

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

MEETING MINUTES

July 11, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED

ATTENDEES:

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

Absent: Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms, Michelle Thomas

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

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

Valerie Bush welcomed the Committee and Guests to the meeting. There were no public comments.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the June 27, 2022, meeting. Tammy Carter made a motion to approve. Carlotta Coates seconded. All in favor.

Playground Update:

Sara Howard-O'Brien shared that the shape of the playground has changed slightly in order to save trees and shared the new design. There are currently no other updates.

June 28, 2022 LCSB Meeting Information:

Sara shared that the School Board approved the names proposed by the Committee for the rooms and facilities on campus at their June 28th meeting. The item was provided in the June 27th meeting packet. Additionally, the School Board agreed to provide a letter, resolution, photo of the Board and a pin to the time capsule.

Historic Marker Update:

LCPS Staff and the LDAA have been working together with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) to amend the language in the historic marker that was located in front of the school on Market Street. The text in the sign was limited to 700 characters. The text was approved by DHR in June, and we are awaiting additional information regarding when the marker will be created and available for installation. There are several other markers being prepared so it may be several months.

Bench with Frederick Douglass:

LCPS has contracted for a statue of Frederick Douglass sitting on a bench with world renowned artist Jon Hair. The statute should be ready for installation by late October. A picture of the statue was shared with the Committee.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Pavers & Quotes Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates, Gert Evans and Tammy Carter
Donna shared with the Committee that the School Attorney reported back earlier in the day regarding the quotes. The direction from the Attorney and Staff is to remove the Disney quotes, along with a few others that Staff was unable to verify. Staff suggestions and votes were as follows:

East Courtyard (Amphitheater side)

LCPS recommends removing the 3 Disney quotes and due to the size of content of the three remaining quotes spread them out over the pavers that sit adjacent to each other. The quotes and location, which will be dependent upon the graphic designer are:

P6 & P7

“When you Undervalue what you do, the world will undervalue who you are” – Oprah Winfrey

P10-13

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek” – Barack Obama

P14

“There will be obstacles. There will be doubters. There will be mistakes. But with hard work, there are no limits.” -- Michael Phelps, Olympic swimmer

Valerie Bush made a motion to accept the changes as suggested by LCPS, Jim Roberts seconded. Roll Call was taken, and the motion passed 11-1 with Mary Randolph voting No and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Inside Room Name Panels

Two quotes will need to be replaced on the name panels. One is a Disney quote *“Think, Think, Think”* and the other is from Les Brown. LCPS was unable to verify that Mr. Brown was indeed the originator (*“Live full and die empty”*).

Three quotes were suggested for replacement of the Les Brown quote: *“Impossible is for the Unwilling”* by John Keats, *“Be yourself, everyone else is already taken”* by Oscar Wilde and *“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom”* by George Washington Carver.

To replace the Winnie the Pooh quote it was suggested to relocate the Frederick Douglass quote, currently proposed for the West Courtyard *“Without a struggle, there can be no progress”* since it is short. Alternatively, the Frederick Douglass quote could remain, and a second quote referenced for the Les Brown replacement could be used.

Tammy Carter made a Motion and Carlotta Coates seconded to replace the Les Brown quote with: *“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom”* by George Washington Carver and to replace the Winnie the Pooh quote with Frederick Douglass quote that was originally proposed in the West Courtyard *“Without a struggle, there can be no progress”*. Roll Call was taken, and that motion

passed 11-1 with Mary Randolph voting No and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

West Courtyard (Shop/Band Building side)

Two suggestions were provided to replace the Frederick Douglass quote being moved to the name panels inside the 1941 building: *“the way to success is to make a goal in life, and to strive for progress”* by John W. Wanzer, President County-Wide League or *“Without education, there is no hope for our people, and without hope, our future is lost”* by Charles Hamilton Houston.

Tammy Carter made a Motion and Carlotta Coates seconded to replace the Frederick Douglass quote with the Charles Hamilton Houston quote *“Without education, there is no hope for our people, and without hope, our future is lost”*. Roll Call was taken, and that motion passed 10-1 with Mary Randolph voting No, Gladys Burke Abstaining and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

1960 Gym Wall

Four quotes were agreed to for the gym wall across from the bleachers. The Muhammad Ali quote cannot be used. Alternatives proposed include: *“Always make a total effort, even when the odds are against you.”* by Arnold Palmer and *“Never let the fear of striking out get in your way”* by Babe Ruth.

Tammy Carter made a motion and Larry Roeder seconded to replace the Muhammad Ali quote with *“Never let the fear of striking out get in your way”* by Babe Ruth. Roll call was taken and the motion passed 10-0 with Gladys Burke and Mary Randolph Abstaining and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Mural Subcommittee: Larry Simms, Larry Roeder, and Joyce Jackson

Mural Call for Artists:

LCPS requested clarification on the Call for Artists and the how the call should be worded regarding the sports theme. The Committee discussed whether they were seeking a mural that depicted all sports, in general, sports that were played in the 1940’s to 1960’s or Sports that were played only at Douglass: Football, Basketball (Boys & Girls), Baseball, Golf and Track. The Committee stated sports played at Douglass was the decision and requested that Cheerleading be added to the list.

West Courtyard Information Panels:

The Committee reviewed the draft concept of the information panels. They discussed identifying as many people as possible in the photos, labeling the photos by year, and including all shop and band teachers that were at the school. Mr. Edwards and Mr. DeLaine were specifically mentioned. It was also noted that a cosmetology teacher should be added. Information regarding who is in each photo could be part of the kiosk information.

Gladys Burke made a motion to accept the general concept with the additional pictures of band and industrial arts and including all shop and band pictures. Joyce Jackson seconded. Roll Call was taken, and the Committee voted 10-0 in support of the concept provided. Gert Evans and Mary Randolph, Abstained. Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas were absent for the vote.

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2022

There was a discussion on who would identify the individuals in the photos. It was generally agreed that the two subcommittees, Mural and Kiosk would identify as many as possible now and that it would be a long-term project for the Consortium to continue the identification. A suggestion was made by Tammy Carter to implement an approach similar to “Do You Know” to have visitors and the community add information via a “Did You Know”.

Larry Roeder made a motion, seconded by Joyce Knox, to identify everyone in the photographs with the understanding the effort would be a long term project with the Coalition having the responsibility to continue this effort. Roll Call was taken, and the motion passed 9-1 with Gladys Burke voting no. Gert Evans and Mary Randolph, Abstained. Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas were absent for the vote.

Logos in 1960 Gym:

At the June 27th meeting the Committee voted to place “DHS” in the center of the basketball court and to place two different logos on each end of the gym in the acoustical panels. The 4 remaining available acoustical panels will have pictures which are still being discussed. LCPS requested clarification as to which direction the DHS letters should be situated. The Committee discussed the various entry points to the gym and orientation possibilities. Mary Randolph asked if there shouldn’t be a logo in the floor of the 1941 gym basketball court. After discussion the Committee felt the current proposal to not have a logo on the 1941 gym floor would be consistent with photos from the 1940 time period.

Valerie Bush made a motion to have the DHS letters oriented in the 1960 gym floor so that they read from the bleachers. Tammy Carter seconded. Roll Call was taken, and the motion passed 11-0 with Mary Randolph Abstaining and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

LCPS requested clarification for the logos on the gym panels as there had been several different LDAA and Douglass logos presented to the Committee at various meetings. After discussion of the various logos Joyce Jackson called the question. Tammy Carter made a motion and Jim Roberts seconded, to have the logo depicted below on one end of the gym and confirmed the Rams Logo as depicted below on the other end.

The RAMS to be flipped so it reads in the same direction as Douglass High School



Roll Call was taken and the logos above were approved 12-0 with Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas were absent for the vote.

Kiosk/Computer Screen Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates, Valerie Bush, Tammy Carter
The Kiosk Committee stated they had no further updates at this time. The Committee discussed the need to identify people in photos and who would be responsible for this. The kiosk data responsibility should be the Kiosk Subcommittee and the Full Commemorative Committee. When the DHS-CC discontinues meeting the Consortium would need to take on the responsibility. The Committee asked if there could be a shared drive to place information for the kiosk that all members could use. The Committee also discussed having a designated Staff person to assist with this information in the coming years.

Valerie Bush made a motion and Joyce Jackson seconded to identify people in photos and to place information in the kiosk as a long term project. The motion passed 10-0 with Gert Evans and Mary Randolph Abstaining and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas were absent for the vote.

W&OD Trail Subcommittee: Tammy Carter and Dwight Brooks
Tammy Carter presented two options for the W&OD Trail marker. One option would provide more history regarding the property and the other a simpler version. The information panel is approximately 24" x 36".

Larry Roeder offered that the draft language should be revised as the high school program initially began in 1920 by J. C. Walker and was upgraded in the 1930's by Edith Harris. Larry is to forward information to document this timeframe to LCPS staff.

Carlotta Coates made a motion to submit the longer version to NOVA Parks for ~~considering~~ consideration, understanding that it may need to be shortened and adjustments made as necessary, not unlike the State historic marker. Gert Evans seconded. The motion passed 11-0 with Mary Randolph Abstaining and Erica Bush, Glory Howard, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Timeline Subcommittee: Gert Evans, Gladys Burke, and Dwight Brooks
Gert Evans reported that the Timeline Subcommittee had met. Gert had also met with Sara and Donna. She has revised the timeline presented and condensed to have more pictures with more detailed information to be placed in the kiosk. Gert also provided an overview of suggestions for the LDAA timeline on the back wall behind the stage which would include both LDAA photos and student pictures. Valerie shared that a large picture of the Class of 1968 could be obtained and suggested reaching out to Pauline Newman. Gert advised that additional graphics and photos were still being considered and noted that the slide on bus transportation could incorporate a graphic of the bus route. Gladys offered that she has a letter regarding the NAACP that could be utilized. For Slide 12 it was offered that it is Adam Craven, not Norman. Gert would like to include a picture of the full marker that exists on the outer wall of the building in the front. Donna shared that she would provide one. at the last meeting to capture key events. Gert reviewed the new timeline photos and info as an update.

Amphitheater Subcommittee: Jim Roberts and Valerie Bush

Valerie Bush reviewed mock-up panels of information for the amphitheater. Gladys suggested that there be information included regarding the establishment of the NAACP in the Timeline section as it is an important part of the history. Valerie suggested that the information could be elaborated with the Charles Houston discussion. A PDF of the latest information will be sent to the Committee for review. The Committee will search for photos of those individuals listed for the County-Wide League and signers of the Deed along with a photo of Gertrude Alexander.

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

Larry Roeder asked if each organization had received a letter outlining what was requested from them for inclusion in the time capsule. The MLK group had still not received a letter. Sara stated she would email again but it had been resent two weeks ago. The Subcommittee agreed to have a Zoom meeting to discuss the basic information that each individual letter should include. The Committee unanimously agreed to move the deadline for submission of letters to August 31st, as the building will not be ready for placement of the time capsule until September at the earliest.

Reconciliation Subcommittee:

Sara shared that the Subcommittee members should have received an email from Shalom Black to discuss meeting times for August.

Consortium Update:

Larry Roeder shared that while he has not spoken with Michelle Thomas, the Edwin Washington Project and LDAA continue discussions with LCPS for their individual MOU's.

Closing: Charles thanked everyone for their time and reminded them that the next meeting is July 25th.