

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

APPROVED

MEETING MINUTES

November 8, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

Committee Members: Charles Avery, Erica Bush, Gladys Burke, Valerie Bush, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Gertrude Evans, Margaret Good, Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, Mary Randolph, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms, Sylvia Smith

Absent: Dwight Brooks, James Roberts, Michelle Thomas

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

LCPS Staff: Kevin Lewis, Beverly Tate, Melissa Tello, Kathy Devens, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca

BBB Staff: Gretchen Pfaehler, Suzi Schmidt, Sarah Wassel, Khadija Callender, Connie Fan, Kirsten Nichols

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests. No public comments were made.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the October 25, 2021 meeting. Joyce Jackson made a motion to approve and Valerie Bush seconded.

BBB Architects Information:

Gretchen Pfaehler with BBB (Beyer, Blinder Belle) introduced her team who shared slides focusing on commemorative opportunities both inside the building and around the outside campus based on comments shared with the BBB team through the September 27 listening session and the Commemorative Committee Recommendations Chart, last amended through October 19, 2021. Following review of the PowerPoint presentation, a break-out session took place. Committee members reviewed presentation boards and provided comments both verbally and on post-it notes of the opportunities presented. Highlights of the boards for inside the building included a portrait of Frederick Douglass on the stage, wall-mounted displays in the main hall for timelines or dioramas, moveable display options, cabinet display options. Highlights for outside opportunities throughout the site focused on the front plaza area, amphitheater, basketball court, back wall, fencing around the court and pavers throughout the site.

There were questions regarding adequate parking, lighting of spaces and light/water features. Committee members also asked where and how the mascot could be displayed somewhere on the site. Questions were also posed regarding kiosks and how oral history can be captured through those, location of the auditorium basketball hoops and court, and the space potential within the individual rooms with organizations being provided space.

BBB stated they would leave the boards with LCPS Staff for the Committee's further review at their December meeting and would provide minutes from their discussions with the members including all ideas shared. BBB will return to the Committee at one of the January meetings with more fine-tuned ideas. The Committee thanked the BBB team.

Joint Board of Supervisors & School Board Committee Briefing:

Kevin Lewis provided an overview of the November 1, 2021 Joint Board of Supervisors and School Committee (Joint Committee) where the Joint Committee discussed a study and reconciliation for the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County. LCPS staff was asked to inquire if the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee (DHS-CC) would be interested in leading and/or participating in these efforts. If so, the Joint Committee asked when the DHS-CC's work for the commemorative project would be completed. The Joint Committee suggested that the DHS-CC could form a "subcommittee" to discuss the reconciliation question. Charles felt that it was possible to do both projects simultaneously. After discussion by the members an informal poll was taken of the DHS-CC as to who might be interested in participating in a subcommittee to discuss the issue. There were four members (Gladys Burke, Gertrude Evans, Joyce Jackson, Larry Roeder) who were interested and others who would like to consider further. There was also discussion as to whether this subcommittee would be comprised of only DHS-CC members or if others in the community could be considered. The DHS-CC will discuss this item further at the December meeting and draft motions will be provided for consideration. The Joint Committee meets again in February giving time for the DHS-CC to discuss and provide input back to the Joint Committee.

Oral History Project:

Larry Simms shared that the first videotaping will take place at the Carver Center on Wednesday, November 10th at 1:00 with members from the Class of 1966. Larry would also like to schedule additional interviews some of those he previously taped. More information on the oral history project will be available in December.

Time Capsule Update:

Melissa Tello shared that an initial, non-invasive investigation of the cornerstone will be done within the next two weeks by checking through the interior wall with a small pinhole and camera. LCPS hopes to have additional information to share regarding the cornerstone at the December meeting.

Construction Update:

Melissa Tello shared that the window restoration and lead based paint abatement continue in the 1941 portion of the building for the next two weeks. Because of the cold weather setting in outside building restoration for all portions of the building will stop, such as roof replacement, etc., until late February or March. Work will continue on the inside of the building in the 1954 and 1960 sections.

Mission Statement & Other Subcommittees:

The Co-Chairs shared that the creation of subcommittees for various projects would be helpful. Suggestions of subcommittees included displays, pavers, statue(s), mural, front plaza, front entrance, stage area and mission statement. Erica asked that members review the Commemorative Recommendations Chart and think about what projects they would like to be more involved in. Joyce Jackson offered to participate in the subcommittee for the Mission Statement. Charles asked that Larry Roeder and Tammy Carter work on a subcommittee for the statue. More information will be provided to the Committee and members are asked to team up

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and meet via Zoom prior to the December meeting. The Co-Chairs cited the need to keep the Committee's efforts moving forward.

2022 Meeting Dates

The meeting dates for 2022 were reviewed. No immediate changes were requested.

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