

# Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

**APPROVED**

## MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2023

### ATTENDEES:

**Committee Members:** Charles Avery, Erica Bush, Gladys Burke, Valerie Bush, Dwight Brooks, Carlotta Coates, Gertrude Evans, Glory Howard, Mary Randolph, James Roberts, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms, Sylvia Smith

**Absent:** Tammy Carter, Joyce Jackson, Michelle Thomas

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

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

**Loudoun County Staff:** Shalom Black

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests to the meeting. Janet Wiggins stated that another alumni had passed away, Joseph Peterson, Class of 1968.

### Review of Meeting Minutes:

The Committee reviewed the February 27, 2023, meeting minutes. Carlotta recommended that a notation be made under the Time Capsule information that at the end of the event the Communications and Community Engagement Office interviewed various Committee members about their thoughts on the renovation. Then Glory Howard made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Jim Roberts seconded.

### Reconciliation Subcommittee:

Erica welcomed Shalom Black to the meeting to provide an update on the Reconciliation Committee's work. Shalom Black reviewed a draft of the Initial Proposal (included in the March 13, 2023 meeting packet) from the Reconciliation Committee, to be presented to the Joint Committee to have a professionally produced documentary. It will be necessary to engage a production company and director to develop a timeline and budget for the project. The documentary would cover 1920-1968 and potentially be broken up into episodes. There could be other suggestions coming out of the Reconciliation Committee in future meetings. This is just one of the items.

### Progress Update/DHS-CC Commemorative Elements:

Melissa Tello shared photos of the construction progress and commemorative elements on-site. The timeline for move-in has been adjusted to April 11-13 for Parks & Rec and LCPS offices. Melissa verified that:

- The desk in the front hall is moveable for events and there will be power and data connections in a recessed floor box which is needed when in use during the day
- LCPS is working on some type of hanging device for the display of pictures, maps, and other historical information for the stakeholder the rooms that will not damage the walls and historic features

- The stakeholders should be able to move in by early May
- Radiators are being installed in the two front classrooms and in the front hall. The Edwin Washington Society space will not have a radiator as that was removed prior to renovations and unable to replicate
- Entrance sign will be installed by May 21<sup>st</sup>
- Historic Marker at Market Street is expected to be shipped soon. It will be installed in its original location or as close as possible
- The outdoor basketball court will have a fence on the east side and the south side as well as further beyond on the west side (not immediately at the court lines). Openings in the fence are provided; not gates.

#### **Sculpture Update:**

Jeff Hall spoke with Donna Torraca earlier in the month and relayed that the sculpture is coming along but feels it may be November before it will be ready for installation. Progress photos were shared with the Committee and the figures and clothing were discussed. Jeff would like to have the Committee come to his studio to view the sculpture before it is shipped to the foundry to be bronzed. He anticipates he will be ready to show the final sculpture to the group in late April or early May. A field trip will be scheduled with the group for either an evening or weekend review.

#### **Kiosk Update:**

Four companies were interviewed to compile the software needed for the touchscreen in the timeline and the kiosk. Sara Howard-O'Brien shared that Arreya has been hired to do the work, the initial focus is on the timeline screen so that that component will be ready for the dedication.

#### **Webpage Update:**

Sara reported that a webpage will be developed under the LCPS Education Center tab on the website. More information will follow once the site has been established but it will be a tool to share information on the commemorative items, tours, and other information.

#### **Douglass Commemorative Consortium:**

Carlotta Coates reported that in order to prepare for tours of Douglass and for each Tour Guide to provide consistent and helpful information, the Consortium is requesting that each Subcommittee write a brief summary of how the Subcommittee chose certain elements and some background on the particular element or area their Subcommittee made recommendations on. For example, on the timeline, how was that developed and why were those particular images chosen? The deadline to provide a draft is at the next full Committee meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup> with the final product being ready at the last Committee meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Donna and Sara will send out the list of Subcommittees.

Larry Roeder reported that a new Gmail account for the Consortium has been set-up [douglassconsortium@gmail.com](mailto:douglassconsortium@gmail.com). The email will be managed by all three groups.

Lastly, each organization has been asked to identify an alternative representative and report back to the full Committee of those individuals by April 17<sup>th</sup>. Each organization should review its individual MOUs regarding its responsibilities.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

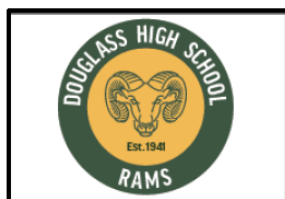
**Mural Subcommittee:**

Larry Simms shared potential changes to the mural submitted by Jason Tetlak. The Subcommittee had reached out to the artist earlier in the month and requested various changes to the mural for the full Committee’s review. The Subcommittee had recommended changes to the golfer from female to male, a different color for the outline of the male basketball player, a different color for the golf ball and different hair for the cheerleader. The Committee discussed the recommended changes, compared to the original submission, and it was agreed to make the following changes:

- Replace the woman golfer with a male golfer since this was only a men’s sports at Douglass;
- Change the outline of the male basketball player from pink to any other color besides pink or darker blue;
- Keep the golf ball white but add more “dimples”; and
- Keep the double ponytail hair that the cheerleader had in the original submission.

**Amphitheater Flags:**

Valerie Bush explained that there are three flag poles at the Amphitheater. The Subcommittee recommended that the initial flags be two of the Douglass Ram Flags and one for the County-Wide League. The Committee reviewed the designs and agreed with the flag designs.



One of the Douglass High School flags would be interchangeable for either other Consortium groups, should they have a flag or in celebration for various events such as Black History Month, Juneteenth Day, or Emancipation Day.

**Dedication Subcommittee:**

Valerie Bush shared that the Subcommittee determined:

- Vendor offered to provide light refreshments at the dedication but due to parking limitations the offer was deferred to a future event at Douglass. A treat from the company would be provided at the event for the Commemorative Committee members.
- The mini-documentary from the LCPS Communications Office would be part of the dedication ceremony.

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- Bookmark sample was provided to the Committee. The bookmark would be laminated and will be color coded to assist in limiting the number of visitors in the 1941 portion at any one time.
- The Dominion High School string ensemble will be performing 30 minutes prior to the dedication and 30 minutes after
- The Loudoun Community Gospel Choir will be singing

Valerie asked that representatives from each of the three stakeholder organizations have representation at the open house on Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> from 6-8 pm.

The keynote speaker was discussed. Judge Joe Baltimore, Edwina Randall Hall, Laura Scott, daughter of Peggy Jones, and Kevin Greene were discussed at the last meeting. Both Mr. Morris and Ruby Bridges have been ruled out due to cost. A motion was made by Carlotta Coates and seconded by Larry Simms to have Kevin Greene be the Keynote Speaker at the Dedication. Roll Call was taken and the motion passed 12-0 with Tammy Carter, Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

The Committee then discussed topics for Mr. Greene's 20-minute address. Suggestions included the struggle for high school education, information about Frederick Douglass, and a personal message from his great-great-grandfather. The Committee asked if Mr. Greene could be recorded.

The Committee discussed the option for a ribbon cutting at the dedication. It was agreed that they would like the ribbon cutting to occur at the front of the building, not in the 1960 gym, and at the alumni pre-dedication preview of the 1941 portion. Jim Roberts and Mary Randolph will work together to provide suggestions for the ribbon cutting event. There was a question as to whether the decision making bodies (School Board, Board of Supervisors, Town Council) would be at or participate in the ribbon cutting.

There was discussion regarding advertising the event, tours on Monday, Saturday and Sunday and alerting Channel 4, newspapers, radio stations, and others about the 4 days. Sara explained that due to the size of the space available, the dedication will have to be by invitation only. LCPS will discuss options and reach out to the media internally and report back to the Subcommittee later this month and the full Committee in April.