



Cambridge Peace Commission

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Cambridge Peace Commission Meeting Notes

Wednesday, January 13, 2010, 6:00-8:00

51 Inman St., second floor

Minutes

Attending: Frank Connelly, Leigh Hardy, Manikka Bowman, Rosalie Rippey (notes)

Staff: Brian Corr

Opening, Note-taker, and Check-in

- **Check-in:** participants introduced themselves and discussed the earthquake in Haiti, the City's efforts to form a response and personal reactions.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- Martin Luther King Day Commemoration is scheduled for January 18, 11:30 to 1:30
- The next Commission meeting will take place February 10

Updates and Reports

Martin Luther King Commemoration

- Brian passed out an agenda for the commemoration, noting that there was a great deal of excitement and desire to be part of the program. Attendees offered to help with several final details. Members of the commission were invited to help with welcoming visitors, helping where needed.
- The event was planned to start with a vigil and walk to St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Youth participation is woven into the event. Brian raised the question of how best to integrate reflections on the situation in Haiti.
- Brian expressed the hope that the event would bring an uplifting tone to inspire people to action.

City-wide Conversations on Race And Class

- Brian gave a background on the city's application for a Kellogg grant for Racial Healing, which would involve a collaboration between the city and America Speaks 21st Century Town Meetings (americaspeaks.org) which organizes town meetings around difficult issues.
- Whether or not grant is awarded, preliminary work has had been done to frame a city-wide conversation or town meeting on race and class. Brian will be attending a meeting

at the end of January to set goals for bringing together all sectors of the community for conversations on race and class, whether or not the grant is awarded.

Memorial Service for Tim Costello

- Brian announced that the Memorial Service for Tim Costello will take place Feb. 1 at the Cambridge Public Library.

City, Save Thyself!

- Peace Commission Founder David Wylie has contacted the Peace Commission about organizing a forum and Book Signing for his book on the creation of the Peace Commission, *City, Save Thyself!*
- Wylie, a longtime Cambridge City Councilor, created the Peace Commission, out of a desire to address the question of what cities can do to address global issues.
- The event will take place sometime in the Spring, to be held at the Public Library.

Traces of the Trade

- Brian handed out postcards and announced that the Diversity Committee of the City is planning a film night the last week of February for the city highlighting this film and host a conversation with the film-makers.
- The film discusses a family's discovery that their ancestors were the largest slave-trading family in the U.S. and their journey to learn more.

2009-2010 Peace and Justice Awards: May 2010

- The Peace and Justice Awards honor people doing work for peace and justice in the city of Cambridge. Last year, the Commission gave 10 individual and 4 group awards; in the past there have been as many as 16 individuals and 10 group awards in one year. The shorter format worked well, creating a more focused program and evening.
- Brian will be drafting a letter to seek nominations and will need help spreading the word. Logistical help will also be appreciated, including help with coordinating the food, coordinating and writing bios for the program. The Commission will review the nominations.
- Attendance has varied from year to year between 150-350 people.
- The group discussed the new West Cambridge Youth Center as a possible location.

Peace Commission Membership

- According to the ordinance, members need to support the goals of the commission.
- The commission acts like a Board in terms of sharing ideas and acting as volunteers to support the Commission; Commissioners have participated in hiring; but they do not evaluate or fire, approve budget or etc.
- As a one-person staff, Brian's biggest goal is for the Commission to be a group of people who can work collaboratively and be partners with the staff.
- It was suggested that it might be helpful to have something written to assist with outreach, and that demographics of group should be representative of the diversity of the committee. Next steps for commission membership is to establish who is interested in joining and identify what our needs are.
- Brian's vision is that the Peace Commission should be about bringing people together. Cambridge is a very diverse-looking city but its communities are not that united. The Peace Commission should be movement-building—it should begin from a point of collaboration and give people the opportunity to be present with you.

- It was suggested to hold a retreat to talk about mission & vision of the Peace Commission.

Brief Updates:

- **2010 Holocaust Commemoration** is held every year in April or May. A Committee has been formed and is currently working on initial planning.
- **The Cape Verde Peace Project with King Open School:** King Open is working with a partner in Cape Verde who is building a school. Cambridge schools have had sister schools in other countries but the idea has been to connect with a community represented in our community.

Closing

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.