



# Museum of Riverside

City of Arts & Innovation

**TO: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM BOARD** **DATE: JUNE 12, 2019**

**FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT**

**SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING STRATEGIC PLANNING, MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION AND EXPANSION, HISTORIC HOUSES, STAFFING, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, AND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

## **ISSUE:**

Receive and file Director's Update regarding strategic planning, main museum renovation and expansion, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, and marketing and communications.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Metropolitan Museum Board receive and file Director's Update regarding strategic planning, main museum renovation and expansion, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, and marketing and communications.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Strategic Planning**

A proposed Museum Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 is presented for the Metropolitan Museum Board's consideration at this meeting. Discussion is welcome regarding content, process, and progress reporting.

### **Main Museum Renovation and Expansion**

An initial planning meeting with the Museum's architects, Pfeiffer Partners, was scheduled for June 3, 2019, as of the time of this writing. The first meeting was intended to be a work session with Museum and General Services department staff to ensure that the architects have what they require, communication channels are established, and discussion of further refinement of the needs assessment could occur. Advisory team and public comment meetings were not yet scheduled as of the writing of this report.

### **Historic Houses**

Two (2) successful events were held in May that gained positive exposure for Heritage House and Harada House. On May 4, 2019, during Let's Explore Riverside, 65 people visited Harada

House (exterior only) and still more visited Heritage House. The citywide event called Doors Open, on May 11, 2019, brought additional new audiences to Heritage House.

Under the direction of Lisa Masengale, Curator of Historic Structures, triage on the Harada garage has been completed. Some encapsulation and safe storage of the small percentage of still-usable materials remains to be done. After many months, Robinson House is now essentially cleared and ready for rehabilitation.

Following the cancellation of the impending agreement with a developer, the Museum is entering into contract directly with a preservation architect to obtain rehabilitation plans for Robinson House. Concerns have arisen regarding the foundation of the house, among other lesser concerns. The initial site walk for interested firms took place on May 8, 2019. The Museum is required to select the low bidder, from whom a proposed approach and cost estimate will be expected during the summer. A new Request for Proposal (RFP) will subsequently be issued to select a contractor. It remains possible that work will commence before the end of 2019, but unlikely that it will be completed in the calendar year.

Please note a correction to the prior report: Heritage House will close for the summer as usual. June 30th (not Memorial Day weekend) will be the last opportunity to visit until reopening after Labor Day in September.

### Staffing

Interviews are under way for the position of Collections Registrar, for which 135 applicants were received. The Department is ambitiously aiming for a start date in July for the successful candidate, whose office will be located at the primary offsite storage facility. Having a staff person housed at this location will improve the security and stewardship of the site as well as facilitate increased intern and volunteer assistance with collection projects.

### Collections

The Collections and Exhibition Management Policies are presented for the Metropolitan Museum Board's consideration at this meeting. This document received very careful review in order to bring a wider range of Museum policies into alignment with peers' best practices.

Also presented for your consideration today is an accession recommendation that warranted exception to the current moratorium on adding to the permanent collections. The moratorium does formally continue, but all offers of gifts and other accession possibilities continue to receive due consideration to ensure that programmatically valuable or rare opportunities are not missed.

### Exhibitions and Programs

The Insect Fair on April 27, 2019, was a success in many ways. Three (3) staff members worked the event—Danielle Leland, Douglas Long, and Robyn Peterson—and, as the event's operation was new to the team, there was much learned about what can be done to amplify and improve the Departments presence next year. In the tiny butterfly tent alone, 572 people were hosted. Uncounted numbers visited the Museum's other station, manned by Douglas Long. The Riverside Museum Associates also saw strong sales at a separate station. The event has much potential for enriched interdisciplinary content development.

First Sundays for the 2018-2019 academic year concluded with a mobile interactive tidepool on May 5, 2019. Between this regular program, which has gone on for many years, and special opportunities that were developed more recently, the Museum Department approached the end of the fiscal year having offered special exhibitions and programs on average every two (2) weeks.

This is noteworthy given the small size of the staff (9.5 FTEs) and the substantial share of staff time that's been required to pack, move, and store collections in preparation for renovation.

Marketing and Communications

The City's Communications Division continues to assist by developing further rebranding concepts so that all parties have a varied array of options to consider. A selection is expected to be presented to Museum staff in mid-June. Public input will be gathered on the rebranding options over subsequent weeks. Over the summer, staff will also begin to rescript the Museum's website and source new imagery so that the new brand can be applied to an upgraded website as well.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Approved by:	Lea Deesing, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney