

# Boston Landmarks Commission approve additions to Martin Luther King memorial

The Boston Landmarks Commission held a public hearing to discuss requests brought to the Design Review Committee in which they approved an addition to the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial in Boston Common on Sept. 27th.

Jonathan Evans of the Mass Design Group and the executive director of King Boston, Imari Paris Jeffries, proposed the addition of 71 names to “The Embrace,” the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial being built in Boston Common. Additionally, they proposed that three signs be put on the pathways leading up to the monument.

“We knew the importance of other hidden figures in this moment,” Jeffries said, “So this memorial evolved from just recognizing Dr. King, to recognizing Dr. and Mrs. King, to evolving to recognize 71 civil rights leaders from Boston from 1950 to 1975.”

Along the perimeter of where the monument will be, the names of 71 civil rights leaders will be engraved. The names will go around the curve, being set flush with the perimeter. Jeffries confirmed the potential to add more names to the monument if so desired later, although that is not the intent of the design.

The signs will be placed along each of the three pathways leading to the monument. On it, information will be displayed acting as an access point to the digital exhibit that is being made alongside the monument. These gateway markers will also provide recognition to the creators of the monument. The ultimate goal of the signs is to orient people to the piece.

“The idea is that there will be signage on there identifying the piece,” said Evans, “and there will be ideally some connectivity to a digital more immersive experience.”

Evans made sure to note that the signs are “elegant and simple” and that there is precedent for them already in Boston Common. Many similar signs can be found throughout the park.

Despite this, there was a bit of public concern for the signs. Boston resident Alison Pultinas had concerns about the signs being a potential hazard at night. She expressed concern about people potentially bumping into them and hurting themselves in the dark.

Evans did not find much to be concerned about with Pultinas's worry. He assured her that there is minimal risk as the signs are not directly on the path, but off to the side. They are also situated close to lights, so they should be able to be seen in the dark.

The council agreed with him, accepting everything shown by Evans and Jeffries as presented.

A few other issues were discussed at this meeting, like the installation of three new street light poles, two on Charles St. and one on Boylston. All three were approved by the Boston Landmarks Commission.

Architect Rafi Segal proposed a renovation of a single family house into a two family house in Highland Park. This house would be for Segal and his wife to live in, not to go on the market. Segal's proposal was approved by the Commission.

Commissioner of the Design Review Committee said, "[Highland Park] is a little bit more open than shall we say some of the other landmark districts. I think this is gonna be a very beautiful building."

The last order of business was the proposal to upgrade the HVAC system (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) of City Hall. This proposal was approved, but with a list of conditions that must be met. The proposal must be brought before the committee again after incorporating these provisions.

The Design Review Committee of the Boston Landmarks Commission will next meet on Tuesday, Oct. 25th.