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## I. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

### *History and Description of Jefferson School*

Jefferson School is located on the western edge of the Central Business District in Charlottesville Virginia, one block from the downtown mall between West Main Street and Preston Avenue. Situated on land referred to as Toole's Hill, Jefferson School was developed to serve the education needs of the African American community.

Built in three phases, the oldest portion of the building, fronting on Commerce Street, was constructed in 1926 as Jefferson High School. Later additions to the School were constructed in 1938 and 1958. Carver Recreation Center was added to the north end in 1958 and served as an indoor gymnasium for the school and a community recreation center.

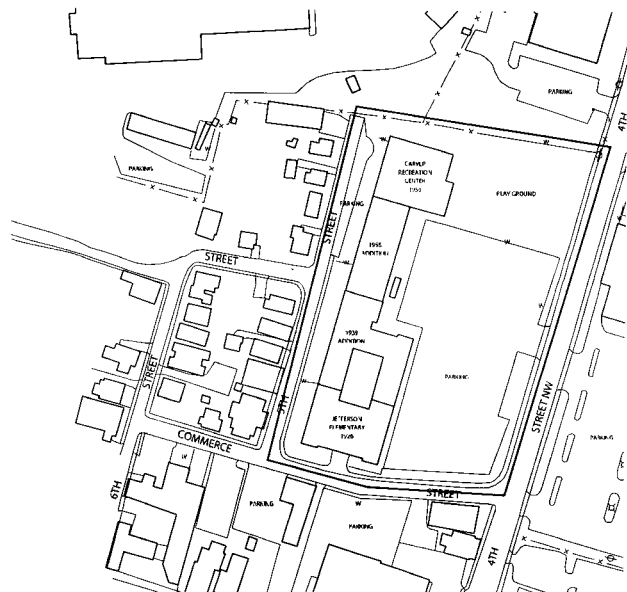
A portion of the complex includes the parcels acquired in 1894 for the construction of the Jefferson Graded School. The Biennial Report of 1894-95, of the *Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Commonwealth of Virginia*, lists two schools in Charlottesville in 1894, one being a five-room Colored School at Union Depot. In 1895, the Colored School is listed as being located on Commerce Street with six grades and six teachers.

Jefferson High School was constructed in 1926 on a site adjacent to the elementary school. The high school was expanded in 1938-39 to accommodate the growing student population. In 1951, a joint city-county black high school, Jackson P. Burley High School on Rose Hill Drive, was opened. Jefferson High School students now attended Burley High. Relocation of the high school classes to Burley created

additional space in Jefferson School for elementary classes.

Between 1953 and 1957, the city acquired all of the lots to the north of the school complex between Brown Street (which was vacated between Fourth and Fifth Streets) and the City Yard for the expansion of the school and the construction of the Carver Recreation Center. In September 1959, the newly expanded Jefferson Elementary School opened for fall classes. During that summer, the "old Jefferson Graded School" was demolished.

In June 1964 the last black elementary school classes were dismissed, ending the era of segregation in Charlottesville. The school was reopened in 1965 and served as a temporary location for all 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in the city, while the city completed two new middle schools. Between 1967 and 1995, Jefferson School served a variety of uses, primarily as temporary classroom/office space for elementary



*Jefferson School site*

schools and city offices undergoing renovation. In fall of 1995, the City's preschool special education program was moved to Jefferson School. Between 1995 and 2002, the school housed Adult Education, English as a Second Language, as well as the City's Preschool Program, Suspension Center, supply and maintenance center, and the Piedmont Community College Neighborhood Center. Jefferson School was closed in June 2002. Carver Recreation Center continued to be open as a community recreation center operated by the City Department of Recreation.

### ***Background on the project***

In 1998, residents in the Starr Hill neighborhood approached the City with concerns about the appearance and condition of the school building. Upon inspection by building officials, the school board was notified of numerous building code violations both within and on the exterior of the building. Preliminary estimates for renovation of the building for continued use as a school were in the range of \$8M. This issue, combined with an internal school board evaluation of the pros and cons of a centralized preschool program vs. locating programs in each of the elementary schools prompted discussions by City Council and School Board on the reasonableness of expending funds to renovate Jefferson School.

Between 1999 and 2001, in expectation of the building being declared surplus by the school board, the city began initial explorations of possible redevelopment scenarios for Jefferson School. The City

initiated a planning effort utilizing the design team of the Torti-Gallas & Partners/CHK. The architects were challenged to create a redevelopment scheme that would retain the existing school building and Carver Recreation Center, provide space for a community auditorium/history center, an early childhood education center (operated by either the City's Preschool Program or a private provider) and be achieved with limited public funding. In early 2001, the team submitted three development alternatives that addressed the City's charge. The development schemes included the public use amenities, and redevelopment of a significant portion of the school as housing, and construction of additional housing or a mixed-use development on the site. The new construction was proposed to offset cost of renovation for the public uses. The community resoundingly rejected these schemes.

In the winter of 2001, the School Board voted to close the building and deed it and the site to the City. In January 2002, Citizens for Jefferson School (CFJS), a citizen action group, was formed. CFJS lobbied City Council to establish a citizen task force to guide a full study of the redevelopment and financing options for the school.



*Jefferson Graded School*

### ***Appointment of Citizen Task Force***

On April 1, 2002, City Council approved a proposal from the Citizen's for Jefferson School to create a citizen task force to consider the future of the Jefferson School building and site. The CFJS recommended that in considering appointments, Council would insure that the task force was representative of the community and included the technical expertise needed to successfully complete the project.

City Council appointed 16 citizens representing a broad range of interests and expertise to serve on the Jefferson School Task Force. In September 2002, the consulting team of Mary Means & Associates /Kweli Konsulting was retained to facilitate the Task Force planning process.

### ***City Council Charge to the Task Force***

***The following Guiding Principles were approved by City Council on April 1, 2002:***

- The Historic Phase I of the buildings should be redeveloped with the original building facade kept in place with entrance from Commerce Street.
- Explore using the auditorium level and surrounding classrooms as a public area for meetings, stage events, dances, and class reunions and for use of the citizens of Charlottesville.
- Explore using some of the classrooms around the auditorium to display the historical and cultural heritage of African Americans who attended the school and of the Vinegar Hill Community.
- The gymnasium facility will be refurbished at its present location or a new facility will be built on site and have continued use by Recreation and Leisure Services.
- Although there are no specific development plans for the areas surrounding Jefferson School, consider the redevelopment of the School in light of the fact that development of the school site may influence the character of development in the immediate area.
- Explore options for any potential new construction that the site offers; require on-site parking.
- Require all proposed new buildings be of similar architectural scale and compatible with existing building.
- Explore use of Federal, State and Local Historic Tax Credits for the redevelopment.
- Consider the advantages/disadvantages of historic designations.
- The site should be developed consistent with urban design principles with emphasis on pedestrian friendly street edges and landscaping.
- Explore public/private partnerships for the redevelopment and operations.
- Develop and recommend comprehensive plan of program uses and a long-term financial plan for construction and operation costs. City funds for the project and operations are limited.
- Present several alternative scenarios in the final recommendations to City Council.

## II. Task Force Planning Process

The fifteen-month Task Force planning process allowed the Task Force members and interested citizens to consider a wide range of ideas and concepts for the redevelopment of Jefferson School. One of the first decisions was to gain agreement on several key points. The Working Assumptions and Guiding Principles permitted the Task Force to defer a final decision on several important issues while exploring a range of ideas and concepts for new uses of Jefferson School.

The research and brainstorming phase of the planning process allowed the Task Force to consider a wide range of potential uses and themes for the project. During this phase, the Task Force invited expert speakers to gain additional information on historic designation and redevelopment. Task Force members participated in tours of projects in Richmond and Petersburg.

In the third phase, the Task Force developed a menu of options for the redevelopment of the school building. These ideas were tested with potential partners and local service providers to gain additional insights on the feasibility of the concepts.

The Task Force presented the themes and concepts to the community at an April 22<sup>nd</sup> workshop. More than 50 citizens participated in the meeting. Two themes emerged from the community meeting – (1) honoring the history and purpose of the school by keeping the building in public use and (2) not converting the school into housing.

In the fourth phase of the planning process, the Task Force identified and tested three scenarios that met the guiding principles and were feasible new uses for the school. The Task Force received information from an

economic development consultant specializing in land use economics on several models to evaluate renovation and development costs, balanced by possible

### **PHASE I. WORKING ASSUMPTIONS**

*It is the Task Force intent to support a request for nomination to the state and national registers of historic places for the building and some or all of the grounds. In our planning it is our working assumption that the entire building and some or all of the site is eligible and appropriate for historic designation.*

*The building and/or site will house multiple uses. Educational uses, in their broadest sense, are priority uses for Jefferson School.*

*Jefferson School should continue to be a gathering place – a place that brings people together and a meeting place.*

*Jefferson School is a cornerstone/ key contributor to the surrounding neighborhoods, businesses and downtown. All scenarios will be respectful of the adjacent neighborhood and will seek to strengthen the link between Preston Avenue, Main Street and the Downtown.*

*The Task Force recommendations to City Council will include an evaluation of both capital development costs and long term operating costs, to better understand the sustainability of the building and the uses.*

### **PHASE I. TASK FORCE GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

*All scenarios will:*

- *be developed as if the building has been officially listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.*
- *honor the meaning and symbolism of the building and its original use.*
- *provide for some degree of public access and civic purpose.*
- *incorporate space and/or way to tell the story of Jefferson School and African Americans in Charlottesville/ Albemarle.*

revenue streams, and financing alternatives.

Members of the Task Force presented the three scenarios at a community workshop on October 4. Workshop participants were in general agreement that relocation of the Library to the School was a preferred scenario. This scenario maintained the school as a center for learning and empowerment. The library is a public use that is open and accessible to all citizens. The community workshop participants agreed that the library would be a good partner with other community activities and programs such as a Cultural Center for the interpretation of African American history in Charlottesville and a Saturday Academy for college bound African American students. The Carter G. Woodson Center for Local Studies was also identified as a potential partner with the Library and other educational and cultural uses.

There was also community support for the Task Force scenario for a children and family focused center. The types of uses that were identified by the workshop participants included early childhood education, tutoring, arts and cultural education, job training and counseling, and family support services. The third scenario, for a multiservice center with a job training focus raised some community concerns on feasibility. Several participants stated that these uses had earlier been located in Jefferson School and were not successful.

The final phase of the Task Force's work was to consider guidelines for redevelopment of the site. The final report recommends concepts for development of the school and site. The Task Force reached consensus on many of the key recommendations. The Task Force did not reach consensus on issues related to development of the site or on possible expansion/ redevelopment of Carver Recreation Center/ and the 1958 section of the School. Both options are presented with rationale to City Council for their consideration.

### ***Public input throughout the Task Force planning process***

In addition to the community meetings, the public was invited to attend and speak at the beginning of every Task Force meeting. Representatives of Citizens for Jefferson School, Preservation Piedmont, and Jefferson School Alumni regularly attended the meetings and reported to their membership on the Task Force decisions. Meeting notes were posted on the City's website (on the Jefferson School Task Force page) and were distributed to members of the School Board and City Council on a regular basis. The Task Force meeting notes were reported on the Citizens for Jefferson School website.

### III. Task Force Recommendations

City Council charged the Task Force with considering a range of questions and concepts when developing recommendations for the future use of Jefferson School and the site.

One of the first lessons learned was that the Jefferson School planning process was about much more than the redevelopment of a surplus publicly owned building. Jefferson School is an important historic cultural resource worthy of preservation. Future uses should honor and interpret the history of Jefferson School students and African Americans.

#### ***Summary of Recommendations***

1. Nominate the Jefferson School/ Carver Recreation Center building for listing on the National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register.
  - Include the Phase I and II site associated with the 1926/ 1938 buildings in the nomination.
  - Consider including the entire site in the application for nomination.
2. Modernize Carver Recreation Center as a City recreation facility. Funding should be set aside in the City's capital improvement plan.
3. Redevelop Jefferson School as a civic purpose project.
4. Program the original Jefferson High School building for use as a cultural/ educational facility focused on interpreting the history of Jefferson School and African American history from a local, regional and national perspective.

5. The facade of the 1926 and 1938 sections of the building should not be altered.
6. Rehabilitation of the Jefferson School building, interior and exterior, should be done in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
7. Public entrances to the building should be on the 4th Street, Commerce Street, and City Yard sides of the building. On the 5th Street side of the building public entrances should be limited to those needed for Carver Recreation Center
8. An appropriate landscape area should be developed to provide pedestrian and visual connections to the Commerce Street entrance.
9. Design guidelines for the West Main North zoning district should include recommendations for buildings abutting the south side of Commerce Street:
  - Rear service entrances should be





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- appropriately designed or shielded from view from Jefferson School.
  - New construction should be encouraged to have attractive facades with windows and entrances along Commerce Street
10. The Fifth Street side of the building faces the Starr Hill neighborhood.
- a. No changes or additions should be made to exterior of Jefferson School along the Fifth Street building face.
  - b. No loading, service entrances or dumpsters should be permitted on this side of the building.
  - c. Appropriate landscaping should be installed along the face of the building.
11. Development of the Jefferson School site
- a. Consolidate the Jefferson School site and some portion of the city yard site (public works administration building) as a single development site, taking in to consideration likely site constraints from previous uses.
- b. New construction should be of a similar scale and compatible with the existing building;
  - c. The project should be pedestrian friendly.
  - d. The project should maximize green space and landscaping
12. City Council should adopt development design and use guidelines incorporating the Task Force recommendations to be followed by the development entity.
13. City Council should place a high priority on enhancing the development of and on the site by taking action to:
- a. acquire/preserve viewshed and pedestrian access to McIntire Road;
  - b. acquire viewshed and pedestrian access from West Main Street to Commerce Street entrance
14. City Council should seek opportunities to improve linkages from the Downtown Mall, McIntire /Ridge to the Jefferson School site. Development of a pedestrian path linking the Omni Center / Downtown Mall and Jefferson School is desirable.

## IV. Development Themes

The Task Force explored a range of development and reuse themes that would be appropriate for Jefferson School.

- Jefferson Cultural Center
- Carver Regional Recreation Center
- Jefferson Education and Career Center
- Jefferson Condominiums/Apartments
- Jefferson Academy
- Jefferson Library and Learning Center
- Jefferson Children's Place

Jefferson Cultural Center. Several cultural uses would be co-located under the umbrella of the Jefferson Cultural Center. Potential partners for this concept included the Virginia Discovery Museum, the Charlottesville/ Albemarle Historical Society, and the Music Resource Center.

Carver Regional Recreation Center. Jefferson School would be redeveloped as a regional recreation center. Additional outdoor recreation would be developed on the site for tennis, basketball, skateboarding and children's play areas. Possible partners for this concept included Boys and Girls Club, YMCA and the City.

Jefferson Education and Career Center. Jefferson School would become a central site for the co-location of adult education, job training and counseling and employment services. Possible partners for this concept included the VEC, PVCC Job/Career

Training programs, Piedmont Works, and Bio-Medical Training Programs.

Jefferson Condominiums/Apartments. Jefferson School (with the exception of Carver Recreation Center and space for the Jefferson School Cultural Center) would be developed as housing. Possible partners for this concept were non-profit and private sector housing developers.

Jefferson Academy. The concept of a five-day Afrikan-centered academy was proposed as an appropriate educational use for the school. The focus of the school would be a rigorous academic program that would prepare young African American students for college or university. Possible partners for this concept would be recruited from outside Charlottesville.

Jefferson Library Learning Center. The anchor tenant would be the Jefferson Madison Regional Library with other supporting uses. Potential partners for this concept included the Jefferson Madison Regional Library, Charlottesville Albemarle Historical Society and the Children's Discovery Museum.

Jefferson Children's Place. Jefferson School would be developed as shared space for children's educational programs and family support services. Potential partners for this concept include a for-profit day care provider, and Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA).

## V. Development Scenarios

**Task Force Recommendation:** *Redevelop Jefferson School as a civic purpose project.*

In the next phase of the planning process, the Task Force came to consensus that the preferred development scenarios for the school building should focus on the co-location of public purpose uses. Three scenarios were identified: Jefferson Multipurpose Services Center, Jefferson Learning and Community Center and the Jefferson Library and Cultural Center. These three scenarios honor the history and role of Jefferson School as an educational institution and address Council's charge and the Task Force's guiding principles.

There are several common elements in the three scenarios. All require creation of a public / private partnership involving multiple partners. Implementation and management of the project will require the active participation of the partners and tenant/users. The development/ ownership entity should be structured to optimize use of historic tax credits and grants as part of the financing package.

Each of the proposed scenarios presumes the presence of a cultural center/ interpretation component and the continued use of Carver Recreation Center as a modern city-operated recreation facility. The final development plans envision additional development on a portion of the site with densities and uses sufficient to provide for public benefit in the school building.

**Task Force Recommendation:** *Modernize Carver Recreation Center as a City recreation facility. Funding should be set aside in the City's capital improvement plan.*

### **Carver Recreation Center**

Carver Recreation Center is currently maintained and operated by the City's Department of Recreation and Leisure. The 18,000 square foot facility includes the City's only regulation size full-court basketball facility. Other spaces include community recreation rooms, a roller skating rink/community event facility, an area for ceramics, a small kitchen, and office space.

The Carver Recreation Center has not been upgraded in several years. The dilapidated condition of the community event facility has discouraged many of the social clubs from holding their events at the Center. The Task Force strongly urges the City to renovate Carver Recreation Center to provide modern, up-to-date facilities and to improve the overall appearance and functionality of the center. Carver Recreation Center should continue to be operated and maintained by the City. Planning for the renovation should take into consideration the possible expansion of the facility to include additional recreation services compatible with the proposed new use and to serve the growing downtown residential and business community.

### **New Uses for Jefferson School**

#### **Jefferson Cultural Center**

The renovation of this building creates the opportunity to "tell the story" of Jefferson School and the African American community in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. This can be accomplished several ways, ranging from including displays throughout the building, to setting aside

**Task Force Recommendation:** *Program the original Jefferson High School building for use as a cultural/ educational facility focused on interpreting the history of Jefferson School and African American history from a local, regional and national perspective.*

space for programming as a cultural and educational center within the building.

The Task Force is in agreement that the interpretation of Jefferson School and African American history in Charlottesville is too important to be relegated to displays scattered throughout the building and on the site. There is unanimous agreement on the Task Force that at a minimum, the first floor of the original 1926 building should be devoted to a heritage museum whose central focus would be the African American experience in the Charlottesville/Albemarle region. The available content for a heritage museum/cultural center is extensive – in private collections, at the University of Virginia’s Carter G. Woodson Center, the and at the Charlottesville-Albemarle Historical Society. There are objects, documents, photographs and oral histories that could enrich permanent and changing exhibits and stimulate lively public programs. Properly done, an African-American Experience Center could be an important opportunity for community dialogue and understanding, as well as a source of pride for all. It could also become an item in the region’s palette of visitor attractions.

Presently, however, an organization with the capacity and commitment to bring such a cultural center into being does not exist. Nor is there an organization that can program and operate it, and conduct the fundraising needed to support its operations. Before there can be a Cultural Center, there must be a champion and a high-capacity non-profit organization committed to the

capital and operating challenges involved in creating and sustaining it.

What will be the focus of the cultural center? This is a question that will shape the audiences it will attract, for if it is as narrow as ‘the history of Jefferson School and its alumni,’ as fulfilling as this may be to alumni, it will be of little interest to others – black or white. If, however, the focus is a more universal theme, it will appeal to many more people and age groups. Because Jefferson School is in Charlottesville, home of Thomas Jefferson, and because of recent scholarship about Jefferson and slavery and civil rights, it is not out of the question to imagine a focus for the museum/cultural center that could attract many of the visitors to Monticello and UVA, possibly even extending their stay and adding to the economic impact of tourism regionally.

Carter G. Woodson Institute Center for the Study of Local Knowledge, the Charlottesville Albemarle Historical Society, Jefferson School Alumni Association, Office of African American Affairs, Luther P. Jackson Black Cultural Center (LPJBCC) at the University of Virginia, African American Genealogy Group of Charlottesville/Albemarle and Citizens for Jefferson School, Inc. have been identified as potential partners to be tapped to develop an interpretative plan for the cultural component for the project.

### **The Jefferson Library and Learning Center**

The Jefferson Library and Learning Center brings Jefferson School back to life as a center for knowledge and learning. With the Library as the anchor tenant, new and dynamic relationships can be created between the Library and a wide range of activities and programs that could become a

*Imagine walking up to the door that opens into a 21<sup>st</sup> century library, being welcomed by a dramatic two story space that showcases local art and history, looking out onto a floor space that is surrounded by reading areas, stacks of books, computer work spaces. The aroma of coffee and spiced cider from the coffee shop just inside the entrance door invites you to linger before walking up the stairs to the classrooms in the Jefferson Learning Center where your book group is meeting..*

*You are looking forward to an invigorating morning of discussion, relaxed knowing that your preschooler is safely in the hands of the drop in childcare teachers on the first floor. In your bag are your yoga clothes for a class at the renovated Carver Recreation Center later in the morning. Tomorrow night, you'll be coming back to Jefferson for a piano concert in the auditorium. You and your friends are strolling over to dine at one of the West Main restaurants after the concert. One of the historic "before" photographs of the Jefferson School building catches your eye. It is hard to remember when this lively center was a sad, tired looking place.*

destination for residents, visitors and students.

The anchor tenant for this scenario is the Jefferson Madison Regional Library, Charlottesville Branch.

Other supporting uses considered in this scenario include:

- Classroom/ office space for: Afrikan centered Saturday academy, Center for the Study of Local Knowledge at Carter G. Woodson Institute for African American and African Studies, PVCC, Jefferson Institute of Lifelong Learning (linked to UVA continuing education programs for seniors), English as a second language classes.
- Gallery/ display/ museum space for: Jefferson School African American Cultural Center, Albemarle Historical Society, Children's Discovery Museum
- Meeting rooms and auditorium space for all of the uses.

- Carver Recreation Center. Carver Neighborhood Recreation Center could include expanded programming for drop-in childcare or playroom space in support of the education and cultural center programming.

### **Jefferson Learning and Community Center**

The Jefferson Learning Center renews Jefferson School as a place for children to learn. With a full day childcare center as the anchor tenant, the Center would become home to a wide range of child centered education, recreation and cultural programs.

The anchor tenant for the Jefferson Learning Center is envisioned as a full day childcare center with a strong academic and Pre-K program.

Other supporting uses considered in this scenario include:

- Language immersion program for 3 and 4 year olds.
- After school programs and tutoring programs for K-12 students
- Gallery/ display/ museum space for: Jefferson School African American Cultural Center, Albemarle Historical Society, Virginia Discovery Museum
- Meeting rooms and auditorium space for all users
- Classroom space for: Afrikan centered Saturday/ after school academy, adult education, Center for Study of Local Knowledge at the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African and African American Studies
- Office and classroom space for job training and job counseling
- Office space for family counseling and service providers
- Carver Recreation Center

*Imagine listening to the sound of children laughing on the playground early in the morning as parents arrive by bus, trolley and car to drop off their preschoolers for a day of learning and play. In the afternoon when parents return, their older school age children have already arrived at the Center. The middle schoolers are enrolled in computer and science enrichment programs, the early elementary students are practicing ballet or learning to build a space station. In the evening, high schoolers take over, coming for SAT preparation classes and math and language enrichment coaching sessions.*

*When the center begins to close its doors at 10 p.m., the director looks down the long hall to the auditorium. People are setting up for tomorrow's visit by UVA scholars and students taking part in a "memory lane" day learning from the stories and talks by Jefferson Alumni and historians. Going to their cars in the parking deck, the sound of basketball and dance class jazz is faintly in the background, as people begin to leave Carver after the last aerobics and dance class. As the lights go out around midnight, the Center is ready for another day. It will come alive again when the first child arrives.*

### **Jefferson Multipurpose Services Center**

The Jefferson Multipurpose Services Center renews Jefferson School as a one-stop center for adult education, job training and employment services. This scenario does not require an anchor tenant to be successful. The Center would be renovated as leased office, classroom and lab space. The Center would be managed by a consortium of service providers to encourage the appropriate mix of educational uses and service providers.

The lead agencies in this scenario would be the VEC and an expanded and enhanced One-Stop Employment and Training Center. The Center consortium could include PVCC Job/ Career Training Programs, Bio-Medical Training Programs, and Piedmont Works programs.

Other supporting uses considered in this scenario include:

- Adult higher education programs – degree
- Gallery/ display/ museum space for Jefferson School African American Cultural Center
- Meeting rooms and auditorium space for all users
- Carver Recreation Center

*As a businessperson arriving at the Center early in the morning, you pick up your coffee and bagel from the downstairs café, lingering for a few extra minutes to listen to the news on the bank of televisions in the lobby. You are here for a seminar on International Banking Regulations, held in one of the classrooms upstairs. On the way, you check the board for program announcements.*

*After your morning class you can stop by the Career Center and check with the counselor to see if there are any new candidates interested in the position with your firm. Good news: there is a full house in the Cisco Certification classroom as you walk by. You are hopeful you can schedule one or two interviews by the end of the week. Positions have been hard to fill recently, it seems that more and more people are being snapped up by top firms, and wages seem to be rising.*

*As you walk past the windows that overlook the central courtyard, friends are engaged in a lively discussion over breakfast in the courtyard's crossroads cafe. Checking your watch as you sit down for the seminar, you breathe a sigh of relief that you didn't have to drive to Washington last night and then fight traffic on the way home. Having this wonderful Center and its specialized classes has really increased productivity and saved money. While your staff training budget has remained the same over the last two years, now you can promise everyone that they will get the training they need and get to hear top speakers, brought in to keep everyone motivated.*

## **VI. Development Considerations**

### ***Interpretative Plan***

An Interpretative Plan is an important component of any development scenario. While the Task Force's charge is to provide a set of recommendations, once its work is done, no matter the choice made by Council, further detailed planning will be needed to develop an interpretative plan.

The cultural center's proposed focus on the African American experience in the region touches on areas where there are strong feelings and different viewpoints. It could be very constructive to begin with the issue of interpretation, and create an interpretive framework collaboratively, as a way of developing community ownership and raising community excitement.

Interpretation is the art of presenting information about historical events or natural sciences in ways that engage people emotionally, framing the stories in ways that connect to people and their own lives. An interpretive framework provides a set of themes as story structure. The stories that evolve from the interpretive framework can be presented in a variety of media: exhibits, film, audio programs, living history dramatizations, and so forth. The art of a good interpretive framework is its ability to approach the subject from a fresh perspective.

When the subject matter is one where there are strongly conflicting perspectives (the events of labor history, for instance, are viewed differently by workers and corporate leaders), the process of developing an interpretive plan can be provocative and constructively tense. This can lead to a robust dynamic for public programs and can help communities work through some of the differences of their pasts. Properly done, a

dynamic interpretive plan will be exciting and stimulate interest in bringing it about. Since the issue of "whose story is it?" is so important, it is recommended that doing an interpretive plan should be the first step in exploring feasibility.

Scholars such as Reginald Bell and others at the University need to be involved, as well as alumni of Jefferson School, Caucasian and African American leaders from the Civil Rights Era up through the present. It is recommended that the group undertaking this vital step engage an excellent interpretive planning professional with experience in similar settings who would work with a diverse committee of knowledgeable individuals.

### ***Cultural Center***

A physical place set aside for interpretation of the story is included in all of the development scenarios. For the cultural center component, a 'pursuit group' will need to undertake the next stage of planning, which involves feasibility. While all can agree that it would be great to have a cultural center, making it happen cannot be done by City Council.

Those who seek to start a new cultural center need to begin with decisions about its purpose, and mission. As part of the development process, the pursuit group will need to determine the level of support and physical size of the center.

Development of the cultural component of the project will start with the interpretative plan. The interpretative plan is an important component of planning for the physical space and framing the fundraising campaign.

The African-American Cultural Center could attract leadership support from Carter

G. Woodson Institute, and the University of Virginia through Office of African American Affairs, Luther P. Jackson Black Cultural Center (LPJBCC) at the University of Virginia but would require a significant capital campaign. If sufficiently bold in concept, the cultural center could attract national foundation and government support and become a visitor attraction.

**Task Force Recommendation:** *The original Jefferson High School building for use as a cultural/ educational facility focused on interpreting the history of Jefferson School and African American history from a local, regional and national perspective.*

### **Library and Cultural Center.**

There is strong public and Task Force support for this scenario. A Library and Cultural Center would create an opportunity to bring together on a single campus uses that attract patrons from across economic, geographic, age and race boundaries. It provides an opportunity for the library facility to move beyond the traditional format of book stacks to the new era of libraries as interactive knowledge centers. Linking the library mission and programming with the expanded role and mission of organizations such as the Charlottesville / Albemarle Historical Society and the Center for the Study Local Knowledge at the Carter G. Woodson Institute brings to life to history and history to the future. With Charlottesville's acclaimed Festival of the Book and the growing number of well-known authors in the region, the potential support for an exciting Library/Cultural Center should not be underestimated.

This scenario is the most exciting and dynamic vision; it will also require

significant civic and philanthropic effort over a 5 – 7 year time frame to bring to fruition. Development of a new library facility will require collaboration between city and county, Library Board, Friends of the Library and more. For the project to be successful, significant fund raising will be required for development of the facility and expansion of services and facilities that creates a new space that does more than simply replace the current space requirements.

The Jefferson Library and Cultural Center could become significant downtown destination and activity generator in the revitalized downtown.

### **Jefferson Learning and Community Center**

Jefferson School is an excellent central location for a child-centered facility. With a full day childcare center as the anchor tenant, the Center would become home to a wide range of child centered education, recreation and cultural programs.

This scenario would require formation of a development entity as the managing partner to guide the project and recruit partner tenants. This scenario will require a philanthropic and civic capital fundraising effort over a 3 -5 year time frame. Development of the Center will require collaboration between a private childcare center and for-profit and non-profit child center educational and cultural programs. For the project to be successful, the facility must have a sufficient mix of programs to attract children and families from the greater Charlottesville area.

While this scenario meets the community's goals and values that education of children be the focus of the new use of Jefferson



School, a significant hurdle that must be overcome is balancing the need of recruiting tenants able to carry their share of the project costs and the desire for programs that are open and affordable for all children. No one user (either a private child care provider or a nonprofit organization) is a large enough single user to manage the project.

In developing the partnerships needed to implement this scenario, it will be important to frame the new use as one with appeal to local and national philanthropic interests that traditionally support child centered programs.

In this scenario, the cultural component is significantly smaller in scale, for the more focused role of the complex would not generate the broader public audiences associated with a library. The cultural component could range in magnitude and scale from a portion of the 1926 building as cultural center and exhibit space, down to interpretive displays of Jefferson School and Vinegar Hill artifacts throughout the building's hallways.

### ***Jefferson Multipurpose Services Center***

Jefferson School is an excellent central location for a multipurpose adult education,

job training and employment services facility. It is easily accessible by public and private transportation, with adequate parking and is within easy walking distance of major employers and services.

No anchor tenant has been identified for this scenario. This scenario would require formation of a development entity as the managing partner to guide the project and recruit partner tenants. The Center operates as leased space and would not require a significant fundraising campaign. Fundraising in this scenario would be focused on development of the cultural component and building and grounds enhancements tied to the historic importance of the site.

In this scenario, the cultural component is significantly smaller in scale, for like the child-centered Learning Center, the more focused role of the complex would not generate the broader public audiences. The cultural component could range in magnitude and scale from a portion of the 1926 building as cultural center and exhibit space, down to interpretive displays of Jefferson School and Vinegar Hill artifacts throughout the building's hallways.

## VII. Downtown/Neighborhood Context Considerations

Jefferson School is located on the western edge of the Central Business District in Charlottesville, one block from the downtown mall between West Main Street and Preston Avenue in an area traditionally known as Vinegar Hill. The western edge of the property faces the Starr Neighborhood. Starr Hill is a residential community composed of one- and two-story houses, many of them dating from the late 1800s. The northern edge of the property abuts the City Yard site. The eastern and southern edges of the property face the commercial uses located in the Downtown and West Main North mixed use corridor districts.

The Vinegar Hill area was the center of Charlottesville's African American residential and business community in the era of segregation. An urban renewal project cleared much of the area in the 60s. The Omni Hotel and west end of the Downtown Mall were developed on land assembled during this time period. There has been little development activity in the area east of Jefferson School. The combination of the uncertain future of Jefferson School and the presence of the City Yard as the abutting property may have had a dampening effect on investment.

The Starr Hill neighborhood is experiencing a renewed interest in downtown living. Over the past five years as homes have come on the market, there has been a marked increase in prices with many of the new owners then making a significant investment

in renovation. Improvements to Jefferson School will be a benefit to the neighborhood. The current dilapidated appearance of the building has been a source of concern to the neighbors.

The West Main corridor is also enjoying a resurgence of investor interest. This corridor is identified as one of the City's priority areas to encourage the development of high quality mixed use (residential and commercial) properties that will link the University of Virginia and Downtown by an attractive urban corridor. Jefferson School sits one block north of the West Main Corridor. If Jefferson School is redeveloped as a major cultural attraction it would benefit—and benefit from—development on the West Main Corridor.

Jefferson Library and Cultural Center and an updated Carver Recreation Center would be a major new cultural attraction that would strengthen the edge of downtown, and generate significant activity, including tourists. It could stimulate development of the former grocery store property across Fourth Street.

Jefferson Learning Center and Jefferson Multipurpose Service Center and updated Carver Recreation Center would strengthen edge of downtown and better link the Starr Hill neighborhood to downtown. Redevelopment of the site could aid redevelopment of the former grocery store property site across Fourth Street.

## VIII. What Might It Cost?

### Overview and Assumptions

Renovation of the historic school building can be calculated in several ways. There is an underlying cost to restore the exterior of the building, install new electrical, heating/air-conditioning, plumbing and fixtures, repair and or restore windows, doors and roof and other building systems. To take advantage of Federal and State Historic Tax Credits, all renovation must be done to meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for historic structures.

In addition to renovation of the exterior and core systems, the building must be renovated to meet the needs of the tenants. Depending on the ownership/ management model, the cost for fitting out the space for tenants may be part of the overall project budget, or may become the responsibility of the individual tenant. Estimates for fitting out spaces to meet the needs of individual tenants are broken out by scenario.

### Building envelope

The Jefferson School building contains approximately 74,000 sq. ft. Of this, Carver Recreation Center occupies 18,000 sq. ft. of the total building. Using an average per square foot cost of \$150, renovation of the building envelope and systems would be in the range of \$8.5M. Of this figure, approximately \$3.7M may be offset through the sale of Federal and State historic tax credits.

Federal and State Historic Tax Credits apply to the costs for renovation of the historic

**Task Force Recommendation:** *Rehabilitation of the Jefferson School building, interior and exterior, should be done in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.*

### Building Envelope & Systems Renovation

Total Sq. Ft.	73,867		
Carver Recreation	-18,000		
Balance	55,867	at	\$150 per sq. ft.
		<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>= \$8,380,050.00</b>
<b>Tax Credits</b>			
Federal	-20%	=	-\$3,771,023
State	-25%	=	-\$1,676,010
			-\$2,095,013
		<b>Remaining Balance</b>	<b>= \$4,609,028</b>

portion of the building. They do not apply to building acquisition, new construction, or renovations that do not meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for historic structures. Federal and State Historic Tax Credits may apply to some of the interior finishes for specific uses.

### Tenant Space

### Cultural Center

Assuming the cultural center is to be a stimulating experience for its audiences, one of which is visitors to the region, the exhibits and programs need to be interactive and dynamic, more than just glass cases with objects and documents. Interactive exhibits are costly to develop and fabricate, but they are much more popular with audiences and provide a more engaging learning experience – especially for children and young people already accustomed to technology.

In addition to the costs of rehabilitating the building envelope and systems, there will be the cost of exhibits, fixtures and furnishings. Costs to fit out the space will range from \$100 sq. ft. for back office and visitor support facilities to \$250 – \$500 per sq. ft. for exhibits. Costs to fit out the cultural center could range from \$1.25M – \$2M. In

addition to fit out costs, a cultural center will have ongoing staffing costs. If there are few collections, and the cultural center is mostly a teaching environment rather than a research operation, it can be designed for a minimum level of staffing. One should assume that an active museum with ongoing public programs will require a professional staff of 3- 5 people, including director, educational outreach personnel, and development staff.

### **Library**

In 1999, the library conducted a space needs assessment for both the branch and central administration functions. The study determined that approximately 50,000 sq. ft. of space would meet the current and projected needs of the library. Using 50,000 sq. ft. as a minimum space requirement for the library, building fit out could be in the range of \$5M.

### **Learning and Community Center**

In the learning center scenario, approximately 10,000 sq. ft. would be a childcare center, with the remaining space developed as classrooms and support space. Estimated costs to fit out the space for this scenario could be in the range of \$2.5 – \$4M.

### **Multipurpose Service Center,**

In the multipurpose service center, the building would be largely programmed for office and classroom space. Estimated costs to fit out approximately 45,000 sq. ft. could be in the range of \$1.75 – \$2.5M.

### ***Food for Thought***

In considering the financial feasibility of the preferred development scenarios, several preliminary cost and revenue estimates were

developed. These estimates are general in nature and may vary greatly from final cost estimates, pending in-depth architectural and engineering studies and more focused market analysis.

### **Library and Community Learning and Cultural Center**

The estimates for this scenario included construction of a two story parking facility on the north edge of the property, and a two story addition to the Phase III 1958 section of the School to create a dynamic two story entrance and circulation area for the Library, with a direct link to the parking facility to provide all weather pedestrian connection to the library and cultural center. Additions to Carver Recreation Center would provide for enhanced facilities for aerobics rooms and exercise facilities as well as associated lockers, restrooms and support services. The additions to Carver Recreation Center would have direct linkages to the parking facility for all weather pedestrian connections.

The preliminary estimates were intended to provide some sense of the magnitude of the project. The library and community cultural center is the most expensive option. It is, however, the one that creates the most excitement and by changing the image of the Vinegar Hill district is the most likely to stimulate development that will better connect the downtown, the West Main Corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods.

## JEFFERSON SCHOOL TASK FORCE

### LIBRARY AND COMMUNITUY CULTURAL CENTER

	Sq. Ft.	\$ Per Sq. Ft.	Estimated Cost
<b>Library</b>	<b>52,000</b>		
Central Library/ Administration Functions	10,000	150	\$1,500,000
Charlottesville Branch Functions	37,300	200	\$7,460,000
Meeting Rooms	2,700	150	\$405,000
Storage space	2,000	75	\$150,000
<b>Education/ Office</b>	<b>5,500</b>		
Classrooms	3,000	150	\$450,000
Work and storage space	2,000	75	\$150,000
Office space	500	100	\$50,000
<b>Cultural Center</b>	<b>8,000</b>		
Exhibition space	5,000	200	\$1,000,000
Work and storage space	2,000	75	\$150,000
Office space	1,000	100	\$100,000
<b>Carver Recreation Center</b>	<b>20,450</b>		
Renovation of existing space	18,000	100	\$1,800,000
Additional space: weight room, aerobic room	2,450	100	\$245,000
Sq. Ft. Required	85,950		
Renovated space	73,867		\$10,815,000
New construction	12,083		\$2,645,000
<b>Parking Garage</b>			
2 levels / spaces	130	20000	\$2,600,000
	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$16,060,000</b>
	Eligible for tax credit treatment		\$10,815,000
	Federal tax credit		-\$2,163,000
	State tax credit		-\$2,703,750
	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$5,948,250</b>
	New construction		\$2,645,000
	Landscaping		\$1,000,000
	<b>Development costs</b>		<b>\$9,593,250</b>
<b>Interior finishing/ furnishings/ fixtures</b>			
	Library		\$5,000,000
	Cultural Center		\$2,000,000
	Classrooms		\$1,250,000
	Carver Recreation		\$1,000,000
	<b>Total</b>		<b>\$18,843,250</b>

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### Jefferson Learning and Community Cultural Center

CHILDREN AND FAMILY CENTER			
	Sq. Ft.	\$ Per Sq. Ft.	Estimated Cost
<b>MACAA</b>	<b>29,500</b>		
Office and program space	14,000	125	\$1,750,000
Head Start Classrooms (3)	6,000	125	\$750,000
<b>AFTER SCHOOL AND/OR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER</b>	<b>9,500</b>		
Classrooms (4)	8,000	125	\$1,000,000
Office	500	125	\$62,500
Storage	1,000	75	\$75,000
<b>FAMILY SERVICE PROVIDERS</b>	<b>12,000</b>		
Program space	6,000	125	\$750,000
Office space	6,000	125	\$750,000
<b>JEFFERSON SCHOOL CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY CENTER</b>	<b>4,726</b>		
Exhibition space - Auditorium	3,426	200	\$685,200
Work and storage space	1,000	75	\$75,000
Office space	300	100	\$30,000
<b>CARVER RECREATION CENTER</b>	<b>20,450</b>		
Renovation of existing space	18,000	100	\$1,800,000
Additional space: weight room, aerobic room	2,450	100	\$245,000
Sq. Ft. Required	76,176		
Renovated space	73,867		\$7,727,700
New Construction	2,450		\$245,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$7,972,700</b>
Eligible for tax credit treatment			\$7,727,700
Federal tax credits			-\$1,545,540
State tax credits			-\$1,931,925
<b>Subtotal</b>			<b>\$4,250,235</b>
New construction			\$245,000
Landscaping			\$1,000,000
<b>Development costs</b>			<b>\$5,495,235</b>

The estimates for this scenario focused on redevelopment of the school and Carver Recreation Center for a mix of childcare providers and family service providers. The tenants would share some of the meeting room and play space for children. In this scenario each tenant would be responsible for the cost of specialized fixtures and furnishings to complete their space. The estimates for renovation of Jefferson School for a Multipurpose Center were similar to the Learning and Community Cultural Center.

### **Jefferson Community**

Two scenarios were developed that used rental housing as the primary use for the school building, although there is strong opposition on the Task Force to this concept. The Task Force also heard opposition to the housing concept from members of the Jefferson School Alumni and Citizens for Jefferson School. The housing scenario was tested despite community feelings, in the interest of exploring financial feasibility in case the Task Force determined that a viable non-housing use for the building was not possible, then at a minimum the structure could be saved through adaptive reuse as housing.

These scenarios confirmed earlier findings by the City that if the property was developed as housing, then some portion of

the building could be developed for public uses such as a community cultural center, classroom and exhibit space. Retaining Carver Recreation Center as a facility at the site has been a given in all discussions.

In preliminary estimates, retaining both floors of the 1926 building and Carver Recreation Center as civic uses, with the conversion of the remainder of the space into residential units indicated that the project could break even if the development made maximum use of the federal and state tax credits, and the city donated \$2M to the renovation. The cultural center uses presume the sponsoring organization/tenant would raise funds for interior finishing of their space, fixtures and exhibits. A nominal rent would be charged for the classroom, exhibit and cultural center space.

## IX. Complementary Development on School Grounds

Some Jefferson School Task Force members have suggested incorporating private sector uses—particularly residential, retail and office space—into the project to offset costs associated with the rest of the development program. The Jefferson School environs enjoy several significant competitive advantages, most notably its central location with easy proximity to the downtown business district, the University of Virginia campus and such other employment centers as the medical complex. A very conservative estimate of the portion of the school site that is unsuitable for new development leaves about 1.5 acres for redevelopment. Adding to it the eastern portion of the adjacent Public Works/City Yard site would create a redevelopment site of approximately 3 acres.

If, at some future date, Charlottesville elects to pursue development on the northern third of the Jefferson School site, possibly in conjunction with a parking garage, and/or the eastern reaches of the City Yard, it will be necessary to conduct a market analysis to determine what feasible uses should be considered. Market analysis forms the basis for real estate investment decisions regarding use, location, size, pricing, design and quality.

Forecasting market support entails examining both sides of the traditional supply-demand equation. The supply side represents the existing or expected competition that offers the market a comparable choice. The demand side represents consumers with affinity and need for the project. In real estate, all locations are, literally, unique although they may share the market: the source of demand. But while quantifying the supply of complementary and competing uses is fairly

straight-forward, projecting demand melds standard methodologies and established analytic techniques with intuition, particularly when projects intend to induce consumers to change how they relate to the built environment: where they live, work, shop and play.

Real estate market analysis helps decision-makers evaluate the risks and potential rewards inherent in buying, developing or redeveloping property. In addition to developers, those benefiting from real estate market analysis include elected and appointed officials, lenders, neighbors, competitors, and entities operating complementary uses. Although techniques for evaluating market potential varies by real estate product—they type of development being contemplated—all address the following fundamental issues:

- Can the project capture business from users willing to rent/buy space and/or the products, services or experience being offered within it?
- What is the relationship between price and market absorption?
- How should the product be tweaked to optimize its performance in the market place and/or improve its competitiveness?

When people care deeply about a particular parcel, like Jefferson School, it's easy to assume that development will flock to the opportunity or, conversely, to assume that the market has been thwarted. On occasion, developers neglect viable areas because:

- the regulatory environment discourages commercial growth;



- past experience suggests a difficult approval process lies ahead;
- the resident base has changed without an appropriate response from the commercial sector;
- the lending community holds old perceptions of the area, perhaps because only aged data is available;
- outside forces may influence the length of time to market unpredictably (as in brownfield sites or projects affected by pending legislative action), creating uncertainty about return and generating unacceptable opportunity costs.

Some of these forces appear to be at play with regards to the Jefferson School.

Once demand and supply are fully understood, they become key ingredients for a financial feasibility analysis that ultimately reveals whether a project will succeed from the point of view of various stakeholders, including investors, tenants, redevelopment and other public agencies, lenders, and the developer. Like market assessments, feasibility analyses are ongoing ventures, continually refined as new information becomes available and assumptions are replaced with facts. Preparing a feasibility analysis requires an understanding of both construction costs and operating economics, along with informed strategy for the end

game: will the developer own and operate the project in perpetuity, flip it after some number of years, or hire outside management? How will establishing multiple types of uses together affect performance? Are there synergies or disincentives that affect how the market resolves its demands? Charlottesville will need to understand these dynamics before bringing the Jefferson School opportunity to the development community.

### **Meaning for Jefferson School**

As Charlottesville contemplates reshaping Jefferson School's role in the community and responds to changing market dynamics, quantifying demand and determining what incentives, if any, are necessary to induce developers to respond to opportunities becomes crucial. These issues emerge whenever complex projects arise, particularly when they must overcome real and perceived barriers to success or when taxpayer dollars or strategic parcels are in play. Balancing those risks is commensurate reward: projects that can exert a transformative effect. As a community, Charlottesville needs to articulate what it desires for the area surrounding Jefferson School—expressed in terms of character as well as land use—and then determine whether sufficient demand exists or can be induced to achieve it.

## X. Building Renovation and Site Development Guidelines

The final plan for renovation of Jefferson School and development of the site will depend on many factors, including the ability of the community to raise the capital needed for a major cultural facility.

The Task Force encourages the City to adopt development guidelines that would be applicable to any future development of the building and site.

- Program the original Jefferson High School building for use as a cultural/educational facility focused on interpreting the history of Jefferson School and African American history from a local, regional and national perspective.
- Rehabilitation of the Jefferson School building, interior and exterior, should be done in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- The facade of the 1926 and 1938 sections of the building should not be altered.
- Public entrances to the building should be on the 4th Street, Commerce Street, and City Yard sides of the building. On the 5th Street side of the building public entrances should be limited to those needed for Carver Recreation Center
- An appropriate landscape area should be developed to provide pedestrian and visual connections to the Commerce Street entrance.
- The Fifth Street side of the building faces the Starr Hill neighborhood.
  - No changes or additions should be made to exterior of Jefferson

School along the Fifth Street building face.

- No loading, service entrances or dumpsters should be permitted on this side of the building.
- Appropriate landscaping should be installed along the face of the building.

- Development of the Jefferson School site
  - Consolidate the Jefferson School site and some portion of the city yard site (public works administration building) as a single development site, taking in to consideration likely site constraints from previous uses.
  - New construction should be of a similar scale and compatible with the existing building;
  - The project should be pedestrian friendly.
  - The project should maximize green space and landscaping

To enhance the appearance of the Jefferson School site, when developing the design guidelines for the West Main North zoning district, attention should be given to the relationship of development on the south side of Commerce Street to the Jefferson School project.

- Design guidelines for West Main North zoning district should include recommendations for buildings abutting the south side of Commerce Street
  - Rear service entrances should be appropriately designed or shielded from view from Jefferson School.
  - New construction should be encouraged to have attractive

## JEFFERSON SCHOOL TASK FORCE

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facades with windows and entrances along Commerce Street

The City has identified Downtown and the West Main corridor as priority areas for the development of commercial, retail and residential properties that add to the diversity and liveliness of City. Efforts should be made to link the Jefferson School property to these priority areas visually and through pedestrian and transportation linkages.

- City Council should place a high priority on enhancing the development of and on the site by taking action to:

- acquire/preserve viewshed and pedestrian access to McIntire Road;
- acquire viewshed and pedestrian access from West Main Street to Commerce Street entrance.

- City Council should seek opportunities to improve linkages from the Downtown Mall, McIntire /Ridge to the Jefferson School site. Development of a pedestrian path linking the Omni Center / Downtown Mall and Jefferson School is desirable.

## XI. Historic Designation

**Task Force Recommendations:** *Nominate Jefferson School/ Carver Recreation Center building for listing on the National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register.*

- a. *Include the Phase I and II site associated with the 1926/ 1938 buildings in the nomination.*
- b. *Consider including the entire site in the application for nomination*

The Task Force urges City Council to initiate the process to nominate Jefferson School/ Carver Recreation Center for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The Task Force is in full agreement that the building (Jefferson School and Carver Recreation Center) is an important historic resource and should be designated as a significant historic resource. The 1926 and 1938 portions of the building meet the guidelines for both age of the building (greater than 50 years) and historic significance. While the 1958-59 school addition and Carver Recreation Center are less than 50 years old, they cannot be physically separated from the 1926 and 1938 portions of the building and should therefore be included in the nomination.

The Task Force is not in agreement on how much of the site should be included with the building in the nomination. In determining what portion of the site should be included in the nomination, the following information should be considered.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources guidelines for determining a property's boundaries include the following criteria:

- Select boundaries that encompass the entire resource, with historic and contemporary additions. Include any surrounding land

historically associated with the resource that retains its historic integrity and contributes to the property's historic significance.

- For urban and suburban properties that retain their historic boundaries and integrity, use the legally recorded parcel number or lot lines.

It should be noted, that a National Register listing or Virginia Landmarks Register listing does not prevent adding an addition to or constructing a new building on other parts of the site.

- If an addition to the existing building was made at the same time that the building was being rehabilitated and the project wished to use tax credits, then the design of the addition would have to be reviewed and approved by VDHR and the National Park Service.
- If an addition is made at a later time (after the 5 / 10 year tax credit limitations expire), VDHR and National Park Service review would not be required.
- If a new building were constructed on another part of the site, which was not attached to the existing building, VDHR and National Park Service review would not be required.

Jefferson School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. For eligible sites, as well as listed sites, the use of Federal money for the renovation or

expansion of the existing school or for new construction on the legally recorded parcel (site), will require the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to determine if Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) applies. The review will determine how historic properties might be affected and explores alternatives to avoid or reduce harm to the historic properties. Bottom line, since the building and site are eligible for the National Register, keeping it off the Register will not reduce the review requirements for projects involving federal funds, including Community Development Block Grants.

**In summary**, nomination of all or a portion of the site should have minimal impact on the rehabilitation process for the building or development of the site. New construction on the site is not eligible for tax credits and

therefore does not require review by VDHR and the National Park Service for appropriateness.

If the preferred development proposal recommends subdivision of a portion of the site as a separate parcel, it would be reasonable to exclude that portion of the site from the application process.

If there is concern about adding additional layers of review to the rehabilitation and development process, consideration should be given to the benefits of inclusion of 4<sup>th</sup> Street as a designated entrance corridor. Designation of the building and site as a locally Protected Property should not be considered until the redevelopment, guided by the Secretary of Interior's Standards, is completed.

## XII. Conclusions

The Jefferson School project will take a number of years to complete. There are however, several important first steps that should be taken.

1. Nominate building and site for listing on the NRHP and Virginia Landmarks Register. Designation will not add regulatory layer and will bring significant funding stream through historic tax credits available to private developers.
  2. City Council should adopt Task Force recommendations, signaling to potential investors a predictable climate for development.
  3. Development should be coordinated by a non-profit organization working closely with the city. The City should engage the services of a tax credit developer to advise the city on the ownership and management structure and provide construction management services.
  4. A pursuit group needs to further develop one or both of these recommended concepts. It could take 7 – 10 years to create the Library/Cultural Museum.
- Early steps include developing an interpretive framework (the framework for the stories that will be presented in the Cultural Center) and conceptual plan for the museum. Creating the interpretive framework is an excellent opportunity for collaboration and should generate a significant level of excitement. It could evolve into a pre-development package used to do a capital campaign feasibility study. Both the interpretive framework/museum concept plan and capital campaign feasibility study require specific professional expertise and should be funded by City and civic sources.
5. City should undertake needed repairs to protect the building from deterioration, vandalism. Starting actual rehabilitation, however, should be preceded by a sound development plan, and only when an appropriate owner/developer entity becomes involved.
  6. City should give Carver Recreation Center priority in the CIP. A renovated recreation center is an asset for reuse of the remainder of the building.

## **APPENDIX: Historic Designation**

### **National Register of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, administers the National Register. Nearly 77,000 listings that make up the National Register and include properties across the country that have been nominated by governments, organizations, and individuals because they are significant to the nation, to a state, or to a community.

National Register properties are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. These criteria recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have contributed to the history and heritage of the United States and are designed to help state and local governments, Federal agencies, and others identify important historic and archeological properties worthy of preservation and of consideration in planning and development decisions.

- Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the community.
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects.
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that Federal agencies allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on all projects affecting historic properties either listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register. The Advisory Council oversees and ensures the consideration of historic properties in the Federal planning process.

### **Eligibility for federal tax benefits.**

Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for a 20% investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings. This credit can be combined with a straight-line depreciation period of 27.5 years for residential property and 31.5 years for nonresidential property for the depreciable basis of the rehabilitated building reduced by the amount of the tax credit claimed. Federal tax deductions are also available for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures.

### **Qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.**

Historic places are nominated to the National Register by the State Historic Preservation officer (SHPO) of Virginia, in this case, the Department of Historic Resources. Anyone can prepare a

nomination to the National Register; generally nomination forms are documented by property owners, local governments, citizens, consultants or SHPO staff. Nomination forms are submitted to a State review board composed of professionals in the fields of American history, architectural history, architecture, prehistoric and historic archeology, and other related disciplines. The review board makes a recommendation to the SHPO either to approve the nomination if, in the board's opinion, it meets the National Register criteria, or to disapprove the nomination if it does not.

During the time the proposed nomination is reviewed by the SHPO, property owners and local officials are notified of the intent to nominate and public comment is solicited. Owners of private property are given an opportunity to concur in or object to the nomination. If the owner of a private property, or the majority of private property owners for a property or district with multiple owners, objects to the nomination, the historic property cannot be listed in the National Register. In that case, the SHPO may forward the nomination to the National Park Service only for a determination of eligibility. If the historic property is listed or determined eligible for listing, then the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation must be afforded the opportunity to comment on any Federal project that may affect it.

The SHPO forwards nominations to the National Park Service to be considered for registration if a majority of private property owners has not objected to listing. During the National Register's evaluation of nomination documentation, another opportunity for public comment is provided by the publication of pending nominations in the Federal Register.

### **Virginia Landmarks Register**

The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) administers two programs designed to recognize our resources and to encourage their continued preservation: the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

The National Register of Historic Places, established in 1966 and managed by the National Park Service, is the official list of structures, sites, objects, and districts that embody the historical and cultural foundations of the nation. The National Register of Historic Places already includes more than 2,000 properties in Virginia. The Virginia Landmarks Register, also established in 1966 and managed by the Department of Historic Resources, is the state's official list of properties important to Virginia's history. The same criteria are used to evaluate resources for inclusion in each register. Periodically, the department publishes an updated edition of The Virginia Landmarks Register, a book that contains a photograph and description of each property on the register.

To be listed on the national and state historic registers, a property must go through a preliminary evaluation process and then be nominated to the registers. Requests for nominations to the state and national registers are reviewed by a special committee of the Department of Historic Resources (DHR), the State Review Board. In most cases, the board makes its preliminary determination based on the information submitted in a Preliminary Information Form. The Preliminary Information Form is not a nomination report. It is rather a means of obtaining sufficient information for the State Review Board to judge if a property or district warrants more detailed documentation for nomination as required by the Virginia Landmarks Register and



National Register of Historic Places. When it is judged to be complete, the Preliminary Information Form is reviewed by the department's Register Evaluation Team. This interdisciplinary committee meets twice a month and makes a recommendation regarding a property or district's eligibility to the State Review Board. Such factors as the architectural integrity of the structure(s), historical background, and regional representation on the register are considered by the board members in their evaluation. The National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register Criteria for Evaluation are used in the determination. If the board judges the information sufficient, it will act upon the question of the property or district's eligibility. The board may concur with the staff recommendation that the property or district is eligible for listing, request further information, or make recommendations. Upon the State Review Board determining a resource is eligible, a formal nomination to the registers comes next. Nomination forms require detailed historical and architectural documentation proving that the resource meets certain criteria. The Department of Historic Resources has continually maintained high standards for properties listed on the national and Virginia registers. Registration is thus selective and honorific. DHR has prepared a set of "Frequently Asked Questions." Since the issue of listing Jefferson School on the National and Virginia Registers is one of importance, some of these FAQs follow.

### **What are the benefits of registration?**

Registration is an honor bestowed on historic properties by the state and federal governments. It recognizes the historic value of a property and encourages present and future owners to continue to exercise good stewardship. Owners of registered properties may donate historic preservation easements (which can reduce real estate taxes), qualify for the state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, receive technical assistance from department staff for maintenance and rehabilitation projects, and purchase plaques that mark the property's significance.

### **Will anyone be able to stop me if I want to alter or tear down my property once it's registered?**

Not as a result of registration. Property owners who donate historic preservation easements, participate in the federal or state tax credit programs, or accept a federal or state rehabilitation grant must abide by certain restrictions on alterations or demolitions associated with those programs. Otherwise, only local building codes and permit requirements must be satisfied, as with any property.

### **Some friends live in a historic district, and they tell me that they have to get permission from a board to repair their porch or paint their house. Will I have officials looking over my shoulder if I register my building?**

No. Only locally designated historic districts are subject to local zoning ordinances and procedures. Sometimes, a property or district may be listed at the national, state, and local levels but it is only the local designation that places restrictions on private owners.

### **Do I have to open my property to the public if it is registered?**

No. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the Virginia Landmarks Register does not require that you open your house to the public.

**Will registration or listing increase or decrease my property values and tax burden?**

Many factors affect the value of real estate: location, improvements, supply and demand, zoning, surroundings, local and national economic conditions, business cycles, and actions of national, state, and local governments. Changes in any of these factors may increase or decrease the value of property. Registration per se appears to have little effect, although one would expect well-kept, attractive, older properties and neighborhoods to experience rising values over the long run.

**Isn't it true that only sites associated with famous people or events get registered?**

No. The register criteria apply to places of local as well as of national or statewide significance. Many places are listed in the registers because they exemplify themes or architectural styles important in local history.

**If my property is listed in the national or state registers, will it be protected from undesirable development or destruction by government projects?**

Not necessarily. Only easements protect property in perpetuity. Registration informs owners, local planners, government agencies, and others involved in land-use planning of the existence of a historic resource. Neither the National Historic Preservation Act nor the Code of Virginia, however, requires property owners, developers, or government agencies to avoid affecting or destroying historic resources. The National Historic Preservation Act does require, however, that federal agencies take historic properties into account when planning projects. In many cases, state and federal agencies work around the historic property or mitigate the effects of a project on the property. However, in most cases, the federal or state project usually proceeds even if it affects or destroys the resource. In some instances, the force of public opinion has persuaded developers or government agencies to spare a registered property.

***Historic Preservation Tools<sup>1</sup>***

In addition to the honor of recognition, listing in the National Register results in the following for historic properties:

- Consideration in planning for Federal, federally licensed, and federally assisted projects;

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 provides that Federal agencies seek comment by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on all projects affecting historic properties **either listed in or determined eligible for listing** in the National Register.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cr.nps.gov.nr.listing.htm>

- Eligibility for certain tax provisions;

One of the most important financial tools for the preservation of Jefferson School is the potential use of Federal and State tax credits to offset or reduce the net cost of renovation of the building.

Owners of income-producing properties listed in the National Register are eligible for a 20% Federal investment tax credit. Virginia offers an additional 25% State investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings. These federal and state tax credits can be combined with a straight line depreciation period of 27.5 years for residential property and 31.5 years for nonresidential property for the depreciable basis of the rehabilitated building reduced by the amount of tax credit claimed.

### **What Is a Tax Credit?**

A tax credit differs from an income tax deduction. An income tax deduction lowers the amount of income subject to taxation. A tax credit, however, lowers the amount of tax owed. In general, a dollar of tax credit reduces the amount of income tax owed by one dollar.

The 20% rehabilitation tax credit equals 20% of the amount spent in a *certified rehabilitation* of a *certified historic structure*.

The 10% rehabilitation tax credit equals 10% of the amount spent to rehabilitate a *non-historic building* built before 1936.

The use of tax credits could be a significant source of financing for redevelopment of the Jefferson School. It is a technically complicated matter, and again, a few FAQs are provided below, from Virginia DHR and the National Park Service, which administers the Federal program.

### ***20% Rehabilitation Tax Credit***

The Federal historic preservation tax incentives program (the 20% credit) is jointly administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Department of the Treasury. The National Park Service (NPS) acts on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in each State. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) acts on behalf of the Secretary of the Treasury. Certification requests (requests for approval for a taxpayer to receive these benefits) are made to the National Park Service through the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Comments by the SHPO on certification requests are fully considered by the NPS. However, approval of projects undertaken for the 20% tax credit is conveyed *only in writing* by duly authorized officials of the National Park Service.

The 20% rehabilitation tax credit applies to any project that the Secretary of the Interior designates a *certified rehabilitation* of a *certified historic structure*. The 20% credit is available for properties rehabilitated for commercial, industrial, agricultural, or rental

residential purposes, but it is not available for properties used exclusively as the owner's private residence.

### ***What is a "certified historic structure?"***

*A certified historic structure* is a building that is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places —OR— a building that is located in a *registered historic district* and certified by the National Park Service as contributing to the historic significance of that district. The "structure" must be a building—not a bridge, ship, railroad car, or dam. (A *registered historic district* is any district listed in the National Register of Historic Places. A State or local historic district may also qualify as a *registered historic district* if the district and the enabling statute are certified by the Secretary of the Interior.)

### ***What if my building is not yet listed in the National Register?***

Owners of buildings that are not yet listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or located in districts that are not yet registered historic districts may use the Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part 1, to request a *preliminary determination of significance* from the National Park Service. Such a determination may also be obtained for a building located in a registered historic district but that is outside the period or area of significance of the district. A preliminary determination of significance allows the owner to proceed with the rehabilitation project while the process of nominating a building or a district continues. Preliminary determinations, however, are not binding. They become final only when the building or the historic district is listed in the National Register or when the district documentation is amended to include additional periods or areas of significance.

### ***What is a "certified rehabilitation?"***

The National Park Service must approve, or "certify," all rehabilitation projects seeking the 20% rehabilitation tax credit. A *certified rehabilitation* is a rehabilitation of a *certified historic structure* that is approved by the NPS as being consistent with the historic character of the property and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. The NPS assumes that some alteration of the historic building will occur to provide for an efficient use. However, the project must not damage, destroy, or cover materials or features, whether interior or exterior, that help define the building's historic character.

### ***How old does the property have to be?***

Generally properties eligible for listing in the National Register are at least 50 years old. Properties less than 50 years of age must be exceptionally important to be considered eligible for listing.

### ***How long does the nomination process take?***

## **JEFFERSON SCHOOL TASK FORCE**

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The process varies depending on the State workload, planning, and registration priorities, and the schedule of the review board. The process takes a minimum of 90 days to fulfill all of the review and notification requirements provided that a complete and fully documented nomination form has been completed for the property.

Upon submission to the National Park Service, a decision on whether to list the property is made within 45 days.

### APPENDIX: Lessons from Other Places

In addition to considering community input, the Task Force sought information from other sources, including research of other school redevelopment projects, community cultural centers and libraries. The Task Force invited Bill Frazier, Frazier Associates, Staunton VA to present information on the use of tax credits for redevelopment and to share his experience with the historic school redevelopment project in Staunton. Bob Carter, Virginia Department of Historic Resources provided in depth background information on the historic designation and regulation process.

The Task Force visited four school redevelopment projects in the Richmond / Petersburg area that successfully used state and federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits. Two of the schools were redeveloped for use as governor's schools, one was a market rate housing project, and one was office and restaurant use. All of the sites were located in an urban neighborhood setting.

- Maggie L. Walker Governor School in Richmond
- Robert E. Lee School renovation project (conversion of school to housing) in Richmond
- Stonewall Jackson School renovation project (conversion to offices and restaurant use) in Richmond
- Appomattox Regional Governor's School for the Arts and Technology in Petersburg

Task Force members visited the Manchester Center Guild/ Bidwell Training Center (MCG/BTC) in Pittsburgh. MCG is a very successful private program that includes a youth arts/ education program, job training, and a performance jazz venue. The program has attracted national attention for its success.

Several other projects provided valuable insights on the complexity of developing a successful African centered cultural center. Moton School located in Farmville Virginia is a historic black school that was purchased in 1996 by the Martha E. Forrester Council of Women for rehabilitation as a civil rights museum. The museum will be a repository for historically significant materials that cover the ongoing struggle for civil rights in education, particularly in Prince Edward County. Franklin Street School in Cape May New Jersey is a building of similar size to Jefferson School into a community art center. The project was initiated in January 1995 by the not-for-profit Center for Community Art. The organization has been working to raise funds to preserve and recognize the significance of the African American Historic Site and restore its use as a community learning center.

Two public/private partnership projects were considered. Both projects resulted in a portion of the project being developed by the for-profit entity, with provisions for providing renovated space for the non-profit cultural center or other public use.

The Sumner School in Washington DC was owned by the School Board and was located in an



area where there was a strong commercial market. The School Board negotiated a deal with Boston Properties whereby they demolished the white school on the adjacent site for the construction of a new office complex in exchange for renovating the Sumner School for use as a museum, conference center and meeting rooms and archive for the DC public schools. Sumner School was built in 1866 as the first permanent school for African American children in the District.

Harrison School and Cultural Museum in Roanoke Virginia was the City's Black High School. The School is located in a historically African American neighborhood that had declined over the years. The City negotiated a deal with a residential developer to renovate the school for housing for the elderly and handicapped. The first floor of the building was renovated by the developer for use by the Harrison School Cultural Center as a community and arts center. The Cultural Center is responsible for the costs of upkeep and utilities. The Cultural Center will relocate to a new site as part of the Henry Street project. The Henry Street project is strategically located on the edge of downtown adjacent to the Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center. This project has been in the planning and development process for more than 20 years