

Perkins&Will

Meeting Minutes

Date: 5.21.2020 **Authored By:** Uttara Ramakrishnan

Meeting Details

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

Project Name: George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Time: 6.30 PM

Project Number: 215011.000

Meeting Location: WebEx

Attendees:

George Washington Carver Ambassadors:

Bernadette Phifer, David Featherson, Pamela Vance, Clifford Gillard, Latrice Davis, Leon Roberts, Arthur Sauls, Judith Rhedin, Clay Shorkey, Linda Hill, Jill Channelor, Carrie Lane, Harold Bowling, Paulie Emerson, Para Agboga

Smith & Company Architects:

Terry Smith, Juarez White, Ivonne Canez

Perkins and Will:

Stephen Coulston, Malcom Davis, Paul Ward, Uttara Ramakrishnan

Discussion

1501 E 4th St, Bldg A, Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78702

www.perkinswill.com

Please note: The foregoing constitutes our understanding of matters discussed and conclusions reached. Other participants are requested to review these items and advise the originator in writing of any errors or omissions.

Meeting Minutes

George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	ORGANIZATION
1	<p>Greeting</p> <p>A brief introduction of the project and the purpose of the meeting to seek the help of the participants to define a vision for the future of the Carver Center. Review agenda and uncertainty of timeline.</p>	Carre Adams	George Washington Carver Museum
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. Both value diversity and inclusion.</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 Museum
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 Museum
7	Wrap Up	Gregory Montes	COA Parks and Recreation Department

Meeting Minutes
George Washington Carver Center
Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

Exercise: Keep, Toss, Create

KEEP What do you currently enjoy most at the Carver Center?

feels like home, a welcoming place for all, welcoming spirit	celebration of the things we do in the community, bringing this under one roof	our own space for presenting events, artworks, performance	Events held at the carver (silverbell social, santa)	impressed with the theatrical performances	versatility of space, need multipurpose space to accommodate 10-20 round top tables
atrium, entry, openness	"go forth" sculpture (could be highlighted / enhanced)	design of space, including exterior, were designed as teaching tools of our culture	interior and exterior are both utilized, external spaces part of the whole experience of the carver	building design for nurturing, crescent shape	juneteenth celebration -- this is a special thing for carver) austin families
The Entryway (could this be enhanced for visually impaired or others of different abilities)	experiential elements for those of all abilities	Theater	Photo developing (darkroom)	"the drum"	Galleries
Lab Coat experience in the children's gallery	Symbolic nature of "the drum" (needs improvement otherwise)				

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

The replies covered multiple concerns:

a) Idea of the Building:

The participants conveyed that the building elicited feelings of home. It provides a welcoming space for everyone and has a welcoming spirit to it.

The buildings are grounded in African American culture and celebrate the spirit of the community, by encompassing the culture under one roof.

Meeting Minutes

George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

In the same vein, it is a place the community can call their own by providing dedicated spaces for events, performances, and artworks.

The participants are proud of the building design – the exterior, various spaces, symbols and elements throughout the building were designed to be express and teach people the culture of the community. The design of the building as a crescent seemed to represent nurturing qualities to the people.

b) Experience:

Participants cherished the events held here – Juneteenth, Silverbell social, Santa Special celebrations, etc.

The atrium, entryway and its open-ness was something they liked about the building

The participants suggested that the ‘go-forth’ water fountain gets lost at the current location.

The Children’s gallery presents a fun experience for the kids where they don a lab-coat.

Versatility of the building lies in the fact that one can host a reception and a play in the same building.

c) Programs:

The theater, dark room, ‘the drum’, and galleries are spaces that the participants cherish about the Carver Center.

d) Spaces in the building:

The participants felt that the spaces, while being versatile needed to be bigger to accommodate large scale events.

The participants suggested enhancing the entry-way experience for the visually impaired or others of different abilities.

‘The drum’ while being cherished for its symbolic meaning, needs acoustic improvements.

Meeting Minutes
George Washington Carver Center
Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

TOSS

What do you least appreciate or dislike?

Exhibit space is not enough (designed as art, history, culture + childrens) added community gallery later

kitchen is also too small (this is an important part of our culture and use of the space!)

Parking lot is down around the corner, long walk, concern for seniors, after dark

wheelchair access from lower lot (north) is not easy

not enough wall space for temporary displays

no "backstage" backstage

not enough exhibit space

size of theater - it is underused or can't be used - not sized appropriately - either too large or small, depending

theater does not feel safe (railings / steepness)

lack of signage / wayfinding

when the drum is used for meetings it is acoustically challenging

lack of lighting / security on the grounds

lack of porousness between interior and exterior space (visual but not physical connection)

not enough storage space, cant accomodate all the tables and chairs and tables and chairs...

archival space gets taken over by other uses intruding

walking from the parking lot all the way to the front

Meeting Minutes
George Washington Carver Center
Meeting Date: 5.20.2020



Phase 1/2/3 - previous info, can this planning info be made available at the Carver during the process, we all need the information about the designs, previous thoughts, records of other work products, this work product in the future, could this also be part of the collections of the museum

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

The replies elaborated on various issues:

e) Way finding:

The participants conveyed that the grounds lacked lighting and security.

f) Parking and Accessibility:

Wheelchair access from the lower parking lot to the Carver is not easy and needs improvement.

The walk from the parking lot to the museum is long for senior citizens who do not feel comfortable especially when its dark.

The participants suggested including Accessible Parking on the street in front of the Carver.

g) Design and utilization:

The participants felt that the Carver lacked porousness between the interior and exterior spaces and could do with some physical connection to the landscape.

Meeting Minutes

George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

The kitchen is too small for large events, is over-utilized and the participants elaborated on the importance of food in celebrations at the Carver.

The Carver does not have enough wall space for temporary displays.

The participants conveyed they felt unsafe in the theater on account of its steep slope and urged the design team to re-think this space and add a railing at a minimum.

Some of the participants felt that the theater is not sized appropriately and should be re-designed to accommodate events of all sizes.

The Carver auditorium lacks a proper 'green room'.

The acoustics in 'the drum' is challenging when there are many people and needs to be updated in the re-design.

The Carver at present lacks storage space and unable to store all the tables and chairs needed for the various events and gatherings.

The participants suggested expanding the archival space, since right now, this space gets taken over by other uses.

Meeting Minutes
George Washington Carver Center
Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

CREATE

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

classrooms, art school	meeting space	More dance studios, expand theater, space for piano lessons for kids, spaces for young people	Large multi-purpose room, ball-room to host large scale events (incl. 10-20 round top tables)	Black box theater, sound studio	Celebrate other components of art	envious of MAAC since they have a very strong connection with childrens activities
more space for collection and archiving	backstage/ dressing room	Need better signage and wayfinding throughout the facility	Adequate/ more than enough storage space to accommodate all the tables-chairs for very large scale events	Dedicated, large archival space	space for a museum store / gift shop	better lighting around the facility
a professionally landscaped grounds with a sense of enclosure	digital marquee in the front of facility to inform visitors of the facility and events	better connection between geneology center and museum (physical or implied)	signage within the museum directing visitors	Automatic introduction upon entry describing the facility and exhibits up front	better connection interior to exterior	acoustic treatment to The Drum

Meeting Minutes

George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020



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

The replies can be categorized as follows:

h) Ideas:

The participants suggested that the Carver should present itself as a space that celebrates all types of art.

The Carver consists of spaces that speaks to the history of the community.

i) Way finding and Accessibility:

The participants suggested improving signage and way finding throughout the facility.

A digital marquee could also be placed at the front of the building to inform people of the events happening in the facility.

Within the museum, the participants identified the need for better signage to direct visitors. This could be coupled with an automatic introduction of the facility and its displays the moment one enters the building.

Participants also suggested creating a multi-sensory experience through the entryway.

The museum could provide visitors with the option of conducting self-directed tours if needed.

Meeting Minutes

George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

j) **Programming:**

The participants suggested that the Carver must develop a strong connection with children's activities and mentioned the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center does this very successfully with rich programming and provision of a variety of spaces (classrooms, video-production, etc).

Keep all historic data related to the Carver in a designated room.

k) **Design:**

The Carver needs more classrooms, meeting spaces, dance studios, spaces for piano lessons for kids, spaces to engage younger people.

Large multi-purpose room, ballroom to host large events with 10-20 round-top tables.

The participants suggested including in the new design, a black-box theater, sound studio, back-stage and dressing room.

The re-design must include expansion of the archival rooms.

The participants pressed the need to have a lot of storage space to store tables and chairs for large scale events.

The new facility could include a museum store/gift shop as well

Professionally landscaped grounds with a sense of enclosure could be designed with the building physically opening out to it.

It was suggested that the genealogy center and the museum could have a better connection – physical or implied.

'The Drum' needs acoustic treatment.

Numerous pockets for impromptu display spaces could be added to the new design.

The previous masterplan design had a space for an amphitheater, and it was suggested that an amphitheater could be incorporated in the new design to be a space for organizing outdoor movie viewing.

The participants identified the need for a dedicated video-conferencing space that could be used by the community at large.

Including an enclosed sound booth/sound board in the current theater, in the process of re-design was suggested by some participants.

The rear side of the theater needs an elevator.

Relocating the statues to the front of the facility could be an option the design team could consider (posed as a question/suggestion by participants).

More space for meetings or larger events that is flexible enough to be partitioned for smaller meetings as well.

The current theater could be expanded to seat 500 people according to some of the participants.

Meeting Minutes

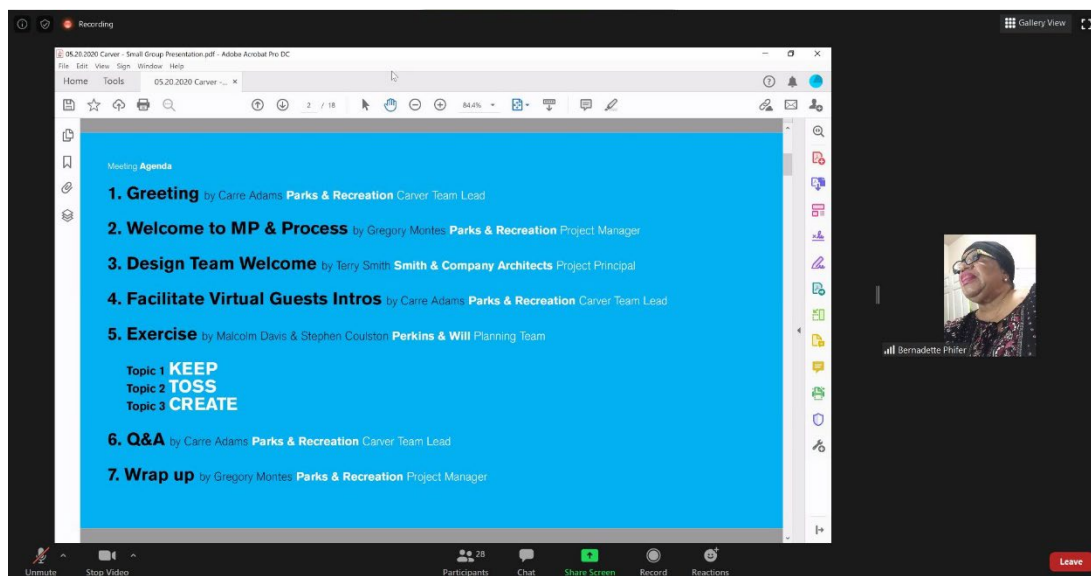
George Washington Carver Center

Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

I) **Building Management Systems:**

Participants suggested improving lighting around the Carver grounds.

Photos/Screenshots of the meeting:



Meeting Minutes George Washington Carver Center Meeting Date: 5.20.2020

