



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council
FROM: Kathleen Dooley, City Attorney
DATE: November 7, 2019
RE: Loan agreement – Fredericksburg Area Museum

Issue:

Shall City Council approve a loan agreement with the Fredericksburg Area Museum for the slave auction block?

Recommendation:

Yes, Council should approve the agreement, in order to implement the relocation plan for the stone block.

Background:

The plan for the relocation of the slave auction block proposes that this historic artifact should go on display at the Fredericksburg Area Museum, just two blocks from its current location. The proposed “FAM Incoming Loan Agreement” effectuates that plan.

The proposed term of the loan is 20 years with a formal review mechanism every five years. Section 6 of the loan agreement provides that the stone block will be on display in the “River Gallery” of the museum. The exhibit will maintain the association of the block and the larger Planter’s Hotel site at 401-405 William Street. The City is responsible for removing the block from its current location, cleaning it under the supervision of an archaeologist, and delivering it to the exhibit space at the museum.

FAM estimated that its costs related to creating a new exhibit space for the slave auction block will be close to \$14,500, and the loan agreement provides that the City will pay those costs.

City staff has worked closely with FAM Director Sara Poore and Memorials Advisory Commission Chair Nancy Moore and would like to thank both individuals for their participation and collaboration in preparing this loan agreement.

Fiscal Impact:

Costs of removing, cleaning, and delivering the stone block plus \$14,500 for the FAM exhibit.



November 12, 2019
Regular Meeting
Resolution 19-

MOTION:

SECOND:

RE: Approving a Loan Agreement with the Fredericksburg Area Museum for the Slave Auction Block

ACTION: APPROVED: Ayes: 0; Nays: 0

The City is the owner of a circular-shaped sandstone plinth located at the northwestern corner of the intersection of William and Charles Streets in Fredericksburg, Virginia, colloquially known as the “auction block” or “slave block,” as described in “Archaeological Testing of the George Street Tunnel and Intersection of William and Charles Street, Fredericksburg, Virginia,” prepared by Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, dated January 2019, pp. 63 et seq. (“Dovetail January 2019”).

City Council has decided to relocate the auction block from the corner of William and Charles Streets to the Fredericksburg Area Museum (FAM) for purposes of display to the public in a museum exhibit located in the “River Gallery.” FAM has agreed to continue to provide opportunities for free admission and after-hours access to the exhibit; to engage a professional in the field of museum interpretation and design to ensure the final exhibit meets accepted standards for scholarship, accessibility, and design; and to seek and consider input on exhibit content and design from the Fredericksburg Memorials Advisory Commission and other community organizations as appropriate. Interpretation will maintain the association of the block and the larger Planter’s Hotel site at 401-405 William Street. Final exhibition content and design is subject to the FAM’s sole approval.

FAM and City staff have prepared a “FAM Incoming Loan Agreement” dated November 12, 2019 for purposes of making this loan. The term of the agreement is 20 years with reviews scheduled every five years, as stated in more detail in the loan agreement.

City Council has determined that the exhibit of this historic artifact at FAM will further the public interest in historic preservation and the telling of the City’s history.

Therefore, the City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager to execute, deliver, and carry out the FAM Incoming Loan Agreement in substantially the form submitted for approval.

Votes:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent from Vote:

Absent from Meeting:

Clerk's Certificate

I certify that I am Clerk of Council of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia, and that the foregoing is a true copy of Resolution No. 19-, adopted at a meeting of the City Council held November 12, 2019, at which a quorum was present and voted.

Tonya B. Lacey, MMC
Clerk of Council

FAM Incoming Loan Agreement

November 12, 2019

- 1. Lender:** City of Fredericksburg, c/o City Manager, 715 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401; (540) 372-1010.
- 2. Description of artifact:** Circular-shaped sandstone plinth located at the northwestern corner of the intersection of William and Charles Streets in Fredericksburg, Virginia, colloquially known as the “auction block” or “slave block,” as described in “Archaeological Testing of the George Street Tunnel and Intersection of William and Charles Street, Fredericksburg, Virginia,” prepared by Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, dated January 2019, pp. 63 *et seq.* (“Dovetail January 2019”). Value: __TBD through appraisal_____
- 3. Current condition of the artifact:** The existing condition of the artifact is documented in Dovetail January 2019 and may be updated in a follow-up report upon the relocation of the artifact (when the base is exposed.)
- 4. Special handling instructions:** FAM will consult with the City before moving the artifact, after its initial installation. The City will make staff and equipment available to FAM to assist with moving the artifact, to the extent available and otherwise consistent with this loan agreement.
- 5. Loan period:** Initial term of 20 years with a review every five years. The parties may use the review to assess whether the loan and exhibit continue to accomplish the purpose of this agreement. If both parties are satisfied, then the loan term continues. If not, the parties will seek to generate a new plan for the preservation and exhibit of the artifact, or either party may terminate this loan agreement with reasonable notice to the other. If the FAM ceases to exhibit the artifact for a period of six months or more, then FAM and the City will engage in a review of the loan and the reasons for non-exhibition, and the City may elect to have FAM return the artifact prior to the expiration of the loan term.
- 6. Purpose:** Display to the public in a museum exhibit located in the “River Gallery.” FAM will continue to provide opportunities for free admission and after-hours access to the exhibit. FAM shall engage a professional in the field of museum interpretation and design to ensure the final exhibit meets accepted standards for scholarship, accessibility, and design. In addition, FAM will seek and consider input on exhibit content and design from the Fredericksburg Memorials Advisory Commission and other community organizations as appropriate. Interpretation will maintain the association of the block and the larger Planter’s Hotel site at 401-405 William Street. Final exhibition content and design is subject to the FAM’s sole approval.

7. **Credit line:** FAM will credit the City of Fredericksburg as the lending institution on display labels and/or published catalogs issued in connection with the exhibition of the artifact.
8. **Transportation and Packing:** The City shall remove the artifact from its current location, clean the artifact under supervision of an archaeologist, and deliver the artifact to the River Gallery exhibit space in a condition appropriate for display, at the City's expense, placing the artifact in the location identified by FAM.
9. **Loan costs:** not to exceed \$14,500.