

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

MEETING MINUTES September 27, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

APPROVED

ATTENDEES:

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

Absent: Tammy Carter, Michelle Thomas

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

LCPS Staff: Kevin Lewis, Lottie Spurlock, Bev Tate, Melissa Tello, Kathy Devins, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca

BBB Architect Staff: Gretchen Pfaehler, Khadija Callender

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests and asked if there were any public comments before the meeting began. No public comments were given.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the September 13, 2021 meeting. No changes were recommended. Gladys Burke made a motion for approval and Larry Roeder seconded.

The LCPS architectural team of Melissa Tello and Kathleen Devens introduced themselves, as did the Beyer, Blinder, Belle (BBB) Architects, Gretchen Pfaehler and Khadija Callender. Ms. Pfaehler shared with the Committee the experience BBB has with historic properties and, in general, projects they have worked on. The architectural team voiced their collective excitement to hear the ideas of the Commemorative Committee.

Commemorative Discussion:

Valerie Bush provided an overview of the Outside Committee recommendations for commemoration. Carlotta Coates provided an overview for the Inside Committee recommendations. Additional items were offered by the collective Committee and corrections were made to the overall commemoration chart including:

Outside:

- Clarification that the Committee voted to place “Douglass High School 1941-1968” in the peak of the roof at the front of the building at their September 13th meeting;
- Desire to have a mural on the back wall of the gym at the new outside basketball court;
- Clarification that the Committee voted to explore the cornerstone for a time capsule

(**Note:** Confirmation is needed by LCPS regarding naming of the playground either by LCPS or County Parks & Rec)

Inside:

- Silhouette of stage location marked on the floor in the front room as it was in 1941
- Basketball hoops re-installed in front room
- Marking the former basketball court lines in the front room

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- Possible kiosk in the vestibule area
- Clarified that they would like quotes of Frederick Douglass throughout the building
- Clarified that it is the school motto for each class
- Mural on the walls inside the gym
- Letterman Jackets or Sweaters on Display
- Mural inside former shop/band building

Inside or Outside

- Mosaic tile for Countywide League
- Timeline

Reference updated Commemorative Opportunities Chart

Oral History Project:

Larry Simms provided an update of the oral history project, stating that LCPS was close to securing a videographer. He is working to have a group of 5-8 people from the Class of 1966. Additionally, he is scheduled to interview Paul D. Jackson who was a former bus driver and her Aunt Barbara Jackson Coe. Larry and LCPS staff will be meeting on Friday to coordinate additional interviews.

Naming of Monument Sign for Campus:

The Committee asked if the name adopted would be permanent. Kevin Lewis explained that future School Boards could potentially change names of facilities, as they are currently doing now for facilities with confederate ties, but he feels it is unlikely the name of Douglass High School will be changed.

Erica led the discussion regarding the campus name and explained that, through a roll call vote, each member could choose 3 of the names provided on the list of suggested names provided in the packet. Once the list is narrowed down the Committee would continue to vote until a more manageable list is established for final voting. She asked that each member identify the associated number with the names they would like to have for further consideration.

Joyce Jackson explained the history of the end of segregation and what typically happened to the black school facilities when integration occurred. She stated her support for the recommended name, #22 The Historic Douglass High School Education and Development Campus and why she felt this was the best name for the campus.

Roll call was taken and each member voted for their top three. Twenty-two names were listed for consideration. Only five received a vote. The five mentioned, along with their corresponding number were:

6. Douglass Educational & Performance Center
11. Historic Douglass High School
15. Douglass
16. Douglass Education and Community Center
22. The Historic Douglass High School Education and Development Campus

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The votes by each member were as follows:

Charles Avery	22, 22, 22	Glory Howard	22, 22, 22
Erica Bush	22, 22, 22	Joyce Jackson	22, 22, 22
Dwight Brooks	22, 22, 22	Mary Randolph	11, 22
Gladys Burke	6, 15, 16	Jim Roberts	22, 22, 22
Valerie Bush	22, 22, 22	Larry Roeder	22, 22, 22
Tammy Carter	Absent	Larry Simms	22, 22, 22
Carlotta Coates	22, 22, 22	Sylvia Smith	22, 22, 22
Gert Evans	22, 22, 22	Michelle Thomas	Absent
Margaret Good	22, 22, 22		

Joyce Jackson made a motion to adopt #22 the Historic Douglass High School Education and Development Campus for the renovated facility. Glory Howard seconded. Roll Call was taken on the motion:

Charles Avery – Yes; Erica Bush – Yes; Dwight Brooks – Yes; Gladys Burke – Abstain; Valerie Bush – Yes; Carlotta Coates – Yes; Gert Evans – Yes; Margaret Good – Yes; Glory Howard – Yes; Joyce Jackson – Yes; Mary Randolph – Yes; Jim Roberts – Yes; Larry Roeder – Yes; Larry Simms – Yes; Sylvia Smith – Yes

Motion passed 14-0-1-2 with Gladys Burke Abstaining and Tammy Carter and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Time Change for Future Meetings:

Erica discussed the possibility of changing the start time of the meeting to an earlier time with the change in the seasons and darkness setting in earlier. The group by general consensus agreed to moving the start time up by 30 minutes to begin future meetings at 6:00 p.m.

LCSB Meeting September 28, 2021 at 5:00pm:

The Co-Chairs will be presenting an update to the School Board of the work the Commemorative Committee has done, to date, and the Committee's support for the three groups seeking space in the historic portion of the building. Sara provided an overview of the meeting logistics for the next evening, Tuesday, September 28th and shared how Committee members can view, participate and be present at the School Board meeting.

Dwight Brooks inquired as to the potential for these groups to use the Union Street School building which was just before the Town Council last week. Kevin Lewis explained the ownership of the property and that the Board of Supervisors has not engaged a particular group to occupy the property at this time. Larry Roeder expressed concern that there should be further inspection of the building and the walls for historic items that may still be located there. Margaret Good and Gladys Burke also sit on the Heritage Commission for the County and said they would bring that up at their next meeting, as that Commission provides recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

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