



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD AGENDA
556 W MAPLE
Thursday, September 7, 2017
5:30 PM**

***Mission Statement:** The Birmingham Museum will explore meaningful connections with our past, in order to enrich our community and enhance its character and sustainability. Our mission is to promote understanding of Birmingham's historical and cultural legacy through preservation and interpretation of its ongoing story.*

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Introduction of Guests**
- 4. Approval of the Minutes**
 - A. Minutes of August 3, 2017
- 5. Announcements**
- 6. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Master Landscape Planning-Brian Devlin
- 7. Communication and Reports**
 - A. Committee Reports-Joint Bicentennial Book Committee
 - B. Director Report
 - C. Member comments
 - D. Public comments
- 8. Next Regular Meeting: October 5, 2017**
- 9. Adjournment**

NOTICE: Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the city clerk's office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-5115 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. *APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MUSEUM BOARD MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AND ON THE CITY WEBSITE AT www.bhamgov.org.* City of Birmingham, 151 Martin, Birmingham, MI 48009; 248.530.1800. Persons with disabilities that may require assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at the number (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-5115 (for the hearing impaired) at least one day before the meeting to request help in mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

Las personas con incapacidad que requieren algún tipo de ayuda para la participación en esta sesión pública deben ponerse en contacto con la oficina del escribano de la ciudad en el número (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-5115 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un día antes de la reunión para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

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**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 3, 2017
5:30 PM**

Members Present: James Cunningham, Russ Dixon, Tina Krizanic, Marty Logue, Caitlin Rosso

Student Members Present: Hannah Sandler, Carson Claar

Members Absent: Lori Eaton, Judith Keefer

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: Brian Devlin, Devlin Nagy Land Designs; Parks Manager Carrie Laird

Guests introduced themselves.

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of July 13, 2017**

MOTION: by Dixon, seconded by Logue:

To approve the minutes of July 13, 2017.

VOTE: Yeas, 5
Nays, 0

Announcements

None.

Unfinished Business

A. Historical landscape architect, Brian Devlin, shared his ideas and reactions to members' priorities for the four landscape zones. In general, the steep grade change is a significant part of the landscape and despite challenges it poses, it is part of the historic aspect of the site. It should only be altered where necessary, for instance, to create ADA/barrier free accessibility. Some stabilization of slopes will be necessary for barrier free path around pond and for improved trail access, which could be done with (new) stone retaining walls to suggest other historic aspects of the site. The existing stone walls are also important features and will need some repair and stabilization. Mr. Devlin emphasized that new garden areas should be introduced in only a limited sense as appropriate for the mission to avoid disruption of the historic character of the site. Invasive species and inappropriate or potentially harmful trees and shrubs can be replaced with native species to reconstruct the 'interstitial woodland' appearance that

historically reflects the Allen House and earlier periods. These changes would be a long-term plan to bring the trees to maturity and may involve removing healthy but inappropriate plantings as part of a whole master plan.

Pond Zone: The pool/pond area will require additional study to determine and reduce to the historic water level in order to reveal the concrete side walls of the rectangular pool. This level will also determine the natural level of the barrier free path. Mr. Devlin may be able to provide a general estimate of the engineering survey costs that would be involved for planning purposes. A seating area/overlook for the pool would be an important way to serve the public. Low plantings along the slope of the pond could provide a natural barrier without impeding the view. A water garden could be introduced at the spillway area.

Transition & Heritage Zones: Mr. Devlin recommends consideration of a parlor garden (historically simple, with perennials) in the front of the Hunter House and a demonstration vegetable garden behind it. Both would be small in scale, and used for educational purposes. Introducing disease-resistant elms is an important consideration for returning the landscape to some of its former character. Trees of 2"-3" in diameter will have less transplant shock and will be able to recover more quickly than larger diameter trees. Mr. Devlin suggested that the earlier stone stairs/steps could still be under the present wooden steps and if so, could be integrated into new stone stairs that are wider and have a landing and possible seating halfway down.

Riverine Zone: Ms. Laird clarified that a master plan is in process for the other city parks, and if a Master Plan for the museum site were ready, could be combined with their plan for an early 2018 presentation to the city commission. Public input and focus groups will be held in the fall, and the museum board could participate at that time. City park initiatives parallel the concerns raised by the Museum Board for the museum site. They include 1) providing barrier free/ADA access, 2) removing invasive species, 3) reintroducing native species, 4) enhancing trail connections and 5) education. It may also be beneficial to coordinate furniture acquisition and signage with planned city initiatives for all parks. A Rouge River Master Plan was adopted in 2006 and may also offer guidelines of interest. One of the goals of the Rouge plan has been to provide ADA/barrier free access, which is not met with the existing wood chips. A crushed limestone path would meet ADA requirements and could possibly be sited from the sidewalk at Willits near the bridge to the river. The Museum Board would like to include this second barrier free point in the landscape master plan if feasible.

Communication and Reports

- A. Joint Bicentennial Book Committee Report-a public survey has been created that will be launched around September 15 electronically and on paper to get public feedback about the form and content of a bicentennial publication.
- B. Museum Director Pielack provided updates to her report and clarified the concept for the 2018 exhibit.
- C. Ms. Rosso pointed out that Museum Assistant Caitlin Donnelly has been doing a great job on the museum's social media efforts, and that the museum staff seems very strong at this time.
- D. There were no public comments.

Ms. Krizanic adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

DATE: September, 2017
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Director Report

Allen House Siding—the siding project contract award was approved by the commission on August 28 for L.G.K. Company in the amount of \$ 57,430. The company is planning to start as soon as possible. The anticipated timeline is about four weeks, weather permitting.

Eagle Scouts to White Wash Picket Fence—Our Eagle Scout project is planned for September 9. They will work with city staff to power wash, prime, and paint the picket fence around the property and to power wash the wooden steps going down to the lower level from the Allen House.

2018 Exhibit—The museum plans to incorporate a unique idea into its 2018 exhibit that will also integrate well with the Birmingham Bicentennial. A working title is “200 Years of Stories: Celebrating the People of Birmingham.” We would like to invite the public to contribute to the exhibit by submitting someone they would like to celebrate. It could be a living person or a historic one. It does not have to be a well-known person-in fact we will encourage the opposite. This crowd-sourced exhibit will be balanced by invited submissions and museum-curated content. We will have a special spot for student submissions as well. There are many benefits to an exhibit like this. As things develop, there will be lots of opportunity for the Museum Board to get directly involved. We have already met with secondary social studies teachers to explain the exhibit and invite them to consider incorporating it into their classes.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Process-Public Input Meeting—On October 3, there will be a public input meeting for the city’s overall parks Master Plan. Other boards and commissions will be invited as well for this informational discussion session. Save the date, and more information will be forthcoming.

Fall Programming—The museum is teaming with the Baldwin Public Library to present a three-part series, “Art and Activism,” featuring speakers in the fields of theater, music, and finally, visual arts. Victor will be hosting the last presentation here at the museum explaining his approach to activism and some of his work on display. Victor is also holding two programs in September here at the museum. September 9, 2 to 4 PM, kids ages 2-10 are invited to work with Victor’s guidance to create sidewalk art. September 16, Victor will be hosting a workshop on creating landscapes, using the backdrop of our beautiful park.

Bell Paver Sales Renewed—The Friends are reopening their Bell Paver fundraiser from now through September 30. Some pavers have already been purchased. There are a few at \$100 level and some at \$250 level.

Credit Card and Gift Shop Merchandise—The Friends have decided to transfer all their merchandise to the Museum for future sales. The Gift Shop is in need of reevaluation for ongoing marketing.



Leslie Pielack <lpielack@bhamgov.org>

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update - Save the Date October 3rd

1 message

Lauren Wood <lwood@bhamgov.org>
To: "Pielack, Leslie" <LPielack@bhamgov.org>

Wed, Aug 30, 2017 at 4:03 PM

Hi Leslie,

Thanks for the opportunity to share with the Museum Board some preliminary information about this upcoming Open House to garner public/community input about parks and recreation in the City of Birmingham.

We encourage and welcome input from all City Boards/Committees/Commissions including all residents during this vital planning process. The Parks and Recreation Plan last updated in 2012 expires at the end of 2017. We are in the midst of preparing an updated plan to be adopted in early 2018.

Join us for a project specific Open House and presentation by our consultants, McKenna Associates on Tuesday, October 3, 2017. The Parks and Recreation Board meeting begins at 6:30 PM on this evening and is held at the Department of Public Services conference room located at 851 S. Eton. The details and start time for the Open House will be announced shortly, please keep an eye on the City website for updates and save this date.

The City will also be gathering resident feedback via a survey, to be available online and a hard copy available at various municipal facilities. We can be contacted directly with any questions in the meantime, at [248.530.1700](tel:248.530.1700).

I appreciate your time with this and providing the information to your Board. If you need anything further, please let me know. I look forward to our future discussions during this process.

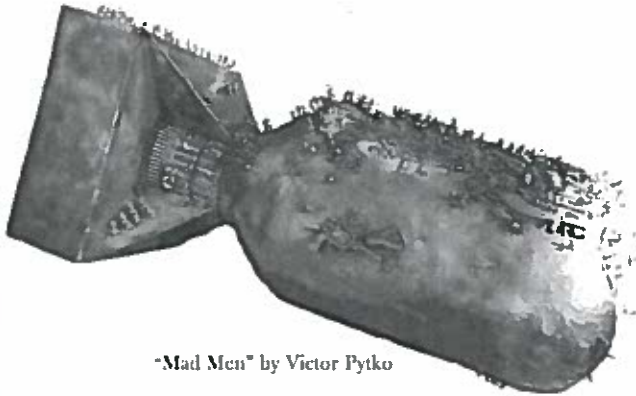
Lauren

Lauren Wood
Director of Public Services

City of Birmingham
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The Birmingham Museum

JOINT LIBRARY-MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES TO EXPLORE ART AND ACTIVISM



"Mad Men" by Victor Pytko

Victor Pytko's thought-provoking "Mad Men" sculpture is part of his exhibition at the Birmingham Museum.

This fall, the Birmingham Museum and Baldwin Public Library will be presenting a joint lecture series program entitled, "Art and Activism," which will take a closer look at the long tradition in the arts of questioning authority and making us think. Whether in the theater, in music, or in the visual arts, encouraging new perspectives has a long history in the western world. This three-part lecture series will explore this history and the important role played by the arts in challenging the status quo.

Each program will feature a presenter who will provide historic context for this tradition in their respective field. Free to the public.

• **Oct. 12, 2017: "Art and Activism: The Theater" 7-8:30 p.m. (at the Baldwin Public Library)**

Jay Kaplan will discuss how the stage has been a natural place to question authority and make political

commentary, from the ancient Greeks to Shakespeare to Europe under repressive regimes to modern day. Kaplan is a respected actor/director in the Detroit area who has been associated with the Village Players for years. As an attorney for the ACLU, he also has one foot firmly planted in local activism.

• **Nov. 9, 2017: "Art and Activism: Music" 7-8:30 p.m. (at the Baldwin Public Library)**

Susan Whitall will present some of the major ways that music, especially American music, has actively contributed to the tradition of political expression and social issues. Whitall is an author, long time music critic for the Detroit News, and former writer/editor for Birmingham's CREEM Magazine.

• **Dec. 14, 2017: "Art and Activism: The Visual Arts" 7-8:30 p.m. (at the Birmingham Museum)**

Birmingham artist and filmmaker Victor Pytko will discuss how the visual arts can broaden a viewer's understanding by presenting a different perspective, suggesting another reality or stimulating a new perception. The premise that "art must offend to advance" will be considered in the context of Victor's work on display at the Birmingham Museum through Dec. 31, 2017.

Birmingham Museum 2018 Exhibition
The People of Birmingham: Celebrating 200 Years of Stories

BIRMINGHAM
The MUSEUM



The Birmingham Museum would like to invite you to share a story about a special person from Birmingham's last 200 years. This person can be anyone from the present or the past—a friend or family member, an ancestor, a neighbor, or someone you remember growing up that made an impression on you. We are more interested in the story and why it is important to you than exact facts.



We will create exhibit panels featuring submitted entries and will display them in our museum and online during 2018—Birmingham's 200th year. You can fill out this form and drop it off or mail to us (see address at bottom of page) or you can go online to a fillable form at <http://www.bhamgov.org/PeopleofBirmingham2018Exhibit>. To submit an entry, please follow the following guidelines:



Name of person you are submitting: _____
Year of birth/death (if unknown, please estimate): _____
Your name: _____ Please provide contact info (will not be published):
Email _____ Telephone: _____

In one or two sentences, please describe what inspires you about this person's story:



Tell us something you want people to know about this person in 200 words or less (attach sheet or write on back if needed):



Do you have a photo or artifact you would like to display or share to go with this story? It could be a family photo, picture of a house or building, a drawing, or a personal object. We can scan images and return them, or display your artifact during the exhibit. Or, feel free to arrange a time to come to the museum, and we will help you research in our files. Contact us at 248-530-1928 or www.bhamgov.org/museum.

Thank you for submitting your entry for our 2018 "The People of Birmingham: 200 Years of Stories" year-long exhibit. Your submission will become part of our permanent collection, and may appear online, in the museum, or both. The Birmingham Museum reserves the right to edit your entry as needed. The exhibit will run through December, 2018, and will include an online version that may be accessible permanently.