

Notes from the 1/25/2011 meeting of residents regarding the Daisy Wall

There were 13 people present.

Dennis Harder from Joseph Freed and Associates and David Kirshenbaum attempted to listen via conference call, but unfortunately could not hear everyone in the room through the cell phone. Dennis requested that Beth Foley and Wendy Harless e-mail him with their thoughts on the meeting.

Mark Malcolm opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming.

He then explained our objective and plan to bring all parties concerned to the table.

The residents of Union commented that they would like to have representation on the taskforce. Peter Sinkunas noted that there were no residents from the Daisy Lofts present and he thinks we should have representation from the Lofts at Daisy Square on the task force.

Rich and Monica Chylla volunteered to represent the Townhouses on the task force.

Kathy Clark volunteered for Union Street.

Wendy Harless then spoke about many of the ideas that she has received in the last month and a half from residents of Plymouth. She explained that we are trying to develop a plan that would:

- Create an aesthetically pleasing and useful structure that would be an asset to the community and fit in with the surrounding neighborhood
- Properly memorialize the important historic heritage
- Be completed ASAP (in 2011)
- Be affordable (able to raise the funds needed ASAP)
- Be able to be maintained with minor ongoing expense

Wendy then passed out a first draft drawing of an example concept for a park pavilion incorporating the wall and asked for input from the group. A good and productive brainstorming session followed.

The three most prevalent criticisms/suggestions related to: 1. Scale of the wall (too tall), 2. Desire to make it look less “free standing” (e.g., through other building elements, landscaping, etc.), and 3. Desire to make the added structural elements more historic in design (less modern-looking).

Comments and suggestions from the residents about the pavilion concept:

- This still looks like a freestanding wall. Could we somehow make it look more like a building? Maybe with landscaping? Maybe through the design make it appear the have walls? Ask the architect if we could make it look less “wall.”
- Most present liked that it would be a usable structure.
- Parking was discussed: would the park need to provide parking for cars? .
- It is too tall. Can we remove the third story? Reuse the bricks for other things in the project (columns, fireplace).

- Could it have a BBQ pit or fireplace (like the pavilion in McClumpha park)?
- Could a structure be built on the front of the building?
- Current concept drawing looks too modern. Can we incorporate more elements that will make it look more historic to fit in with the neighborhood?
- What to do about the windows? Suggestions included putting plaques in the ground floor windows that explain the history of Daisy.
- What would happen with the windows on the upper stories? **NO GLASS!**
- Will there be picnic tables or something provided under the pavilion?
- How can we keep small children out of the street (Union)? We could do something with landscaping, or black fencing like the fencing around Miller Park on Ann Arbor Trail—**no chain link!**
- The residents want to see new drawings with landscaping that shows the Lofts and how the pavilion would relate to that building.
- They would like to have another meeting to see what the cross-organizational Daisy Committee develops. .

Other non-pavilion ideas discussed included:

- Could the wall be disassembled and stored for use at a later date? (
- Could a 1/16 scale replica of the entire building be constructed on site from the wall's bricks?
- Could a community center/meeting room be built using the wall or built from the disassembled bricks?
- Could the wall be disassembled, laid down flat in the ground and be the “walkway” of a park? So the wall looks just as it did standing, but now it is flat in the ground? *As discussed in the meeting, this alternative has previously been suggested and investigated and is not feasible. The bricks made in the 1880's for construction were not meant to be placed in the dirt. They are not the same materials as a paver or cobblestone, these bricks are much softer. The earth around the bricks will freeze and thaw over time causing the bricks to break apart.*

Summary

Virtually all in attendance were appreciative of the effort underway and were actively engaged in the 90-minute meeting in trying to help devise a workable solution (though there is clear and understandable urgency that the present unacceptable situation be addressed ASAP). Only one person appeared opposed to incorporating historic preservation into the ultimate solution. The PPN is grateful for the engagement and suggestions and intends to try to work with an architect to enhance the concept based on the input received. When available, this enhanced concept will be reviewed with the cross-organizational Daisy Committee (including representatives of the Daisy residents, Union Street residents, Freed, the Planning Commission, the City Commission, and the PPN) to work together to get input and build consensus on a jointly recommended and fundable plan.

These notes will be posted on the PPN web site at www.plymouthpreservation.org.