

KALAMAZOO ABRAHAM LINCOLN PROJECT

Annual Report, April 21, 2018

The steady course of the Kalamazoo Abraham Lincoln Project has seen a marked degree of progress over the past year. A community steering committee has become a new Michigan non-profit corporation. Upon obtaining its non-profit status, the organization has amicably severed its fiduciary ties with the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo and is now poised to commence a vigorous capital campaign in earnest. In the wake of recent developments regarding the amenities of Bronson Park, the progress of the Kalamazoo Lincoln Project can best be attributed to the board's persistent and patient efforts to overcome hurdles and proceed with determination and good will in all its interactions with city officials and community leaders. Implicit in all of this is the positive and compelling merit of the project itself: to improve the educational and cultural life of Kalamazoo.

The new corporation has recently attracted the attention of the Director of the Education Department of the Gilmore Car Museum who has expressly stated the museum's interest in establishing a partnership to assist with the development of educational resources. The board has secured grant funding from the Jim Gilmore, Jr. Foundation and is in receipt of two allotments of a \$15,000 grant. The board has secured the voluntary services of an award-winning graphic designer to produce a quality promotional brochure to launch the group's capital campaign.

In organizing as a Michigan non-profit corporation, the board has successfully navigated the maze of pre-requisites including the creation and adoption of Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, a Conflict of Interest Policy, Michigan's Charitable Solicitation

Application, and the successful labor-intensive completion of the IRS 1023 long-form document submission. Recently, the board's Finance Committee established guidelines regarding receipts and expenditures and has established a checking account with Mercantile Bank. Most importantly, the board has selected the willing services of a new board member to serve as the corporation's treasurer and has enlisted the services of a professional accountant. The ongoing services of attorney Leo Goddeyne has been invaluable to the corporation's forward motion.

The resources of a professional promotional video, an internet presence and Facebook Page have helped the organization tell its story to the public at large and to a variety of community groups, most notably the 160th anniversary gathering held at the Kalamazoo Public Library in 2016.

The board has redrafted its three-part Kalamazoo Lincoln-legacy plan in a way that gives clarity to its statement of purpose, and projects realistic objectives.

All of this and more is the result of a dedicated group of citizen volunteers who have given of their time, talent and resources inspired by the life and legacy of one man's sojourn to Kalamazoo over a century and a half ago.

—Submitted by Cameron S. Brown, President