

BRIEFING PAPER

LOWELL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

March 21, 1984

"Working"

The special opening night performance of the musical "Working" will be performed by Merrimack Regional Theatre, March 30, 1984 at 8:00 p.m. at Mahoney Hall on the University of Lowell campus following the Commission meeting. The performance will serve as a fundraiser to support the major exhibit being developed by the Greater Lowell Central Labor Council. The \$100,000 Commission grant towards this exhibit will be announced at this time. Dr. John B. Duff will serve as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. Senator Paul Tsongas, Governor Michael Dukakis and leaders and members of organized labor throughout the state have been invited to attend the performance.

Operating Budget Report

The Commission's Operating Report enclosed indicates a healthy balance of \$354,260 for the remainder of the fiscal year. It is estimated that at mid-year, March 31, the Commission will have obligated approximately 40% of its operating budget. A full six month report will be available prior to the Commission's April meeting.

Personnel Report

Interviews have been set with finalists for the Operations Assistant and Cultural Affairs positions. Additional advertisements will be appearing for the Assistant Architect and the temporary Construction Inspector positions. At the request of the Melting Pot tenants, University of Lowell Small Business Development Center, and Budget Committee, you will be asked to approve the position of Events Coordinator. This individual would be responsible for scheduling events at Market Mills, promoting the complex, and generally marketing the space. This would be in lieu of the advertising done in previous years. The position would be for one year's time in order to allow an evaluation of the results, and would pay approximately \$16-\$17,000 per year. Because of the urgency felt by the tenants, the Chairman and Chairperson of the Personnel Committee consented to advertising for the position beginning on March 18th. In the event that the full Commission refuses to approve the position, no hiring would take place. A job description and additional details will be presented at the meeting.

Mogan Cultural Center - Construction Update

The Construction Subcommittee met March 12th, to review price proposals for two change orders from Anchor Construction Company. Change Order #1 for change in brick and mortar was accepted by Anchor Construction with no price or time difference. Change Order #2 for foundation and structural work in the Boarding House and Link Building was accepted by Anchor on March 19, 1983. The price is \$56,000 with a 60 working day time extension. The Contract total is \$1,019,056 with an end date of November 23, 1984. Price negotiations were held with Anchor on February 29 and March 8. The above amount and time was presented to the construction subcommittee and approved. Armand LeMay of the subcommittee was briefed on the change orders on March 16. The contracting office in Boston was briefed and subsequently approved the change orders.

Cultural Center Program Update

A design meeting was held March 6, 1984 with Crissman and Solomon, Architects, to discuss the program plans for the Center. Representatives of the Commission and Park Service were in attendance. Discussed were issues relating to interpretation, layout and design of the mill girl and immigrant workers exhibits. Meetings have also been held recently with the user organizations - Central Labor Council, University of Lowell Continuing Education, and Special Collections.

Martin's Relocation

After conferring with the Budget Committee and Assistant U.S. Attorney, a special relocation expert has been detailed from the Department of the Interior in Washington to attempt to resolve the Martin's relocation benefits situation. The Commission and Mr. Trivers have been unable to agree on an equitable price and on what is real estate versus personal property. The special assistant from the department will replace Paul Cotter, NPS Chief Lands Officer in Boston, on this case.

Acquisition

The Regional Office is discussing the acquisition of the Counting House and Coal Pocket with owners of the Boott Mills, but there is no significant news since the last meeting.

Grants/Loans

The deadline for applications is March 30, 1984. There has been considerable interest in the Grant and Loan Programs. Over 40 building owners have taken out applications. A full report will be given at the next meeting.

Historical Board Begins Operations

The new Historic Board has met three times since its swearing in and is busy readying its rules and procedures for applicants. The Board adopted the Commission's preservation standards (published in the Preservation Plan) as its interim guidelines, with one exception. It was decided to replace the Commission's sign standard with the newly published Sign Book (by the City Division of Planning and Development and Commission). The Board is recruiting an administrator and preparing application materials in anticipation starting to review development proposals. A budget request will be made to the City Council shortly, matching the Commission's contribution.

Trolley

The cars will be delivered in mid-April, prior to the April Commission meeting. With the exception of the items approved at the last meeting, the overhead line construction is complete. Testing for the line and the cars will occur in early May.

In order to build four platforms before operations begin in May, we have requested the Park Service to prepare a proposal whereby maintenance crews might do this work. Their price of \$15,000 is most advantageous and will be recommended for Commission approval at the meeting.

Central Street/Pawtucket Canal

The construction contract for the Central Street/Pawtucket Canal Improvements has been awarded to P.J. Gear and Son, Inc. of Everett for \$491,455. The Northern Middlesex Area Commission will reimburse the Commission for \$196,500. The Commission will be entering into easements with the City of Lowell, Lowell Sun Realty, and the Proprietors of Locks and Canals in the next few weeks for the right to make improvements on the properties within the project area.

Market Mills Leasing

Activities are ongoing to lease available space at Market Mills. We are presently having discussions with an owner of a Mexican Fast Food restaurant for the space available at the Melting Pot once occupied by "Wok of the Town".

Melting Pot Progress

The staff and Commissioner, George Duncan, have been meeting weekly with the members of the Melting Pot Association to resolve the problems with maintenance, rents, signage and promotions. The meetings have been very productive and many problems are being resolved.

New Members Briefing

The staff hosted new members Clementine Alexis, Paul Sheehy and Bob Kennedy on Tuesday, March 13, 1984, for a briefing on Commission goals and projects. Summarizing five busy and productive years was quite a challenge, but all felt the meeting was time well spent.

Additional Computer

Digital Equipment Corporation has generously offered the Commission a 50% discount towards the purchase of another word processing machine for use in the Commission office. Since the arrival of the first DECmate 1 in September, the staff has had to stand in line for time to use the machine. An additional word processor would be a welcomed addition that would increase the Commission's clerical efficiency and meet the office's expanding needs. The Commission's cost for the keyboard, video display and drive unit will be approximately \$2,000.