

The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc.

**P.O. Box 5043
Key West, FL 33040**

September 14, 2023

To: Mayor Terri Johnston

From: The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project, Inc. (FDSBEMP)

Please find enclosed a complete packet of documents from the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project, Inc. (FDSBEMP) requested by your office. Enclosed are:

- FDSBEMP Community Building Model, January 2011*
- FDSBEMP Master Plan, March 22, 2020*
- Memorandum, March 29, 2016 (City of Key West)*
- Resolution No.21-091, February 24, 2022 (City of Key West)*

Since the above named documents were submitted to you, the City Commissioners, BVRAC member, and the City Manager on March 22, 2020, we have continued efforts to engage with representatives from the City of Key West regarding promised support in helping us to obtain a building to house a museum for the indigenous people of Key West and Bahama Village. We have had no success.

We are reaching out to you, Mayor Terry Johnston, again, by submitting additional information, past and current, in the documents named above.

We feel that these documents, including the resolution signed by the Mayor and City Commissioners show the intent of the Commission and City Staff to help FDSBEMP Inc., obtain a space for the Ellen Sanchez Museum & Cultural Center that was promised (See Community Building Plan, pgs 5-6). See, also, efforts by City Manager in March 29, 2016 Memorandum to continue to work on providing a museum space dedicated to artifacts, history, and other notable information relative to Bahama Village and the indigenous people who lived here in Key West from the 1800s.

Please permit us to make a plea again for the space to house this museum by noting that the FDSBEMP, in collaboration with the Key West Art and Historical Society, presented to the Key West Community an exhibit that showcased the

rich history of Key West and Bahama Village. The exhibit became a reality
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through a connection made with Michael Geida and Dr. Cori Convertito, members of the Art and Historical Committee, and was slated to be open to the public from January 2023 to March 2023. The exhibit's popularity drew so much interest that it was extended to May. The exhibit, "Bahama Village: Relics of a Fading Community," used approximately 1600 square feet of museum space. That exhibit was only a small portion of the artifacts and history that have been collected. The exhibit was a total success, not only for our local citizens, but to many who came from far and near.

Thank you, Mayor Johnston, for your support in helping this museum become a reality, not just only for the indigenous people, but for all of Key West!

***THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS SCHOOL
BLACK EDUCATORS' MEMORIAL
PROJECT, INC.***

(A Community Building Model of Inclusion, Diversity, and Empowerment)

***Theme: "Community Pride and Empowerment – Using a Memorial Project to
Provoke Cooperation, Communication, and Conviction"***



***"It is alright to go back for that which is forgotten."
(Ghanaian Saying)***

*Key West, Florida
January 2011*

6 CORE VALUES*

HELPING

CARING

SHARING

GIVING

RESPECTING

MAKING FRIENDS

**** Core Values Form & Support Basic Structure of FDSBEMPI's Programs.***

***THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS SCHOOL BLACK EDUCATORS' MEMORIAL PROJECT
(A Community Building Model of Inclusion, Diversity, and
Empowerment)***

***Theme: "Community Pride and Empowerment– Using a Memorial Project to
Provoke Cooperation, Communication, and a Conviction"***

THE PROJECT'S VISION

OUR VISION IS A COMMUNITY WITH ACTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE PARTICIPANTS, WHERE EVERYONE IS RESPECTED.

THE PROJECT'S MISSION

OUR MISSION IS, THEREFORE, TO ENSURE THAT THE CULTURE AND TRADITIONS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF THE BAHAMA VILLAGE COMMUNITY & SURROUNDING AREAS ARE PRESERVED AND ENHANCED. WE DO THIS THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS, EVENTS, PROJECTS, AND ACTIVITIES SO THAT THE PEOPLE OF KEY WEST AND ISLAND VISITORS WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL AND LIFE ENHANCING EXPERIENCES THAT WILL MAKE OUR COMMUNITY A WONDERFUL PLACE FOR ALL.

THE PURPOSES OF THE PROJECT

- *To erect a **Public Memorial** to honor the educators and students of Frederick Douglass School, Key West, Florida, from 1871 – 1965.*
- *To develop and implement a **community building model** that will strengthen families and support, not only, the well-being of the children and youth of the Indigenous Groups of African/Bahamian/Cuban/Chinese American people in the City of Key West, Florida, but, also, the elders and other community members.*
- *To develop and encourage **collaboration** with members of the Faith community, local education and service groups, public and private businesses, government entities, local, state, and federal, and families of the Indigenous Groups of the community that will support youth activities and promote the welfare of said community.*
- *To provide a **forum** for historical, cultural, and educational enrichment, using The Ellen W. Sanchez Center for the Preservation of Indigenous Culture of Key West as the focal point.*
- *To conduct any and all other **legal activities** that may from time to time be found appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the Memorial Project.*

THE PROGRAMS OF THE PROJECT

- **The Ellen W. Sanchez Center for the Preservation of Indigenous Culture of Key West**

Museum for Historical and Cultural Archives (Written & Digital)

Host for Community Conversations on Questions That Matter

Office for Coordination of Educational, Cultural, & Historical Events

Community Branch Library

Community Children's Learning & Memorial Garden

- **The Programs for Children and Youth**

****Spring Camp: "Places, Spaces, and Me" (ART and the Environment)*

Grades 1 - 6

****Summer Camp: "Places, Spaces, and Me" (Culture, Diversity, Peace & Justice)*

Grades 1 - 6

+Academic Tutorial Program – Grades 1 - 5

Academic Tutorial Program – Grades 6 – 8

Career Mentoring/Training for Middle Aged Children – Grades 5 – 8

Art in the Park: An After School Cultural & Enrichment Program – Grades 1 - 6

- **The Programs for Elders**

** Elders Honoring Event/Sacred Circle of Elders*

**Telling Our Stories: An Elder's View*

**The Photo Gallery of Elders*

***The Rose S. Lopez Compassionate Heart Award for Community Outreach*

- **The Programs for Families**

***The Venora P. Mingo Family Festival of Reading*

DOORWAYS - A World Beyond: Film, Photography, Travel

***The Nook Book Reading Club (Note: This program is inactive.)*

+Programs implemented by Frederick Douglass Community Center

****Programs implemented 2011.***

*****Programs implemented 2012.***

******Programs implemented 2013***

THE OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

We hope that:

- *a desire will be created in the participants to preserve and enhance their cultural and social traditions, using a community building model that will foster empowerment and pride.*
- *the experiences that the children and youth will be invited to participate in will enhance their well-being socially, cognitively, emotionally, and aesthetically.*
- *an awareness of role responsibility in the building and maintaining of effective and rich community will be created in the participants.*
- *the community will be inspired to participate in creating a culture of hope for young and old and that the participants are provoked to transcend their present circumstances in the best ways.*

The Memorial Project

*Conceived by two (2) members of the Frederick Douglass School Class of 1959, the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. was organized, initially, to erect a public memorial designed to give credit to the men and women, the Black educators of Frederick Douglass School, from 1871 – 1965, who shared their diverse cultural backgrounds with their students. Their diversity was a springboard for the students' own original intelligence and creativity and served as a catalyst, along with the support of their parents and community, for their successes in life. **These educators, the majority of which had been recruited for the most part, from the East Coast of the United States, as far north as New York City,** brought with them cultural, political, and social views and values that added dimension to the academic skills they brought as educators, as well.*

In a conversation about Douglass School and its teachers and about segregated schools in the United States with Mr. Tom Hambright, Monroe County Historian, he maintained that in his research on segregated schools in this country, he found, above all, that Douglass School was by far the best of what he called, "experiment in education," in this country during school segregation.

*The Memorial Project is a **community building model** and is used as a provocation to engender community pride and to provide opportunities for the Key West community, the remaining members of the indigenous people of Bahama Village and surrounding areas, and those descendants who live in other cities, states, and countries, to invest in preserving the indigenous culture and traditions of their African/Bahamian/Spanish/Cuban/Chinese American heritage. Additionally, the Project is seen as a model for programs for children & youth, for families, and the elderly that could create opportunities for more cooperation, communication, and collaboration among the members of the community.*

The Sacred Elders Project

Established in December 2010 by the members of the Steering Team, The Sacred Elders Project is made up of three (3) programs: Elders Honoring Event/The Sacred Circle of Elders, Telling Our Stories: An Elder's View, and The Photo Gallery of Elders.

The Sacred Circle of Elders/Elders Honoring Event *is an attempt to identify and honor all individuals 70+ years old at an annual event who are descendants of the people of African/Bahamian/Cuban/Chinese Americans who arrived in Key West in the 1800s, married and had families. They are called "Sacred Elders" because they hold the wisdom of the ancestors. They are recognized as the "wisdom torch" and are held responsible for sharing their knowledge of how the community grew and developed and of their family's role and contributions to these efforts. Further, they are held responsible for passing the "torch of wisdom," this knowledge, to future generations.*

Telling Our Stories: An Elder's View *is a program designed to interview and collect stories from the elders that capture their historical views and community and family stories from the past.*

The Photo Gallery of Elders *is a collection of photographs of all living elders 70+ years of age to be displayed, eventually, as a permanent exhibit in the Ellen W. Sanchez Center for the Preservation of Indigenous Culture of Bahama Village & Surrounding Areas.*

Revised: July 4, 2017

The Rose S. Lopez Compassionate Heart Award
for
Community Outreach

Originally, the Rose S. Lopez Compassionate Heart Award for Community Outreach was named as an annual award to recognize women in our island community, specific to those representing the Indigenous Groups. The idea for this recognition came from one of the members of the Memorial Project Steering Team who suggested that we respond to the call that was being made in the United States and the international community to make 2012 the year of special emphasis on empowering women worldwide.

Our response was to make an effort to highlight women in the community during the month of February with an idea that was in alignment with the vision of The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc., that of recognizing the women in our community, past and present, who contribute or have contributed to the betterment of the lives of the people. Since that time, we have given consideration to the fact that this award should be given to anyone, regardless of gender.

It was decided that the award would be based on recognizing the "heart of the individual." This award will be given annually with the recipient receiving a plaque during our annual Sacred Circle of Elders Honoring Event.

The recipient is someone who might fit all or some of the following criteria:

- 1. An elder. (70+ years old)*
- 2. Is seen in the community as an individual willing to serve a specific need, e.g., feeding people who have no food and no means of their own to purchase food and gives willingly to those in need without expecting anything in return.*
- 3. Offers everyone a smile, loving embrace, and listens when someone is in need of these responses and turns no one away.*
- 4. Holds a heart that represents warmth, kindness, and goodwill.*

February 24, 2012

Revised: December 27, 2014, January 12, 2016

The Ellen W. Sanchez Center
For
The Preservation of Indigenous Culture of Bahama Village & Surrounding Areas
(Proposed)

Established by the Steering Committee of The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, The Ellen W. Sanchez Center for the Preservation of African/Bahamian/Cuban/Chinese/Spanish American Culture, indigenous to Bahama Village & Surrounding Areas, will oversee the preservation of said cultural groups from 1827 – Present.

We envision the Center, initially, with a role of:

- coordinating cultural and values driven educational programs that will target members of the community from birth to old age and are specifically and intentionally designed to enhance the well-being, not just of the members of the Bahama Village community, but, also, members of the broader community.*
- serving as host to a Community Museum and Library that will house books, artifacts and historical information specific to these cultural groups and community, a Photo Gallery of Elders, living and present, and a Photo Gallery of The Image of the Child.*
- providing the resources for a training and dissemination center for community building, using a dialogic process based on the international World Café model for community dialogue and conversation.*
- acting as a wellspring for infusing and energizing the members of the Bahama Village community with continuous opportunities for development, renewal of creative ideas, and healthy community growth in collaboration with local partners.*

The specific goals for The Ellen W. Sanchez Center will be:

- 1. To develop and encourage collaboration with local education and service groups, public and private business, and families of The Bahama Village Community that will support youth activities promoting the welfare of said community.*
- 2. To develop and implement an education model that will support the well being of the youth in the Bahama Village Community in the City of Key West.*
- 3. To serve as a base for forums for historical, cultural, and educational enrichment.*
- 4. To house artifacts and other historical documents that will be used for exhibits and displays.*
- 5. To conduct legal activities that may from time to time be found appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the Memorial Project.*
- 6. To serve as an open forum for the spiritual, cultural, historical, and educational advancement, primarily, of the well being of the people of the indigenous groups.*

January 2011

Revised: July 4, 2017



VENORA P. MINGO FAMILY FESTIVAL OF READING

The Annual Venora P. Mingo Family Festival of Reading is sponsored by the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. At the first event in 2012 at the Willie Ward Park in Key West, Florida, over 1000 books (As of 12/2016, over 9500 books have been distributed.) were distributed to children between infancy and 13 years old. Well over 250 children and adults participated in activities which included face painting, balloon art, a petting zoo, and a variety of other child and family friendly experiences. Over twenty local civic, business, and church groups supported the event along with volunteers from our military, local government, Florida Keys Community College, and many other citizens. At the first event, as a tribute to Mrs. Mingo's legacy, a \$2500 check, made possible through a grant to St. Peter's from the Marion Stevens Foundation, was presented to the Memorial Project to support the Festival and to purchase E-Readers to be used in a newly initiated Nook Book Club** (This program is inactive.) for children from 3rd to 8th grade.*

The Family Festival of Reading is named in honor of Mrs. Venora P. Mingo, who was a leader in the congregation of St. Peter's Episcopal Church as a church officer and teacher-principal of their parochial school for children from 1st to 8th grade. When the school was closed she founded the St. Peter's Kindergarten, where she and her staff provided a first class education for young children in our island community of parents of African/Bahamian/Cuban descent until her death in 1967. Mrs. Mingo was one of our most trusted and valued leaders of education in the Key West community for over 30 years," says Dr. Virginia B. Irving, Project Facilitator for The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc., "and would be hailed today as one of the greatest advocates for children and families." The Family Festival of Reading is one of two programs proposed by the Project's Steering Team as part of an ongoing effort to accomplish its mission and to support the well-being of the children and families of the Key West Community.

September 2012

**Updated: December 2016*

The Nook Book Club

The Nook Book Reading Club is conducted by the Steering Team of the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. It is conducted on a biweekly basis and began in December 2012. It is held in Key West, Florida, on the site of the Frederick Douglass Community Center. This activity furthers our exempt purpose because it provides a reading program for middle age children from a depressed area in the city and supports their educational development, providing opportunities for growth in reading skills, for collaboration and dialogue among the members, and enhances the well being of the young children involved. It adds dimension to their reading abilities and stretches their imagination and creativity to support their daily learning in a public school environment. So far, the time allotted for this activity is a minimum of 6 hours per month for direct reading experiences and planning time for the coordinator. This activity is funded with a grant from a local foundation.

January 2013

Program Accomplishments



SCEH Event 2015



**Sacred Circle of Elders Event (SCEH)
Honoring Douglass School Teachers 2015**



Summer Camp 2015 & 2016



SCEH Event 2016

The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc.

**P. O. Box 5043
Key West, Florida 33045**

March 22, 2020

*To: Mayor Terri Johnston, City Commissioners, City Manager Greg Veliz,
Aaron Castillo, Chair/BVRAC, Patricia Eables, Vice Chair/BVRAC*

*Re: Master Plan for Acquisition & Preliminary Renovation Source for the
Frederick Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building*

Please find enclosed a copy of the above-named document that we are submitting in support of our 10-year request to secure the Band & Industrial Arts Building to house a museum & cultural center. This museum will honor the history and heritage of the indigenous people, the Bahamian, African American, Spanish/Cuban American, and Chinese American who helped shape the culture of Bahama Village and Key West, starting in the mid 1850s to the Present, and who are part of the original footprint of our island.

We have chosen to name the document as stated above instead of a Business Plan since we are not a business yet, have never been a business, but hope to be, with the help and support of the City of Key West as we work together to establish a museum and cultural center for the history and culture of the indigenous people.

Thank you, in advance, for your review and consideration of our submitted document, and resulting action that would support, we hope, our goal of Key West and the Ellen W. Sanchez Museum & Cultural Center becoming a part of the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network (FAAHPN)

Sincerely Yours,

John Wilson Smith, President

**MASTER PLAN FOR ACQUISITION & PRELIMINARY RENOVATION SOURCES
FOR
THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS SCHOOL BAND & INDUSTRIAL ARTS BUILDING

FOR THE PROPOSED
THE ELLEN W. SANCHEZ MUSEUM & CULTURAL CENTER**

Presented by:

The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc.

P. O. Box 5043

Key West, Florida 33045

(727) 502-5820

March 15, 2020

Executive Summary

The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project was formed in 2010 as a non-profit organization committed to erecting a public memorial designed to give credit to the men and women, the Black educators, of Frederick Douglass School from 1871 – 1965, who shared their diverse cultural backgrounds with their students.

In 2011, the group implemented a community building model that was designed to engender community pride and to provide opportunities for the remaining members of the indigenous people of Bahama Village and surrounding areas, and for their descendants to invest in preserving the indigenous culture and traditions of their African/Bahamian/Spanish/Cuban/Chinese American heritages. This community building model was designed deliberately to include a museum and cultural center to house and showcase the culture and traditions of the indigenous people, oversee cultural enrichment programs for children & youth, for families, and the elderly. The model would create opportunities for more cooperation, communication, and collaboration among the members, not only among the indigenous people, but of the entire Key West community, as well.

The programs of the Project grew successfully and exponentially. (See photos attached at end of document.): Summer & Spring Peace Camps for children; an annual family reading festival for families where, over the course of six (6) years, more than 10,000 books were given out to children & families of the Key West community; and programs for the elderly members of the indigenous people, such as an annual Sacred Circle of Elders Honoring Event designed to give back “place” as wisdom bearers to those 70+ years of age, and the creation of a Photo Gallery of Elders, and the Telling Our Stories: An Elder’s View, both of which were designed deliberately to be exhibited in the museum and cultural center we envisioned to be housed in the Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building.

The purpose of this plan is to show the importance of securing the Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building and why it should be used as the Ellen W. Sanchez Museum & Cultural Center for the Preservation of Indigenous Culture of Key West.

When secured and renovated, the building will be operated as a museum and cultural center. It will be dedicated to collecting, preserving, exhibiting the history of the indigenous people of Key West from 1861 – the Present. It will emphasize the importance of the indigenous people in shaping the cultural and social context of the island, one that to this day plays an extremely significant part in the mythology of the narrative that was used/is being used to attract millions of people to Key West annually. The story of these individuals plays a significant role in boosting the primary means of financing for the local economy. The use of this building for the museum and cultural center will not only boost revenue in the tourist industry, since more people of color will visit Key West, now that there will be a specific reason for them to do so, there will be now a museum where they will learn of the history of people of color here in Key West. It will capture, also, the imagination of everyone living here on the island. In addition, and, perhaps, more so, it will evoke memory for the descendants of the indigenous people who still live on the island, and it will instill in them a renewed sense of pride and importance in their heritage and in their need to preserve it.

Displays of artifacts, storyboards, written documents, oral & video histories, various art exhibits, from private and public collections, will help both American and foreign visitors understand better the experiences of the people who helped provide the cultural & social foundation for Key West as it was up until about 30 years ago. The museum will act as a wellspring for infusing and energizing the members of the Bahama Village community with continuous opportunities for development, renewal of creative ideas, and healthy community growth, in collaboration with local partners in the Arts community and other creatively enriched groups. Finally, the museum and cultural center will strive vigorously to accurately interpret, present, and preserve the rich history of the indigenous people who came to this island from their islands of origin and other “spaces & places,” and helped make, overall, Key West’s history and culture richer.

Mission

The members of the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. is committed to preserving the history of the indigenous people in our community, educating the general public about the cultural and social life of the indigenous people starting from their arrival in 1861 up to the present time, by using the Frederick Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building as a museum and cultural center. There is no public space and/or place in Key West, currently, that serves these functions.

Product/Services

The Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building is an iconic structure. It was part of the Frederick Douglass School complex that was used for educating Black children during the era of segregation in our country from 1871 until 1965, when the school was closed. Located at Fort Street, it is the only building left of the school complex that wasn't demolished and represents the only remaining icon of that complex that holds the memory of what it meant to so many indigenous families and their children who attended and graduated from within the Douglass School walls during the time of segregated education in our country. The building will be renovated to serve as a museum and cultural center and will serve as a wellspring for infusing and energizing the members of the Bahama Village community and surrounding areas with continuous opportunities for development, renewal of creative ideas, and healthy community growth in collaboration with local partners, both private and public, local, state, and federal entities. The museum and cultural center will join a network of over 40 museums in Florida dedicated to showcasing African American history, culture, contributions to society, and more, the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network – FAAHPN. (See collage of Network at end of this document.) We need Monroe County in this collage.

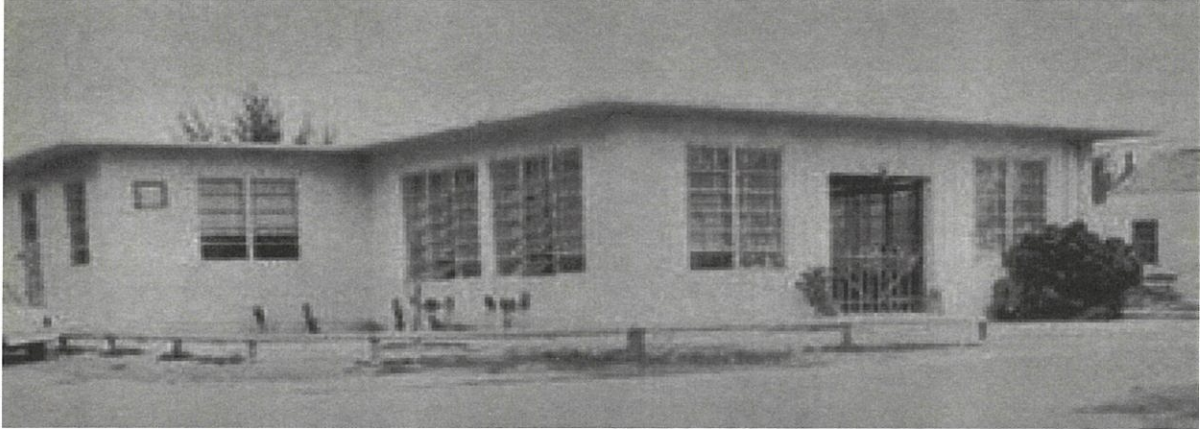
Frederick Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building

(See photos, Page 3a.)

Features of the Museum will include:

- Artifacts, including photographs, clothing, household furnishings
- Wall displays of indigenous families in the Key West community
- Display cases: Written Documents: Books, Poetry, Family Reunion Booklets, Family Histories.
- Repository for oral histories & interviews, books, letter
- Educational & Cultural Center for dissemination of information and creative dialogue
- Special event displays
- Historic Marker & Memorial Plaque for Black Educators
- Special interior lighting to highlight exhibits
- Meeting/Conference room
- Exhibits of historical significance (e.g., African American Montford Point Marines, Frederick Douglass School, 1871 – 1965)
- Rotating museum of historical African & African American Art Exhibits
- Permanent Exhibits: Black Educators, Photo Gallery of Elders

Frederick Douglass School Band & Industrial Arts Building



Band Room & Industrial Arts Building (circa 1959)



Band Room & Industrial Arts Building (circa 1970s)



Band Room & Industrial Arts Building (2020)

Operations

Aside from traditional adult museum participants, the museum & cultural center will be a facility that will provide the necessary environment, programs, and activities that will be open, also, to children from preschool age up to college level. Invitations will be extended to all local social and church communities to participate in the life of the museum with their attendance, and/or serving as a reservoir of information relative to their experiences, either as members of families of indigenous people and/or members of church congregations who serve a majority of members who are descendants of the indigenous people.

Museum Holdings Program:

We will collect, carefully, conserve, properly, document responsibly, and interpret, intelligently, holdings of artifacts and archival assets that are readily accessible from individuals in person and from online submissions.

- Acquisition of artifacts and archival assets such as oral histories.
- Conservation and preservation of artifacts and archival assets.
- Research and interpretation of artifacts and archival assets, and their context and significance.
- Public displays of artifacts and archival assets and related interpretive materials and activities.

Community Relations Program:

- Actively promote and engage in activities that honor and reinforce the sense of place and space of the physical facility.
- Develop community cultural and educational programs with an emphasis on promoting the well-being of children, youth, families, and the elderly of the indigenous groups.
- Hold community conversations around Questions That Matter using the well-known international community building model World Café.
- Establish community committees and advisory boards to assist in museum & cultural center management and oversight and preservation of cultural entities.
- Use community experts in the Arts to serve as program advisors.
- Form a community committee to build collaborations on new community initiatives.
- Join Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network and other local and art & museum affiliations.

Fees:

For a short period of time, at the initial stage, admission to the museum will be free in order to raise awareness. A charge of \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children & youth, 11 years and older. Membership packages will be available. No charge for school tours.

Hours of Operation:

- Monday – Thursday: 11:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Friday – Saturday: 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Groups of 10 or more may schedule appointments for special tours.

Acquisition Effort and Outcomes

2011 - 2016

2011 – 2015

Met many times throughout those years with Commissioner Lopez and other FDSBEMP members (Dr. Virginia Burgohy Irving, John Wilson Smith, Detra Fisher, Mechelle Burgohy, et.al.), first making our desires known about the use of the space for a museum and cultural center and being assured by him that he would help us, which, of course, did not ever happen.

December 10, 2015

District VI Meeting - John Wilson Smith made an appeal for the use of the historic Band Room to house a museum and cultural center for the preservation of the culture & history of Key West's indigenous people. Mayor Cates was present and extended an invitation to the group to meet with him. **(See Portia Navarro for Action Minutes.)** The FDSBEMP sends letter to Mayor Cates, copy to Jim Scholl, Thaddeus Cohen, City Commissioners. **(See January 13th Letter and Proposed Plan for Ellen Welters Sanchez Museum & Center Attached.)**

January 14, 2016

Meeting with Mayor Cates (Dr. Irving, Detra Fisher, John Wilson Smith) Discussed contents of 13, 2016 FDSBEMP Letter. **(See January 13th letter attached above under #3. Read & Presented at January 20th City Commission Meeting for Record.)**

January 20, 2016

City Commission Meeting **(See Resolution directing City Staff to "FIND A SPACE WHERE BOTH PARTIES COULD BE SATISFIED." Action Minutes, #12, p. 6.)**

January 28, 2016

Telephone Conference with Greg Velez, Assistant City Manager, members of FDSBEMP with Mr. Donald Carey. Meeting was a followup to the directive from the January 20th City Commissioners Meeting. The meeting was not productive because Mr. Veliz did not follow the City Commission's directive. He stated, also, that he was representing the MCHD, which did not make much sense the members present, and, in fact, derailed the process so that nothing was accomplished as far as the task Mr. Veliz was given. Note: Dr. Irving and John spoke via telephone. **(City of Key West Audio/MP3 Download Available from John Wilson Smith.)**

February 23, 2016

Received email from Thaddeus Cohen, City Planner, from Portia Navarro, City Staff, requesting from FDSBEMP "Minimum Information." FDSBEMP provided information. **(See Action Minutes, #28, p.11, City of Key West for April 5, 2016 – "Black Educators Memorial Proposal.)**

March 29, 2016

Memorandum from Ass't City Manager Greg Veliz to City Manager Jim Scholl presented at April 5th City Commissioners Meeting. Information cited in Memorandum by Mr. Veliz was not accurate. FDSBEMP rebutted the information. **(See City Commission Minutes for April 5th for this document under Executive Summary. See John Wilson Smith for copy of their response to Mr. Scholl.)**

April 5, 2016

City Commission Meeting – City Commissioners award Band Room to MCHD to "relocate." **(See Action Minutes above, p. 11, for Resolution, excerpted Minutes from January 20, 2016 Commissioners' Meeting, Black Educators Memorial Proposal. See under Executive Summary: Memorandum from Greg Veliz.)**

Acquisition Efforts and Outcomes (cont'd)

2019

March 27, 2019

BVRAC Meeting – Mr. Bob Eadie, MCHD, declines Band Room offer. **(See Action Minutes – Received, Filed.)**

June 13, 2019

District VI Meeting – Commissioner Lopez opens meeting with reference to Bob Eadie (MCHD) declining Band Room space. See page 1 paragraph #1 of Minutes for this meeting. See p.2, of Minutes for this meeting, last paragraph, Steve McAlearney, City Engineer's statement – "... Awaiting clarity from the Health Department as to whether they will use the Band Room for the Roosevelt Sands Health Clinic..." **In same meeting, both individuals provided conflicting statements.** **(See Minutes, p.1 & p.2, for this meeting. These Minutes are attached to September 12, 2019 District VI Meeting.)**

July 8, 2019

District VI Meeting – Community Health of South Florida makes presentation. **(Note: FDSBEMP not invited at this time.)**

August 1, 2019

BVRAC Meeting – Rural Health makes presentation. **(Note: FDSBEMP not invited at this time.)**

October 26, 2019

RFP went out for Health Initiatives. **(See City of Key West website.)** FDSBEMP not informed of release of RFP. In fact, the RFP was specific to who should apply – only entities that had a health focus.

November 7, 2019

BVRAC Workshop Meeting – Presentation by FDSBEMP/John Wilson Smith after being invited by Vice-Chair Patricia Eables **(Mr. Smith's Power Point is available for review. See Amanda for help in its release. See, also, as attachment to BVRAC Minutes, not yet released.)**

November 8, 2019

Received telephone call from Ms. Portia Navarro. Re: "Greg Veliz would like to meet with you on Wednesday, November 13th." Mr. Smith unable to meet on Wednesday. He called Ms. Navarro on November 15th to suggest meeting on November 19th. Mr. Veliz was not available due to City Commission Meeting that evening. Mr. Smith sent email to Mr. Veliz on November 22nd to try again for a time that would accommodate both of their schedules. No success in setting up a meeting with Mr. Veliz.

April 2020 City Commission Meeting

A presentation was made to the City by The Black Educators Memorial Project and they were presented with our Master Plan for the museum. There was discussion. A vote was taken and the only Commissioner to vote on our behalf was Commissioner Sam Kaufman. The building was then awarded to CHI.

Preliminary Plans for Renovation Sources

There are numerous opportunities for funding sources for the museum & cultural center from local, state, and federal sources, both private and public, in the form of grants, benefactor gifts, capital project appeals, to name a few. We consider the City of Key West to be a major partner in helping to support the renovation effort in the form of TIF and other city revenue funding sources. Our expectation is that the building itself will be donated to FDSBEMP by the City of Key West, and maintained, for its stated purpose, to present to the world the culture and history of the indigenous people in our city, those who are now ancestors, and those descendants who have survived them. These very special people are part of the footprint of the Bahama Village history and culture that is almost destroyed.

There are opportunities for financial support through such entities as the Division of Cultural Affairs – Florida Department of State and the Division of Historical Research, and support available from the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network (FAAHPN) once the museum is up and running and is a stated member of this group. That is why we need a building. The Band & Industrial Arts Building was promised nine years (9) ago to house the museum & cultural center for the indigenous people. If we receive the help that was promised, and the support of the Key West community, including the City of Key West as a major supporter in this effort, if you help us “build it,” the resources will become available to maintain an important component of Key West history that is now missing. So far, the evidence shows that there has been no interest in Key West in preserving Indigenous Peoples heritage. Now would be the time to correct this error.

Marketing

The purpose of this section of the plan would be to promote the Ellen W. Sanchez Museum and Cultural Center to the Key West community, including residents, visitors, businesses, children of school age, and other community groups.

OBJECTIVES:

- To build awareness among all the members of the Key West community and other entities outside of Key West that might be interested in the history and culture of the indigenous people of Key West during the years from the mid-1800s to the Present.
- To engage the community in forming a participatory relationship with the museum and cultural center .
- To educate the groups targeted listed above about the richness of the cultural and historical significance of Key West's indigenous groups and how inclusivity enriches the lives of all the citizenry of places, far and near, and makes for a true synthesis of our humanity.

TARGET MARKETS:

- General public
- Educational institutions
- Church communities
- Tourists

MARKETING ELEMENTS:

The Ellen W. Sanchez Museum & Cultural Center will be featured in printed materials (e.g., media, both printed and digital through press releases, brochures, posters, website, Facebook, and GoFundMe). Printed materials will be distributed to area businesses, residents, and other targeted groups. The materials will be designed to attract the attention of consumers, donors, benefactors, among others. The specific planned elements are:

- **Media:** Letters to the Editor, Opinion Articles, and Ads will be developed to promote the museum & cultural center. Information about special events will be shared, as well, for publication. All will be sent to the local newspapers. We will use local radio stations to share information, as well.
- **The Museum & Cultural Center Brochure & Website:** An information brochure and our website will feature the location of museum & cultural center, contact information, hours of operation, current exhibits, and other information that is pertinent, such as special exhibits. An Annual Membership Appeal Brochure will be developed, too. Though we have a website for our Project, the museum will have its own, including a Facebook page, and a GoFundMe page.
- **The Museum & Cultural Center Poster:** A poster will be designed to feature the museum & cultural center services. It will be placed in the appropriate places in the community. For special exhibits and events, separate posters will be designed and posted.
- **The Museum & Cultural Center Flyer:** To accentuate special events held at the museum & cultural center, flyers will be mailed to local businesses, resident members, schools, if appropriate, and patrons.
- **Community Outreach and Announcement of Service:** The museum curator will be responsible for canvassing the city to make personal contact with potential patrons and provide them with the necessary information that they would need to consider becoming a "friend" of the museum & cultural center. Sites to be visited will include shopping centers, banks, restaurants, educational facilities, senior residential centers, and more,

Marketing (cont'd)

- **Public Relations:** Press releases will be written and distributed to all local newspapers, radio station, as well as civic and social associations. We will pursue, aggressively, story ideas with the media that will promote any new and expanded services, as well as existing ones.

Contractor Cover Letter for Preliminary Design (circa 2016)



GREENE CONTRACTING SERVICES INC.

To whom it may concern:

The construction management company of Greene Contracting Services Inc. is being retained by the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Committee Project Inc. to evaluate and submit construction drawings for "The Douglass School Band Room", to house "The Ellen Sanchez Museum".

Our presentation will be presented and reviewed by the Educators group upon completion. Plans to implement work will be determined at that time of approval.

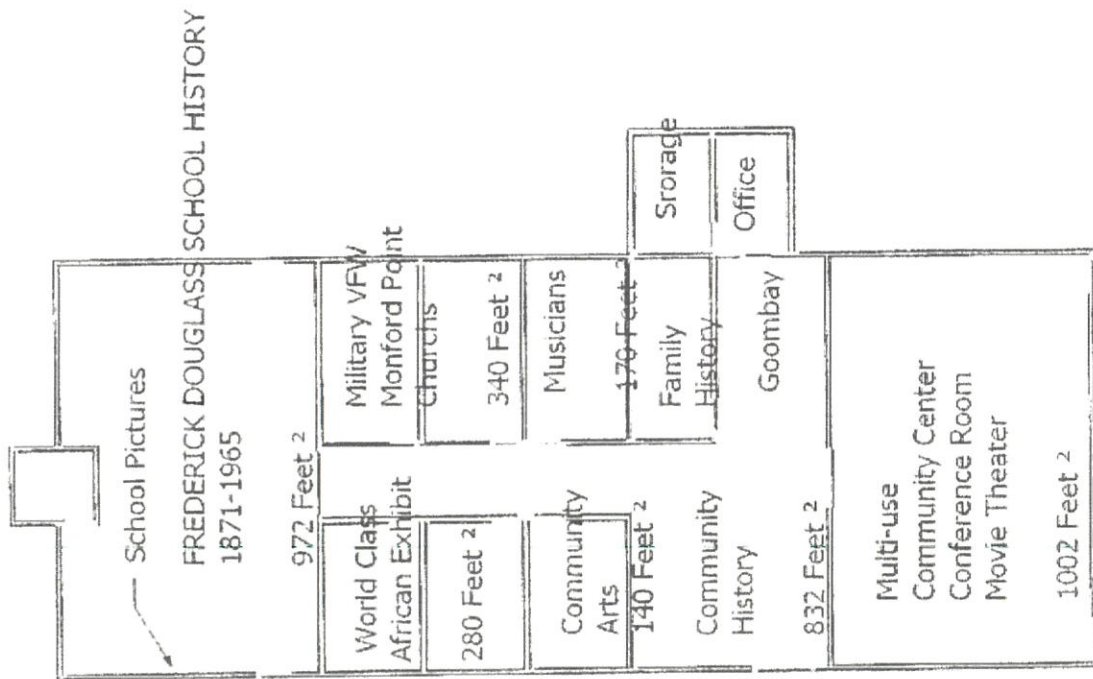
Thank you,

Orin Greene
Certified Building Contractor
CBC 1259595
Greene Contracting Services Inc.
www.greenecontracting.org







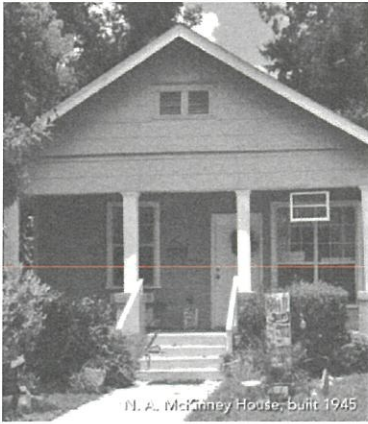


Orin Greene
Certified Building Contractor
CBC 1259595
12219 Swaying Moss Circle
Riverview, FL 33569

PHONE (850) 556-4447
FAX (813) 354-4839
GmConSvcInc@gmail.com










Preliminary Floor Plan Design












FAAHPN Museums featured in the Mobile Application

<p style="text-align: center;">A. Quinn Jones Home (Gainesville, FL)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Accord Civil Rights Museum (St. Augustine, FL)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">African American History Society/Coulson House (Pensacola, FL)</p>
		
<p style="text-align: center;">African American Museum of the Arts (Deland, FL)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">American Beach Museum (Amelia Island, FL)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Artists Showcase/ Historic Jenkins House (Palm Beach, FL)</p>
		
<p style="text-align: center;">ASH Gallery (Tallahassee, FL)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bethune House (Daytona Beach, FL)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Blanchard Museum (Punta Gorda, FL)</p>
 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">N. A. McGinney House, built 1945</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Broward Library &</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Carter Woodson Museum</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Clara White Mission/Eartha</p>



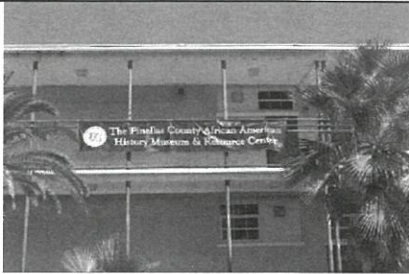
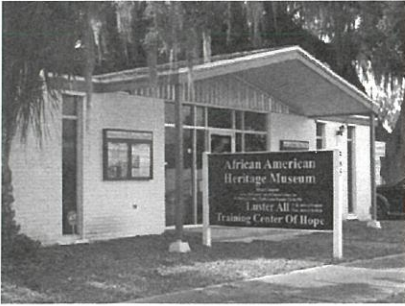





FAAHPN Museums featured in the Mobile Application

<p align="center">Museum/African-American Research Library (Ft Lauderdale, FL)</p>	<p align="center">(St Petersburg, FL)</p>	<p align="center">White Museum (Jacksonville, FL)</p>
		
<p align="center">Durkeville (Jacksonville, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Zora Neale Hurston Fine Arts Museum (Eatonville, FL)</p>	<p align="center">FAMU Meek/Eaton Black Archive/Museum (Tallahassee, FL)</p>
		
<p align="center">FAMU/Union Bank Location (Tallahassee, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Goldsboro Museum (Sanford, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Glover School (Plant City, FL)</p>
		
<p align="center">Higgs Beach African Burial Ground (Key West, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Johnnie Ruth Clark/Mercy Hospital Historic Site</p>	<p align="center">Kingsley Plantation (Jacksonville, FL)</p>


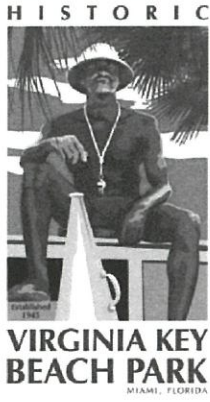





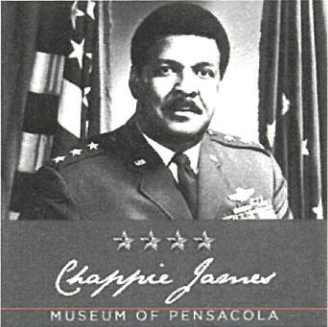

FAAHPN Museums featured in the Mobile Application

	<p align="center">(St. Petersburg, FL)</p> 	
<p align="center">Knott House Museum (Tallahassee, FL)</p>	<p align="center">L.B. Brown Museum (Bartow, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Lincolnville Museum & Cultural Center (St. Augustine)</p>
		
<p align="center">Mary Harrell Museum (New Smyrna, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Harry and Harriette Moore Restored Home (Mims, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Howard Thurman Historic Home (Daytona Beach, FL)</p>
		
<p align="center">Moseley House Museum (Eatonville, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Old Dillard School Museum (Ft. Lauderdale, FL)</p>	<p align="center">Pinellas AA Museum (Clearwater, FL)</p>

FAAHPN Museums featured in the Mobile Application

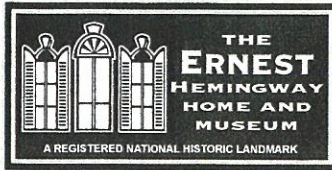
		
<p>Luster All African American History Museum (Bartow, FL)</p>	<p>Rhoda Martin Center (Jacksonville, FL)</p>	<p>Riley Museum (Tallahassee, FL)</p>
		
<p>Ritz Theater and Museum (Jacksonville, FL)</p>	<p>Royal Theatre (St Petersburg, FL)</p>	<p>Spady Museum (Delray, FL)</p>
		
<p>Tallahassee Museum/History & Natural Sciences (Tallahassee, FL)</p>	<p>Virginia Key Beach (Miami, FL)</p>	<p>Wells Built Museum (Orlando, FL)</p>

FAAHPN Museums featured in the Mobile Application

		
<p>Williams Academy (Fort Myers, FL)</p>	<p>The Black Archives of South Florida/Historic Lyric Theater (Miami, FL)</p>	<p>Cotton Club and Cultural Center (Gainesville, FL)</p>
		
<p>Ella Jordan House (Pensacola, FL)</p>	<p>Chappie James Museum (Pensacola, FL)</p>	<p>Family Heritage House Museum (Bradenton, FL)</p>
		
<p>Manhattan Casino Historic Building (St Petersburg, FL)</p>	<p>Bing House (Plant City, FL)</p>	

FAAHPN Museums featured in the Mobile Application





October 16, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter comes in support of the Frederick Douglas School Black Educators Memorial Project Inc. and their efforts to secure a museum that will house information about the indigenous people of Key West and Bahama Village, with a vast amount of artifacts and relics that will tell their story. Their story includes, from a historical perspective, how the indigenous people contributed to the growth and development of Key West.

We have worked for many years with this organization in supporting their community building efforts, both monetarily and morally, and with great pleasure and delight. We continue to support them because their efforts have always been genuine and authentic.

We have seen them demonstrate their total commitment to the Key West community. This commitment has in the past reaped many benefits to local families, children, and the elderly through their various programs, specifically designed to help these groups enjoy and improve the quality of their lives.

We support them 100% in their efforts to bring a museum here to honor the indigenous people of Bahama Village and Key West, Florida.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Morawski

President of 907 Whitehead Street Corp.

DBA: Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum

'THIS IS WONDERFUL'

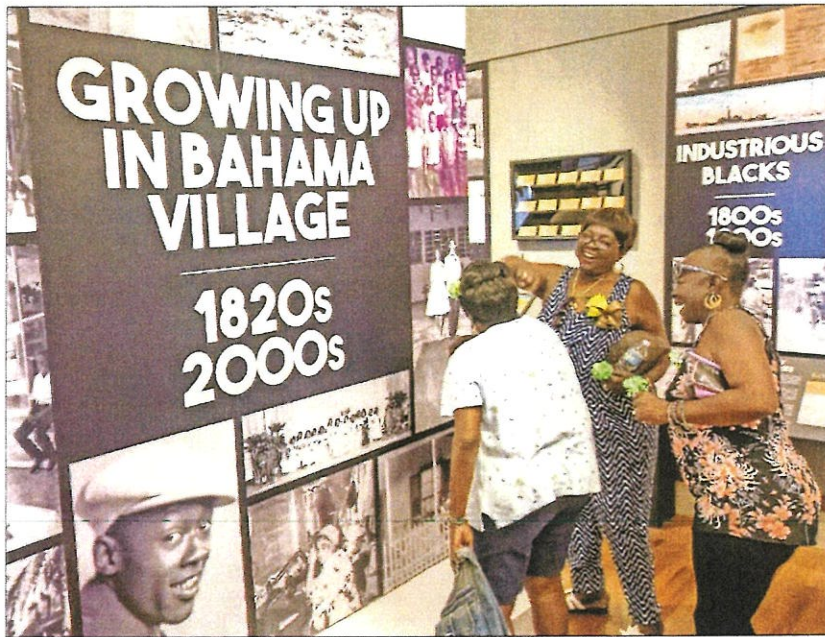
Bahama Village elders, others reflect on contributions to community

BY TED LUND
 Keys Citizen

Julia Campbell was young again.

The 93-year-old lifelong Bahama Village resident boarded a Conch Train last Saturday and made the little over a mile trip along Duval Street to the Custom House to view the exhibit "Bahama Village: Relics of a Fading Community."

There, she looked on as memories of nine decades came to life. At the beginning of the exhibit, Julia came face to face with a bigger-than-life photo of her brother, David Alvin, playing the base drum and marching down Petrona Street with the Welters Coronet Band.



Photos by ROB O'NEAL, Keys Citizen

Connie Teate, Diane Castillo and Chandra Tynes have a hearty laugh while reminiscing over old photos on display at the Custom House's Bahama Village exhibit.

"This is wonderful," she said, slightly tearing up. "It is important to show people and our families what our ancestors did and how we helped to build Key West."

And that is precisely what the exhibition, hosted by the Key West Art & Historical Society, does.

The treasure trove of photographs and artifacts takes viewers back to the 1800s when immigration was at its peak from the Bahamas and Southeastern United States to modern times.

It looks at the contributions of Key West's indigenous people — Bahamian, Cuban, Chinese and others — through the lens of topics like industry, music, art and the military.

Julia was one of more than

60 people ranging from 10 to 100 who were brought to enjoy the exhibit before it closes on Sunday, May 21.

Dr. Virginia Burgohy-Irving was one of the founders of the Fredrick Douglass School Black Educators Project, the non-profit group that curated and produced the exhibit.

"We believe it is important to tell people the stories about the indigenous people who helped build Key West," said Burgohy-Irving. "We just hope this isn't the last we see of it."

"The group was initially promised the old Douglass School band room on Fort Street. Unfortunately, that space was given to Key West



From left, Detra Fisher, Dr. Virginia Irving and Mechelle Burgohy share emotional moments at the Custom House's Bahama Village exhibit.

See VILLAGE, Page 6A

Council whisks through light agenda

BY RICHARD TAMBORRINO
 Special to The Citizen

The Marathon City Council conducted a somewhat abbreviated session that included some surprising citizen comments and a disturbing property insurance update.

The Tuesday, May 9, meeting began with a proclamation recognizing the Guidance Care Clinic on its 50-year anniversary and establishing May 14-20 as Guidance Care Center Week in observance of that



milestone accomplishment.

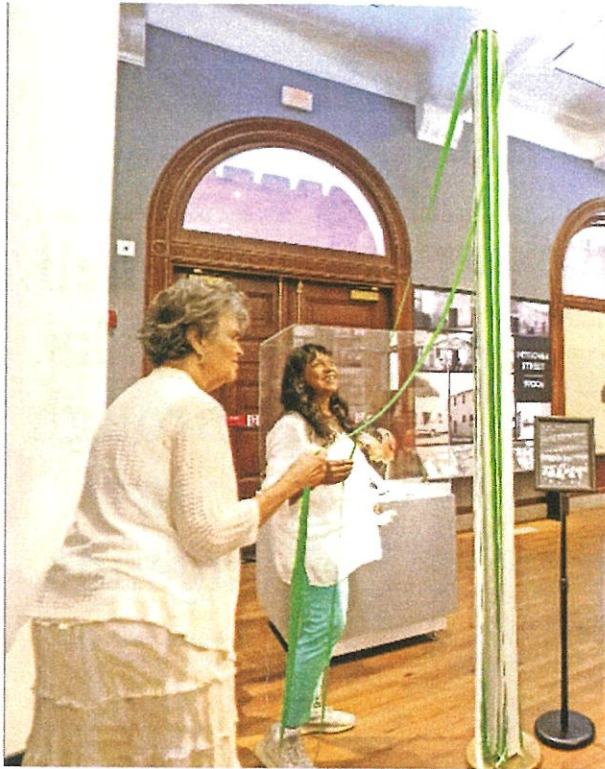
Mayor Luis Gonzalez then recognized the Marathon Football Club as Florida Keys Soccer League (FKSL) champions. The team beat Revolution in a riveting, highly attended soccer match April 9 at Matthew Gilleran Field in Key West.

The sobering Monroe County property insurance update was delivered by Mel Montagne, president of Fair Insurance Rates for Monroe (FIRM). His presentation cited continuing challenges for property owners, calling it "the most challenging insurance market I've seen in 35 years."

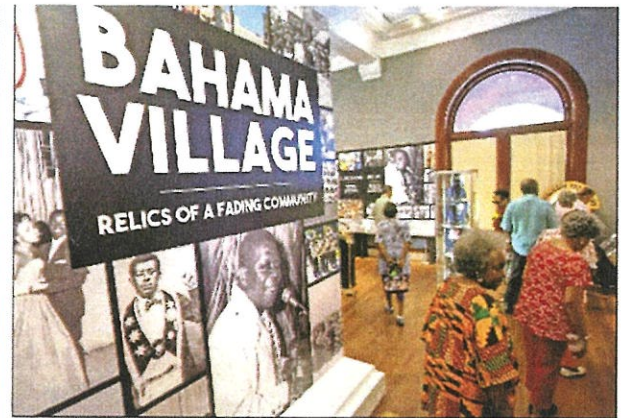
Premiums are expected to increase while coverage will decrease, he said. As an example, Citizens Insurance, which has collected \$850 million in gross profits

See COUNCIL, Page 8A

FROM PAGE 1A



Dr. Virginia Irving, left and Carrie Groomes play with a May Pole Installed In the Bahama Village exhibit at the Custom House.



Photos by BOB O'NEAL, Keys Citizen

Bahama Village residents enter the Custom House on Saturday, May 6, to experience the exhibit that tracks the history of the famed island neighborhood.

Village

FROM PAGE 1A

Health Center. We hope the city will honor that promise and find a spot for us."

In recent years, the idea of dedicating a portion of the Steam Plant project in Bahama Village to the group. But that project has stalled, and the city is going through another round of requests for proposals, RFPs.

In the past, several courtiers have proffered concepts



The Bahama Village exhibit features artifacts such as this football player's gear from the Class of 1963.

KEY WEST'S #1 STATION

Key 93.7

The Keys' Yacht Rock Station

of a retail space, brewery and eatery at the location. Still, the association balked at those ideas, concerned such a facility would endanger the family nature of the neighborhood and wouldn't be appropriate for its permanent exhibit.

The group has also been offered space as a part of the Douglass School expansion and accepted that temporarily but decided that was not a long-term solution.

"We just really hope that we are going to get the space that we were promised," said Burgohy Irving. "We believe this story is important, and we want to continue telling it for generations."

"Bahama Village: Relics of a Fading Community," continues at the Key West Art & Historical Society at the Custom House Museum, 281 Front St. The museum is open seven days a week from



Dr. Virginia Irving, left, and her sister, Hortense Edwards, spot their cousin, Veronica, in an undated photo of children playing with a May Pole in Bahama Village.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the last admission being at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are \$17 for adults (\$15.50 online), \$13 for seniors, locals, college students, and retired military (\$11.50 online), and \$9 for children

ages 7-18 (\$7.50 online). Children, active military and society members may attend for free.

For information, visit <http://www.kwahs.org> or ted.lund@keysnews.com

RESOLUTION NO. 21-091

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO WORK WITH THE PRINCIPALS OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS BLACK EDUCATORS MEMORIAL TO LOCATE AN APPROPRIATE SPACE TO DEVELOP AND OPERATE A MUSEUM PRIMARILY DEDICATED TO THE HISTORICALLY BLACK KEY WEST AND BAHAMA VILLAGE FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LONG HISTORY OF KEY WEST; REQUESTING THAT THE MUSEUM SHALL RECOGNIZE EDUCATORS AT THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS SCHOOL AND ST. FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOLS AMONG ITS EXHIBITS; REQUESTING THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS BLACK EDUCATORS MEMORIAL TO DEVELOP AND PRESENT A PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS MUSEUM, INCLUDING A PLAN FOR ITS OPERATION AND SUSTAINABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that there should be a local museum dedicated to recognition of the many accomplishments of black educators and prominent citizens with roots in the City of Key West, and the Bahama Village community; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission recognizes the principals of the Frederick Douglass Black Educators Memorial include the creation of such a museum, and that the City Manager and staff may be able to help the organization toward that goal; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that the anticipated development of the 3.2 acre parcel, and the former diesel

plant, may provide a suitable location for such a museum, in the heart of the historic Bahama Village neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission also recognizes that a museum must have a plan for operations and sustainability, before it can be established in a permanent location, and it is incumbent on the museum founders to establish such a plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: That the City Commission directs the City Manager to work with the principals of the Frederick Douglass Black Educators Memorial to identify an appropriate space to develop and operate a museum primarily dedicated to the Historically Black Key West and Bahama Village families and individuals who have made significant contributions to the long history of Key West.

Section 2: That members of the Frederick Douglass Black Educators Memorials are requested to create and present a proposal for the establishment of this museum, including plans for its operation and sustainability.

Section 3: That the museum shall include recognition of black educators from both the Frederick Douglass School and St. Francis Xavier School, among the historical information documented in museum.

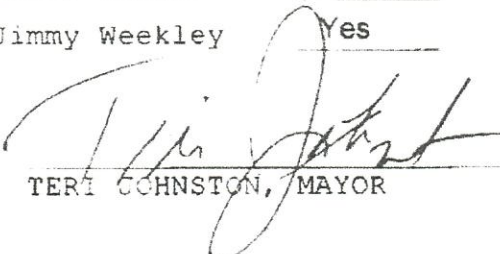
Section 4: That this Resolution shall go into effect immediately upon its passage and adoption and authentication by the signature of the Presiding Officer and the Clerk of the Commission.

Passed and adopted by the City Commission at a meeting held this 4th day of May, 2021.


Authenticated by the Presiding Officer and Clerk of the Commission on 24th day of February, 2022.

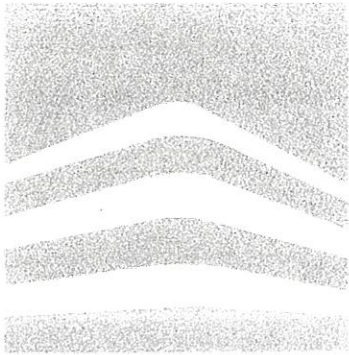
Filed with the Clerk on February 24, 2022.

Mayor Teri Johnston	Yes
Vice Mayor Sam Kaufman	Yes
Commissioner Gregory Davila	Yes
Commissioner Mary Lou Hoover	Yes
Commissioner Clayton Lopez	Yes
Commissioner Billy Wardlow	Yes
Commissioner Jimmy Weekley	Yes


TERI JOHNSTON, MAYOR

ATTEST:


CHERYL SMITH, CITY CLERK



The
**STUDIOS
OF KEY WEST**

533 Eaton Street
Key West, FL 33040
Tel 305-296-0458
Fax 305-296-5200

info@tskw.org
www.tskw.org

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Judy Blume and George Cooper
Bookstore Founders

Jed Dodds
Executive Director

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my unwavering support for the establishment of a museum in Key West dedicated to the history and accomplishments of our historic African American community, and for the efforts of the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project to bring this vision to fruition.

The 2023 exhibition at the Key West Art & Historical Society, *Bahama Village: Relics of a Fading Community*, offered not only a glimpse of what such a museum might look like, but also showed that the objects exist to tell the story in a rich way, and that much of the scholarly work to underpin a permanent collection has already been done. As with so many other aspects of Key West, the significance of our island's Black history far exceeds our size. What's missing, of course, is a permanent location to experience it.

The particular advantage of museums for a community is that they simultaneously preserve the past, safeguard our living traditions, and chart a way to the future. The precarious position of Key West's Black community in the face of gentrification is apparent, and a permanent museum would go far in forestalling this erasure. Living traditions from parades to music and cuisine are more likely to be passed down if we understand where they come from. When embodied by a permanent museum, such history and traditions enrich the island's distinct cultural mix, providing jobs and helping to fuel our tourist economy.

I don't discount the challenges of establishing a new museum, which go beyond simply finding somewhere to put it. Someone needs to take the first big step, however, and identifying a space for a museum dedicated to Key West's Black history and heritage is the right one.

Beyond the economic and community benefits that such a museum would generate, we shouldn't forget that it is also a question of doing what's right. Key West as we know it would not exist without the proud legacy of its Black community, and if we don't take action, it might well disappear on our watch.

To the extent it may be helpful, please know that I stand ready personally to offer whatever assistance and advice I can in helping to make this vision a reality.

Yours truly,

Jed Dodds
Executive Director

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

Alison Kerr
Director of Community Health
Florida Department of Health in Monroe County
1100 Simonton St.
Key West, FL 33040

RE: Letter of Support of the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project, Inc

To Whom this May Concern:

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Health in Monroe County to recognize the wonderful work that has been done and continues to be done by the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project, Inc. I have worked with the Douglass Educators for well over 10 years as a volunteer and as a department employee.

When I started working as a volunteer with the department in 2012 through the time I was hired as a Health Educator, the Douglass Educators provided enriching projects and events for children in the community, including their Book Fair, Summer Camps, and Spring Camps. The Book Fair was an annual event in partnership with multiple organizations including that of the health department. All books and services offered, including helmets fitted by the department as part of the Florida Pedestrian Bicycle Resource Center, were provided at no cost to participants. During their Spring and Summer camps, they offered healthy opportunities for youth, including nutritious meals and physical activities. As a volunteer, I taught students to dance Tahitian and hula as part of their physical activity and to expand their knowledge of some pacific island cultures.

The Douglass Educators have proven many times that they are here for the community and to provide services at no charge, engaging the young community who otherwise would not benefit from such services due to cost prohibitions. They value teaching the people of tomorrow. Anyone who is able to support their initiatives will be grateful to invest their time and resources toward this wonderful and altruistic group.

Should you have any questions or comments related to my experience with the Douglass Educators, please do not hesitate to contact me at Alison.Kerr@flhealth.gov or call my cell 305-619-8087.

Sincerely,

Alison Kerr, MPH
Director of Community Health
Florida Department of Health in Monroe County



Alison Kerr
President
Zonta Club of Key West
PO 0184
Key West, FL 33040

RE: Letter of Support for the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project, Inc.

To Whom it May Concern –

The mission of Zonta Club of Key West is to improve the legal, political, economic, health, educational and professional status of women in the Florida Keys through service and advocacy. As president of Zonta Club of Key West, I support the efforts being done by the Frederick Douglass School Black Educators Memorial Project, Inc as their values align with the club's mission.

For many years the Douglass Educators have provided free books and children's activities, thereby supporting the educational status and elevating the lives of Florida Keys residents. Through their annual Venora P Mingo Festival of Reading, they have supported the well-being of children and families of the Key West communities, serving over 500 families and children and donating well over 4,000 books. The Douglass Educator's motto for these Festivals of Reading is to "Inspire a Child to Read; One Book at a Time." Zonta values this notion.

Should you wish to contact me, email me at zontakeywest@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alison Kerr'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison Kerr
President
Zonta Club of Key West



THE CITY OF KEY WEST

Post Office Box 1409 Key West, FL 33041-1409 (305) 809-3700

TO: Jim Scholl, City Manager
FROM: Greg Veliz, Assistant City Manager
DATE: March 29, 2016
SUBJECT: Negotiations with Monroe County Health Department to relocate to Frederick Douglass Band Room Property.

Action Statement:

Authorizing City Manager to enter into negotiations with the Monroe County Health Department (MCHD) to relocate to the Frederick Douglass Band Room Property; providing for an effective date.

Background:

The Monroe County Health Department (MCHD) is currently located in the southern wing of the Frederick Douglass Gymnasium on Olivia Street in Key West (Douglas Gym). However, following a structural failure and condemnation of a portion of the Douglass Gym, the City of Key West (City) authorized the design and construction document preparation to renovate the gymnasium portion including the main entrance to the MCHD. These construction documents are currently undergoing 100% review at the City.

Based on the required renovation scope of work, condition of the existing structure and MCHD operational requirements, it was agreed by both MCHD and City Staff that continued operation of the health center during construction could potentially result in serious health and safety issues to staff and patients. Working with the MCHD, City staff suggested the Frederick Douglass Community Band Room building (Band Room) as a future permanent location for the health center. Therefore, to facilitate a timely and seamless transition from the Douglass Gym to the Band Room and to minimize delays to the gym renovation project, an emergency procurement of contractor services was recommended for the Band Room.

Purpose and Justification:

Upon passage of Resolution 16-034, an amendment was made directing City Staff to find a space acceptable to The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. and MCHD. City Staff has met with both parties on several occasions since January 20, 2016 to find an amicable solution.

Key to the Caribbean – Average yearly temperature 77° F.

MEMORANDUM

Throughout these meetings, The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. remained adamant that the Band Room facility was the only option. On January 28th, a meeting was held with The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. and City Planner Thaddeus Cohen to discuss potential shared use of the Band Room with MCHD. During this meeting, City Planner Cohen advised they would have to provide their space requirements, staffing requirements, etc. (see supporting documents). The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. asked to schedule a meeting for the purpose of reaching an agreement with MCHD, City Staff was asked not to attend. A meeting between the MCHD and The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. was held on February 29th at the Gato Building and to the City's knowledge, no agreement was reached.

Financial Impact:

MCHD had assured City Staff they have funding in place for renovations. City Staff requested The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc. provide additional information of their funding sources and currently, City Staff has not received a Business Plan, Financial Report or reassurances of their funding for renovation and temporary relocation.

Options:

1. Grant City Manager the right to negotiate with MCHD for space located at the Frederick Douglass Band Room and continue working with The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc.
2. MCHD will remain in their current location at the Frederick Douglass Gymnasium during the construction. City staff will continue working with The Frederick Douglass School Black Educators' Memorial Project, Inc.

Recommendation:

City Staff recommends Option 1, granting the City Manager to enter into negotiations with MCHD by extending and amending their current lease for relocating to the Frederick Douglass Band Room property.



Welcome



Sacred Circle of Elders

Bahama Village

Relics of a Fading Community Exhibit

May 6, 2023



BAHAMA VILLAGE

RELIQS OF A FADING COMMUNITY

Through education, religious institutions, businesses, food, music, and voluntary associations, Key West's Black community created ways to serve and strengthen their village and the island. Bahama Village, in the westernmost portion of the city, was a neighborhood comprised of Black Bahamians and Black Cubans, Chinese, and other groups of color. In this exhibition, their history and stories will be woven together through various events that shaped the Black and Indigenous cultures of Key West.

In the early 1800s and 1900s, the Black and Indigenous community of Key West was skilled and hardworking. Many early settlers migrated to the island from St. Augustine, the Bahamas, and Cuba, and with them they brought their skills, education, and culture. These settlers were great contributors to the island's development. This included African slaves that were imported by slaveholders to assist in the expansion of the island.

Many male members of the Bahamian and Cuban community were entrepreneurs, skilled carpenters, masons, seafarers, and shipbuilders who constructed several homes, schools, and churches. Other professions included teachers, fishermen, barbers, restaurant owners, and ship pilots who worked in the harbor. The women were often mothers, teachers, seamstresses, practical nurses, midwives, housewives, and community supporters. Together they created a self-sustaining village which benefited the residents in many ways.

Free Blacks relocating to Key West were some of the first to become educated in America. They believed strongly in education which began at home and in church basements until the establishment of the segregated Frederick Douglass School in 1871. Douglass School, located in Bahama Village, was the only Black school on the island for children in grades one through twelve. It maintained a reputation for its exceptional educators and for providing a superb education.

At the heart of Bahama Village was Petronia Street which was known then as the Black economic business and entertainment hub. A mixture of Black owned and operated businesses lined the corridor including the famous Blue Heaven Pool Hall, Josepha and Shorty's Conch Shop, Floyd's Barber Shop, Eaker's Package Store, Sam and Florence's Barbecue Stand, Bop Brown's Jazzy Spot, Mingo's Shoe Shine, and Johnson's Grocery Store.

Key West's Black community was developed around, and enmeshed in, a culture that served as a 'village'. While components of this exhibition include religion, education, music, and social activities, this only lays the first stone. The narrative of Bahama Village goes much deeper. It is the wider community's responsibility to emphasize the importance of this thriving, active 'organism' that nurtured and cultivated its citizens to serve as effective contributors to the enhancement of Key West.