

Holiday Display Task Force Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 3, 2007
City Hall, 300 LaPorte Avenue

Meeting began at 5:00 p.m.

There were no observers to offer public comment. Invited guest in attendance: Cheryl Donaldson, City of Fort Collins Museum Director.

Tess informed the task force that the recommendation to City Council has been scheduled on Tuesday, November 6th. An agenda item summary should be prepared for the City Clerk's office by October 17th. The task force has the option to elect a representative to present to Council.

Short discussion about the September 26th task force meeting, members felt positive on the direction of the conversation.

The task force participated in a sorting exercise. Each of the 11 participants members present applied adhesive "dots" to a chart to indicate their preferences for types of displays and locations. The group agreed to set aside discussion about the interior of City buildings for the time being. Following the exercise and discussion several dots were modified. The final result is illustrated below.

	Exterior of City Buildings	Oak Street Plaza	Museum and/or Museum Grounds
Nothing	0	0	0
White lights (strings, winter symbols – not holiday symbols)	11	10	10
Wreaths, garlands, foliage	2	3	3
Written (secular) message	1	6	7
Educational display with faith symbols and secular signs	1	5	11

Members also discussed using an educational display at the Museum and/or Museum Grounds as a starting point, with the thought that the display or some variation of it could later expand to Oak Street Plaza. After further discussion, members concluded the following:

- Consensus on recommending an educational display at the Museum. (Further details follow in these minutes.) The display would also include white lights.
- Consensus on recommending Oak Street Plaza have white lights, but no clear agreement on if Oak Street Plaza would have any other display. The group did agree that any display in this location would be more modest in nature than that at the Museum because of space constraints.
- Consensus on recommending that the exterior of City buildings should only include white lights.
- The white lights referenced above refer to strings of lights. If the lights were also in the shape of symbols, those symbols should be of the winter season (e.g. snowflakes), not holiday symbols (e.g. wreaths or evergreen trees).

Karen Schwartz presented a proposal for the start of the educational display with symbols of light representing different traditions of a diverse community. Written text is included with each

symbol and was chosen because they represent the men and women who have fought in the U.S. Armed Forces. Traditions would include:

- 1). Kwanzaa
- 2). Ramadan
- 3). Baha'u'llah
- 4). Diwali (Deepavali)
- 5). Christmas
- 6). Oshogatsu
- 7). Bhodi Day
- 8). Snowflake
- 9). Winter Solstice
- 10). Hanukkah

Steve Lovaas presented a three-part holiday display policy proposal that the group briefly discussed, however time was limited:

- 1). Seasonal poster commissioned from local artists.
Theme: "A Season of Light"
Competition possibly hosted and judged by MOCA and HRC?
Poudre School District?
Neutral default decoration to illustrate theme?
- 2). Annual educational display at the Fort Collins Museum
- 3). Strings of light to decorate exterior City property.

Cheryl Donaldson confirmed that Museum Staff are very interested in partnering on an educational exhibit. She will take these ideas to her staff and return to next weeks meeting, October 10th, with feedback as to what they feel could be accomplished.

A question was raised wondering if the City has means to accept contributions from the community that could be restricted to the display expense and the answer is yes.

Rich Thompson presented to the group that the task force could provide a smaller proposal for 2007 that might include a Menorah and Christmas Tree with a larger recommendation for 2008 and ensuing years. The task force could draft a logical interim solution. Council could adopt the recommendation with the understanding that this would be an evolving proposal. Time was short so the group will discuss this further at the next meeting.

Action Items for October 10 Meeting:

- Museum staff will take the ideas generated thus far and provide initial feedback on options, both for this year and in future years.
- Steve will contact MOCA to determine interest in participation.
- Marty will contact the Muslim community for input given the time period of the current policy November 1 - January 30.
- Saul will contact the Native American community to get feedback.
- Howard will contact those who celebrate Kwanzaa to get feedback.

Action Items for Future Meetings:

- Elect spokesperson(s) for the November 6 City Council meeting
- Develop a plan for communicating results of the work of the Task Force, once completed
- Develop recommendation for interior of City buildings

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.