

16 June 1987

Old School Square Foundation
Delray Beach, Florida

Dear Frances:

Would you please begin to explore with the board the perceived goals and objectives for the OSSF project, as the "plunge" into the market research and programming for the arts and cultural center begins.

In the next few weeks, we will be involved in the process of carrying out a systematic and detailed assessment of Delray Beach's cultural activities, needs and ambitions. It may be considered a market survey of the community's creative energies - and all the social, political, and financial pressures that affect those energies. Producing this assessment can be a complex and laborious task - to inventory the resources of the community and to understand how an arts and cultural center in the city's central business district can become an extension of community experience, rather than an appendage to it.

I would ask the board to assess the following in establishing its goals:

1. The background history on the "project" from inception of the idea as a community arts facility to the present, providing notable dates and people involved.
2. The history of Delray Beach, the project and its architect within the context of the city's "boomtime" architecture of the 1920s.
3. The short-range goal of the planning process could be to determine the legitimacy of the need for such a facility and the measure of the people and dollar support it is likely to receive immediately and in future years.
4. It will be necessary to consider the many interacting forces which the arts and cultural facility/community center will have impact upon, and be influenced by: the tax base, bonding capacity, the educational system, minority communities, area restaurants and merchants, the ego of local politicians, the fire department emergency squad, downtown traffic and transit systems, as well as other arts institutions and sponsors.
5. The long-range goal of the process can be to provide the Delray community with the rare opportunity to examine itself, to identify and reflect on its priorities, to heighten its consciousness of the work and the value of its own creative citizens, and, finally, to rediscover the wellsprings of its communal identity.
6. The planning process for such a civic venture can be a powerful catalyst to produce change in Delray's estimate of itself, but it must work with and through agencies that can effect change.

GOALS (Potential)

1. Documentation of the creative energy that permeates every sector of community life: artistic, social, educational, industrial,

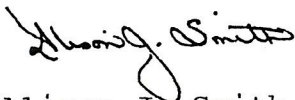
religious, ethnic, fraternal, and political. (Determine the aptitude, taste, and need for the arts through careful study of the cultural diversity and full spectrum of public opinion.)

2. Revelation of the depth, variety, content, and number of arts and cultural/community-related activities in all their manifestations, and clearly draw a profile of the people who support these activities.
3. Profile the identity and numbers of potential users of the planned facility - e.g., both on stage and in the auditorium seats. This revelation may inspire the need to take an honest look at non-arts activities in the community, and how they may translate into regular events in the facility.
4. The means to strengthen, through coordinated programming, the impact of area arts institutions on the community; thus improving the "health" and future prospects of many organizations.
5. The planning process may be the single most powerful catalyst experienced by the community in years, inspiring the Delray community to establish a value system, and thus to reassess its capacity for survival - to come alive again.
6. Utilizing culture as a basic value system, with the arts as a central component of this system, focus the community on what is worth saving - cherishing - for the future.

The restoration of the Delray Beach Elementary School can represent the vitality and perhaps the very identity of Delray Beach. To quote Maynard Jackson, former Mayor of the City of Atlanta, "The arts are the highest expression of the urban experience, and the cultural enrichment that is possible in a community is the highest and most eloquent justification of the community itself."

I look forward to meeting with the members of the OSSF Board and appropriate City officials in the near future.

Sincerely,



Alison J. Smith

AJS:pps