

# **SACO-BIDDEFORD CULTURAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

## **Minutes from October 11, 2005**

### **Attendees:**

Diane Bowie-Zaitlin  
Don Sharland  
David Versel

Diane Noble  
Andrea Strassner  
Rachael Weyand

Renee O'Neil  
Nora Tryon

Meeting opened at 4:05 PM.

- David gave update about web-based survey and let everyone know that both artists and general public are posted
- Renee suggested posting an ad aimed at getting surveys filled
- Andrea thought that 8.5x11 flyer could be put on 4x6 postcards to get more people to fill it out.
- Don talked to Sen. Sullivan at Expo and suggested getting delegation together to talk about this projects

### **Community Cultural Event**

- Diane Noble has done brainstorming
  - Visual arts part at Museum
  - Music/theater/dance event at McArthur Hall
    - One admission price for whole event + cash bar
    - Door prizes for “creative dress”
    - Continuous programming—talent arranged around perimeter of room, people sit at tables to watch next act
    - Final performance could be on stage—band with dancing
    - Milling About is the activity, could it be the title?
  - People/categories
    - Jazz, blues, classical, Greek, French music
    - Rob Duquette wants to be involved (jazz combo)
    - Emily Kimball—singer songwriter
    - Greek band—is there a local group?
    - Zydeco dancer—Andrea has name
- Renee—acoustic music would be best for “milling about” feature
- Theater—short performances from local high schools
- Clowns, jugglers, mimes, magicians—Amador? Ask Renee
- Demonstrations on woodturning? Maybe separate event. Open studio day?
  - Diane B has website for open studio in Camden area
- Could build a whole “Arts and Culture Week” event
  - Art exhibit
    - Are artists willing to show their work for just two weeks—“Come as you are” type event
    - Could be opening event to week, transition into others
  - Concert/event
  - Open Studio at the mills

- Film screening?
  - Nora's son is a NYC filmmaker
  - Screen winning items from Mill Dance
  - Could AV Advantage be a sponsor of the event? Or charge admission for it?
- Get political support for it—have city councils put stamp of approval on it
- How much is bad weather insurance for events? Ask around.
- Still do January public discussion and then present plan to broader audience in April
  - Bring in “expert” speakers
  - Could have standup comic emcee the event
    - Seth Perry, local comedian, lives in Saco. Renee has contact information
    - George Ham is Biddeford comic, young guy—did opening act at Firefighters' comedy night, ask Renee.
- City governments
  - Don suggests doing workshops with each council, do it sooner rather than later—as soon as we have substantive things
  - Aim for January council meetings to get support for public event later in month
- **CONCLUSIONS**
  - **Do community outreach event in January 2006 featuring 1-2 outside experts on cultural development. Experts will give brief presentations followed by a moderated community discussion. Event should be emceed by local comedian.**
  - **Plan for “Arts and Culture Week” in April 2006 as a means of unveiling the cultural plan. It can include museum exhibit, concert, open studio day at mills and perhaps film screening at City Theater?**

### November focus groups

- David presented two preliminary lists—one of arts/cultural leaders and one of civic/business leaders. The committee added some names.
  - We now have 20 invitees to arts/cultural group, which could merit doing two sessions, depending on responses
  - We have 14 invitees to civic/business group
- David asked for input on what to ask participants
- Questions for both groups:
  - What to do with empty storefronts?
  - Is our community ready to have an arts organization?
    - How would it work?
    - What would it need to do?
    - What problems would it need to address?
  - Do writing exercises to have each person write out his or her vision for arts and culture in the area. Do it an hour into the event after some ideas are out there.
  - How broad is community support for arts and cultural activities?
  - Can both cities be “one audience”?
- Questions for arts/cultural group:
  - Why did they come here?
  - What would help them thrive here? (Resources, Venues, organizations)

- Incentives to get them space for living/working
  - What other cities have done this right?
- Questions for business community
  - How do we work to keep artists here?
  - What tax incentives can we have for artist live/work space?
  - What do your organizational structures allow to support? What is off-limits?
- It was suggested to do a separate discussion with both cities' Managers and ED Directors

**Name Of Planning Effort**

- David asked if using “Twin Cities” name better reflected the effort. Everyone says yes. The planning effort will now be known as the **TWIN CITIES CULTURAL PLAN**.

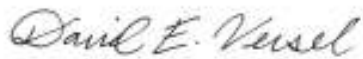
**Public Art**

- HOB has mural project on “car wash” wall on Rte 1, and is working on New Morning building. Will be done by Biddeford schools
- Could this build into Twin City effort? Funding memo written by Antje Kablitz (Saco intern) has a lot of great information.
- Diane B—talked to Keith Ludden at Maine Arts about Museum Panel murals for grant advice, but not much available.
  - \$7,500 collaborative grant “Artists in Maine Communities” due next April
  - Talk more about it at November meeting

**Next meeting is Tuesday November 15, 4PM, Heart of Biddeford**

Meeting closed at 5:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



David E. Versel