

PLANNING PROCESS

**CarverMuseumATX Facility Expansion Plan
Community Meeting #1 – Breakout Rooms Notes
August 8, 2020, 1 p.m.**

GROUP 1

Brief Introductions

- Meg Ellis - Resident of Kealing Neighborhood
- Jay Perrett – Neighbor
- Savannah Wiseman – Neighbor
- Cynthia Evans – Museum Archive
- Benson – Part of the community
- Chivas Watson
- Bernadette Pfifer

Q1: What facilities, resources, and amenities do you anticipate the future generations of Carver Museum users will need in order to sustain a thriving Black community?

- Changing exhibits about culture, space to make sure history of AA community
- Exhibits need to be expanded; more families need to be added and expanded.
- Importance of the history, local people feedback
- History is history, does not need to be changed. Living history: exhibitions can be improved and added to, but should not be subject to revisionism, toning down, or adding language or interpretation to "soften" what's being communicated about the oppression and segregation of African American communities in Austin. Also not focusing too much on rotating exhibits, rather, let the Carver speak to the history of the community over drawing in folks with flashy, new, or buzzy programming that isn't directly tied to the community.
- History of the families of East side: Family histories and exhibition updates - The surrounding community takes great pride in the family lineages represented on the east side. The Carver Museum could beef up its exhibitions related to family histories and the contributions, leadership, and activism as a touchstone for visitors to understand those that laid the way for Black culture here.
- **Office space in the facility should reflect current and future needs of program staff** - A professional museum requires professional office spaces. It's that simple. Employees have to be comfortable and have the space, tools, and resources they need to do their

jobs well. Staff voices should absolutely be involved in any building planning to make sure their needs are met.

Q2: What additions do current users of the Museum need most urgently and how will this support the future growth and development of the Museum?

- Classrooms, studio spaces (clay, welding)
- Multifunctional rooms (indoor events)
- Ventilation especially for the staff members
- Additional kitchen, larger for more capacity (culinary classes)
- Larger theater (more space for audience and performers)
- Better spaces for the staff (office spaces), they want to fit more people in the same space
- Museum Archive, more space for collections
- Collection Manager needs her/his own space, the actual space assigned for them is not the ideal one
- Updated sound board in the theater
- More apt and capable venue/theater space
- Classrooms that have similar connectivity and networking, creativity factors as APL on Cesar Chavez. Expand the classroom.
- A tech/media hub for voices and perspectives of people of color
- Wayfinding Improvements – Difficult to know where the Library is, Museum, etc
- Pool never has been filled, lack of prioritization
- Additional lighting, adequate lighting throughout the outside of the museum especially at night.
- The Carver needs an more apt and capable venue/theater space; the current holds only 100 people at best. Classrooms that have similar connectivity and networking, creativity factors as APL on Cesar Chavez. Many of us believe, for the Black and Brown community, that there should be a media network established in the Carver Museum similar to KLRU @ UT-Austin.
- a tech/media hub for voices and perspectives of people of color
- adequate lighting throughout the outside of the museum especially at night
- Pool: It's great that the pool is being repurposed for arts and education programming, but its very existence is a slap in the face, and quite literally an ugly reminder of how the city has historically underserved the east side. The fact that you can see it from the Carver building is counterproductive to the work that the Carver is attempting to accomplish. Neighbors have asked for it to be renovated into a splash pad for years, which would be free and available for public use, and consistent with expansion plans to create outdoor community spaces. If the door is open for discussing better use and simplifying ownership of the adjacent properties, please consider adding the pool to the facilities of the Carver so that it can be prioritized as a capital improvement project and integrated into the expansion vision and planning process.

Planning Goals & Principles:

1. Recognize, respect, and reflect the community's **history, culture, and heritage**.
2. As the heart of Black art and culture in Austin, the plan should **advance the vision and mission** of the Carver Museum.
3. Establish stronger **outdoor amenities that connect with nature**.
4. Strengthen the **diverse and inter-generational** experiences in and around the facility, while meeting **present and future needs** of the community and staff.
5. Create **flexible spaces** that could be used by everyone in the community.

GROUP (Group No. 2)

Brief Introductions

- Paul Ward (Host)
- Larry Williams – City
- Simone Alexander
- Melissa Fontenette-Mitchell
- Rosalind Alexander-Kasparik
- Shubhada Saxena

Q1: What facilities, resources, and amenities do you anticipate the future generations of Carver Museum users will need in order to sustain a thriving Black community?

- event space used for community gathering, family gatherings
- family reunion space - 150 people
- Sense of continuity between the original Arch and our new design group
- Expanding Exhibits space
- Focus on the theater space / Tech, sound and Lighting equip
- Approve Seating in Theater
- Multiple performance spaces / Black box flexible space & seating
- The archival space seemed to be currently slightly unutilized

Q2: What additions do current users of the Museum need most urgently and how will this support the future growth and development of the Museum?

- Breakout rooms for workshops 20 to 30 people
- Conference room for 200 to 300 people for local community group meetings
- More staff support for longer hours to use the space
- Increase Size of Theater
- Joint Cultural programming
- More Climate controlled space outside for outside events

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GROUP 3

Brief Introductions

- Terry Smith- Facilitator
- Alison Binford- Scribe
- Alfred Godfrey- Trail Foundation, local Architect
- Carolyn
- Ayne
- Roz
- Judith Rhedin- Texas Performing Arts, UT Austin
- Val Tolbert
- Laura Esparza- City of Austin
- Jena Naylor- Perkins & Will

Q1: What facilities, resources, and amenities do you anticipate the future generations of Carver Museum users will need in order to sustain a thriving Black community?

- Flexible, multi-generational, focus on outdoor spaces is excellent
- Programming—use space to bring in community.
- Think about how space needs might be changing- how to adapt to “new normal”
- Ways to engage virtually and physically
- Addition of food- bring people in, allow people to stay longer
- Genealogy Building- include at connecting more in development of future campus, make more usable and accessible
- Theater- look at ways to expand on use
- Could genealogy building be moved again? Was moved from original location to current location on site. Historic significance of current location?
- Improve connection between the park and Carver- explore opportunities
- Ways to connect building from interior to exterior, particularly on eastside/park side
- Create public face on Rosewood?

Q2: What additions do current users of the Museum need most urgently and how will this support the future growth and development of the Museum?

- Food service venue
- Theater expansion
- Shaded outdoor space- consider modifying some existing spaces, add usage/extend time of usage, create programmable space, flexibility, seating

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GROUP 4:

Brief Introductions

- Michael Emery: long time patron of the Carver, seen museum wilt and bloom
- India Wilmott: Actor, Director, panel for Black art matters atx – space for performing arts and spl. Events for black artists; museum of black diaspora SF
- Pam Vance: long time Austin resident (80s), volunteer at museum, member of Ambassadors, evolution of museum
- Kate Muvceski: ATX public Lib, focus on interior design and renovation @ lib, represents APL
- Andre Fuqua: Artist, from St.Louis/NYC, Carver helped to jump into the arts scene, intergenerational
- Daniella Jauna Chicana:
- Kenneth Luker: Facilitator
- Uttara Ramakrishnan: Scribe

Q1: What **facilities, resources, and amenities** do you anticipate the **future generations** of Carver Museum users will need in order to sustain a **thriving Black community**?

- Past : Numerous locations hosting Af-Am communities in Atx – all of these locations to be memorialized. Central E Atx is not the ONLY location
- Resources in staffing
- Treat carver like one unified entity
- Carver should be the space for all people – eg. 17 yo graphic designer to work, be surrounded by others who can engage with
- Focus: legacy of Carver museum
- Unique opportunity: address new + old art
- Perception: Carver should 'Open Up'; needs more of a presence in the city
- Space for younger black artists and their artwork
- Programs: Wood shop at Carver for all to use, Printing space, Residency for artist from the community with new take, more gallery spaces
- Meeting spaces: encourage black orgs to hold meetings @ Carver (Af-am bridge clubs, more black orgs meet at carver and use the facilities – Will help to bring more people in)
- More events for Af-Am kids, provide transit to get them to museum
- Tie to Churches
- Better ties with other institutions will help get in more people
- Museum Store + café
- Tie with UT and HT
- Destination: Becoming a 'destination.' Eg. Orgs that bring in conferences to the city – tie up with them to get more events. SXSW events can take place here. This is also an

economic opportunity for the Carver – helps sustain other art related progs – Center for ACTIVE ART

- Exhibitions: Maybe minimize the focus on GW Carver since we have other spaces in the country that do this. Instead we have family history exhibits (permanent and temporary)
- Exhibits at Carver – elaborating on the history of Austin –place for new people in the city to learn

Q2: What additions do current users of the Museum need most urgently and how will this support the future growth and development of the Museum?

- Open-up space at the back
- Move statues @back to a prominent location
- More space for people to view performance @back
- Pool – bi-functional space with awning – interlaced with landscape
- Theater: make it bigger –accommodate more events; better designed for plays (soundboard), works well for concerts though, needs a booth for stage manager; dressing rooms (is there a proscenium?), storage for sets. Theater is used as a multi-purpose event space right now and does not work for all the events
- Kitchen: Too small right now. Expand/ build another
- Meeting space: need more, gets booked up quickly

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