

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee
Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

APPROVED

MEETING MINUTES
January 24, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

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

Absent: Dwight Brooks, Gladys Burke, Valerie Bush, Glory Howard, Mary Randolph, Michelle Thomas

Guests: Charlotte Coates, Alvin Dodson, Janet Wiggins, Helen Avery

LCPS Staff: Beverly Tate, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca

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

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the January 10, 2022 meeting. Carlotta Coates made a motion to approve and Sylvia Smith seconded.

Construction Update:

Sara Howard-O'Brien provided a construction update stating that construction continues in the building interior. Site work will continue as the weather and temperatures allow. In the 1954-1960 area on both levels with rough-in coordination for mechanical, electrical and plumbing and interior wall partitions. The team is also working in the Band/Shop Building, the T2 outbuilding, and the 1 story portion of the building adjacent to the Gym. The team has met on site and confirmed the next steps for the construction of the 1941 area preservation. Additional documentation has occurred to replicate elements such as classroom chalkboards, trim moldings, and paint. Follow-up on approach for additional investigation in search of the cornerstone time capsule will be forthcoming. The GPR scan of the site for possible time capsules associated with the exterior signs will occur in the Spring when the ground temperatures have improved.

Questions from the Committee:

1. What is being done for fire suppression in the building? Response: the building renovation includes sprinklers for fire protection.
2. What is the relationship of the hockey rink to the property? Why is the hockey rink remaining? How was the hockey rink approved and established on the site? Response: LCPS staff is currently researching the history of the hockey rink and will get back to the Committee as soon as we can. We know that the rink is a part of the PR&CS program and that the rink was refurbished by the Washington Capital in 2017. (Loudoun Times Mirror August 9, 2017)

Responsibility of Stakeholders (EWP, LDAA, and NAACP):

Larry Roeder reported that the stakeholders have met by phone and agreed to meet on a regular basis on the first Tuesday of each month starting next month. February will be slightly different

due a conflict, however, and their first meeting will actually be on February 9th. The stakeholders will bring updates to the full committee.

Subcommittee Reports:

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

Larry Roeder reported that the Subcommittee had met and that he and Mr. Roberts had discussed the project with Laura Christensen, Curator of Manuscripts and Archives, at Thomas Balch Library to get her thoughts on the project. They would like a bronze plaque located on-site to identify the location of the capsule and suggested an inventory of items to provide to Thomas Balch Library and an article be placed in the local newspaper upon completion. A large steel capsule, engraved with Committee member names, may cost around \$2,900 with an interior dimension of 47" x 39.2" x 15.5" and a weight of 108 pounds before items are placed inside. The box would be good from -40F to 250F and is one found on the site *Heritage Time Capsules*. <https://www.heritagetimecapsules.com/> Mr. Roeder stated that his family and the EWP would be willing to contribute \$1,000 to the cost of the time capsule.

Mr. Roberts would like to include all the documents the Committee has received each month in the capsule.

Full Committee decisions include:

1. What criteria will be used to decide what to put inside the box which will determine the size needed but suggest a larger rather than smaller box.
2. Will each committee member or individual organization place something inside the box?
3. Will items be Douglass High School oriented or Loudoun County?
4. Would it be digital or paper?
5. Where should the capsule be located? Should it be inside or outside?
6. Should it be placed below ground or above ground.
7. What is the timeframe for the capsule to be buried; i.e. when will it be opened?
8. What would the plaque identifying the location say?

The Committee suggested that perhaps BB&B could assist with some of the questions above and asked LCPS to request assistance from them. Response: LCPS has requested BBB to provide input and guidance on the time capsule. Information from BBB will be provided at a later meeting date as BBB has been focused on the presentation for February 7, 2022.

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

Tammy Carter stated that she and Dwight had communicated and discussed the plaque. It was thought that a bronze or relief sign with Frederick Douglass' picture that introduces the reader to Douglass and the school named in his honor which would encourage the reader to tour the grounds. Tammy shared suggested pictures of Frederick Douglass for consideration along with various quotes that could be used on the sign and also throughout the property both inside and out. The concept is to keep the sign brief and simple, inviting visitors into the site.

Mural Subcommittee: Larry Simms, Larry Roeder and Joyce Jackson

The mural subcommittee has not met. They require direction on dimensions and locations and will be looking at what objects (subject matter) is to be included.

Kiosk/Computer Screen Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates and Valerie Bush

The Subcommittee met and would like to have kiosks both inside and outside in the vestibule and near the amphitheater grounds but no more than 4. They would like them to be interactive and include, among other things, Douglass High School research, locator maps for areas inside the building and outside on the grounds. There were various questions regarding the kiosk:

1. Location inside depends on the floorplans. What is a good location?
2. Is it possible to have temporary kiosks that are moveable?
3. Will there be a kiosk that you sit at and do research?
4. What would the kiosks look like?
5. Will Parks & Rec have kiosks of their own with upcoming events? Perhaps the Committee should be coordinating with Parks & Rec. Response: LCPS will coordinate with PR&CS as a part of their Memorandum of Understanding. There will be computer screens in the front portion of the building that could be utilized for this purpose, if desired by PR&CS.
6. How will the kiosks use relate to the proposed computer screens?

It was noted that the kiosk could incorporate the oral history interviews.

Pavers & Quotes Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates and Gert Evans

The Subcommittee provided an overview of pavers and quotes which is attached to these minutes. They would like to see quotes throughout the complex on walls, bricks, stone, etc. They would like an area to display all the students who attended Douglass High School, perhaps on a wall. They discussed items that could be on pavers but could also be placed within the kiosk information. There was concern about placing information on pavers that would be walked on and the future maintenance as the information is worn away. It was noted that additional locations could be on low walls or sides of benches that would not easily be worn down. There was discussion regarding the Feeder Schools (example provided in attachment) and whether this is an outside element or a kiosk element. Larry Roeder offered that the Edwin Washington Project has a map of all the former schools in the County and that a link to the EWP web site might be something to include in the kiosk.

Question:

Did Oak Grove students come to Douglass? Response: Yes

Oral History:

Larry Simms stated that, due to COVID concerns, there has been a difficulty with scheduling oral histories. The next oral history recording will occur on Thursday, January 27th in Middleburg. The plans for February 4th interviews have been canceled with rescheduling plans for later in February or early March. The Roundtable Discussion is still scheduled for Thursday, February 17th at Thomas Balch Library. Additionally, because of COVID concerns, along with

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many former students and teachers being around the country, the team is going to pursue Zoom interviews with those not comfortable coming in person or live too far away to do so. A question was asked why interviews were being conducted in Middleburg. The intent is to obtain interviews from alumni/teachers from various parts of the County.

It was suggested since the last meeting that someone from the “white” community be interviewed and Larry asked for suggestions. Wynne Saffer was suggested as a possible person to interview.

Closing:

In closing, Erica noted that she and Charles had provided an update on the Committee’s progress to the School Board on January 11th and relayed that the Committee would be willing to accept the reconciliation task. The item will next be discussed on February 7th at the Joint Board of Supervisors and School Board Committee, just prior to the next DHSCC Committee meeting.

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