

Minutes
Culture, History and Governance (CHuG)
Sub-Committee
December 18, 2008

Present: Susan Brooks, Paul Giese, Sarah Cannon Holden, Harriet Todd, Peter Sugar;

We discussed the following:

- We reviewed the discussion at the SC meeting of 12/16. The major points were:
 - Revision of the schedule to allow more time for the proper editing of the papers and specifically to allow the latter to be more representative of how Lincoln would express itself rather having the expression of the ideas dictated by our consultants
 - Thus it was agreed to have a presentation to TM of a summary of the main ideas and issues, and postpone the completion of the MP – and specifically the implementation plan: therefore the actual vote/final approval will take place at a special town meeting to be called late in May or early in June 2009
 - There will be an interface meeting between all subcoms in the evening of 1/21
 - There will be an all-board meeting at Bemis Hall on 2/11
 - The purpose of the subcom meeting will be to review the major issues which have been addressed in the MP. To this end, all subcoms have been asked to select their four or five major issues
- We then proceeded to deal with these at our meeting. We came up with the following key-words/ideas (based on our work on the papers):
 - Civics (education to start in the schools)
 - Volunteerism (volunteers supporting the various organizations; volunteers serving on major town boards)
 - Communication (the town's website; posting all information on the website; some citizenry not reading the material)
 - Technology
 - TM attendance (sustaining the TM form of government)
 - Integration of the efforts between the various Cultural and Historic organizations
 - Financial consequence of the various recommendations
 - Preservation of our C&H assets
 - Inter-board interface and cooperation
- We agreed that all of the above could probably be boiled down to the following four (or five) points, with many of CHuG's recommendations then grouped as sub-issues under each heading:
 - Civics: this topic would become important as the motivating factor:
 - underlying our town meeting form of government
 - by educating the public – which process would be started in the schools – we would build a corps of volunteers, both to advocate for our various organizations and, from there, to step up and serve in town government (on the major boards)
 - Organizing our volunteers would fall on the shoulders either of a town ombudsman, or a volunteer search committee (who would, among other things, establish a skills bank)
 - The process would increase TM attendance
 - Volunteerism would be encouraged among all new town residents (information packets, welcoming events, etc.)
 - Provision of additional staff support to the various boards and committees
 - Provision of board training for new volunteers on the boards
 - Communication: this involves both: the dissemination of the information to the public, and inter-board and staff communication
 - Using all available 21st century technological tools
 - Improving the town's website
 - Providing appropriate IT support

- Improving inter-board interface and cooperation: possibly by the re-institution of the Moderator's periodic meetings or regular inter-board breakfasts
 - Integration and coordination of the several programs by Lincoln's several Cultural and Historic Organizations (also actively working towards informing both the public and the schools of the many opportunities available to them)
 - Preservation of our C&H assets and ensuring their appropriate maintenance
 - The financial impacts of the recommendations and the establishment of appropriate means to fund the efforts
- We discussed the so-called 'Do Nothing' scenario currently in the MP as a separate chapter. One idea we had was to integrate the pertinent comments under each of the papers. At the same time it was felt that the title was unfortunate in that it did not convey the real meaning: i.e. what would happen if we did not change our current ways and allowed Lincoln to develop slowly under its presently existing agenda: keep going as we are. The approach in handling this topic would be the same whether as a separate chapter or being part of the papers
- Implementation plan - this is a critical aspect of the MP. The SC felt that we might begin to find potential candidates soon after the all-board meeting in February (or even earlier). This committee – of no great size (perhaps 7-9 members) would be in place for probably the next ten years - with the membership rotating to ensure that no one would burn out in the effort. The task of the committee is not to implement the recommendations, but rather to follow the various boards' actions to ensure that none of the recommendations end up on the shelf.
- Survey: we feel that the survey should be an annual event, following - perhaps - a different emphasis/topic each year depending on the most pressing issues of the day. (Preparation of the appropriate survey would be a task for the implementation committee, who may well need a consultant to prepare the survey questionnaire.)
- Finally we touched on the fact that in none of our papers was there a mention of LS – which surely represents a major regional effort

Our next meeting has been set for 7:30 AM on Thursday, 8 January - where we will finalize our major issues for presentation to Mark Whitehead on 12 January, 2009