

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

MEETING MINUTES

October 18, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED

ATTENDEES:

Committee Members:

Charles Avery, Erica Bush, Dwight Brooks, Valerie Bush, Tammy Carter, Gertrude Evans, Margaret Good, Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, Mary Randolph, James Roberts, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms, Sylvia Smith, Michelle Thomas

Absent:

Gladys Burke, Carlotta Coates

Guests:

Nathan Bailey, Helen Avery, Janet Wiggins, Alvin Dodson

LCPS Staff:

Kevin Lewis, Lottie Spurlock, Kathy Devens, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca (Laura Cruz & Stephanie Knott with CCE videotaped and photographed)

Loudoun County

Parks & Recreation:

Rameir Martin, Robin Leonard

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests and discussed Frederick Douglass and his importance and influence during his life time.

Erica Bush asked if there were any public comments. The only comment was that the trees had been removed at the front of Douglass High School.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the September 27, 2021 meeting. Joyce Jackson asked that a change be made to Page 2 under Oral History Project to replace "Joyce Jackson's father" with "Paul D. Jackson." No other changes were offered. Gert Evans made a motion for approval and Larry Roeder seconded.

Rameir Martin, Assistant Director with Loudoun County Parks & Recreation, presented the County's plans for the replacement of the playground located on the Douglass campus. This will be a themed focus playground, reflecting the contributions that African Americans have made both nationally and locally. The intent is to provide a playground that is a learning experience targeting ages 2-12. Components of the playground include a "Hall of Heroes", inspired by the National Museum of African American History and Culture, interchangeable panel images and historic information which can include national and local options, and two custom bronze statues. The PowerPoint presentation is attached to these minutes for further information. Mr. Martin shared that the timeline for the project was to collect suggestions for the Hall of Heroes and panel images from the Commemorative Committee at the October 25th meeting and then hold community meetings between now and the end of the year. In January the County hopes to provide input to the design company and have the playground ready for use when the building is open in the fall of 2022.

The Review of Site Construction with LCPS Architects was tabled until the October 25th meeting.

Oral History Project:

Larry Simms stated he has interviewed individually 7 alumni. A meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, October 21st to meet the new videographer that LCPS has engaged. The team will discuss the scheduling of additional interviews and other logistics.

Time Capsule Update:

Sara Howard-O'Brien shared with the Committee that the company working on the renovation project has the appropriate equipment to view inside the cornerstone to determine if there is anything located within. A timeframe for when this equipment will be used has not been determined but will keep the Committee, and specifically Mr. Roberts, comprised of the progress.

Recap LCSB Meeting September 28, 2021:

Charles Avery shared with the Committee that, as discussed at the last meeting, a presentation was made to the School Board on September 28th. The presentation included an overview of the commemorative discussion, provided by Erica Bush. Charles shared with the School Board the Committee's recommendation to provide space to all three organizations.

The School Board was scheduled to make a decision at their first meeting in October, but that decision has been delayed until the October 26th meeting.

Voting on Various Commemorative Items by Full Committee

The committee reviewed the 19 items recommended for final decision by the Committee. After clarification of some of the items and correction of the Class of 1960 as the class that dedicated the flag pole, Joyce Jackson made a motion to approve all 19 items, collective. The motion was seconded by Glory Howard. The motion passed 14-0 with Gladys Burke, Carlotta Coates, and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Follow-up Note: A comment was made on the flagpole and that it may not have been a class donation but provided by LCPS at some point during one of the construction periods. Further research will be done by LCPS and the Committee members

Future meeting dates were reviewed, and the meeting was adjourned.