SIoux Falls Visual Arts Commission

October 15, 2019
9 a.m.

City Center - Falls #110
231 North Dakota Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD

Staff Liaisons: Russ Sorenson: 367-8888
rsorenson@siouxfalls.org

Shawna Goldammer: 367-8692
sgoldammer@siouxfalls.org

MEETING ASSISTANCE: UPON REQUEST, ACCOMMODATIONS FOR MEETINGS WILL BE PROVIDED FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONTACT THE HUMAN RELATIONS OFFICE, FIRST FLOOR, CITY HALL, 224 WEST NINTH STREET, SIOUX FALLS, SD, AT 367-8745 (VOICE) OR 367-7039 (TDD) 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.

MEETING AGENDA

ITEM 1. Call to Order and Quorum Determination

ITEM 2. Welcome New Members and Introductions

ITEM 3. Approval of Regular Agenda

ITEM 4. Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2019, Meeting

ITEM 5. Public Input on Non-Agenda Items (Chairperson)
(5-minute comment period per individual)

ITEM 6. Unfinished Business - None

ITEM 7. New Business
   a) Review and Action on Sculpture Placement(s)
      1) "Martin Luther King" by Porter Williams, Sculptor, @ Van Eps Park, 300 N Minnesota Ave
      Presenter(s): Angelica Mercado, Sioux Falls Arts Council
      Porter Williams, Sculptor

   b) Sioux Falls Arts Council Updates
      Presenter(s): Michael Jamison —Sioux Falls Arts Council
      1) Cultural Plan Implementation
      2) Other?

(over)
c) Visual Arts Commission Project Updates
   1) Public Art Integration—Work Session Update;
      Subcommittee (Commissioners Oland, DeBoer, Zajicek)

   2) City Hall Revolving Art Program Update;
      Subcommittee (Commissioners Oland, Boice, Lapour & Angelica M - SFAC)

   3) Sculpture Placements - Updates
      a) "Sacred Buffalo" by Porter Williams, Artist, @ Sherman Park, West
         Indian Mound Drive Retaining Wall;
      b) Sculpture Placements for SculptureWalk People’s Choice Award
         Subcommittee (Commissioners Boice, DeBoer, Lapour)

d) Website Updates—Completed

ITEM 8. Other Business

ITEM 9. Announcements
   a) Next Meetings
      1) Working Session Meeting—Wednesday, November 13, 2019, 5:30–7:30
         p.m., @ Downtown Library, 200 North Main Avenue
      2) Regular Meeting—Tuesday, November 19, 2019, 9 a.m., @ City Center,
         231 North Dakota Avenue

ITEM 10. Adjournment

Posting: 10-08-2019 by rls
MEETING MINUTES
SIOUX FALLS VISUAL ARTS COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 17, 2019
9:00 A.M.
CITY CENTER, 231 N. DAKOTA AVENUE, SIOUX FALLS SD

Staff Liaisons: Russ Sorenson: 367-8888 rsorenson@siouxfalls.org
Shawna Goldammer: 367-8692 sgoldammer@siouxfalls.org

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kellen Boice; Zach DeBoer; Keith Lapour; Michael Jamison; Ivy Oland; James Zajicek;
MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Schaefer - excused;
OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Patten – City Parks and Recreation Department;
Russ Sorenson – Staff Liaison;
Shawna Goldammer - Staff Liaison;

ITEM 1. Call to Order and Quorum Determination: Commission Chairperson, Ivy Oland, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 a.m.

ITEM 2. Welcome New Members and Introductions: Commission Chairperson Ivy Oland welcomed the commissioners and guests. She then asked everyone to introduce himself or herself.

ITEM 3. Approval of Regular Agenda: Chairperson Oland asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Commissioner Michael Jamison made a motion to approve the agenda and Commissioner Keith Lapour seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4. Approval of Minutes from August 20, Meeting: Commissioner Zach DeBoer made a motion to approve the August 20, 2019 regular session meeting minutes and Commissioner Michael Jamison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 5. Public Input on Non-Agenda Items. Commission Chairperson Oland noted that no "public" attended, and therefore no public comments were expressed or received on non-agenda items.

ITEM 6. Unfinished Business: None
Visual Arts Commission Minutes
September 17, 2019
Page 2

ITEM 7. New Business

a) Property Dedication Plaque @ Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum

Michael Patten, Parks & Recreation explained the land gift from the Rise Family that will be incorporated into the Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum. He went on to say that a dedication plaque to memorialize this gift has been requested by the family. The exact location of the plaque will be determined, but will be on the parcel being gifted. It will also be included as consideration for the Arboretum's updated Master Plan.

There was no further public discussion. Commissioners Michael Jamison made a motion to approve the Rise Family's land dedication plaque as presented. Commissioner Keith Lapour seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Russ Sorensen then asked the chairperson to consider allowing Michael Patten, Parks Development Specialist, to update the Commission on agenda item 7 c) 3a). Sculpture Placements – Updates - for “Sacred Buffalo” by Porter Williams, Artist, @ Sherman Park, West Indian Mound Drive Retaining Wall.

Michael Patten updated the Commission about this stone artwork project. The Project's General Contractor is Dakotaland Sod. Subcontractor(s)/Artists are Porter Williams & Chris Lee. Robbie Veurink (Midwest Engineering) is the City's structural engineer consultant for this project. Mike Bassing – Public Works Engineering, is the Project Mgr. and Michael Patten – Parks Development Specialist, is also Parks Project Mgr.

Michael Patten expressed important project dates are:
- Sept. 24, 2019 Notice to Proceed (NTP) to be given for Project Start (wall demo portion of project – stones to be salvaged & reused) by Porter Williams & Chris Lee;
- Oct. 28, 2019 Artistic Wall installation begins – (pending executed agreement and funding by Parks and weather permitting);
- Nov. 15, 2019 Dakotaland Sod's deadline to complete the remaining scope of work for the structural engineered retaining wall.

The commissioners mentioned that a better viewing platform, or sidewalk apron, for the stone art wall should be provided to view the stone artwork. Because currently with no sidewalk, it is not safe for pedestrians. A view from Google Maps was displayed to help the Commission visualize the “Sacred Buffalo” by Porter Williams, Artist, @ Sherman Park, along West Indian Mound Drive. Placement for a viewing platform, or sidewalk apron, to view the stone artwork wall, should be considered across West Indian Mound Drive, to the north.
b) Sioux Falls Arts Council Updates  
*Michael Jamison — Sioux Falls Arts Council* updated the Commission regarding the hiring of an Arts Council Director and the hiring process is well underway. Commissioner Jamison then stated how happy the SF Arts Council was to be involved in the City Hall Art exhibit.

c) Visual Arts Commission Project Updates  
1) Public Art Integration—Work Session Update;  
*Subcommittee (Commissioners Oland, DeBoer, Jamison)* Chairperson Ivy Oland updated the group regarding the work session that had taken place on September 11, 2019. She stated the group had approved the first two chapters of the document and encouraged committee members to continue working on the "Public Art Integration Draft Document" on the Google drive. Commissioner Michael

2) City Hall Revolving Art Program Update;  
*Subcommittee (Commissioners Oland, Boice, Lapcur & Angelica M - SFAC)*  
Russ Sorenson updated the commission as to the recently sent e-mail that indicated the SF Arts Council has received 12 artwork submittals for the four locations identified in the City Hall Revolving Art Program. On September 20, the selection committee will notify the artists of the chosen pieces. The Commission encouraged more promotion next time.

3) Sculpture Placements - Updates  
a) "Sacred Buffalo" by Porter Williams, Artist, @ Sherman Park, West Indian Mound Drive Retaining Wall; (see previous discussion after agenda item 7 c) 3a).

b) Sculpture Placements for SculptureWalk People’s Choice Award  
*Subcommittee (Commissioners Boice, DeBoer, Lapour)*. Commissioner Lapour explained how the subcommittee had explored options for the People’s Choice SculptureWalk artworks. Commissioner Lapour emphasized that having a central downtown location was preferred by the subcommittee because having the artworks disbursed throughout the community made it more difficult for many to enjoy the art. He explained that Van Eps Park lends itself perfectly for a sculpture garden. He explained how Van Eps Park is visible from Minnesota Avenue, it is accessible has foot traffic. Commissioner Lapour went on to say that the last subcommittee meeting took place before the CIP presentation about the improvements to Minnesota Avenue; after hearing about the Minnesota Avenue visual improvements, the sculpture garden at Van Eps park made a lot of sense.

The Commission then discussed the merits of establishing a sculpture garden.
Subcommittee members commented they will come up with a recommendation document and bring it forward at next month’s meeting.

ITEM 8. Other Business:
Commissioner Zach DeBoer explained an opportunity that he and Commissioner Oland have been working on with the property owners of a downtown building that has an exposed concrete wall (part of the private parking structure) and a mural. He went on to say they have also met with Planning staff members, Adam Roach and Dustin Powers. Utilizing the VAC’s work session Draft Call for Art as an example, the property owners recently conducted their own Call for Art for mural artwork. The submittal deadline is Sept 27 with painting to start the first week in October. The commission then had a brief discussion regarding advertising and city ordinances regarding signage. Additionally, they identified the other private murals.

On other items, Russ Sorenson updated the Commission regarding the City Hall Revolving Art, and recent conversations from the public about naming the City Hall exhibit space as the Charlotte Visser Carver Gallery.

Russ then explained the Martin Luther King bronze sculpture project and a grant application submittal from the Sioux Falls Arts Council to the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation requesting match funding to fabricate and install such sculpture at Van Eps Park. Pending a successful award of grant funding from the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation, the sculpture project proposal will proceed to the city’s VAC and Parks Board for subsequent reviews and recommendations to the City Council for their consideration.

ITEM 9. Announcements: Next Meetings
1) Working Session Meeting—Wednesday, October 9, 2019, 5:30–7:30 p.m., @ Downtown Library, 200 North Main Avenue
2) Regular Meeting—Tuesday, October 15, 2019, 9 a.m., @ City Center, 231 North Dakota Avenue

ITEM 10. Adjournment: With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:11 am.
To the Visual Arts Commission  
City of Sioux Falls  
Sioux Falls, SD 57117

Visual Arts Commission  
Public Art Presentation Form  
City of Sioux Falls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter's Name(s)</th>
<th>Porter Williams &amp; Sioux Falls Arts Council (SFAC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If applicable, Donor Name(s)</td>
<td>Porter Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Person Name</td>
<td>Angelica Mercado, SFAC Operations Mgr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Address | 325 E 6th St  
City | Sioux Falls  
State | SD  
Zip | 57104 |
| Telephone (h) | (w) (605)271-6696  
(Cell) | |
| Email | amercado@sffas.siouxfalls.org |
| Artist Name | Porter Williams |
| Address | 4805 S Glenview Rd  
City | Sioux Falls  
State | SD  
Zip | 57103 |
| Telephone (h) | (w) (605)299-7743  
(Cell) | |
| Email | |

Artwork

| Title | Martin Luther King |
| Height | 6' |
| Width | 3' |
| Length | 3' |
| Weight | |
| Media | Bronze |
| Approximate value | $33,000 |
| Proposed location | Van Eps Park - south end of oval lawn sidewalk area |
| If temporary, please define exact time frame | |
| Project completion time frame | 1/20/2019 |

Please address the following evaluation criteria for the proposed permanent artwork placement on City-owned property:

1) Appropriateness—How is the content or obvious symbolism of the proposed piece of artwork appropriate for those who will view the art, and is it within the context of the site where it will be viewed? Please see attached documents.

2) Relevance—Does the artwork seem particularly relevant to the place where it will be displayed or the public who will view it? Please see attached documents.

3) Site plan—Does the scale of the artwork fit appropriately within and complement and/or enhance the physical location where it will be placed? Please see attached documents.

4) Installation cost—Are there any significant costs associated with the installation of the artwork at the proposed site? $300

5) Safety/security—How will the artwork be well-protected from potential theft and vandalism, and how will it be properly secured to ensure the safety of those around the artwork? Please see attached documents.

6) Visibility/Impact—Does the proposed location offer high visibility and/or impact to the public? Please see attached documents.

7) Need—Does the organization or location where the artwork will be placed have the means and/or ability to procure artwork through other approaches? Are we serving locations and audiences deemed in greatest need? Please see attached documents.

8) Is this art piece being donated to the City of Sioux Falls? Yes

9) Artwork concept/history/context: Please see attached documents.

10) Installation; e.g., responsible party, method, and equipment requirements: Artist and Bronze Age Art Casting - Sioux Falls SD

11) Are City support services needed; e.g., utilities maintenance requirements, lighting, etc.? See attached documents

Please attach Artist(s) résumé, qualifications, references:

If we declare this art proposal is my/her original intellectual property.

Name(s) | Ceri B. Stayer  
Provider | SFAC  
Date | 10/7/2019 |

Please attach one 8" x 10" illustration or photograph of the proposed artwork to be kept on file.

Return the completed form to: Visual Arts Commission, c/o City Planning Office, 224 West Ninth Street, P.O. Box 7402  
Sioux Falls, SD 57117-7402

J:\Planning\CITIZEN BOARDS (Russ and Shawna)\VISUAL ARTS COMMISSION\VISUAL ARTS COMMISSION - 2019\SCULPTURE PLACEMENTS\Martin Luther King\VAC Public Art Presentation Form - Martin Luther King Sculpture.docx
Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation Public Art Donation Application

Donor Name(s)  Porter Williams
Contact Person Name  Porter Williams

Address  4805 S Glenview Rd
City  Sioux Falls  State  SD  Zip  57103
Telephone (Home)  (605)929-7743 (Work)  (Cell)  (605)926-7743

Artist Name  Porter Williams
Address  4805 S Glenview Rd
City  Sioux Falls  State  SD  Zip  57103
Telephone (Home)  (605)929-7743 (Work)  (Cell)  (605)926-7743

Artist Title  Martin Luther King
Height  6'  Width  3'  Length  3'  Weight  

Media  Bronze  Approximate Value  $33,000

Proposed Location
First Choice  Van Eps Park - south end of oval lawn sidewalk area
Second Choice  
Third Choice  

Why is this art piece being donated to Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation?
Please see attached documents.

Concept/history/context:
Please see attached documents.
Who will be installing:
Artist and Bronze Age Art Casting TEAM- Sioux Falls SD.
Please see attached documents.

Mounting requirements:
Artist and Bronze Age Art Casting TEAM will utilize stainless steel anchor lock bolts into concrete slab or quartzite stone base.

Landscape Plan: Please submit information and drawings illustrating the proposed concept for landscaping the area around the art piece if applicable.
Please see attached site plan document.

Maintenance requirements:
Please see attached documents.

Comments:
Please see attached documents.

Please complete and print the application. One 8-inch x 10-inch photo of the art piece must be submitted with the completed application and the Landscape Plan. The photo and Landscape Plan will not be returned.

Please submit to:
Director of Parks and Recreation
Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation
100 East Sixth Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-5929

For more information, please contact the Parks and Recreation Operations Manager at 605-367-8222.
SIoux Falls
Visual Arts Commission
Parks & Recreation Board

September 19, 2019

Organization Name: Sioux Falls Arts Council
ATTN: Angelica Mercado, Operations Manager

Address: 326 E 8th Street
Sioux Falls SD  57103

Phone: (605)271-6696

Email: amercado@artssiouxfalls.org

Organization is classified under section 501(c) (3)? Yes

Project Name
Martin Luther King Sculpture Project

Project Description

Appropriateness.–
A well-known local sculptor, Porter Williams, has been in recent conversation with the Sioux Falls City Administration about fabricating a life-sized bronze sculpture (approx. 6 foot in height) of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The proposed sculpture placement location is appropriate and relevant as it would be on city-owned property at the south end of the oval lawn sidewalk area within Van Eps Park, adjacently west of the new City Center Building. The sculpture is appropriate to the place where it will be displayed and the to the public who will view it. This proposed location is near the site of the former parsonage where Dr. King spoke when he visited Sioux Falls in January 1961.

Relevance
Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was well known as an American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. Reverend Dr. King is best known for advancing civil rights through nonviolence and civil disobedience.

What may not be known, is that Reverend Dr. King arrived in Sioux Falls SD on January 12, 1961, a guest of nearby St. John Baptist Church that once was located adjacently north of the current day Van Eps Park. Dr. King addressed an evening dinner meeting of the Knife & Fork Club at the Downtown Cataract Hotel. Dr. King stayed overnight at the church parsonage and spoke at St. John’s the next day. A Minnehaha County historical marker commemorating Reverend Dr. King’s visit was placed and dedicated at the northwest corner of Van Eps Park on January 21, 2008. A souvenir program copy of this marker dedication event is provided.

1
Martin Luther King Sculpture Project
Visual Arts Commission
Parks & Recreation Board

Artwork Concept/History/Context —
The Sioux Falls Arts Council builds bridges between the arts and the Sioux Falls Community. The benefits of this Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sculpture project certainly: exemplifies his 1963 “I have a Dream” speech, and is a “Catalyst for Community Good”; demonstrates a strong partnership opportunity between local government and the Sioux Falls Arts Council, a well-known non-profit organization; elevates public awareness of local history, arts and humanities; and celebrates an individual — who has truly impacted lives and created meaningful societal change.
The concept of “public art” advocates a process of designing a sculpture specifically for a site by considering factors such as its audience, environmental conditions, and the history of the site. The importance of public art can enrich our lives in a number of ways. It enhances an experience of being in a public space and is a unifying force that helps define qualities of a community. It helps green space thrive, gives character to pedestrian/street corridors and meaning to community gateways; it demonstrates unquestionable civic and corporate pride in citizenship and affirms an educational environment. Public art can heighten our awareness, transform a landscape, or express community values, and for these reasons it can have power, over time to enhance a city’s image.

Sioux Falls Arts Council’s implementation efforts of the 2014 adopted Cultural Plan known as “The Sioux Falls Imagined—A Cultural Plan for a Vibrant and Prosperous City”, https://www.artssiouxfalls.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Sioux-Falls-Imagined-8.19.14.pdf , along with the Sioux Falls Visual Arts Commission and Sioux Falls Parks & Recreation Board, encourages and recommends public art integration within public spaces and places in Sioux Falls, SD. Both local citizen boards, along with the Mayor and City Council, will consider adoption of a city resolution confirming this sculpture and its placement on public property within our Downtown area as it specifically addresses and fulfills the ‘Community Awareness” portion of goal 4 (pg. 15 and 16) of the adopted Cultural Plan which highlights how the arts build community by celebrating a variety of cultures, nationalities, and ethnicities, and how the arts are “a good way to introduce people to each other and bridge differences, helping us understand and appreciate each other.”

Site Plan —
A site plan has been provided that depicts the sculpture would be located on city-owned property at the south end of the oval lawn sidewalk area within Van Eps Park, adjacently west of the new City Center Building.

Project Budget —
The artist has indicated the total cost for fabricating a life-sized bronze sculpture of Martin Luther King is approximately $33,000. The Sioux Falls City Administration is supportive of this sculpture project, with a 50/50 cost share - the city providing $15,000 and continued maintenance of the sculpture, and $15,000 contributed from other funding source(s) — pending receipt of a successful grant from Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation. The Sioux Falls City Administration is supportive of this sculpture project.
Martin Luther King Sculpture Project
Visual Arts Commission
Parks & Recreation Board

Installation and Maintenance —
Associated installation cost is approximately $500 and would be the responsibility of the artist. The artist is working with the local foundry, Bronze Age Art Casting, who would fabricate and install the sculpture by January 20, 2020, Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

The artist intends to gift the sculpture to the City of Sioux Falls upon project completion, assessment and recommendation(s) by the city’s art conservation consultant, Rosa Lowinger & Associates (RLA) to the city, and gifting agreement acceptance to add the sculpture to the City’s permanent artworks collection. Upon city acceptance, annual conservation and maintenance for this sculpture would be provided by the city through its existing art conservation maintenance program.

Martin Luther King Sculpture Project

Safety/Security —
The sculpture location is within a public park and near the City Center campus. Existing park lighting and camera surveillance is available and operational.

Visibility/Impact —
The sculpture location within an existing public park, and near the City Center campus, east of Minnesota Avenue. High public visibility and impact is certainly afforded.

Need —
If approved by the City of Sioux Falls, this sculpture placement would be the second within Van Eps Park. It is important to recognize the Sioux Falls Arts Council builds bridges between the arts and the Sioux Falls Community. The benefits of this Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sculpture project certainly: exemplifies his 1963 “I have a Dream” speech, and is a “Catalyst for Community Good”; demonstrates a strong partnership opportunity between local government and the Sioux Falls Arts Council, a well-known non-profit organization; elevates public awareness of local history, arts and humanities; and celebrates an individual — who has truly impacted lives and created meaningful societal change.

Need for City Support Services —
Prior to installation, possibly construction of a small concrete pad or installation of a quartzite pedestal may be required, along with minor sprinkler irrigation head adjustment/relocation.
Martin Luther King Sculpture Project
8-2019
HISTORICAL MARKER DEDICATION

Martin Luther King Day
Multi-Cultural Center
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
January 21, 2008

Emcee
Pastor Judy Shaw
Opening Prayer
Pastor Dwayne Williams
Welcome
MCC Director Qadir Aware
Remarks
Mayor Dave Munson
Principal Remarks
Lois Hatton
Special Recognition
Dedication
Melissa Lowe
Unveiling
Emma Armstrong - Porter Williams

Porter Williams
For several years longtime city resident Porter Williams has single-handedly been the proponent and driving force behind an effort to obtain a historical marker to recognize the achievements and genius of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Souvenir Program
Dedication of the Historical Marker
"Martin Luther King"
Leader of the Montgomery Bus Boycott

The arrest of Rosa Parks on December 1, 1955, for refusing to vacate her bus seat for a white man, triggered a massive bus boycott and signaled the birth of the Civil Rights Movement. Martin Luther King was elected president of the boycott group.

Martin Luther King Day
Multi-Cultural Center
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
January 21, 2008

MINNEHAHA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MARTIN LUTHER KING

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the preeminent leader of the movement to end segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other nonviolent means, arrived in Sioux Falls on January 12, 1961, a guest of nearby St. John Baptist Church.

Because of mob violence, the governor of Georgia earlier that day had suspended two black students from the University of Georgia and ordered state troopers to remove them from the school.

When interviewed at Joe Foss Field, Dr. King was asked about the upheaval in Georgia. He bluntly answered, “When public officials predict violence, it is an invitation to violence. . . . Mobs function when they feel they are being aided and abetted by law enforcement authorities.”

In the afternoon an informal reception was held for Dr. King at the First Baptist Church. That evening he addressed a dinner meeting of the Knife & Fork Club at the Cataract Hotel.

Two years later his “I Have a Dream” speech in Washington, D.C., electrified the nation, and he was honored as Time Magazine “Man of the Year.” In 1964 King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Martin Luther King Day, a national holiday, began in 1986.

DEDICATED IN 2008 BY THE MINNEHAHA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, THE JOHN MENDRIDGE ENDOWMENT FUND AND THE MARY CHLTON DAR FOUNDATION

One of the Greatest Leaders of the Twentieth Century

Historical Marker Dedication
by Melissa Lowe

On behalf of the Martin Luther King Day Committee of the Multicultural Center and of the Minnehaha County Historical Society, I do hereby dedicate this new historical marker to the memory of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the 1960s through protests and other means, which were peaceful yet forceful, and which were non violent yet compelling, he successfully led a movement that overturned a policy and system of separate and unequal facilities, education, and opportunities which had existed in this nation for more than 200 years.

Without question, Dr. King was one of this nation’s, and the world’s, most influential leaders of the twentieth century. By this historical marker, we commemorate his 1961 visit to Sioux Falls.

Text author:
Bruce Blake

Marker Location:
Sioux Falls,
Van Eps Park
The Church Where Dr. King Spoke
In May 1917 a group of Sioux Falls citizens under the leadership of Harvey Mitchell formed a community Sunday School service for local black residents. Services were held in the Municipal Court courtroom in the City Auditorium at Ninth Street and Dakota Avenue. The Reverend M. W. Withers arrived a year later and immediately chartered the members of the Sunday School class as the congregation of St. John’s Baptist Church. In 1926 a former Jewish synagogue was purchased and became the first church home for St. John’s. Rallies and fund raising drives successfully retired the mortgage in 1934. The Reverend Ardie Hayes served St. John’s from 1958 through 1963. Pastor Hayes, and members of the congregation who had been members of Dr. King’s church in Atlanta, Georgia, were successful in encouraging Martin Luther King to travel to Sioux Falls in 1961. Image owner: Friendship Baptist Church.

"I Have a Dream!"
One of Dr. King’s greatest moments occurred on August 28, 1963, at the great mall in Washington, D.C. Before the largest protest meeting in the nation’s history, he gave his riveting "I Have a Dream" oration before 250,000 listeners, many of them weeping and emotional with joy and hope for a more promising future.
With Dr. King in the St. John's Parsonage

With Dr. King in this photo were local residents (l to r): Rose Clayton, Pastor Ardie Hayes, Ted Parker, Dr. King, Rosanne Parker Jefferson, and Lenora Hayes. Image owner: Black History Museum.

Arriving at Joe Foss Field

When Dr. King arrived at Joe Foss Field on Thursday, January 12, 1961, he was greeted by Arthur Myklebust of the Sioux Falls Knife and Fork Club and by the Reverend Ardie Hayes, pastor of St. John's Baptist Church. King stayed overnight at the church parsonage and spoke at St. John's the next day. This image is from the January 12, 1961, edition of the Sioux Falls Argus Leader and was reproduced with permission.

Three local women, Emma Armstrong, Marie Harris, and Willann Harris, came to St. John's parsonage to enjoy the honor of meeting Dr. King. Image owner: Emma Armstrong.