

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

APPROVED

MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

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

Absent: Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, Michelle Thomas

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

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

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests. Charles Bushrod introduced himself. Mr. Bushrod attended Douglass High School through 1968 and graduated from Loudoun County High School.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the February 28, 2022 meeting. Dwight Brooks made a motion to approve the minutes and Larry Simms seconded.

Construction Update:

Melissa Tello shared that the 1941 historic wood windows have been restored and returned to Douglass. She will provide pictures of the restored wood for the next meeting. Storm panes will be installed in the interior of the building to assist with energy efficiency. Roof work will begin soon with the weather warming. Brick and mortar mock-ups continue. With the weather warming in the coming weeks, there will be more activity outside on the site and building exterior.

Playground Update:

Sara Howard-O'Brien reported that Loudoun County Parks & Recreation (PR&CS) continues the discussion on names for the new playground with the focus on national figures. There is another meeting tomorrow and an update of that meeting will be provided on March 28th.

Responsibility of Stakeholder Groups:

Larry Roeder reported that the stakeholders had met. The stakeholder groups are anticipating receipt of their individual MOU's shortly.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Front Plaza/Entry Area Subcommittee: Larry Roeder and Tammy Carter

Tammy Carter provided updated information on the Subcommittee's recommendations after further consultation and clarification with LCPS. Tammy reviewed the two monument sign options before the Committee and that the new recommendation from the subcommittee was for Option 1 on the monument sign which would allow for a double-sided sign that could be seen in

both directions with the possibility for an emblem or some other artwork in the column, along with a planter.

Additional recommendations of the Subcommittee included:

- Statue location in the center of the plaza;
- Frederick Douglass sitting on a bench on the east side of the building across from the amphitheater;
- Two exterior signs, one on each side of the door with “did you know” information; one could be information related to the sale of the property for \$1.
- 4 benches in the front plaza, possibly double-sided and made of recyclable material;
- Additional MLK signage on the Douglass HS property
- Water feature with planter on the west side of the building

Questions and clarification requested from the full Committee included:

- Clarification on the angle and location of the monument sign
- Number and location of brick pavers including concern of pavers located in the drive aisle
- Size of the exterior signage suggested by BBB for directional signage (3’ x 3’) and whether two were needed
- Possibility of double-sided benches (the Architects will review but there may not be enough room for double-sided benches in the front plaza area)
- Where Parks & Rec signage would be located (near the side gym entrance)
- Maintenance of water feature and potential for defacing
- Clarification on the MLK current signage location

Roll Call was taken on various front plaza items and the vote were as follows with Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, Michelle Thomas absent for all votes:

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1. Monument Sign Option 1: Passed 13-0
2. An Emblem on Monument Sign: Passed 12-1 (Type of emblem to be determined)
3. Sculpture in Center of Plaza: Passed 13-0
4. Frederick Douglass on Bench on east side: Passed 8-4 (Valerie Bush Abstained)
5. Number of Signs Near Front Door: One Sign Passed 12-1 (Content to be determined)
6. Water feature on west side: Passed 10-2 (Dwight Brooks Abstained)
7. 4 benches in Front Plaza: Passed 11-0 (Mary Randolph and Larry Simms Abstained)
LCPS Construction to study the size of the benches in relation to the front plaza area and the space allotted for the statue to determine single or double sided
8. MLK Plaque on Property: Failed 3-8 (Mary Randolph and Larry Roeder Abstained)

Amphitheater Subcommittee:

Valerie Bush provided an overview of the Amphitheater Subcommittee recommendations. During the discussion, it was noted that the 5 metal panels around the outside of the amphitheater are 6’ high and 8’ long made of metal or similar materials as that in other exterior signs recommended on the property. Recommendations included:

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- 3 Flagpoles around the back of the amphitheater, 2 with permanent flags and 1 with rotating flags (determination of what flags will come later. None of the flags will be duplicates of the 3 flag poles in the front of the school for American, State and Local)
- Leave the podium uncovered as recommended by the architects
- County-Wide League officer names engraved on the inside of the low wall that frames the back of the podium. Name of the amphitheater to be located on the outside of the wall.
- Naming the amphitheater County-Wide League Amphitheater
- Having lighting along the seating area, at the flag poles and the low back-drop wall at the podium area of the amphitheater

This Committee was also tasked with providing recommendations on two elements on the west side of the building.

- Replace the tree that needs to be moved with a Japanese Maple and a plaque with a dedication to all those who taught at Douglass HS;
- Relocate the Margaret Lloyd and Marylee Miller commemorative rocks to this area

Roll Call was taken and the votes were as follows: (Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, Michelle Thomas absent)

3 flagpoles: Passed 13-0 (specific flags to be determined)

Naming County-Wide League Amphitheater: Passed 13-0

Agree with Lighting Proposed in Amphitheater: Passed 13-0

Note: Determined unnecessary to vote on leaving amphitheater uncovered

West Side: Replacing Tree & Dedicate to Teachers: Passed 13-0

West Side: Replace Memorial Stones: Passed 12-0 (Gertrude Evans Abstained)

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

Larry Roeder provided an update to the Time Capsule Subcommittee report, and shared a box mock-up in the general size and shape of the capsule. Recommendations included:

- 19.7" X 15.7" X 9.9" (exterior measure) stainless-steel Heritage Time Capsule
- Laser etched image on the front of Douglass H.S., name of the school, name of Commemorative Committee, member names, year or insertion and date to be opened
- Capsule to be placed inside Douglass at location identified by the architects
- Wording on the plaque sitting over the space was suggested
- Opening was suggested at 50 years on the centennial of the schools dedication (2072), rather than the 20 years agreed to at last meeting
- Once opened contents would be displayed in the school building
- Appropriate Frederick Douglass quote
- Box would include statements from each Committee member and organization along with a group photo
- External drive included
- Physical objects to be determined at a later date
- All documents be drafted and objects chosen by July 1, 2022
- Back-up of all items in the Cloud and suggestions were provided

Additionally, a list of potential objects to be placed inside the capsule was circulated. The Subcommittee asked that each Committee member review and consider items that they feel should be placed in the capsule. The Committee discussed what time period the artifacts and written information should represent, today or history. Continued discussion on items and decisions will be done at a future meeting. Valerie Bush offered that she is working on a format that could be used by all members in preparation for their submissions.

Reconciliation Subcommittee:

Erica Bush shared an update provided by Kevin Lewis earlier in the evening, stating that the Board of Supervisors is scheduled to act on the Reconciliation Subcommittee on Tuesday, May 15th. It is possible that the Board of Supervisors will appoint two Committees, one that would discuss reconciliation and the sale of the school, the other to review segregation in Loudoun County. An update will be provided at the March 28th meeting.

Erica noted that at a prior meeting, Committee members were asked if they wished to be on the Reconciliation Subcommittee. To ensure that all members had a chance to respond it was asked one last time if there were any additional Committee members who were interested in being on this Subcommittee. Mary Randolph and Larry Roeder asked to be included. It was also made clear that one did not need to be on the Subcommittee to provide recommendations.

Oral History:

Larry Simms shared that the team has started scheduling Zoom interviews and reached out to several former students and teachers not living in the area. At the next meeting, time permitting he would like to discuss ideas as to how these oral histories can be used and incorporated into the commemoration.

Closing: Charles thanked the members for their time and commitment and the meeting was adjourned.