

Eatonville Initiative Advisory Committee Meeting Summary – April 2, 2026

Present

Members - Michelle Fort (Member), Theo McWhite (Member), Carol Buford (Member), Bruce Mount Jr. (Member), Simmon Reed (Member), Joyce Irby (Member), Dr. Candace Finley (Member), Bahiyah Maroon (Committee Chair), Bea Hatler Hungerford (Ex-Officio Member), Stephanie Vanos (Ex-Officio Member)

Dr. Phillips Charities - Ken Robinson (Dr. Phillips Charities), Thomas Williams (Dr. Phillips Charities), Terry Prather (Board Chair), Stephanie St. John (Executive Assistant)

The Eatonville Initiative Advisory Committee convened on April 2, 2026, from 4pm – 6pm. The Advisory Committee began with an update on a recent legal filing involving the Hungerford site and OCPS. The committee then moved on to an overview of the Hungerford site including due diligence activities, site improvement considerations, and site history.

The committee reviewed and discussed pillars of the agreement with OCPS including the key community commitments such as the construction of a pavilion and community park, establishment of an early learning center, a potential healthcare or community hub, land for a town hall and historical museum, and an affordable housing strategy with defined long-term timelines.

The pavilion and park are anticipated to be part of Phase 1 and once completed, will be given to the Town of Eatonville along with a strategy to support long-term maintenance.

Significant attention was given to site constraints and infrastructure realities. While the Hungerford site is often referenced as approximately 100 acres, environmental features, wetlands, stormwater requirements, powerline easements, and existing infrastructure reduce the immediately developable area substantially, to approximately 62 acres with 37 acres in the most viable northern portion suited to project deliverables.

Dr. Phillip's is working with the civil engineering team Kimley Horn, and is actively conducting stormwater analysis, boundary surveys, and feasibility planning to ensure development does not worsen flooding in surrounding neighborhoods. Water and wastewater capacity constraints within Eatonville were identified as a critical issue, requiring coordination with the Town's ongoing \$34 million FDEP infrastructure grant and exploration of solutions such as additional wells, storage, efficiency measures, and phased development.

The Committee reviewed preliminary conceptual ideas for the future park and surrounding development, stressing that the illustrations are discussion tools. Concepts explored include a centrally located park, an east west "main street" configuration, and flexible or curbless festival streets capable of hosting major cultural events while serving residents on a daily basis. Members emphasized accessibility, preservation of mature trees, traffic management, multiple points of entry, and careful consideration of noise impacts on

adjacent neighborhoods. There was strong encouragement to ensure the site meaningfully reflects Eatonville's cultural, educational, and musical legacy rather than functioning solely as new development.

Committee Chair, Dr. Maroon, gave a presentation on the history of the Hungerford site as one rooted in love, service, education, and community collaboration. History emphasized how the site's significance extended beyond physical buildings. She shared the stories of Russell and Mary Calhoun, early educators whose dedication to community service brought the Tuskegee model to Eatonville in the late 1890s, and the Hungerford family, whose commitment to racial justice, education, and care for the community led to the donation of land that made the school possible. Through these interconnected narratives, she highlighted the site as a living legacy shaped by acts of love, service, partnership, and shared responsibility. She challenged the Committee to view preservation not as solely recreating structures, but as stewarding the ideals of community service, love, beauty, collaboration, faith, and education embedded in the site's history. The committee shared reflections on the importance of stewarding the site's cultural history.

The meeting then shifted to a discussion of responsible funding approaches for Phase I work. The committee discussed the need to coordinate with the Town of Eatonville on the creation of a pavilion and community park with attention to establishing a funding mechanism for long term maintenance costs (potentially 5-10 years). The committee discussed grant options and the role of Dr. Phillips in identifying responsible funding partnerships.

In the final portion of the meeting Mr. Williams, COO, provided an overview of how Dr. Phillips Charities revitalized the Packing District. Previously an industrial citrus packing area, the district was brought back to life as a vibrant mixed-use community. Mr. Williams emphasized the intentional preservation of historic structures and architectural character alongside development of new amenities such as a central park and pavilion, food hall, retail, housing, and community-serving uses. The project prioritized infrastructure and public space early to create a sense of place.