



**Town Common:
Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza
Stakeholder Visioning Session**

June 8th, 2017 , 11am - 3:30pm





Meeting Agenda

On June 8th, 2017, Rhodeside & Harwell and Perkins + Will facilitated a stakeholder visioning session with Sycamore Hill Baptist Church representatives. The information obtained as part of the session will be used to develop alternatives for the Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza.

11am - 12:30pm: Welcome, Introductions, and Project Overview / Site Analysis

12:30pm - 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00pm - 3:30pm: Homework Assignment Discussion*

***Legacy / Remembrance**

Think about what Sycamore Hill means to you personally and how it has impacted your life. Come prepared to share a story and/or an artifact, piece or memento that has special meaning for you.

***Precedents**

In your travels (actual or virtual), have you have encountered buildings, landscapes and other environments that have moved you or otherwise made a positive Impression. These places could be areas, buildings, venues, gardens or other spaces not necessarily related to the development of the Sycamore Hill area. Print out 8 x 11 images - as few or as many as you like - and bring them to the meeting.

Results from the visioning session has been summarized on subsequent pages.

RHODESIDE & HARWELL

PERKINS + WILL

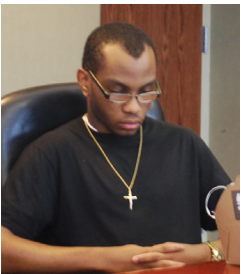
Legacy / Remembrance

Think about what Sycamore Hill Baptist Church and Downtown means to you personally and how it has impacted your life.



Freddie Outterbridge

Downtown was not a slum. The neighborhood reflected the culture of the area. Founded by 22 people in a home, Sycamore Hill Baptist Church grew to be prominent in the community. Community leaders such as teachers, businessmen/women, lawyers and school principals were patrons of the Church. Some people that did not attend the Church were jealous of the congregation's status in the community. The Church's choir sang negro spirituals that told the Bible's story. The music has stuck with him and a lot of other people throughout the years. Church parishioners taught young people that "they will be someone and do great things in life". It is important to inform people of what the church was like-- the Church's history should not be lost. At one time, the Church used the Tar River for baptisms which forged a bond between the Church, the River and nature.



William Barnhill Junior

To William, Sycamore Hill means "family". His grandfather lived along the Tar River at what today is the State Employees Credit Union site. His grandfather, mother, and uncle attended the Church which was established over 100 years ago. He believes that the Church's history should be preserved. He noted that in school, students learn about national history, but little attention is given to local history. For him, local history is just as important as national history.



Joe Rogers

Joe is new to Greenville and joined the Church within the last 10 years. He lived in several communities affected by Urban Renewal. Sycamore Hill Baptist Church has a rich heritage which evokes knowledge and spiritual uplifting. He is concerned about the project's 'architectural movement' including the relocation of the amphitheater and other memorials closer to the Sycamore Hill commemorative area. He believes park elements should fit together and preserve the 'calm and spiritual' character of the commemorative.



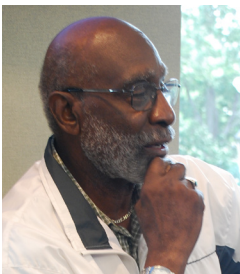
Barbara Brown

Barbara was born on First Street. She attended church every Sunday, three times a day including Sunday School, regular Church service and the Baptist Training Unit. She loves music and sang in three choirs including junior, young adult, and adult choirs. She believes that the Church's rich heritage should be celebrated so that the future generations can reflect on it.



Ann Floyd Huggins

Ann lived on First Street, the second house down from the Church. She moved from the County into Greenville while in the 8th Grade. Growing up, her grandmother believed in attending church regularly. As a result, Ann attended Sunday School as well as both morning and evening worship services. She remembers the beautiful sounds of the choir. Ann loves Sycamore Hill Baptist Church and worship service attendance has become a family tradition.



Alton Harris

Alton was born on Reade Street near the existing ECU bus transfer station. As a young man, he remembers running down to Church every Sunday morning to be the first to ring the bell. As result of Urban Renewal, his family had to move and subsequently they lost many possessions. He is appreciative that Church elders took him under their wings at a young age. He has served as an usher at the Church for over 25 years- a legacy that he would like to pass down to younger generations.



Elly Tyson Harris

She grew up in Cherry View. She sang in the C.M. Eppes High School Choir and became known as a 'songbird'. After her father's friend passed away, she attended the funeral service at Sycamore Hill Baptist Church and heard the choir sing 'Rock of Ages'. To her, the choir sounded like a record-- a sound so beautiful that she can still recall it today. She joined the Church in 1963 and joined the choir. She enjoyed the Church's strict structure and remembers her 'Red Book'. She was baptized at church with Alton Harris and they later married on June 8th 1968. The wedding was the first event at the new 8th Street location. She recalls the erection of the 1995 commemorative monument located at Town Common Today.



Hellen Horne

She would like to see the history of Sycamore Hill Baptist Church restored and recognition given to the many productive citizens it produced.



Sam Barber

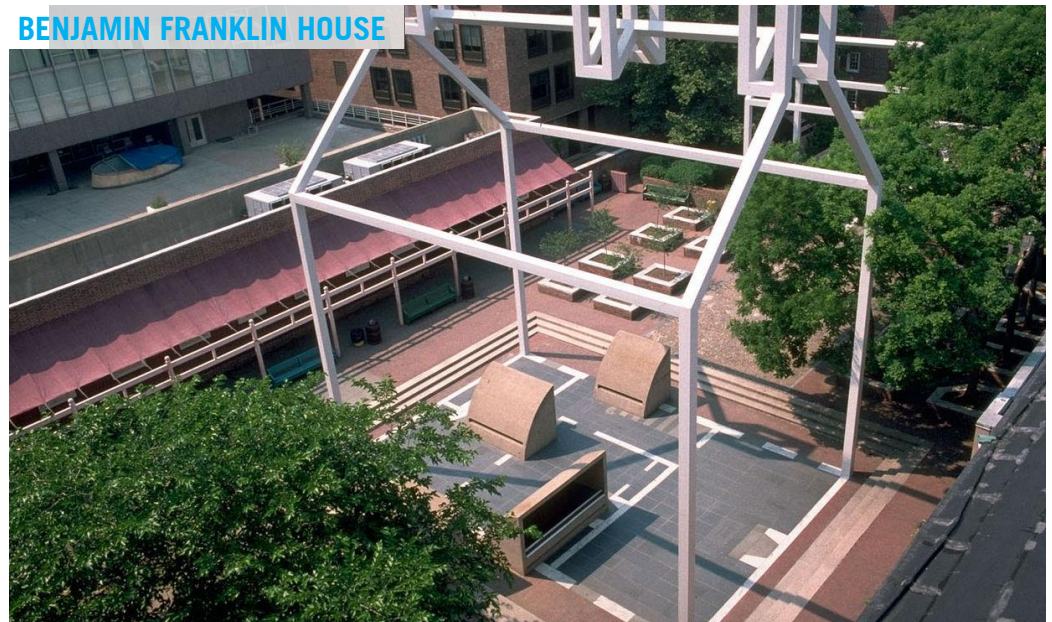
Sycamore Hill baptist Church represented the pinnacle of Greenville and it was an integral part of the Downtown commercial district. The Church was rebuilt several times from 1872 to 1968. Early iterations of the church were wood and later developed with brick in 1917. In 1932, stained glass windows and a pipe organ were installed in the Church which were features unusual for black churches at the time. Once the City's Urban Renewal project commenced, the Church originally decided not to relocate. On February 13, 1969 church was burned and records of the fire are not available. Many artifacts contained in the church could not be saved. He believes that the history of the Church must be told and preserved.

Precedents

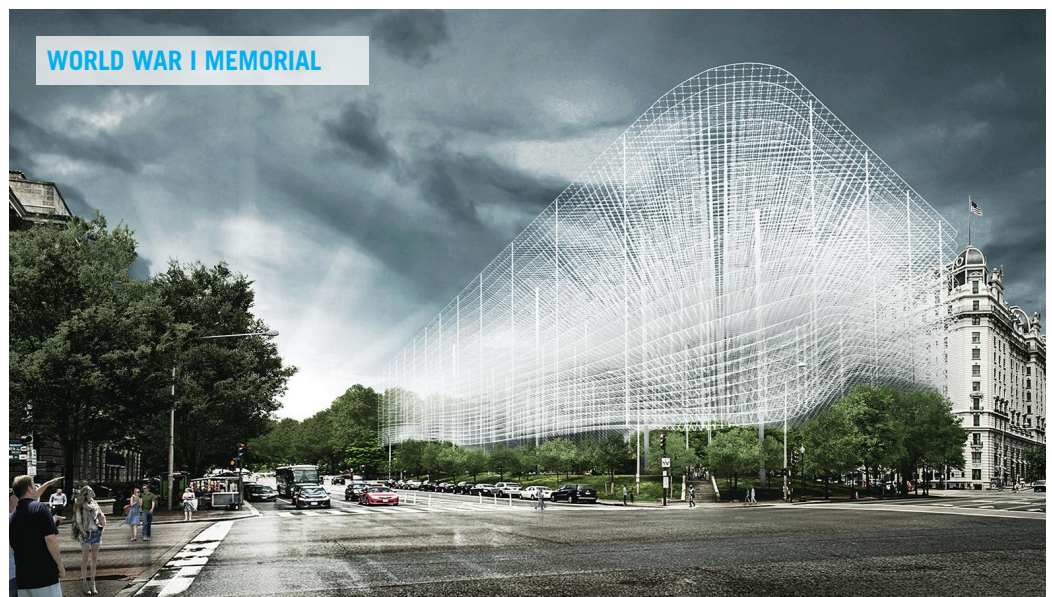
The following precedent images were shared with the group to illustrate how other communities have commemorated places and events. Reactions to each precedent image were recorded below:

Group Responses

- Too open
- Looks unfinished



- Beautiful
- Spectacular
- Looks like a cloud



Group Responses

- Grass looks unkept
- Looks like a market or bus shelter
- Could be in Africa
- Zigzag pathway with field of flowers
- Looks sad

NATIONAL LYNCHING MEMORIAL



- Modern
- Pretty
- Blends old and new
- Like the triangular forms

NYC AIDS MEMORIAL



- Unique
- Odd
- Beautiful
- Harmony of nature to its environment
- Blooming
- Rhythm
- Movement and shadow from above- like the shadow pattern cast on the ground
- Pleasing and relaxing

NYC AIDS MEMORIAL



Group Responses

- Seasonal
- Peaceful
- Interesting
- Monumental
- Walls could be a barrier to access
- Blends warm/neutral and cool colors
- Draws attention



- Wow!
- Beautiful
- Sun and trees
- Peaceful
- Looks like God's creation
- Water captures shadows
- Looks like gates

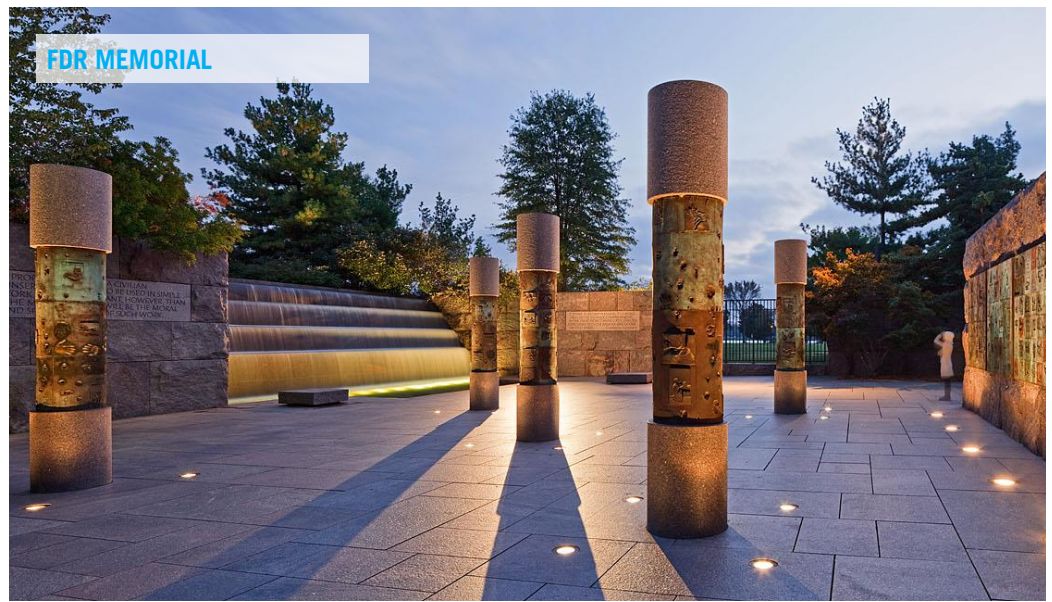


- Oh my goodness!
- I like it, very nice!
- Good place for meditation- provides a place to express yourself with God
- Peaceful / quiet
- Pretty
- Looks like a maze
- Light and dark shadows
- Vertical beacons of light



Group Responses

- Totem poles
- Don't like columns- too many
- Columns can reflect history
- Like waterfall the with lights
- Looks like a museum entrance
- Images appear to be Egyptian hieroglyphics
- Beautiful
- Unique



- Looks like a cemetery
- Sad
- Scary
- Too many markers



- Shape is beautiful
- The vegetation is dense
- Geometric forms can be seen from above
- Can't experience it on the ground
- Looks like a map
- Could be difficult to maintain



Group Responses

- Greenery and wood
- Beautiful
- Feels like a building entrance
- Church-like
- Meditation space
- Wedding space
- Gothic
- Reminiscent of the Sistine Chapel



- Sign similar to those around town
- Looks a building / rest stop
- Could be playground equipment
- Looks like a church
- Appears fragile
- Woodlands are too close- feels unsafe
- Can be seen from all directions



- Looks Roman Catholic
- Like how the path wraps around the monument- can walk around it and up
- A place of reflection
- Purposeful
- Spacious
- The structure is elevated above the sidewalk
- Looks like a tombstone



Adams Memorial, Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, DC

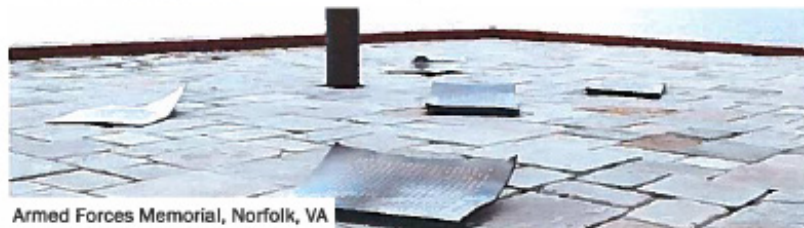
Group Responses

- Reminiscent of the movie Glory
- Don't like it- reminiscent of Civil War



Shaw Memorial, Boston Commons, Boston, MA

- Looks like a hurricane came through and tossed paper around
- Doesn't do anything for us
- Could be a series of testimonies.



Armed Forces Memorial, Norfolk, VA

- Like the lights and images along the wall
- Mimics the original building, but not entirely
- Uses the imagination
- Reminiscent of Roman empire ruins



President's House, Philadelphia, PA





Design Team Reflections

On June 9th, the design team met to reflect on the discussion with stakeholders. The following are key takeaways that were discussed:

- Stakeholders are excited and eager to share their memories. There is a great pride in the Church and the community it fostered.
- There is a strong sense of community- everyone feels like family
- This project will serve as an important healing process for the Sycamore Hill community.
- Explore tower and other alternative concepts that best interprets the Church and the legacy of Downtown.
- Iconic elements of the church included the bell tower roof pitch / shape and red brick.
- Remembrance of Downtown is important.
- Downtown was a neighborhood that included many people that owned their home.
- Downtown was a place of culture.
- A map of Downtown could be used for interpretation.
- The Church was a place to nurture people for the future.
- The Church's music was significant. The 'Red Book' and musical notation could be interpreted.
- Baptism in the Tar River and connection to the River for rebirth is significant.
- The commemorative should be a place for reflection.
- Provide connections to nature.
- Create a place that attracts young people to learn about the community's history.
- Provide a venue for physical content such as images, stories, etc.
- The Church was symbolic of "arms reaching out to the community and holding on to children".
- Consider the noisy traffic from First and Greene Street in relation to the commemorative space

Neighborhood Pitch
Baptism People Tangible
Pride Stories Uptown
Protecting Young
Nature Reaching
Sound Community Homeownership Music
History Map
Downtown Connect Share
Venue Gathering Family
Shape Remembrance
Healing Redbook Memories
Nurture
Spirituality

Meeting Sign-In Sheet

6-8-17
City Hall

SIGN-IN SHEET

	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
1	Raul Somers	ransom@redhellen.com	703-683-7447
2	Helen Horne		
3	Ann F. Huggins	afhuggins@suddenlink.net	252-757-1444
4	J. F. Chadwick		
5	Juanita Bullock		
6	Doris Smith		252-830-9038
7	Joseph M. Rodgers	jnr.rodgers65@suddenlink.net	756-4127
8	Jane Smith		252-830-9038
9	Willie Green + Shirley	no email	252-565-8645
10	Sam Barber	Primo9999@aol.com	252-355-0814
11	Walter Horne		
12	MICHAEL STEVENSON	michael.stevenson@perkinwill.com	202-441-9498
13	Connie Morris	Connie.morris27834@suddenlink.net	
14	William D. Barnhill Jr.	sllickavel26@gmail.com	
15	FREDDIE OUTERBRIDGE	floomaga@aol.com	
16	LILLIAN OUTERBRIDGE	ltoutt@aol.com	
17	Barbara Gainer Brown	barbar302@aol.com	252-347-8877
18	Ella T. Harris	Katell63@aol.com	252-752-3828
19	Alton B. Harris	Katell63@aol.com	252-752-3828

