

Roeland Park Historical Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 25th, 2021

Opening: The 3rd meeting of the Roeland Park Historical Committee was called to order at 3pm on Thursday March 25th, 2021 via GotoMeeting facilitated by Chris Wolff.

Present: Michael Rebne council liaison, Chief John Morris, Chris Wolff, Jim Grebe, Allen Foley, Pete Macek, Russell MCorkle, Liz Vogel, councilperson Tom Madigan, Laura Savidge

Introductions: Introductions of new members Liz and Russell. Everyone gave a brief self introduction to benefit the new members.

Agenda:

- A. Introduction of Laura Savidge Chair of the Roeland Park Parks Committee. Laura expressed her interest in the activities of the Historical Committee and her desire for the various committees that could be impacted by the Historical Committees projects to be kept informed and be invited to participate. She recapped some of the history of signage at RPark and what the Parks Committee would like to see going forward.
- B. Chris Wolff reported back to the committee about his update to the City Council. His impression was that the council supported the committee's goal of showcasing the history of Roeland Park through some form of signage. Councilman Rebne confirmed this sentiment.
- C. Allen Foley Presentation. Allen walked the committee through a short powerpoint documenting his investigation of the historical signs and markers used by Merriam, Kansas. Merriam is using a variety of sign and marker types including the traditional metal signs, bronze plaques applied to boulders and the interpretive style signs the committee had discussed at its last meeting. The Shawnee Methodist Mission will be employing one of these signs soon. Allen contacted the maker of the sign and shared specifics with the committee. The type of sign that the SMM will be using costs \$1500. The artwork lasts for 10 years. The artwork can be replaced for \$500.
- D. Allen showed the committee a flyer put out by the city of Merriam that advertising the locations and scope of its historical signs and markers. Included in the flyer is a mention of Merriam's virtual historical tour facilitated by the smartphone application Otocast.
- E. Chris walked the committee through a demonstration of the Otocast smartphone application, which is used by not only Merriam but also Mission, Leewood, Kansas City and Lawrence. The demonstration outlined the various features of the app, which allows for the creation of any number of highlighted locations on a map.

Once a highlighted location is clicked it opens up a multimedia description of that location. Text can be added to describe the location. Within that text it is possible to provide web links to further content if desired. Photographs can also be added to the description and it is possible to scroll through the photographs. It is also possible to add a voice over narration that compliments the text and the photographs.

Some communities such as Leawood and Lawrence are using the App to facilitate a virtual tour of public artwork. In their tours the location of the artwork is highlighted with a text description, photographs and a voice narration from the artist that describes the piece. Some communities such as Mission and Merriam have created virtual historical tours on the App. In these tours the locations are highlighted with a text description, historic photographs of the location and a voiceover narration by community members.

The cost of such a virtual tour through Otocast would be \$125 per location and that includes setup and maintenance for one year. After that yearly maintenance would be \$60 per location. The service comes with analytics that would allow the city to gage usage of the App.

- F. Discussion. The committee discussed the various options of signage and the idea of a virtual tour. It was agreed that the idea of a virtual tour was worth pursuing in addition to the placement of physical signs. There was discussion of its use not only for a historical tour but also to showcase the city's outdoor artwork. Such a project would cross the boundary into the work of multiple city committees and there would be a need to create liaisons with the other committees.

The consensus of the committee leaned towards the installation of the traditional metal signs, which are used by our neighboring communities of Merriam, Westport and Kansas City. These two projects would allow the city to showcase its history both in the traditional manner and in a manner that would perhaps be more accessible to the younger generation and those more technologically inclined.

- F. A brief discussion was had about the need for the committee to create a brand for this project. This would include a logo that could be placed on signage or any other material created by the committee. This way, if the city changes its logo in the future it won't make the signage or other materials appear outdated. It was requested that committee members think about this and bring ideas to the next meeting
- G. Councilperson Madigan expressed concern over the size of the committee and felt it may be too large. He intended to look into the matter. A creative solution may have to be sought.

Agenda for next meeting:

- A. Chris will contact members of other Roeland Park committees to inform them of the direction of the Historical Committee's thinking and how we might work with them.
- B. Chris will contact Donnie Scharff of Public Works to enlist help in determining the costs involved with the metal signs and their installation.
- C. Committee members will think about the idea of creating a brand for the project. This could include the types of things we would like to see in a brand (e.g. wagon wheel, arrow head, Strang Line Car, etc) or even any sketches of ideas.
- D. Chris will send committee members the list of sign locations and mockups, which were considered in February.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Next Meeting set at 3pm on Thursday April 22nd.