds of partnership(s) might be feasible?
- What would be the business model of the new entity in terms of ownership, ongoing management, and ability to be financially secure and self-sustaining?

I, Amy T. Harvey, Deputy Town Clerk of the Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, hereby certify that the attached is a true and correct copy of (2018-10-24/R-3) adopted as amended by the Chapel Hill Town Council on October 24, 2018.

This the 20th day of November, 2018.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy T. Harvey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

**Amy T. Harvey
Deputy Town Clerk**



A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COUNCIL TASK FORCE TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBLE USE OF THE VARSITY THEATRE AT 123 EAST FRANKLIN STREET AS A COMMUNITY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (2018-10-24/R-3)

WHEREAS, the Council has an interest in enriching the cultural arts in Chapel Hill and enhancing the social and economic vitality of our Downtown; and

WHEREAS, the Chapel Hill Town Council wishes to explore the feasibility of converting the Varsity Theatre on East Franklin Street into a community performance venue that could host a range of performance types including, but not limited to, music, theater, dance, and film. In addition, it could also serve as a setting for community meetings and discussions; and

WHEREAS, the Council has determined that it desires additional consideration and input from community members and stakeholders regarding the possible future of the Varsity; and

WHEREAS, in order to conduct this exploration, the Mayor wishes to establish the Varsity Theatre Task Force to explore the community desire for this type of cultural amenity and the feasibility of managing this type of venture.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill that the Council establish the Varsity Theatre Task Force to consider the possible use of the Varsity Theatre at 123 East Franklin Street as a community performing arts center.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force will be comprised of the following seats, including Council Members Rachel Schaevitz and Michael Parker, appointed as Task Force Co-Chairs.

- o Rachel Schaevitz – Council Member
- o Michael Parker – Council Member
- o Marlon Torres – NC Arts in Action and Downtown Resident
- o Don Tise – Architect and Downtown Business Owner
- o Emily Kass – General Manager of the Chelsea Theater and former Director of the Ackland
- o Justin Haslett – Managing Director of Playmakers Theater and chair of the CH Cultural Arts Commission
- o Hardy Butler – Downtown Entrepreneur
- o Kaze Thomas – Downtown Business Owner and Artist
- o Gerald Bolas – Arts Consultant and former Director of the Ackland
- o Mandey Brown – Downtown Business Owner
- o Sharon Rothwell – NC Arts Commission
- o Greg Overbeck* –Downtown Business Owner
- o Brenda Womble* – Member of the local arts community
- o To be Determined- Downtown Partnership representative
- o Justin Simmons, Chamber of Commerce and Varsity Theatre user
- o Dan Cefalo, artist, former Cultural Arts Commission chair
- o Paul Shareshian, current leaseholder and operator of Varsity Theatre
- o TBD, youth representative

*= tentative

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force would be charged with determining the following:

- o What would be the vision for such a venue? What types of programming would be appropriate and desired by our community?

- How would such a venue meet community needs, reflect community values, and attract a wide range of individuals to the Downtown and what would be the economic impact on the Downtown?
- What would be the costs of this conversion for both acquisition and necessary refurbishment – and how long would it require? How would these costs be paid for and what kinds of partnership(s) might be feasible?
- What would be the business model of the new entity in terms of ownership, ongoing management, and ability to be financially secure and self-sustaining?

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that following the task force's report to the Council in May 2019, the work of the task force will be deemed complete and the task force will be discharged.

This the 24th day of October, 2018.



Varsity Theatre Task Force

Kick-off Meeting

December 17, 2018



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Approval of Agenda
- Public Comment
- Varsity Theatre Today/Tour
- Task Force Charge/Key Questions
- Suggested Meeting Topics/Work Plan
- Meeting Ground Rules/Norms
- Logistics/Meeting Schedule
- Discussion
- Adjournment

Introductions

- Gerald Bolas
- Mandey Brown
- Hardy Butler
- Dan Cefalo
- Justin Haslett
- Emily Kass
- Greg Overbeck
- Michael Parker
- Sharon Rothwell
- Rachel Schaevitz
- Paul Shareshian
- Justin Simmons
- Kaze Thomas
- Don Tise
- Marlon Torres
- Brenda Womble
- Xilong Zhao
- Susan Brown
- Katie Murray
- Sarah Poulton

Task Force Charge/Key Questions

- What would be the vision for such a venue? What types of programming would be appropriate and desired by our community?
- How would such a venue meet community needs, reflect community values, and attract a wide range of individuals to the Downtown and what would be the economic impact on the Downtown?
- What would be the costs of this conversion for both acquisition and necessary refurbishment – and how long would it require? How would these costs be paid for and what kinds of partnership(s) might be feasible?
- What would be the business model for the new entity in terms of ownership, ongoing management, and ability to be financially secure and self-sustaining?

Suggested Meeting Topics/Work Plan(1 of 2)

Target: Recommendation to Council by end of June

Suggest five additional meetings: one per month

- **Meeting Two: Learnings from Elsewhere**
 - Review of theater profiles – key success factors
 - Initial concepts of programming
 - Initial view of refurbishment needs
- **Meeting Three: Key Features of “New” Varsity**
 - Critical success factors
 - Programs
 - Architecture
 - Management/operations

Suggested Meeting Topics/Work Plan(2 of 2)

- **Meeting Four: Financial Feasibility**
 - Likelihood of sufficient capital funds
 - Town sources
 - Fund raising
 - Operating model/business plan – key requirements for sustainability
- **Meeting Five: Task Force Recommendations**
 - Suggested organizational structure
 - Requirements for management entity
 - Key elements of report to Council
 - Review of first draft of report to Council
- **Meeting Six: Final Recommendations and Associated Report**
 - Agreement on recommendations to Council
 - Approval of final report
 - Mutual congratulations

Ground Rules and Norms

- Decisions by consensus
- Materials distributed in advance of meetings
- All members equal
- All opinions respected
- Free and open discussion

Logistics

- Meetings suggested once a month
- Days/times better or worse?
- Specific dates by Doodle poll?

Next Steps

- Develop meeting schedule through end of project
- Survey of Downtown businesses
- Survey of arts organizations
- Profile of successful theaters
- Schedule tour?

Thank You!



Varsity Theatre

December 17, 2018



Agenda

- Welcome
- History
- The Business Over the Last 9 Years
 - Community Events
 - UNC Partnerships
 - Family Entertainment and Birthday Parties
- Love Chapel Hill
- The Last 9 Years and The Road Ahead

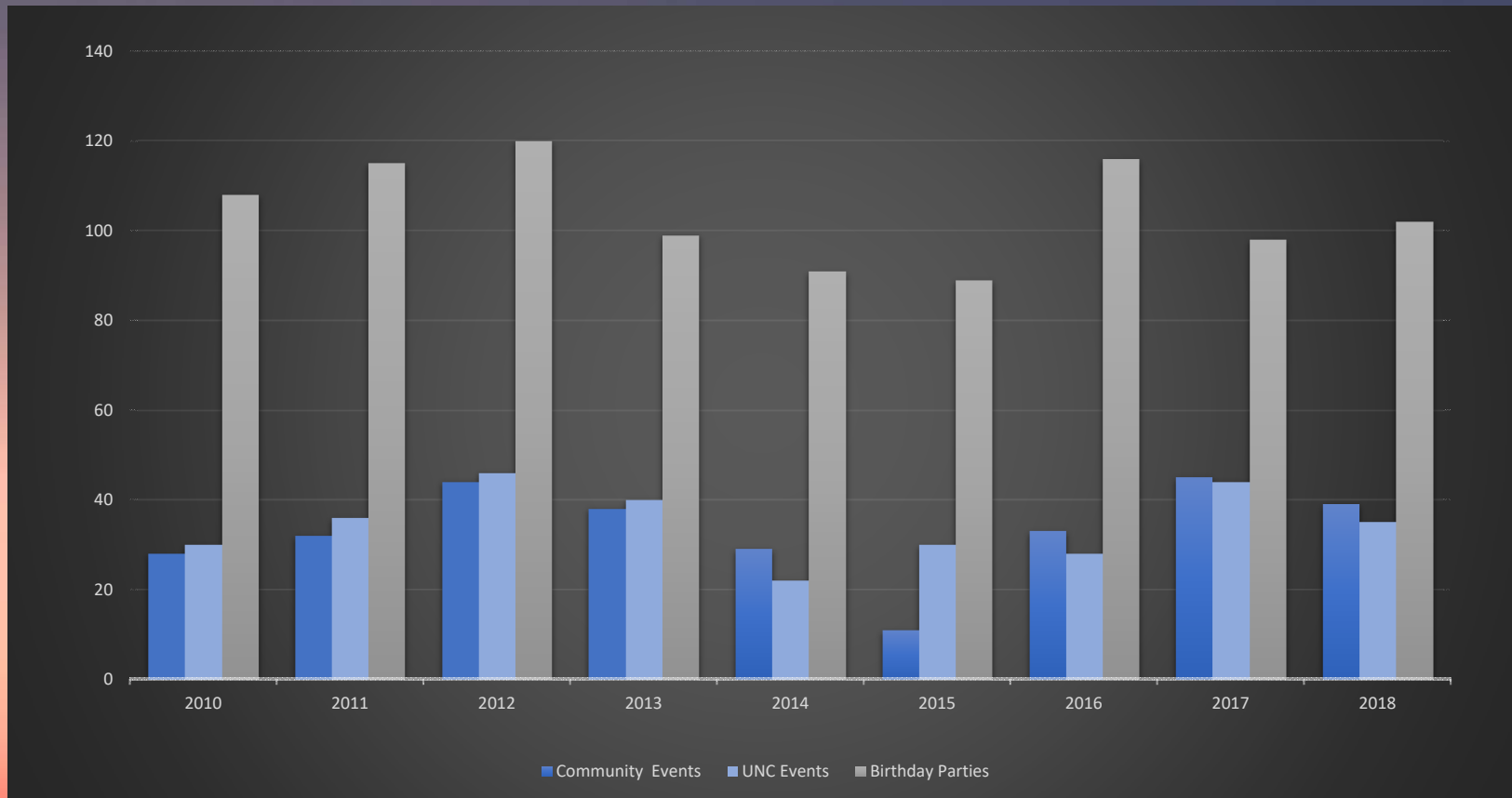


History

- Sorrell Building Opened in 1927
- Home to Carolina Theatre – Single Screen - 500 Seat Movie House
- Became Varsity Theatre in 1950s
- Fire Destroyed Building and Rebuilt in Late 1960s – Converted 2 Screens
- Varsity as Cinema Arts Theater Closed June 2009
- Nov 2009 New Ownership - Rental Space and Late-Run Movies
- Jan 2018 – First Run Movies
- Over 9 Year Period
 - 1548 Special Events In Addition to Scheduled Movies
 - 500+ Love Chapel Hill Church Services/Community Events



Special Events Held at Varsity





Re-Occurring UNC and Community Events













- Home to Ackland Film Forum (18)
- Home to Flip4Kids Language Camps (Spanish/Chinese/French) (12)
- Home to Movie Makers Premieres (4)
- Home to Tar Heel Out Reach Program UNC Basketball Screenings (4)
- Home to Kenan Business School Follies & UNC Law Revue (4)
- Home to Ted Talks - Chapel Hill (4)
- Home to Best Buddies (2)
- Home to Carolina Climbers Events – Reel Rock (2)



Community Support/Fund Raisers

Partnerships with Local 501 (c)(3) Non-Profits

- SKJAJA
- Tar Heel Outreach Program
- ReCYCLERy NC
- Extraordinary Ventures

 <p>The Arc of the Triangle</p>  <p>ADMIT TWO Varsity Theatre 123 East Franklin Street Chapel Hill, NC www.varsityonfranklin.com</p>	 <p>RELAY FOR LIFE American Cancer Society</p>  <p>ADMIT TWO Varsity Theatre 123 East Franklin Street Chapel Hill, NC www.varsityonfranklin.com</p>	 <p>Sweet Melissa Fund</p>  <p>ADMIT TWO Varsity Theatre 123 East Franklin Street Chapel Hill, NC www.varsityonfranklin.com</p>
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Varsity
.. ON FRANKLIN ..

The Best
Birthday
Parties!





Love Chapel Hill



Love Chapel Hill:
investing nearly a
decade of creativity,
finances and heart into
the future of the
Varsity and Downtown



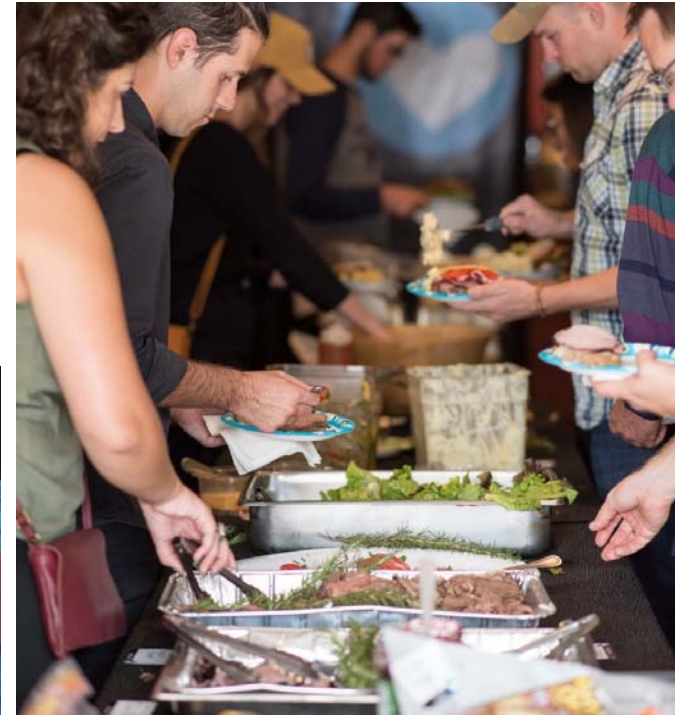


Weekly Sunday Gathering
- 150-200 in attendance
- Eclectic group - with
diversity of age, race,
background, socio economic
and housing status



3 Weekly Kids Classes
Bi-weekly Middle/High School Classes

Bringing families downtown on Sundays



Special Events / Community Gatherings
Free Meals

Benefit Concerts
Free Family Movie Nights



Radical Hospitality



Reckless Love



Optimistic Grace



Courageous
Generosity



Serving Many Community Partners

- Community Empowerment Fund
- IFC
- Table
- Refugee Community Partnership
- UNC Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health
- St. Joseph CME Church

Love Chapel Hill is invested in the next decade as well.

We are committed to the future of this place we call home.



East Franklin St Over the Last 9 Years and The Road Ahead



100 Block of E. Franklin St. – Businesses Closed/Left Since 2009

- Peppers Pizza
 - Krispy Kreme (Franchise)
 - Jack Sprat
 - Tomato Jakes (Franchise)
 - R&R Grill
 - Lings Chinese Restaurant
 - Subway (Franchise)
 - * Smoothie King (Franchise)
 - * Sugarland
 - * Mike's Place
 - * Clothing Warehouse
 - * Artichoke and Basil
 - * Sweet Frog (Franchise)
-
- Ackland Museum Store (Moved)
 - Frank Gallery (Moved)
 - Kidzu Children's Museum (Moved)



Varsity Partnership with Town of Chapel Hill

- Program Town Sponsored Community Arts Programs
 - Town Committee Approves Artists/Group Requests
 - Town Schedules with Theatre
- Grants for Façade/Outdoor Building Improvement
 - New/Upgraded Marquee
 - Lite and Marked Alley Way (Recently Proposed but Unfulfilled)
- Grants for Stage/Lighting Improvements
 - Theater One Lighting for Plays



Questions?