

**Cultural Commission May 21, 2012**

**STATE OF TEXAS §**

**COUNTY OF TARRANT §**

**CITY OF BEDFORD §**

**The Cultural Affairs Commission of the City of Bedford, Texas, met in regular session at 6:36 pm at the Bedford Public Library, 2424 Forest Ridge Drive, Bedford, TX on the 21st day of May, 2012 with the following members present:**

Alicia McGlinchey, Chair  
Barbara Speares  
David Medina  
Janice Vickery

Constituting a quorum

Others present included:  
Mirenda McQuagge-Walden, Staff Liaison  
Ray Champney

Guest, Larry Darlage, President Northeast Tarrant County Campus

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Alicia McGlinchey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. **Consider approval of the following Cultural Commission minutes:**
  - **May 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 regular meeting.**

Mr. Medina made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 7th, 2012; the motion was seconded by Ms. Vickery. The motion passed 6 – 0.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

2. **Report from Chairperson Alicia McGlinchey regarding progress of the cultural assessment process.**

Alicia explained the background of the Cultural Commission including the Cultural District and that the Commission is gathering an assessment of needs.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

3. **Interview with Dr. Larry Darlage**

## Cultural Commission May 21, 2012

The Commission members introduced themselves to Dr. Darlage. Dr. Darlage explained the relationship with Tarrant County College and North Richland Hills. In 1998, the mayor and council members of NRH approached the College regarding development of the Performing Arts Center. A tax increment financing (TIF) district was utilized to help finance a town center. The college would be a recipient of some of the tax money.

Three facilities were planned to meet community needs –

1. Library – new – open for three to four now
2. Recreation Center – recently opened
3. Performing Arts Center

The theme carried forward is to provide a center that is within walking distance for the community. Included in the plans for the town center - retail and apartments on top of retail where shop owners could work during the day and live when not working. This was started in 1998.

The first thing the college did was to become part of the TIF. This was the second TIF for NRH. Some of the tax would be reinvested. Keep the rate the same. As business investments increased in value, taxes naturally increased.

In 1999, the Performing Arts Center Board approved the TIF. Then, the economy turned and there were delays. Retail and apartments filled in first. Then, the Library came on and within budget. As more money came in, the Recreation Center was built. TIF put money aside as savings for the Recreation Center as well as the Performing Arts Center. There was \$8.3 million accumulated in savings towards the Performing Arts Center. A feasibility study is under way for the Performing Arts Center.

The vision is a theater/auditorium which will hold 1,000 people. It would include staging, a green room, dressing rooms, a dance studio, 3,000 foot dance space, art gallery – which the college doesn't currently have, and a black box theatre. TCC owns the land and the building. There would also be increased office space and storage space. At one time there was a plan for a walkway between the theatre and the library. Dr. Darlage envisions a performing arts center with a lecture series and to tie the performing arts center in with an art gallery.

Mr. Champney shared his vision for the Arts and Cultural District in a centralized location in Bedford. The District would not compete with other cities but provide a niche and unique environment for the arts in Bedford including all of the artistic groups already in place in Bedford and expanding for more artistic groups. He shared that there are quite a few hotels in Bedford and coordinating with the college and other cities, they could enhance each other's showcases and not compete.

Ms. McQuagge-Walden inquired about the pitfalls. Dr. Darlage mentioned a Mansfield Performing Arts Center that houses 6,000 which can be partitioned off. The cost is around \$40 million. Other cities have invested in cultural and shopping centers and are not as successful due to the economy, the lack of socializing with the community and getting their buy in and the business investment taking longer to bring the return on investment. Some communities can support high-end shopping centers and other cannot. It is best to look at what your community wants and can support with a deliberate thought out plan.

## Cultural Commission May 21, 2012

During the field trip, the Levitt Center representatives were asked the same question about what they would have done differently and they answered storage, storage, storage.

The NRH/College Performing Arts Center is undergoing the first step, which is a feasibility study. When that is completed, it will be presented to the Board. The next step will be the design, which may start in late summer. Once it is all approved, the Foundation will get active to generate donors. The college has a foundation in place for fundraising.

#### **4. Discussion regarding questionnaire developed by the Trinity Arts Guild.**

The Trinity Arts Guild will come to the next meeting. They have developed a questionnaire they will share with the Commission and how it will reach the artists in the community. It appears that the arts questionnaire encompasses more arts groups than individual artists.

The next two meetings will be June 11, 2012 and June 25, 2012

It was suggested that the commission talk with Colleyville and Southlake to see what worked for them and/or did not work.

Several documents were passed out regarding performing and fine arts groups in Hurst and Bedford.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Ms. Speares motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Barbara made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Medina seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approved:

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Alicia McGlinchey, Chair