

Wooster Square Monument Committee  
November 19, 2020  
Minutes

Committee members in attendance: Bill Iovanne, Jr. Co-Chair; Laura F. Luzzi, Co-Chair, David Belowsky, Frances Calzetta, Frank Carrano, Elsie Chapman, Tom Ciesco, Paul Criscuolo, Rev. Harlon Dalton, Rheta DeBenedett, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Alder Rosa Ferraro-Santana, Anna Festa Frank Gargano, Sarah B. Greenblatt, Vincent Mauro, Charles Murphy, Dan Onofrio, Alphonse Paolillo, Michael Piscitelli, Neil Thomas Proto, Richard Ramadei, Cindy Rosarbo

Committee members absent Andrew Consiglio, Adrienne Jefferson, Alder Ellen Cupo, Aleta Staton,

Observers in attendance: Rebecca Bombero

Observers not in attendance: Frank Gage, Sean Matteson

Chair Bill Iovanne, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

Motioned for approval of the minutes of meeting of Sub-Committee of 11/5/2020 -David Belosky motioned and Paul Crisculo 2<sup>nd</sup> - No discussion or corrections - Accepted as submitted

Motioned for approval of the minutes of Monument Committee of 10/8/2020 –

Frank Carrano 2<sup>nd</sup> – - No discussion or corrections - Accepted as submitted

Chair – Bill Iovanne asked for a presentation of the Art Project as approved by the Sub-Committee by Rev. Harlon Dalton & Frank Carrano – Rev Dalton noted that this project was formed out of crisis and new possibilities. What was our mission and thinking along those lines? Creating an environment that people would want to linger for every age and background. Frank Carrano indicated a rendering to everyone by a graphic artist via a phone conversation to create a visualization to present tonight at the meeting. The collection of tablets that would tell the story of the voyage on four (4) tablets. Each tablet would have a story and visual of the immigrant experience, i.e., finding homes in Wooster Square, creating a neighborhood, efforts to become Italian Americans, creating institutions that would help them assimilate through difficult times also with the help of churches in the area. The final tablet should indicate what it represents what we were and us today. Monument base remains intact, the tablets would go around them in a garden setting. People would read the story and images vintage photographs that could be etched in the tablets. Bring together along with the 128-year-old pedestal that wanted to identify themselves in Wooster Square. The garden, heart shape around with a possibly a butterfly garden want to keep everything at eye level and hopefully people would linger and could and would transfer that part of the park and appreciate the story being told into a welcoming, social space. Wrought iron fence to be removed around foundation is historic and the origination of wrought iron expressed was specific.

Discussion arose regarding the existing fence around the base and the base to be removed. Lowering the height of the foundation, and anything that sits on top of that base would not be a part

of the story but by lowering would allow for it to become an integral part of the story. The stone removed from the existing foundation, to lower the height, would be placed in the garden as benches or border and incorporated into this project. Charles Murphy – steppingstones the panels arranged across, path inside the fence around the park. Fran - expanding the area of immigrants around New Haven rather than just Wooster Street. Frank Carrano – added that we could possibly add kiosks which could be set up around the park. Bill- Italian immigration and the evolution of Italian Immigrants in New Haven and Wooster Square is where our energy needs to be focused. Telling the stories of other prominent Italians, well known New Haveners and highlight other individuals and concept or other panels around the park which would be separate project. Tell the story of Italian immigration. We agreed that very little words on the panels would be necessary, but the pictures would actually tell the story. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro asked the concept was accepted by the committee and then scope of work will follow. The family tells the story -the sculpture and how is what is made on the demeanor of the sculpture an emotional connection that tells the story. Richard Ramadei -the top of the pedestal is small we need a universal symbol on top. Elsie - being a universal, identifying country, etc. Neil Proto – importance that monument was mandated by the mayor should reflect symbolism. You to retain someone and who the artist would recommend what goes on the top of the pedestal. What goes around the base can be done separately. Pedestal being lowered is important. Above the pedestal and around the pedestal should be melded together. Charles Murphy – the pedestals were on ground level. Neil Proto that a close to ground level statue. At base level. Coloration would come together. Frank Carrano- ground level focus of the monument to be at eye level and stand in front of and observe at that level make the connection. Rich – recommended more than one statue. Rosa DeLauro – artist will create the sculpture under our direction and see what they could come up with. Bill – within the panels, the story will be told of the shoemakers, garment workers, etc. and tie them altogether and members of the subcommittee to the historic district to create the image on top and tie the entire project. Need a call to artists. Any other discussion on this. Dan Onofrio – effort that everyone is making on Italian American struggles we can articulate that in the concept would be wonderful. David Belowsky – panels- are they going to metal and be careful because of vandalism. Bill asked Charlie Murph to explain the material used when the name plates were made for the existing park benches. Charlie stated it is a material that has no real scrap value. Benches have to conform to the Parks Department regulations. Frank Gargano would the monument height adjustment be done from the top or the bottom. We would need approval from the Historic District and Parts Department. Vinny Mauro requested that a call for a vote be made but not 2<sup>nd</sup> and therefore further discussion ensued. Frank Carrano – misleading on not finalized symbols or statutes and the artists. Rendering a family or other rendering of the Italian American of families and important to imply. Approval of the concept a little more specific - somewhere in this installation would be a family – Bill Iovanne then restated his original motion to accept as presented and voted on by the sub-committee, the recommendation of the plan to erect panels that tell the story of Italian Immigration and the evolution of Italian Americans in New Haven and Wooster Square around the base in a garden setting with a sculpture on top of the existing foundation and removal of the existing fence. Frank Carrano moved the motion and Elsie 2<sup>nd</sup>. A roll call vote was taken and the project was unanimously approved. And now we can move forward to the visual project.

Fundraising – Mellon Foundation by Frank Carrano - fund raising Mellon foundation has set aside 250,000,000 for project such as ours. Submit a preliminary and review that would appropriate for them to consider and submit and full a proposal for funding after preliminary 1 month or 5 weeks.

Wooster Square Conservancy – could possibly be the pass-through agency for our fundraising.

Mike Piscitelli- Walk us through the process to move this project along. Rebecca and Elsie – are on the phone and can elaborate the process going forward. Parks is the logical, historic district, Cultural Affairs Commission, arts council. Packaging it and process to artist rendering of the idea to the whole body submitting to Culture Affairs first, public art, and kick off then the Historic District and height where this is technically and bundle all the information, David Belowsky is on the call and they are the last stop for the installation. Parks needs to accept the gift and then the Board of Alders for the approval. Harlan asked that we sit with all of them regarding the art and fabrication and pivot back to them and financial reasons. Next step with meeting information meeting and a sense of how to continue forward. Anna Festa asked if we need a legal opinion, Bill noted that he did not believe that we did but, Elia, from corporation council noted -nothing to add. Frank Carrano asked that there be a proposal how to start.

Bill Motioned for adjournment at 7:55 pm Frank C 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Next Meeting, December 3, 2020 will be with full committee.

Respectfully submitted: Rosa Ferraro-Santana