

## MINUTES

### Athens Justice and Memory Project

#### Team Meeting #16

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

5:00- 6:00pm

#### Virtual WebEx Meeting

- A. Hattie Thomas Whitehead started the meeting by stating this team was working hard on avenues of atonement outlined in the Linnentown Project resolution, which was voted on unanimously and approved.
- B. Moment of silence for Linnentown descendants
  - The justice and memory team took a moment of silence to acknowledge and show respect to those who were no longer with us.
- C. Attendance: some members are calling in via phone
  - Hattie Thomas Whitehead, Committee Chair and First Descendant of Linnentown
  - Dr. Jennifer Rice, UGA Professor and Researcher, Parliamentarian
  - Dr. Jerry Shannon, UGA Professor and Researcher- presenter, non-member
  - Bobby Crook, Linnentown first descendant- calling in
  - Christine Davis Johnson, Linnentown first descendant- calling in
  - Commissioner Mariah Parker, ACCGov Commissioner, District 2
  - Niki Jones, ACCGov Assistant Manager, non-voting/supporting member
  - Selah Gardiner, ACCGov Inclusion Office, non-voting member
- D. Ms. Thomas Whitehead stated that the minutes of the last meeting were distributed to members in advance of the meeting and asks if there are any amendments to the meeting.
  - On a motion by Dr. Rice; seconded by Ms. Thomas Whitehead, the minutes are approved with no opposition or abstinent.
- E. Dr. Shannon, faculty provides a report on the results of the research he conducted alongside Dr. Richard Martin and Aidan Hysjulien at the request of the Mayor's office regarding the financial losses from urban renewal in Linnentown
  - To measure the financial loss, Dr. Shannon et al. first looked at underpayment: what is the amount homeowners received for their properties and how does it compare to what the fair price would have been?
    - Measured fair price by looking at recent home sales around where Linnentown once was
    - Compared the records of property owners of Linnentown to the property north of Baxter street
  - The second measure Dr. Shannon et al. looked at was loss appreciation: what was the financial loss due to lower rates of appreciation for displaced Linnentown homeowners?

- Used archival data from the Special Collections Library; home prices from the 1970 census, and ACC Tax Assessor for home sales since 1990 to measure rates of appreciation.
- Using the first method, based on estimates, the cumulative value of all Linnentown properties would be 7,950,585. Adjusting for appreciation, the amount residents received sums to 3,922,795. Notably, Linnentown owners were underpaid at 4,027,789.
- Using the second method, based on estimates, the fair price of Linnentown would be 6,985,638. Adjusting for appreciation, the amount residents received sums up to 3,922,796. Notably, Linnentown owners were underpaid at 3,062,842.
- Moreover, in total lost appreciation because of forced displacement, Linnentown residents lost 994,586 dollars; if residents would have stayed, they would have accumulated nearly a million dollars in property appreciation
- Based on underpayment and loss from low appreciation, there is a combined loss of 5,022,375 dollars for Linnentown residents
- Notably, research does not estimate other financial losses experienced by residents: effects on employment, education, or emotional trauma of forced displacement
- Dr. Shannon opens the floor for any further questions or comments: Commissioner Mariah Parker compliments Dr. Shannon's methodology and Ms. Thomas Whitehead thanks Dr. Shannon and his team for their research
- Ms. Thomas Whitehead asks the groups if they would like to vote on having it sent to the Mayor
- Commissioner Mariah Parker inquires if they have a quorum for a vote
- Dr. Rice opens the floor for discussion and asks if the group would like to accept the report as information that sees as useful
- On a motion by Commissioner Mariah Parker, seconded by Ms. Thomas Whitehead, the report is accepted unanimously
- Assistant Manager Jones recommends taking another vote on whether or not we want to send this recommendation to mayor and commission via a work session - he recognizes \$5 million is the output, but how that works with the gratuity clause - how are we going to present this at the work session moving forward? As an informational piece?
- Mariah Parker states that mayor and commission could formally accept the report; checking this against any forms of committed or expended funds that have been requested by Athens Justice and Memory; that might be a next step that others would like to see - what do we have the money to do? In the grand scheme of the government, it is an amount we should be judicious with
- Ms. Thomas Whitehead points out that the \$5 million will be split between the University of Georgia and Athens-Clarke County
- Dr. Rice clarifies that the \$5 million is the ask of the Linnentown Project, not necessarily something that has been adopted and asked by the Athens Justice and Memory team

- Ms. Thomas Whitehead asks if she needs to put together a subcommittee to delegate tasks for the recommendation of going forward for an agenda item for the work session
- Assistant Manager Jones clarifies that the Athens Justice and Memory Group accepted the report today and, in the future, there is the intent to go back to mayor and commission during a work session to talk about this report and then have concrete recommendations
- Ms. Thomas Whitehead clarifies that she meant a subcommittee of certain people from the Athens Justice and Memory Group, not any outside people, and the selected members of the Athens Justice and Memory Group bring it back to the full group
- Dr. Rice agrees that Ms. Thomas Whitehead's plan might be best, asks if Ms. Thomas Whitehead has anyone in mind to lead that subcommittee
- Ms. Thomas Whitehead states she will contact some members of the Athens Justice and Memory Group and bring it back to the full team, if you all agree to that
- Assistant Manager Jones offered ACCGov staff's assistance, wants to make sure we are clear on the gratuities clause, and suggested the attorney's office come to talk to this group as a step in moving forward; whenever this group comes up with ideas, we can call on our network to bring people in to discuss those items (for example, affordable housing experts to talk about affordable housing), much like the procedure with forming the HRC (Human Relations Commission)
- Inclusion Officer Gardiner and Assistant Manager Jones both offered to be support staff for Ms. Thomas Whitehead's subcommittee
- Mariah Parker states that they feel they are well-versed on the gratuities clause from prior trainings, but having the staff expertise on hand is always welcome
- Dr. Rice states the Athens Justice and Memory Group has done their part to accept the report and push it to the work session; from there it goes, work session, agenda setting session, and the voting session
- Inclusion Officer Gardiner states there was no formal vote in February to accept the Walk of Recognition
- Mariah Parker makes a motion to accept the presentation on the Walk of Recognition, seconded by Ms. Thomas Whitehead, and is accepted unanimously
- Mariah Parker left the meeting early
- Dr. Rice summarizes the last work session where she talked about the Walk of Recognition and thanks all of the ACC staff and elected officials; that item went to the agenda setting meeting last night (4/19); her understanding is that the actual things they are considering for the agenda is an RFP for the historical signage (which will bring in an interpretive graphic design firm that will create the 3 historical signs), the general concept for the Walk of Recognition - asks Inclusion Officer Gardiner to clarify the considered items for the next agenda
- Inclusion Officer Gardiner states that it was titled "Public Art - Location, Style, and Type" so we're requesting the location (which is the right-of-way on Finley Street), the style, and the type, which would be the 3 historical signs and the participatory art

mosaic; that will be back in the work session in August with the schematics of what those designs will be

- Dr. Rice summarizes that in the May 3 voting meeting we will get the vote on the general concept including all the items just discussed and the RFP for the signage
- Dr. Rice expresses excitement over the Walk of Recognition and encourages the public to speak their mind about the item at the May 3 meeting; she mentions we are lacking a formal mechanism in terms of liability with Dr. Bustle taking on the participatory art piece of the project; the Athens Justice and Memory Group is working with Assistant Manager Jones and Inclusion Officer Gardiner as well as taking recommendations from the mayor and commissioners as to what that mechanism might look like so Dr. Bustle can continue work through the completion of the project; Dr. Rice wants to go more in-depth about the work of Dr. Bustle's participatory art project in the next meeting so people can start to get a sense of that work
- Ms. Thomas Whitehead provides an overview of the history center - states that she attended the work session to update the commissioners on where they are; the next step is to participate in the RFP process, asked for an acquisition of lease agreement, will continue to focus on funding, and the 501c3 has been filed for the history center
- Dr. Rice asks how long it will be before this group can have another meeting with the appropriate staff and members of this committee about the Dr. Bustle piece
- Assistant Manager Jones states that there will be an email sent to this group (Athens Justice and Memory Project) and mayor and commission to outline 3 options tomorrow (4/21); once we digest that information, we can schedule another meeting
- Ms. Thomas Whitehead adjourned the meeting