

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

MEETING MINUTES

July 25, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED

ATTENDEES:

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

Absent: Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Glory Howard, Michelle Thomas

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

LCPS Staff: Beverly Tate, Kathleen Devens, Donna Torraca

Erica Bush and Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests to the meeting. Jaxon Roberts thanked the Committee for allowing him to attend and participate. This will be his last meeting, as he is returning to school in August. The Committee expressed their appreciation for his helpful insight and comments.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the July 11, 2022, meeting. Valerie Bush offered that on Page 2 of the minutes she had made the motion to accept the recommended changes in the East Courtyard and Jim Roberts had seconded. Mr. Simms asked about the spelling of Mr. DeLaine's last name. Donna Torraca said she believed it was the spelling found in the yearbooks but would be double check. There being no other changes to the minutes, Dwight Brooks made a motion to approve. Joyce Jackson seconded. All present voted in favor.

Playground Update:

There was no playground update.

Progress Update/DHS-CC Commemorative Elements:

Kathy Devens provided an update on the construction noting that drywall and plumbing is currently happening in the 1954 section of the building. Paving has begun on the east side and the roof installation is underway. Kathy then reviewed the BBB's draft report summarizing decisions the Committee has made in terms of commemorative elements and that LCPS is actively moving forward with. The intent is to formally document the Committee's decisions and will also include an Appendix with more specific information.

Jim Roberts noted that the scoreboard in the 1941 portion should read "Home" and not "Douglass." Larry Simms inquired if there would be actual basketball hoops installed in the 1941 section and Kathy confirmed that there would be. Valerie Bush asked about the lighting in the front room. Kathy shared that, upon review of photos, the lighting would be similar to the style of 1941 and depicted in the PowerPoint. Larry Simms asked if there would be volleyball inserts in the 1960 gym floor and Kathy confirmed that there would be.

In reviewing the slides for the shop building, Gladys Burke asked if the photo had already been prepared and why there is green on each side of the photo depicted in the PowerPoint. She felt this was too much graphically and it is possible to do a blend out on each side continuing the feel of

looking at the shop building. Kathy explained that this is just a rendering and LCPS will be working with the graphic design team on this element. The image will be scaled to fit the wall and digitally manipulate the photo and add into the image to make it appear that it goes to the edge of the wall.

In the front plaza area Kathy shared that there will be 2 sets of bollards to define the roadway in front of the school for safety purposes.

Kathy asked that the Committee review the presentation, a copy of which has been placed in their packet and provide any comments prior to or at the August 8th meeting.

Douglass Commemorative Consortium:

Larry Roeder shared that the Edwin Washington Project has met with LCPS regarding the MOU. Gladys Burke asked what the status of the room assignments and the MOU and when everything would be finalized. Erica Bush stated that once all three groups have come to agreement on the MOUs with Kevin Lewis' team the MOUs will then be brought back to the School Board for final approval. No date has been set.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Reconciliation Subcommittee:

Erica noted that the County representative, Shalom Black, had reached out to Subcommittee members for preference on dates and time but no date for the first meeting has been set.

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

The Subcommittee included key items they would like Committee members to state in their letters for the time capsule. Larry Roeder reviewed the items and reminded the Committee that their letter must fit on 2-pages, be 8-1/2 X 11 and not folded. Each Committee member may also include a photo up to an 8-1/2 x 11 size. A group photo of the Commemorative Committee will also be taken. All submissions are due for the time capsule by August 31st.

Gladys suggested that "age" be revised to state "date of birth" which for archival and research purposes is much more helpful. She also stated that the Heritage Commission would like to include a copy of their publication "*The History of the Loudoun County Courthouse and Its Role in the Path to Freedom, Justice, and Racial Equality in Loudoun County*" which is approximately 85 pages long. After discussion it was suggested that the organizations follow the guidelines of one two-page letter or resolution, one photo and one small item that can fit in a #10 envelope. They are welcome to submit other items with the understanding that not all items may fit beyond those mentioned in the guidelines and will be considered by the Committee once all items are received at the end of August.

Sylvia Smith asked who would be responsible for the key to the time capsule? After discussion, Donna Torraca stated that she would inquire and let the Committee know at the next meeting. There are several LCPS schools that now have time capsules. We can inquire who is responsible for those keys and specifically who would be responsible for the Douglass key.

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

Carlotta Coates had shared a picture of Arnold Ambers in his basketball uniform with the mural subcommittee as a suggestion for one of the 4 acoustical panels in the 1960 gym. Larry Simms would like to use this photo somewhere but would like to keep the photos in the gym to those of teams. The Subcommittee will meet in the next two weeks and come back with a recommendation to the full Committee at the August 8th meeting.

The Committee reviewed briefly the West Courtyard recommendations that have been updated with additional photos and dates to all those that could be identified. This information will be passed on to the graphic designer.

Amphitheater Subcommittee: Jim Roberts and Valerie Bush

Valerie Bush shared the current information and layout of the 5 panels in the amphitheater. The Subcommittee is looking for pictures of all the members of the Countywide League from the initial formation as well as those that signed the deed to the School Board. Eva Sanford, Reverend W. E. Williams and Charles H. Willis are still needed. The Subcommittee is also in search of a photo of William S. Gibbons. Mr. Gibbons is the individual who sold the property to the County-Wide League.

Timeline Subcommittee: Gert Evans, Gladys Burke, and Dwight Brooks

Gert Evans advised that a copy of the timeline referenced last week for Douglass High School but not included in the July 11th packet has been included in this packet. Gert stated that two corrections have been made to this timeline, correcting Norman to Adam Craven and including a picture of Barbara Hodges.

Pavers & Quotes Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates, Gert Evans and Tammy Carter

The pavers and quotes for the property have been completed. Donna Torraca will provide a PDF of the list by email to all members this week and place a hard copy in the August 8th packet.

Kiosk/Computer Screen Subcommittee: Carlotta Coates, Valerie Bush and Tammy Carter

Valerie Bush reported that there were no updates at this time. LCPS is researching how the displays will work and will report back to the Subcommittee after in-house discussion.

Sculpture Subcommittee: Tammy Carter and Larry Roeder

The Call for Artist deadline for the sculpture is July 29th. The Subcommittee will review all submissions the following week and provide a recommendation to the full Committee at the August 8th meeting. Any other Committee members who would like to be a part of the initial review are welcome. Larry Roeder asked that anyone interested contact Donna Torraca.

Larry also shared that he and Tammy Carter have spoken with local sculptor artist Jeff Hall who has a sculpture that is in keeping with his thoughts on the project.

W&OD Trail Subcommittee: Tammy Carter and Dwight Brooks

The Subcommittee had recommended a certain stand for the W&OD Trail signage, different from that typically used on the trail. Donna Torraca reached out to NOVA Parks regarding the signage content and the stand type. Because the information panel will not be directly on the W&OD but on the side trail going onto the Douglass property, NOVA Parks is agreeable to the Subcommittee's recommended

information panel. Additionally, they have approved the content for the sign. Donna Torraca provided a photo of the location of the information panel.

Joyce Jackson made a motion and Larry Simms seconded to use the recommended information panel suggested by the Subcommittee. Roll Call was taken, and the motion passed 10-1 with Mary Randolph voting No and Gladys Burke, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Glory Howard and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Oral History Update:

Larry Simms reported that there was no update at this time. The team needs to meet with Corey Gray the Videographer hired by LCPS regarding next steps and integration of information into kiosks and timeline.

Tobler Memorial:

Joyce Jackson asked that the Committee reconsider the Tobler Memorial, stating that Mr. Paul Tobler was a long-time educator and connected to the building. Gert Evans shared that he was very well thought of in the community. Donna Torraca shared that the Tobler memorial stone was originally at the flagpole but could be relocated anywhere on the property, should the Committee choose to do so. Mr. Roberts asked if he was a teacher and if so, why the memorial could not be placed in the west courtyard which honors the other teachers.

Mr. Roberts made a motion to place the Tobler Memorial in the west courtyard with the other teacher memorials. Joyce Jackson seconded. Roll call was taken, and the motion passed 11-0 with Gladys Burke, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Glory Howard and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Meeting Times:

Joyce expressed a desire to strive to have the Committee meetings capped at two hours and made a motion to that affect. Larry Simms seconded. Roll call was taken, and the motion passed 7-0 with 4 Abstaining (Erica Bush, Valerie Bush, Mary Randolph, Larry Roeder) and Gladys Burke, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Glory Howard and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Dedication:

There was discussion regarding plans for a dedication for the property. Donna Torraca stated that a date had not been set for the dedication, but a Subcommittee would be formed to plan a dedication once the project is closer to being opened. Larry Roeder requested that the 3 consortium organizations be a part of that Subcommittee.

Reminders:

Erica Bush reminded everyone that these meetings are open to the public and all are welcome to attend. Additionally, all meeting documents are posted on the LCPS website and the location of same is noted at the bottom of the Agenda, should anyone need to reference and/or share.

Closing: Charles and Erica thanked everyone for their time and reminded them that the next meeting is August 8th.