

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

APPROVED

MEETING MINUTES

February 7, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

Committee Members: Charles Avery, Erica Bush, Dwight Brooks, Valerie Bush, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Gertrude Evans, Joyce Jackson, James Roberts, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms, Sylvia Smith

Absent: Gladys Burke, Glory Howard, Mary Randolph, Michelle Thomas

Guests: Charlotte Coates, Alvin Dodson, Janet Wiggins

LCPS Staff: Beverly Tate, Melissa Tello, Kathleen Devens, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca

BBB Staff: Gretchen Pfahler, Connie Fan, Kirsten Nichols

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests. There were no public comments provided.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the January 24, 2022 meeting. A correction to the spelling of Douglass was offered and mention of Larry Roeder and EWP willingness to contribute \$1,000 to the time capsule project. Erica Bush made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Tammy Carter seconded.

Larry Simms asked the Committee to provide any names and places in Loudoun County that students of Douglass came from such as Turnertown and Guinea Bridge. He also requested names of any bus drivers. Larry Roeder offered that Nathan Bailey has done extensive research on transportation and could provide a lot of information.

Construction Update:

Melissa Tello shared that renovations to the interior 1950/1960's portion of the building continues. Following a site visit in the 1941 historic portion with BBB, paint samples and other existing elements of preservation were collected in an effort to match the original wood and paint finishes. On the outside they are analyzing the various bricks that were used over the course of the years and matching as much as possible. Bricks will only be replaced to the extent they are in bad condition (deteriorating). Melissa also discussed that a Pin Oak tree in the west plaza area will need to be removed. LCPS engaged an arborist to evaluate the tree and the report finds that the tree will need to be removed, This will provide another potential commemorative opportunity such as a memorial tree planting or other element.

Questions from the Committee:

1. There was a question regarding a Facebook Video that some members had seen concerning construction on the inside of the building. LCPS is not aware of such a video.

BBB Presentation:

The BBB team presented their recommendations and cited questions that the Committee could answer regarding the inside of the building and the outside grounds. They focused on the monument sign, front plaza area, amphitheater, outside basketball court, gym, shop/band building and west side seating area. Committee members had questions during the presentation including:

1. Is there LED recessed lighting in the 1941 ceiling?
There is recessed LED lighting in the ceiling tiles.
2. Will you still replicate the lighting fixtures in the ceiling?
Yes, lighting fixtures similar to those in 1941 will be installed. The recessed lighting in the ceiling tiles is to distribute a little more lighting in the room, supplementing the historic style lights
3. Will the scoreboard be replicated in the front hall?
Yes, if the Committee is interested in doing so. There are two pictures included in the presentation but if Committee members have any others that show a clearer image of the scoreboard that would be helpful.
4. Can the kiosks be touchscreen or push button rather than headsets? Experience has shown that the headsets are easily damaged.
It is possible to have Bluetooth capability so that visitors can use their phone to learn of the history both inside and outside. Durable headsets will also be researched.
5. Will there be both words and sound for vision and hearing disabilities?
Yes, that will be accommodated to meet accessibility requirements.
6. Is there lighting in the front plaza?
There is regular security lighting on the entire campus as with all LCPS facilities. There is additional lighting proposed around the sculpture, history walk, and in the amphitheater seating.
7. How tall is the sculpture? Will it block the view of the front door from the plaza?
The sculpture is proposed as $\frac{3}{4}$ height of an adult plus the base. BBB does not feel it will block the front door view from the street.

Subcommittee Reports:

Time Capsule Subcommittee: Valerie Bush, Larry Roeder, Jim Roberts

Larry Roeder reported that a new idea is placement of the time capsule in an interior wall with a plaque over it to identify what it is, who placed it there and when it should be opened so that it is not lost for future generations. BBB agreed that interior would be safer for the contents and offered that it could be placed inside a wall, under the stage or a number of other places in the building.

W&OD Trail Sign Subcommittee: Dwight Brooks and Tammy Carter

Dwight stated that both he and Tammy were in agreement to keep it simple and had also agreed upon an image of Frederick Douglass including a quote that Tammy had located: *"In a*

composite nation like ours, as before the law, there should be no rich, no poor, no high, no low, no white, no black, but common country, common citizenship, equal rights and a common destiny.”

Mural Subcommittee: Larry Simms, Larry Roeder and Joyce Jackson

The mural subcommittee has met and discussed perhaps having work done through a Committee of students. They asked if there could be a mural on both ends of the Band/Shop room to reflect that both occurred in the building. BBB offered that, while it was not possible to put a mural at the other end there is opportunity on the side walls. BBB will provide information regarding a recent museum project that was done in D.C. with a life-size individual mural and will send that example and elevations to Melissa and Kathy.

Kiosk/Computer Screen Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates and Valerie Bush

No updates were available at this time.

Pavers & Quotes Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates and Gert Evans

No updates were available. Carlotta did state that students who went to Douglass should be noted somewhere and that it was imperative that the names be spelled correctly and that an accurate list of students be used. Erica noted that there is a need for one of the subcommittees to take on additional naming information for buildings and rooms and asked if the subcommittee would be interested. Carlotta said that they would.

Question: Where could the \$1 bill be prominently displayed? Carlotta would like it to be one of the first things visitors see when they enter the building. She also shared that text to go along with the \$1 has been drafted.

Front Plaza Subcommittee:

Larry Roeder reported that information was coming together.

Amphitheater Subcommittee:

The subcommittee will meet and provide additional comments at the next meeting.

Timeline Subcommittee:

Additional timeline information and graphics were provided in the Committee packet for everyone's review.

Reconciliation Update from Joint Committee Meeting:

Bev Tate provided an update from the Joint Board of Supervisors and School Board Committee meeting that evening (February 7th). She reviewed which School Board and Board of Supervisor members sit on this Committee and shared that the Action Item was in the Committee packet. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of recommending to their respective boards that the DHS-CC assist with the study and reconciliation considerations for the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County. The only addition to the original motion was to add a Board of Supervisors Staff person to the Subcommittee. The School Board at the February 8th LCSB meeting is scheduled to modify the Commission's Mission Statement to include this task.

Oral History:

Larry Simms provided an update on the oral histories reminding those on the roundtable panel and in attendance at the meeting that the roundtable discussion is scheduled for Thursday, February 17th from 1-3 at Thomas Balch Library. One member has dropped out and he is working on replacing with another individual from the 1950's. As stated at the beginning of the meeting, a list of all bus drivers and support staff would be very helpful in the oral history effort and encouraged members to email or call with names. The next phase of the oral histories will include interviews by Zoom and he is working with LCPS to conduct those with alumni who are no longer in the area. Larry will also contact Wynne Saffer to conduct an interview. Valerie suggested interviewing Mildred Nichols who is in the area quite often and may be interested in being interviewed.

Closing:

Erica and Charles thanked everyone for coming and BBB for their presentation. The Committee was reminded that the next meeting will be February 28th and that over the next three weeks the Subcommittees should be meeting. LCPS will be putting questions together for the Subcommittees to review, consider and provide recommendations to the full Committee on the 28th.

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