

Perkins&Will

Meeting Minutes

Date: 5.15.2020 Authored By: Uttara Ramakrishnan

Meeting Details

Meeting Date: 5.4.2020

Project Name: George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Time: 6.30 PM

Project Number: 215011.000

Meeting Location: WebEx

Attendees:

Carver Task Force:

Andrea Mellard, Jennifer Rangubphai, Michael Love, Miriam Conner, TJ Owens, Pamela Benson Owens, Shuronda Robinson, Clifford Gilliard, Homer Hill, Neferetiti Jackmon, Betelhem Makonnen, Steve Sadowsky, Shelbi Mitchell, Eric Byrd, Stephanie Lang, Kellee Coleman, Gabeda Lyle, Kelene Blake-Fallon

Smith & Company Architects:

Terry Smith, Juarez White, Ivonne Canez

Perkins and Will:

Stephen Coulston, Malcom Davis, Paul Ward, Uttara Ramakrishnan

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Discussion

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	ORGANIZATION
1	<p>Greeting</p> <p>A brief introduction of the project and the purpose of the meeting to take the help of the participants to define a vision for the future of the Carver Center.</p>	Carre Adams	George Washington Carver Center
2	<p>Welcome to Master Plan and Process</p> <p>A briefing of the project initiation and selection of the design team.</p>	Gregory Montes	COA Parks and Recreation Department
3	<p>Design Team Welcome</p> <p>Design Team: S&C + PW consortium, has a long history of working together; and individually on key projects of local and national significance.</p>	Terry Smith	Smith & Company Architects
4	<p>Facilitate Virtual Guests Intros</p> <p>Brief introduction by each participant – who they are, how are they related to the Carver center.</p>	Carre Adams	George Washington Carver Center
5	<p>Exercise: KEEP TOSS CREATE</p> <p>The Design Team engaged with the participants to understand their relationships with and aspirations for the Carver Center. The aim of this exercise was to garner detailed information regarding programming, expansion needs, infrastructure, transportation, neighborhood connectivity, environmental concerns, and any other relevant issues affecting the development of the identified area.</p> <p>The participants were asked questions: (details below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What they enjoy the most at Carver? b) What they least appreciate or dislike about Carver? c) What is missing/ what new programs would they like to see? 	Malcolm Davis & Stephen Coulston	Perkins and Will
6	Q&A	Carre Adams	George Washington Carver Center
7	Wrap Up	Gregory Montes	COA Parks and Recreation Department

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Exercise: Keep, Toss, Create

KEEP

What do you currently enjoy most at the Carver Center?

(everything!...) Carver gets 100	Theater, dance rooms, kitchen, galleries... kitchen isolation - update	multigenerational destination, multicultural interaction, organic culture	the plaza area and grand entry, patterning and representation	building entryway welcoming of visitors	african culture and art on display publicly throughout the grounds
keep and expand community spaces which are in high demand!	museum galleries and display areas - telling our story as blacks in this country - other facilities have raised this	Gallery space is valuable and should be expanded, display our diverse talents and cultural history	the facility sets the tone, grounded in african culture from the moment of arrival	provides the introduction to this culture and history for an austin population that can be transient	Theater space - seats many but the steepness is an issue
Theater space is well loved for production and attending	support facilities for production - parking, storage, prep etc	outdoor spaces used and adapted for different types of festivals and productions, re-use is cool!	landscaping around the facility, important for black spaces to have connection to nature	works with past present and future simultaneously - important to tie all these together	the dark room, the view of the sunrise behind the tree from the the hallway through the all the windows
the story the building itself tells and how it attracts the new stories in progress and in continuation	loved rummaging through the refrigerator in the kitchen like its home!- because it is! <3	Versatile space - each space needs to shine	I like how the office space is situated that we can see people approaching the museum	Community solar farms - expand	

1. Keep: The participants were asked what they enjoy most at the Carver.

The replies ranged from multiple levels:

a) Idea of the Building:

The building conveys the story of the African American people in Austin and is a place for new stories to unfold. It is a timeless complex where the past, present and the future all coalesce.

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The buildings are grounded in African American culture right from the design of the entrance plaza to the spaces inside.

The complex presents a very versatile space for the community and the participants conveyed to the design team that it was necessary for each building/each space to shine.

b) Experience:

Participants noted the experience of the sunrise behind the tree from the hallway as being deeply cherished.

It was also conveyed that the building felt like home and as such, people enjoyed rummaging through the refrigerator in the kitchen.

The participants appreciated the fact that the Center was a multigenerational, multicultural space which encouraged organic /chance encounters between community members.

c) Programs:

The theater, dance rooms, dark room, kitchens and galleries are spaces that the participants cherish about the Carver Center.

The museum galleries and display areas are a good representation of the community.

The presence of adequate support facilities such as parking, storage that enable the regular use of the space.

Community solar farms to be expanded.

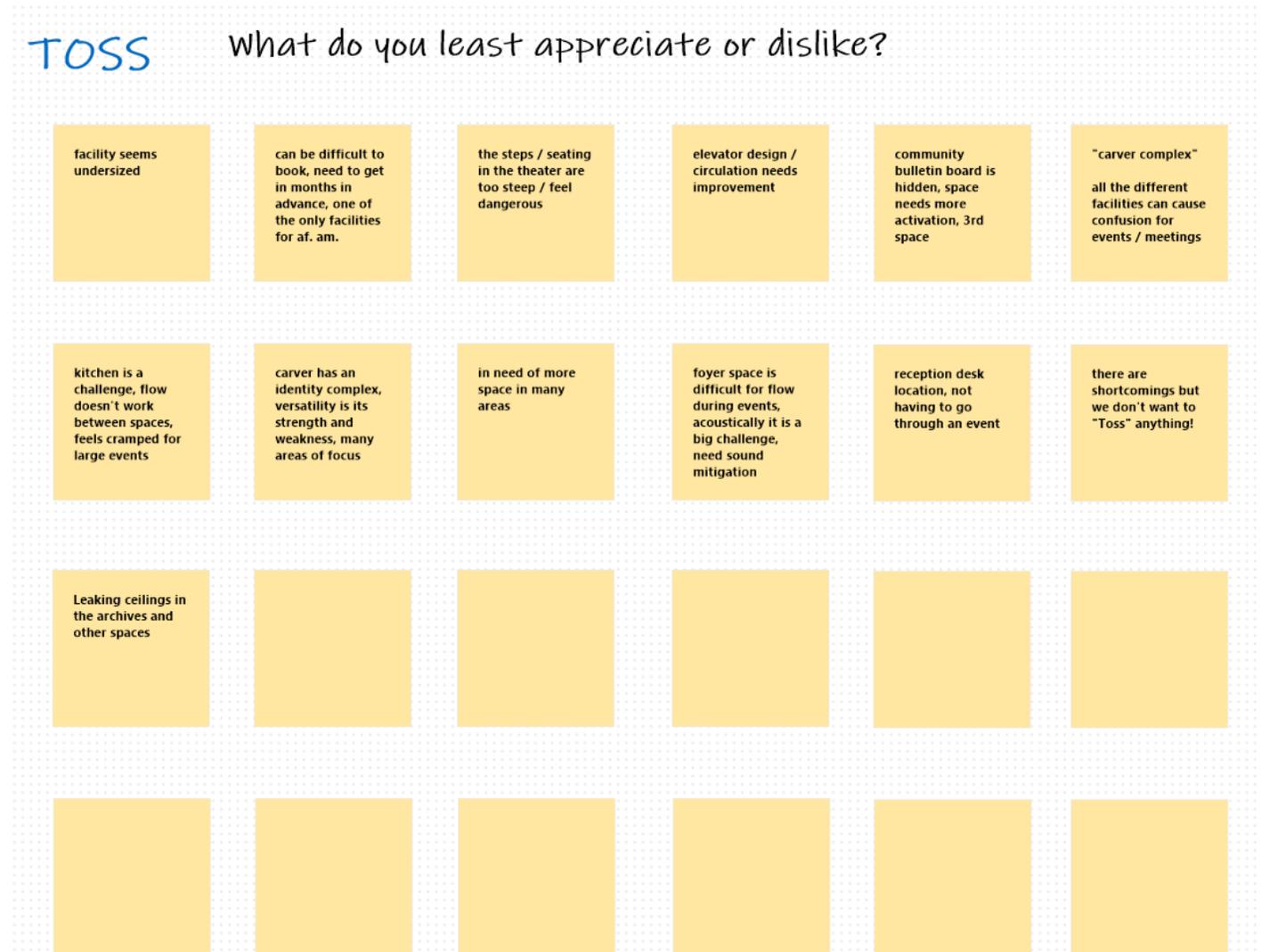
The open space and landscaping around the building is cherished by the participants.

d) Spaces in the building:

The participants felt that the building entryway was very welcoming of the visitors in its gradiosity and markedly African culture inspired patterns.

The theater, while a wonderful space was felt to be too steep by some participants.

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2. Toss: The participants were asked what they appreciate the least or dislike the most about the Carver?

The replies ranged from multiple levels:

e) **Way finding:**

The participants felt that the Carver was a complex of multiple buildings. For a first-time visitor, it is often difficult to distinguish between the various buildings.

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f) Circulation:

Elevator design and circulation spaces need improvements.

The circulation in and around the Kitchen is very challenging and the participants suggested possible expansion.

Challenging circulation in the foyer space during large events

g) Design and utilization:

This is one of the only facilities of this kind for the community here in Austin and is often difficult to book spaces for use since they get booked very quickly.

The participants expressed that the community bulletin board is currently hidden from the public eye and would need some activation around it.

The foyer space often gets very noisy during large events.

The participants suggested re-thinking the location of the reception space.

Numerous spaces in the buildings have leaking ceilings and the participants recommended upgrading these.

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CREATE

What is missing/ what new programs would you like to see ?

More classroom space, meeting rooms, roof top meeting space

more community space, a gathering spot, a "living room?"

better flow, choreograph the audience experience

artist studio space, dance studio space to support specific uses, sprung floors, e.g.

control of heating and cooling being offsite is problematic in terms of damage to the art and collected artifacts

more display / gallery space

walking the grounds just to re-center and ground!

a roof meeting space would be SOOO DOPE - THE Sunsets and sunrises are prefect from the Carver!!

there's a huge black dance community here. So I co-sign on dance floor space AND there's a huge black dance

give people opportunity (space) to draw them back

More cooking classes so that the old recipes are not lost

don't just rethink what we have but reimagine how we can do more

Can the space be wired to telecast what is happening in the spaces, lets say if there is something happening in the

space for child care, this is a multigenerational destination

somewhere to have a snack or drink for visitors

space must be accessible to (i.e. wide walkways, elevators, ramps), etc — easy for folks to enter and move around all

museum gift shop

east side lacks an appropriate space for festivals and events

dedicated & planned garden space - reflective of a black aesthetic

outdoor gallery/ display space? Murals, etc.

technologically supportive art spaces - future of art is changing / evolving

staff needs a space that allows for more creativity, flexibility, involvement, maker space, etc

garden that represents the black aesthetic + could be a farmers market/produce for the community

Exhibition space for local artists, could provide more flexible / experimental spaces

Also, flex performance spaces - black box theatre "and" traditional theatre spaces and dance space with sprung

wayfinding project, improve entry / arrival from multiple points

Staff meditation and hollistic care area

a space that better supports music and recording arts (this is the live music capital after all...)

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3. Create: The participants were asked what programs or upgrades they would like to see here.

The replies were as follows:

h) Ideas:

The participants suggested that while designing the facility, one must not just re-think what one has right now but re-imagine what it could be in the future.

They wanted the space to draw more people in.

The participants also raised another point – is the team considering the finite space of the existing Carver Center? Could we look into the possibility of collaborative or branch development on partner sites?

i) Way finding and Accessibility:

The participants suggested increasing accessibility of the spaces through adequate way-finding signage, wide ramps, corridors, and elevators. It must be designed to be used comfortably by everyone.

Improving entry and arrival from multiple points.

j) Circulation:

The participants suggested choreographing the experience of the audience to design a better flow for the Carver.

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k) **Programming:**

The participants suggested increasing the number of class room spaces, meeting spaces and even creating roof-top meeting spaces(also taking advantage of the views of the sunsets and sunrises).

Studio spaces for artists, dancers, filmmakers/screenings, videography, publishing and other specific users with specific requirements to be incorporated into the new design

The participants suggested increasing the display and gallery spaces in the building.

The participants recommended designing a child care facility in the center since it is a multi-generational place.

Museum gift shop and places for visitors to have a quick bite and a drink.

Since the East side lacks an appropriate space for events, the participants suggested that the Carver Center could fill this void. Site improvements could result in the creation of a hillside amphitheater, outdoor venue, etc.

The landscaped areas could hold farmers markets for the community, as suggested by some of the participants.

There is a need for welcoming and plush study room spaces like the City library.

The participants suggested making place for a teaching kitchen, concession stands supportive of local food businesses.

Staff meditation and holistic care area is needed.

Provision of computer/ technology lab to train people in coding.

l) **Design:**

The participants suggested choreographing the experience of the audience to design a better flow for the Carver.

An orchestra pit can be incorporated in the auditorium.

Spaces for outdoor gallery, display spaces and murals were recommended by the participants and designing art spaces that are technologically supportive and adaptive.

The participants urged that the new design have appropriate spaces for all art to be exhibited – indoors and outdoors.

m) **Building Management Systems:**

Participants suggested improvements to the existing HVAC system since at present, it affects the existing art works.