

# Perkins&Will

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 7.7.2020      **Authored By:** Uttara Ramakrishnan

### Meeting Details

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**Meeting Date:** 7.31.2020

**Project Name:** George Washington Carver Center

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**Meeting Time:** 1.00 PM

**Project Number:** 215011.000

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**Meeting Location:** Microsoft Teams

**Attendees:**

George Washington Carver Center:

Carre Adams, Arrietta Allen, Ciceley Fullylove, Shellie Eagan, Nicole Parker

Austin Parks and Recreation Dept:

Gregory Montes, Megan Eckard, Larry Williams

Smith & Company Architects:

Terry Smith, Juarez White, Ivonne Canez

Perkins and Will:

Stephen Coulston, Malcom Davis, Uttara Ramakrishnan

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## Discussion

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	ORGANIZATION
1	<p><b>Greeting</b></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><b>Welcome to Master Plan and Process</b></p> <p>A briefing of the project initiation and selection of the design team.</p>	Gregory Montes	COA Parks and Recreation Department
3	<p><b>Design Team Welcome</b></p> <p>Design Team: S&amp;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><b>Facilitate Virtual Guests Intros</b></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><b>Exercise: KEEP   TOSS   CREATE</b></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"> <li>a) What they enjoy the most at Carver?</li> <li>b) What they least appreciate or dislike about Carver?</li> <li>c) What is missing/ what new programs would they like to see?</li> </ul>	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

## Exercise: Keep, Toss, Create

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

Mission - contribution of Af-am diaspora, connection to local history and community - vital	Staff conscious of mission. Focus on presence, opening of core exhibit	Re-branding of Carver	Preserve local history. Community has been heavily gentrified - imp to preserve history	Panels inside, sculpture outside(house) - all need to be better identified	Location as a campus - imp to the future	Close proximity to Huston Tillotson University	
Love the space, need more. Programming is great. Affordable programming.	space for all types of programs. need more space. space to interact with programming (customers,etc)	Keep the culture of E Atx alive with programming - younger generation. Reach out more into community -	Genealogy Center - patrons want more from the center in providing programming, training and	In transition, some opportunity to realign intentions and mission between depts.	Should collaborate more with community	Enjoy new exhibit,sculpture garden - needs plaques behind that	Location of the museum - easy access, right at the div. line of E-W
Natural light ( great but also challenging), makes space welcoming - can also be intimidating	Theater space, gallery space, class rooms, dance studio - imp spaces	Artifact storage room is important for preserving the collections when not on exhibit.	Green space - expansion must accommodate green space/ maintain this	Typically Af-Am museums are house museums/ rec centers. Carver is different ( has a theater, footprint sizeable)	Have a good collection! ( other facilities dont usually have collections )		

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

The replies covered multiple concerns:

#### a) Idea:

- The Carver is a place to exhibit the contributions of the African American diaspora and deeply connects to local history and community. It is important to preserve the local history since the places where the community thrived have been heavily gentrified.
- Re-branding of the Carver is underway.

#### b) Experience:

- Carver staff is very conscious of the mission.
- The panels and sculptures in the Carver need to be better identified and a visitor should be directed to them.
- Great location – ties to history of the community and accessible. Its proximity to Huston Tillotson University works in its favor.
- Typically, African American museums are house museums or recreation centers. The Carver is one of the few museums with a sizeable footprint.

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### c) Programs:

- The participants conveyed that they love the spaces in the building, but the Carver needs more space to accommodate all the programming underway. It houses numerous affordable programs directed at the community.
- The Carver is working towards keeping the culture of East Austin alive. It would be beneficial to the facility and the community to have more programming directed towards the younger generation. The Carver should have a deeper outreach.
- The genealogy center should provide additional training and services to its patrons.
- The Carver has a good collection compared to other museums in the country.

### d) Spaces in and around the building:

- The participants conveyed that the building needs spaces where the staff can interact with the visitors.
- The spaces in the building get ample sunlight – which the people enjoy but can also be a hindrance during setting up certain types of exhibits. Too much light may damage the artwork on display.
- Theater, gallery, classrooms, dance studios are all important spaces.
- Artifact storage room is important to preserve the exhibits when not on display.

## TOSS What do you least appreciate or dislike?

We have too many entry/exits museum. Reduce w/o compromising safety & allow for more wall space for exhibits, etc.	Lack of classroom space and functional class room space	Staff workspace - very open, no privacy, people walk in and out all the time, noisy-dedicated office space for	Breakroom ( cramped atm ) - could do with a bigger space where peopel can sit comfortably, sit, quiet	Storage - very little atm. Gallery, theater, edu - all need a lot of storage	No way to communicate from front lobby to theater during full site events ( PA system? )	Transients by the alcove window by my basement office and door on the loading dock & parking	
Eg. people in the theater may miss a show happening down/ in the grounds. no way to communicate atm	Basement - not comfortable to work in. Worst place to have collection	Administrative area lighting ( fluorescent inst lighting ); admin, class room, conf room are DARK atm	Incorporate natural light into space ( to do )	Archive in the basement atm. Relocate above ground	Too crowded to share between collections, exhibits, maintenance, etc.	Basement is technically the worst area to have collections storage.	Basement is not an area that is comfortable to work.
Flooding in the basement affecting archives	Basement lacks insulation - freezing all the time. Loud ( HVAC, water all exposed ) - may not have been	There was some flooding in the artifact storage room due to crack in exterior wall and ground level against the wall.	Freight elevator and garage doors are loud when opened/closed and this occurs frequently disrupting work.	Bathrooms need redesigning - location of bathroom too far. Could have separate staff bathrooms	Bathroom - bad ventilation	Break room one of the smallest spaces atm. (6X8 ft ) - no faucet/ water outlet as well right now	People rarely use the break room to sit and eat
Wayfinding bt/ museum and library unclear	Public still perceives the place predominantly as a library.	Entire bldg has issues with temperature control (guests have complained, uncomfortable for staff )	Pests in the kitchen	(Classroom used by staff to celebrate etc - no dedicated space for them at present)	Parking: guests park on the curbside blocking traffic & traffic sightlines.	Empty fenced off swimming pool and re-purpose that space for the Carver!	Get simultaneous request from the community to reserve the multi-purpose space

## 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:

- Wayfinding between the museum and library is unclear.
- The public predominantly perceives the facility as a library.

### f) Maintenance:

- Transients by the alcove window by basement office and door on the loading dock & parking.
- Kitchen ridden with pests.
- Pool is empty and fenced off. It is useless at present.

### g) Design and utilization:

- According to the participants, the museum has too many egress (entry and exit) points that comprise on the available wall space for exhibits.

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- The various staff departments (education, etc) need separate rooms. At present, the staff workspaces are very open without any privacy.
- The staff breakroom is very small and cramped. This needs to be expanded. Adding a water outlet would be helpful.
- At present, the Carver has very little storage space.
- During large events in the Carver, there is no way to communicate from the front lobby to the theater. Need a PA system.
- Basement is not comfortable to work in and according to the participants it is the 'worst place to house a collection.' The basement also floods which makes it a bad space to store archives.
- The basement also lacks proper insulation making it uncomfortable for people to work here for long hours. It has exposed HVAC, water lines that present a visual clutter.
- Administrative area of the museum needs better lighting.
- Freight elevator and garage doors are loud when opened/closed and this occurs frequently disrupting work.
- Bathroom does not have proper ventilation.
- Staff uses the classrooms for their gatherings or celebrations. They do not have a dedicated space for this, and the break room is too small to house all the staff at once.
- The Carver needs more space (multipurpose room is always booked).

### h) **Building Management Systems:**

- HVAC system in the whole building needs to be revamped. The staff find it uncomfortable to work and numerous patrons have complained about the

### i) **Parking:**

- Guests park on the curbside blocking traffic and traffic sightlines.

## CREATE

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

We need a reading room for both the genealogy center and the artifact collections area for researchers.

Artifact storage needs museum standard shelving units & new space to allow for future artifact collecting space.

We need a dedicated space for rentals to free up the lobby where pathways get blocked / access points.

Need to address that museums and cultural centers are two different purposes - yet here they're one.

Would like to have a staff breakroom, that provides for respite from external facing activities.

Need storage: have programming that requires repetitive use, so cheaper to 'own' and hold.

More classroom, dance studio, & conference room spaces.

Dedicates staff restrooms.

Additional dance studios needed - 3 rooms would be amazing, could do with 2 more (at the least)

Classroom space (used for class, book clubs, etc) - need additional spaces specifically designed for classes (30-50)

Cultural lounge

Rooms for committees to gather/ meeting. (20 ppl) - bigger conference room

Need adequate space for rental programs and in-house programs to all happen

Lighting in the parking - better. (feel unsafe at night)

Dance studio - class setting usually has 12 ppl (participants) + teacher + musician. Zumba/ other - 20-30 ppl.

Musician practise room that is sound proof. Lot of sound bleed atm.

Studio space - practice, record music

Create 'purpose-built' space for (classrooms, musci, dance, etc.) versus trying to be 'multi-purpose'.

Purpose built spaces - revenue generators

Parking garage to accommodate guests for events

Need at least 2 conference rooms for meetings - one room for staff use and the other for public reservation.

Open to integrate flex-event spaces into the existing design.

overwhelming when there are 150-200 or more ppl right now. (integrated/flex-use - need to avoid confusion)

Can the hallway wall of windows be extended to create a ballroom?

Bad idea to allow events/beverages/ food in exhibit spaces or collections spaces. Spills/Damage/ pests etc. will be a

Certain amt of separation of event spaces is needed. Prevent bleeding/ confusion

Difficult to access outside space from the inside atm (eg. restroom, hand washing)

Separate the cultural center building from the museum building to create a campus?

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Would like better space than basement to work in and store archive collections.	Museum store	Multi-purpose space like the AARC ballroom	Better kitchen	ADDITIONAL theater space	Edible landscape, garden space - reflects GW Carver ethos; citrus trees; programs for kids
Parking spaces closest to the building dedicated to the employees. Well lit and safe for women at night!! - path	Monitor front doors, back area (from the front desk - CCTV)	Roof top event space - big dream! (food, events all at the same lvl as teh gallery)	Distinct program use separation for events/ entertainment - separate from gallery	Create a space where its ok for people to treat it like a club	If we had a ballroom it would never go unbooked.
No intentional lighting around dmonuments, green area at the back. Look at how to make the space safe, well-lit	Seperate artists studio spaces (3 spaces ) - dont need staff to be present for artsist to access space. Full residency/	Green roof	Drum is beautiful but awkwardly shaped. Not conducive to diff. events - event rentals block it.	AMPITHEATHER	Patio and seating area
Need a better access to the restrooms from the outside	Shading outside - freedom plaza area	ADA compliance important	Need good connectivity AND security between indoor/outdoor, especially for events.	Parking lot to museum - accessibility improvements (ADA)	Like idea of an interior courtyard



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

The replies can be categorized as follows:

j) **Ideas:**

- Need to address that museums and cultural centers are two different programs- yet here they're one.

k) **Programming:**

- Future permanent exhibits could depict the history of East Austin.

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### I) Design:

- The Carver facility needs reading rooms for researchers in the genealogy center and the artifact collection area.
- Artifact storage needs museum standard shelving units & new space to allow for future artifact collecting space.
- Carver needs a dedicated space for renters to store stuff. The lobby and pathways get blocked since they are used to store things temporarily.
- The participants conveyed that they would like to have a staff breakroom, that provides for respite from external facing activities.
- More storage spaces.
- More classroom, dance studio, & conference room spaces.
- Would like better space than basement to work in and store archive collections.
- Museum store.
- Carver needs a multipurpose space like the ballroom at AARC.
- Improvements in the kitchen.
- Additional theater space.
- Edible landscape, garden space - reflects GW Carver ethos; citrus trees; programs for kids.
- Pool improvements.
- Multi spaces are needs that are only used for certain functions.
- Dedicated staff restroom with proper ventilation.
- Additional dance studios – 2 or 3 rooms.
- Additional classrooms – 2 to 3 rooms (seating 30-50 people).
- Cultural lounge.
- Bigger conference room to aid gathering of committees or groups of 20 people.
- Need adequate space for rental programs and in-house programs simultaneously.
- Lighting improvements in the parking required. One feels unsafe at night.
- Parking spaces closest to the building should be dedicated to the employees. It must be well lit and safe for women at night, with lighting all along the path.
- Possibility to monitor front doors, back area from the front desk.
- “Its my dream to have a rooftop event space at the Carver. We can host events, food all at the same level of the gallery.”
- Entertainment spaces should be separate from the gallery spaces.
- The Carver should have spaces similar to a club.

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- Expand children's gallery.
- Separate classrooms for art vs learning/lecture.
- New dance studios to house 20-30 people.
- Practice rooms for musicians that is soundproof.
- Create 'purpose-built' space for (classrooms, music, dance, etc.) versus trying to be 'multi-purpose'. These could be good revenue generators. No luncheons should occur in the art room. Mixing of incompatible programs should not be allowed. Flex-event spaces could be incorporated into the design strategically.
- Parking garage to accommodate guests for events.
- Green space at the rear to be safe and well-lit all the time.
- Separate artist's studio spaces (3 spaces) to house resident artists. These could be dedicated spaces for the artists even after the facility closes.
- Need a green roof.
- Drum is beautiful but awkwardly shaped. Its not conducive to house the various events. Oftentimes, this space is blocked by event rentals.
- Amphitheater to accommodate outdoor programs.
- Patio and seating area to be designed.
- "Can the hallway wall of windows be extended to create a ballroom?"
- Accessing the restrooms from the outside should be made easier. Events in the outdoor area may require people to access indoor spaces/restrooms and it is very difficult with the current design of the Carver.
- Create a campus – separate the cultural facility from the museum.
- Purpose built shades in the outdoor spaces – freedom walk, etc.
- Maintain and incorporate better ADA compliance.
- Accessibility improvements from the parking lot to the museum.
- "Maybe we have an interior courtyard?"
- If we are to accommodate more exhibits (rotating and permanent), the Carver would require additional space of around 10,000sq.ft.
- Gallery space can be used by performing artists as well.