

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project

Soil and Marker Committee

Planning Meeting

April 28, 2022, 7:00 pm to 8:00

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom Webinar

MEETING NOTES

In Attendance: Patrick Andriuk, Char Bah, Amy Bertsch, Gretchen Bulova, Jeff Davidson, Audrey Davis, Rose Dawes, Caroline Klam, Lottie Lent, Tiffany Pache, David Spinrad (chair).

1. David Spinrad called the meeting to order at 7:05.
2. Personal Share: Reflections on the Remembrance Ceremony from group members
 - Shared a lot of history/good information. (Commonwealth Attorney's connection to history and apology was very good.)
 - Very moving event (Student speaker was very good).
 - Liked having the stones as it was good to have something tangible that connected the participants to the memorial.
 - Discussion of having religion as part of the event and whether it would make some people feel excluded. Rabbi Spinrad advocated for it as it was a eulogy and event to memorialize Joseph McCoy who was a Christian.
 - It felt as though we were part of a moment that after tending the orchard for the last several years was bearing fruit. This felt like movement toward reconciliation with our past.
3. Descendant Research Update
 - a. Genealogist Char Bah provided information on her research into Benjamin Thomas descendants. She has identified several possible family members. She also has identified a couple families (some still local) connected to the events of the night before Benjamin's lynching when many in the Black community stood up for the rule of law and tried to protect the young man.
 - b. Tiffany Pache presented Leslie Anderson's research on descendants of Joseph McCoy. By focusing on Harriet McCoy (Joseph's sister or aunt), Anderson was able to locate 8 descendants, all of whom live out of state.
 - c. Additional research was presented to the group identifying the Aunt who said as the people killed him let them bury him of McCoy as Rachel Chase Gary.
4. Soil Collection
 - Guidelines from EJI indicate we need to provide a draft plan for our soil collection to EJI representatives in June.
 - Proposed date for a remote soil collection for both men September 24, 2022.
 - Volunteer request to build/create raised bed for remote soil collection
 - Invite CTE students at the high school
 - Talk to Seaport Foundation about partnership

- Consult with Art League
 - Consider asking Smoot Lumber to provide supplies as a reconciliatory action.
- Planning meeting on May 26 to prepare draft plan for EJI.
5. Marker Update – we still have work to do on individual state markers.
Interest in a larger box marker for each post as well. Waiting for new lamp posts first.
 6. Next meeting date: May 26 discuss options for ceremony at soil collection.