

## MS Civil Rights Sites Special Resource Study

### Public Open House Meetings – Flip Chart Raw Comments

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Meeting Location: Delta State University

Time: 11:30 am – 1:30 PM (Monday, May 7, 2018)

#### Comment Station # 1: What are the most important stories and people associated with the civil rights movement in the state of Mississippi?

- Jessie Williams – First teacher to integrate a white public school (Shaw High School) in Mississippi Delta
- P.M. Smith (Howard worked for PM Smith)
- I. T. Montgomery
- T.R.M Howard – Taborian Hospital, Mound Bayou
- Mound Bayou – Black Agency - Largest All Black Town in the US 1887
- Aaron Henry (Clarksdale)
- N. Bolivar Co. Water Association / Delta – Health Center – Right to Clean Water (*More Sessions to collect history needed beyond this meeting*)
- Dr. Robert Smith (MD) – treated many of the Civil Rights workers (Delta Health Center)
- Site of initial Emmet Till beating in Glendora
- Montgomery Co. – Duck Hill
  - Town of Duck Hill – in 1955 it was a safe haven for Wheeler Parker, Till’s Cousin, who was in the room with Till when they kidnapped him. William Parker House
  - Mule Train – Duck Hill one of the starting points for the Poor People’s Campaign March. Benford Chapel UMC site where H. Williams / Jesse Jackson recruited for the March
  - Winona, MS – Where Fannie Lou Hamer beaten in jail. Building is gone, site still there.
  - Duck Hill – First black female gospel congress, Lucie E. Campbell “In the Upper room” – Supported Marrison Omolerson’s performing – organizer – labor rights activist
  - 1937 – Lynching of Bo Jack & Red in Duck Hill – Propelled anti-lynching bill
  - One of the earliest Head Start sites (also 1<sup>st</sup> / only black public school in area)
  - Integration of Binford High
  - James R. Binford, state rep. / former confederate soldier who introduced “Jim Crow” legislation to 1890 constitution of MS that was adopted throughout the South
- Grenada
  - School Integration (MLK, A. Young, J Baez) Abernathy, marched to integrate Grenada schools
- Black Power Movement – Park where term “Black Power” coined in Greenwood, MS.

**Comment Station # 2: Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting civil rights sites in Mississippi? What are they?**

- NPS can take lead but should involve other experts & grassroots.
- Fannie Lou Hamer
- Bridge Communities – eg Asian communities, making loans to black communities. Chinese groceries are still exist.
- How can we make these stories interesting to people who feel these are not their stories?
  - Foster a spirit of acceptance
  - Not trying to hold people accountable but approach with recognition that events happened
  - Paint the entire context
  - Explain importance & the reasons
  - Not them but us

**Comment Station # 3: What sites or places related to civil rights history would you suggest for consideration as part of this study? Why?**

- Clarksdale – Drug store site of Aaron Henry, leader of CR movement in 1950s – NAACP organizer in Clarksdale. Representative in Jackson, store site bombed & burned, his church across the street (MLK, Jr. Spoke)
- IT Montgomery House, Mound Bayou
- Taborian Hospital & City of Mound Bayou
- ETHIC Site, Glendora & Black Bayou Bridge
- Clinton Melton, 1955 murder site (marker) – Glendora
- JW Milam’s house site, Glendora (Marker now)
- TRM Howard Home site (Marker) & Friendship clinic (Marker)
- Magnolia Mutual Life Insurance CO. Sign, where Medgar Evers worked, in Mound Bayou
- Booze Home, where Dr. Burton lived, Mound Bayou. Mary Booze – house, instrumental in Republican Party & IT’s daughter, where Mamie Till stayed during trial.
- TRM Howard’s influence on Rosa Parks before Montgomery boycott. Speaker.
- Mound Bayou was a symbol of freedom because owned by African Americans
- Duck Hill, Wheller Parker, cousin of Emmett Till
- May 20, 1968 – site of the Mule Train recruitment – 4 families, Marks MS, commemorating Mule train this week.
- March 16. 1968 – Jennings Temple Methodist Church – spoke on Poor People’s March. Greenwood MS
- Civil Rights Trail around the Delta – a big park with many small places
- Between 1875-1950 – La Flore County ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in lynching among the southern states (south)

- 1963 – Greenwood, March led by Bob Moses to register to vote – Howard Street in Downtown Greenwood. Stopped, arrested & in national press
- Sunflower County – F.L. Hamer from Ruleville, WM Chapel M.B. Church – only church to hold voter registration meetings. (Freedom Trail Marker) & FL Hamer memorial garden. Sunflower CO. Courthouse – where Hamer tried to register & bus stopped.
- Winona, MS – where Hamer arrested, beaten, & Montgomery CO. (check to see what’s there – Bus station café)
- Amzie Moore Home & Pan AMM Station – the only stop between Vicksburg & Memphis for African Americans

**Comment Station # 4: What ideas or comments would you like to share with us?**

*Includes responses from the Q & A Session*

- Who will determine the Definition of “Civil Rights” – Who as affected by them – Will that definition be publicized?
- Concern – a lot of sites are volunteer run-staffing is a concern
- How can you harness this network that already exists? People love what they do.
- NPS mgt. could help with outreach & mgt.
- Broad civil rights perspective –will the study consider other disenfranchised communities? Eg Asian.
- Need assistance w/preservation form NPS
- So much has been mistold and skipped because of racial fears – a lot of information has not been told. NPS plays a part but there needs to be more involvement from other entities. For example Mound Bayou was the center for civil rights and the irch stories have not been truthfully told. (TRM Howard) – challenged Hoover to investigate medical doctor spoke 4 days before Rosa Parks rode bus. He inspired her. He housed Mamie Till & took her back and forth to trial.

**State Map Notes (Potential Sites)**

- GONG – LUM v. Rice – 1927
- Chinese School – Near Greenville
- Greenville Reflection & youth Development Museum ( Jesse Williams)
- Sunflower Co. Courthouse (Hamer & King)
- Amzie Moore Home
- Mound Bayou
- Drew (Jail) Silver Rights – Mac Bertha
- Ruleville (Hamer)
- Glendora (Till)
- Duck Hill (Till connection)

## **MS Civil Rights Sites Special Resource Study**

### **Public Open House Meetings – Flip Chart Raw Comments**

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Meeting Location: Sumner

Time: 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm (Monday, May 7, 2018)

#### **Comment Station # 1: What are the most important stories and people associated with the civil rights movement in the state of Mississippi?**

- Aaron Henry (213 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Clarksdale) – Pharmacy (burned but a museum is in the works)
- VERA Piggee – Clarksdale – CR leader, beauty Saloon, still standing. Wrote a book - “ The Struggle of struggles”
- Book Reference - “Crossroads at Clarksdale – Black Freedom Struggle in the MS Delta” by Hamlin
- Freedom Farm – Co/op – Fannie Lou Hamer

#### **Comment Station # 2: Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting civil rights sites in Mississippi? What are they?**

- What are comparable civil rights sites? In the Southeast? - Birmingham NHS & Freedom Riders NM - Reconstruction Era NM and other small historic sites
- Emmet Till case was biggest in country at the time. Rumors that this was a hoax. Trial was a mockery. 1985 NBC documentary “Death in the Delta”. Need to tell the true history. And that Mississippi has changed, though it has a long way to go – need good leadership
- Sumner & Tallahatchie Courthouse is a principle site in MS
- Consider MS Civil rights Museum – what is the role?
- Opportunity to make history with National Park designation. Tell the story with all the sites connected. Heal by recognizing all the sites & individuals involved. Important to vindicate Emmett in his death. Tallahatchie County & La Flore County.
- People come from all over country. Lots of funding support. Also a positive teaching story.
- Connect the dots.
- Many school buses arrive here – very busy already.
- Biracial commission in 2005 – needs to integrate Glendora. Tell history truthfully – Glendora Museum – Human Rights violation. Should have a historic district.
- Challenge of public history & civil rights is that NPS is sites/places but the organization happened in small little houses, barber shops, back rooms, ect.
- Aaron Henry – NAACP, Pharmacist (drug store burned – considering replica or park) , 213 MLK, Clarksdale.
- Interpret the first desegregation sites. Eg church visit campaign in 1963, Tougaloo. CR movement was decentralized.

- Tougaloo rises up – more active in Civil Rights
- Noone has written a play of the trail that talks about how justice went. Act out roles (Role reversal)
- Start at Civil Rights Sites Museum in Jackson, then go out to Delta to experience the story. See how people lived in the Delta & many stories, museums – Hub to introduce people to here.
- Vera Piggee – Worked with Medgar Evers & A. Henry – Beauty shop still standing- held meetings
- Emmet Till was a catalyst for Civil Rights Era
- Emmet Till story – arrived to MS in summer (common among kids) – Grandparents/uncle home in Money – Store incident – Murder site (Controversy where) – some think sunflower county – where body was found in river
- McComb Ms – More bombings than any other town in MS
- Need to connect w. Toni –Sumner Town Clerk to get information on use of court for trials and other uses.

**Comment Station # 3: What sites or places related to civil rights history would you suggest for consideration as part of this study? Why?**

- Tutwiler Funeral Home
- Home of Mrs. Birdia Keglur, killed for registering people to vote in Greenwood (home of Charleston) (Sidon) outside of Greenwood @ 1966, Jan. 11
- Greenwood MS (Howard & Church St) – Black citizens attacked for registering to vote, leaders Rev. Tucker & Cleveland Jordan (1963, Feb.)
- Grenada
- 213 MLK – Aaron Henry’s Drugstore Clarksdale
- Moses Wright (Till’s Uncle) House in Money MS (Till abducted from this house)
- Drew, MS – Plantation where Till was taken and tortured
- The story of Emmet Till should be told through a network of the 8 sites involved
  - 1 Hotel in Sumner where jury stayed, where international press stayed
  - 2 Tutwiler Funeral Home
  - 3 River site- where Till’s body was pulled out
  - 4 Glendora Gin
  - 5 Milom’s House (JW)
  - 6 Shurden Plantation (Clinton Milton, killed after Till, most likely with same gun
  - 7 King’s Place – where James Hicks found two blacks forced to participate in Till murder
  - 8 Sumner Courthouse

**Comment Station # 4: What ideas or comments would you like to share with us?**

*Includes responses from the Q & A Session*

- USE GPS & Use dots & have story told – make it simple

- Plater Robinson – LA (studied Emmet Till)
- Sites need to be readily accessible and tell the story well. This site fulfills both of these goals.
- What local public investment is required?
- Will jobs be for local people?
- How ill history be collected and documented? Concern is if we use books it will be the same false history we've had that is already recorded.
- Instead of isolating sites, make a historical district instead of picking one that is central. A district makes it inclusive and no one would feel left out – this cuts out rhetoric
- This should not be about gain but about healing process for the community.
- There is a high school in West Virginia that comes here every summer and re-enacts the trial – on spring break.

### **State Map Notes (Potential Sites)**

- **None Identified on the Map (double Check)**

## **MS Civil Rights Sites Special Resource Study**

### **Public Open House Meetings – Flip Chart Raw Comments**

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Meeting Location: Jackson – Two Museums (MS Civil Rights Museum)

Time: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (Tuesday, May 8, 2018)

#### **Comment Station # 1: What are the most important stories and people associated with the civil rights movement in the state of Mississippi?**

- March on Brandon – 1965 (Rankin County Courthouse) – George Raymond “CORE”
  - John Adams -NAACP (601) -201-3611
  - Race Riots in Clinton MS 1880s – Senator Charles Cardwell assassinated, Beginning of the end of Reconstruction – Train Depot
  - Cotton Gin – in Gendora – As a site of the Till story
  - Tutwiler Funeral Home – As a site of the Till story
  - Uncles’ Home – Crosby Smith - Asa site of the Till story
  - Church (where they tried to burry Emmet –Uncle Moses – As a site of the Till Story
  - “Local People” book as a resource
  - IT Montgomery
- Please add the Scott Ford house to the list. They were the homes of Midwives after slavery (see brochures)

#### **Comment Station # 2: Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting civil rights sites in Mississippi? What are they?**

- Study should not be broad bunch of events, but should highlight specific individuals ad their stories and efforts.
- Build empathy one story at a time to convey history.
- NPS needs to come back and do further visits to understand context and evaluate the sites that are identified in these meetings.
- Be careful to separate fact from fiction in relation to the Till case.
- Contact Delta Center for Culture and Learning for historic research information (Delta State University)
- Need to be a connection to other things live education which is a big part. Need to be taught what we need to do.
- Historical Black education should be involved.

- Feature the Medgar Evers home – he dedicated his life work to the betterment of the African American Community. Brought social & economic justice through protests boycotts and demonstrations.
- Gilbert Mason beach wade-in. Physician instrumental in integration fo beach on MS Gulf Coast. Demonstrators were beaten & driven off the beach by brutal police and brutal law enforcement.
- RR Track that brought Emmet & Cousin to Money is significant. Needs a marker.
- There’s a barn further out from where he was killed. We don’t necessarily want this.
- Scott Ford House (in a historic district – garden & children’s house) 2 houses homes of midwives (Jackson Cohea Street) This tells the sotry of work after slavery this was their business.

**Comment Station # 3: What sites or places related to civil rights history would you suggest for consideration as part of this study? Why?**

- City of Natchez
- Stringer Lodge Masonic Temaple – Lynch St.
- Council of Federated Organizations (Jackson State University)
- Welthall Hotel, Jackson MS
- Chambliss Shoe Hospital – JR Lynch St.
- Alexander Hall – Jackson State – Gibbs – Green Shooting
- Include more blacks and elderly
- Make this nationally known – Radio TUD Film
- Jacob Reddix Home – Valley St. Jackson MS  
Mt Olive Cemetery, Jackson State
- Isiah T. Montgomery House
- COFO Building in Jackson
- Prospect Hill, Louman
- Republic of New Africa, Janson MS – House that was site, is currently condemned by city. Action is needs to be taken to save it. Coordinate with MS Dept of Archives and history – URGENT
- Natchez MS – Include on a statewide tour. Oct 1965 – voter registration effort – over 700 people arrested, 150 sent to Parchment w/o charges. Natchez movement made concessions w/o mainstream support. Included armed resistance (unlike non-violent orgs.)
- Republic of New Africa – main sites of birth of black nationalism – Chokwe Lumumba – establish black separatists – early 70’s Black Panthers –
- Wathall Hotel – Jackson meetings of Jackson Citizens Council committee of concern. Raised \$ to rebuild burned churches.
- Mason Temple & MW Stringer Grand Lodge – NAACP HQ, M. Evers office and where funeral held. 1955, first place where MLK Jr spoke, COFO, MF Democratic Convention, Thurgood Marshall attended opening, Many visitors Bullet holes intact. Auditorium, and cultural arts events for community during Civil Rights Era, COFO Meeting place ZT Huber Hospital – JSU
- MT Olive Cemetery – JT Lynch St. 2 of 1<sup>st</sup> African American statues in the state.



- COFO Building ( next to cemetery) – Lynch Street historic corridor – access from Masonic Lodge.
- Alexander Hall – Dorm at JSU – 1970 – Killed James Earl Green & Gibbs (After Kent State) by National Guard & Jackson Police – Racial Tension
- Book – Devils Walking by Stanley Wilson – why community had to arm itself.
- Natchez – Deacons for Defense & Justice, armed & made trip to Bay Area Panthers before armed resistance.
- Natchez NHP – add Forks of the Road – the south’s second largest slave market after 1809.
- Natchez –churches were the meeting places, Churches Byhlah, China Grove, Holy Family Catholic Church & NAACP local efforts – offices in a private home. (Part of existing driving tour).
- Natchez bombing. Tire plant. Metcalf, after Civil Rights Act.
- Took to streets, led by Charles Evers, then KKK March.
- Parchment Penitentiary – Unit 17 – both Natchez group and Freedom Riders held here.

#### **Comment Station # 4: What ideas or comments would you like to share with us?**

*Includes responses from the Q & A Session*

- *Will you use any money to diversify curriculums? How do you give back to community. We need better race relations. This is what I want to see as a member of the Till Family.*
- *Length of study – too short. This is important nationally. Concern about representation in the NPS. How are decedents being involved? Two years is not enough time. Majority of the sites are perpetrator owned (5 sites) There is a great need to study more.*
- *It is a problem to talk about Civil Rights and it is an impersonal thing. Bigger impact to talk about individuals. Broad stories create lack of empathy. There is curriculum already established. Here experiential experiences.*
- *I know we are labeling the Civil Rights Movement. Want to tell the story of Gilbert Mason, Concerned about the timeframe. Dig Back further.*
- *George Famer, County Seat of Beandon. Received Presidential Medal of Freedom 1999. We need to get with people that are still here.*
- *NPS Can help us save places. Are a number of sites already. Bryant Grocery – a broader context. Broad scope of study. Mound Bayou – good place. Isaiah T. Montgomery.*
- *1947 – Flood*
- *We should know who Medgar Evers is – not just we was killed in the driveway. Are we going to have representation? Will I see myself? How would you hire staff?*
- *Commend NPS to Handle all stories of America. This will open doors. More of an introduction of the humanity of enslaved people. Stories should be greater than the 5 sites.*
- *This is my history we need proper representation though out the process. Get the right people involved.*
- *MS is passionate about their people and history. All comments are important. Need integrity and inclusion. Happy you are here to present. Is there a cap on sites?*

- *How does the park service handle sites that are not NPS owned (Medgar Evars home in a neighborhood) Need people who can give correct information, How did you get word out to communities on Civic engagement? Family Involvement – what is it?*
- *Who made selections? (Five Sites)*
- *Praising Perpetrators is a concern (Courthouse)*
- *Were sites selected because they were already preserved?*
- *Bethel AME – How can we be included?*
- *Need a specific way to take concerns.*
- *Vicksburg- Actual physical materials, list of current living freedom fighters.*
- *Formally request that Vicksburg be considered& education of Freedom fighters.*
- *We (Vicksburg) is open to a site.*
- *Need to understand where our heroes lie.*
- *Establish direct contact with survivors and families of our civil rights victims and martyrs*
- *Diversify the representation of the final staffing and ongoing meetings*
- *Develop and target specific interest groups and people for their involved rather than mass media*
- *Please consider the time of these interest meetings in cultivating your involvement.*
- *Community engagement through our churches and service orgs.*
- *All of this is relational, establish contact with the resources in our people & communities*
- *I want to get the Okolona College on the NPS rolls.*

#### **State Map Notes (Potential Sites)**

- *Parchment Pen.*

## **MS Civil Rights Sites Special Resource Study**

### **Public Open House Meetings – Flip Chart Raw Comments**

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Meeting Location: Jackson – Medgar Evers Library

Time: 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm (Tuesday, May 8, 2018)

**Comment Station # 1: What are the most important stories and people associated with the civil rights movement in the state of Mississippi?**

- Fannie Lou Hamer
- Recognize & include the Medgar Evers monument
- The NPS should collect oral histories as part of their research efforts (talk to those who were involved in the movement)

**Comment Station # 2: Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting civil rights sites in Mississippi? What are they?**

- Include individuals who were around at the time to be involved.
- It will take further community engagement for people to feel comfortable with outcome, takes an investment of time.
- What were the cultural institutions? Talk about the people. Do not just focus on violence. (Palace of Children) Civil rights organizers came to a stable place in Mississippi. they provided homes, ect. Scott Ford house did all things right. Focus on things that hold up. (Ferrish Street Historic District) – see brochure
- There were a lot of things happening in the churches/
- What happen as far as security? Who will keep the street from too much traffic?
- How will this benefit the home owners?
- What about Uncle Moses house? Why the store and not the home?

**Comment Station # 3: What sites or places related to civil rights history would you suggest for consideration as part of this study? Why?**

- Masonic Temple – Jackson MS. Perhaps most historically significant bld. In MS. M Evers office and permanent home of NAACP, from 1955 – Thurgood Marshall dedicated it in 1955. SCLS, Freedom Riders – CORE office and trained locals to participate in local sit ins in places such as the zoo, parks, ect. SNCC also had office here. Plus 70 + MS organizations formed COFO. Also

meeting space by African American celebrities to raise money. Developed savings & loan to support Evers neighborhood and businesses. Kirk Flood spoke to support movement.

- Brother Hollis: The Sankofa of a Movement Man, By Hollis Watkins
- Look at others after M. Evers death. Influence Derrick Johnson, head of MS NAACP, now national leader.
- Stringer started PHA Masonry, late 1850, early abolitionist & education.
- 3 churches – Bethel in Vicksburg & PHA Lodge # 1, Pearl St. in Jackson, PHA Lodge #2, in Natchez & PHA Lodge #3
- WW II Black Veterans – M Evers, Amzie Moore, CC Brown, Steadman
- For My People by Margaret Walker Alexander
- Midwifery – path to middle class, educators & affiliations with church. Lead to self-sufficiency.
- Fairish Street Historic District – NR listed. African American corridor. 4 remaining structures. 126 acres – where CR workers initially stayed. Where M Evers first office. See Civil Rights walking tour, by visitor bureau.
- Important to consider the ground work already laid to prepare the local people.
- Idea for period 1945 – 75 (WW II – When CR were fully tested)
- Redemption by Nicholas Lehmer
- Tougaloo College – Chapel – RF Kennedy, MLK, S. Carmichael, FL Hamer Spoke here.
  - Sara A. Dickey Hall – Temporary hospital during March Against Fear
- Gulf Side Assembly Center – Waveland MS, on Gulf Coast Owned by United Methodist church. Planned organizations and meeting places. Bought beach area, in view of public beach.
- I got the Light of Freedom by Charles Pagne (The Land was Ours)

#### **Comment Station # 4: What ideas or comments would you like to share with us?**

Includes responses from the Q & A Session

- *Italics are facilitation team responses.*

- Stop giving power to perpetrators and not those who stood up and still are fighting against injustice!
- See student film on Medgar Evers
- Is historic interpretation the duty of the park service or the federal government? - *The Organic Act requires NPS interprets stories. This includes seeking oral histories, etc. and first-hand information, in this study.*
- Family members of Emmett Till – Uncle Moses, funeral home should be considered. Not courthouse & Bryant's store.
- *Civil Rights period – think holistically, starting w/1 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> amendments through Jim Crow and the broad arch of history.*
- Civil rights is it about people getting killed, stepping out against laws? Violence happened, then protest. Think about how people lived. How African Americans survived, educated themselves, before what is traditionally called the CR movement. Scott Ford House Landmark. (see brochure)

- *# of sites studied will expand – they are a starting point, and they are not competing against each other.*
- *Time factor – aim for summer 2019, but may lengthen.*
- *SRS criteria - concern for family and need for adequate management. IS it already done? - NOT a done deal*
- *Who is study? Professional historians, interpreters?*
- *Who are the names?*
- *Engage local historians and representative who interpret C rights history. Don't dictate an incorrect story. Personal stories need to be included. Include Medgar Evers home. Women were left out of books. Concerned that study team are not from MS or African American.*
- *We don't want to give you (NPS) our story and then publish it.*
- *Study does not involve a democratic voting process.*
- *Send comments to Dr. Timla Washington, who will forward comments to NPS. Need to provide feedback.*
- *NPS brings a national platform for national stories, economic opportunities w/tourism dollars that communities stand to benefit from.*
- *M Evers home – how would integration into NPS Be? NPS will look at questions concerning management & operations. Want to see the story continued to be told well by Tougaloo College. NPS will consider this. Tell how its working now? What are your concerns?*
- *Will the NPS help the Evers neighborhood home owners? Too premature, but look to Natchez NHP example.*
- *M. Evers Home – Where would cost for repair lay? Tougaloo currently, Potential NPS management would then be responsible.*
- *House Resolution Introduced for M. Evers national monument – how do these two efforts play together? All NPS units are the same but with different names. Congress doesn't need to wait for the study to establish a park.*

### **State Map Notes (Potential Sites)**

- *No Comments received on the map at this meeting.*

## **MS Civil Rights Sites Special Resource Study**

### **Public Open House Meetings – Flip Chart Raw Comments**

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Meeting Location: Philadelphia

Time: 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm (Wednesday, May 9, 2018)

#### **Comment Station # 1: What are the most important stories and people associated with the civil rights movement in the state of Mississippi?**

- Side trip during March Against Fear to Philadelphia – MLK & Abernathy 1966 @ MT. Nebo at 2 year anniversary of murders. Waiting for Trail to Start.
- Westside Park church (Neshoba)
- Rock Cut Road – Murder site CR515 (Goodman, Cheney, Schwerner)
- Bogue Chitto Swamp – where burned out car found
- Old Jolly Farm – Where bodies were buried
- Long dale Community (Phito Co.)
- Everything (terrorism) that happened in Long dale happened in all neighboring black communities – look at the level & frequency of this terror.
- COFO building on S. 5<sup>th</sup> street – in Meridian
- First Union Bapt. (Meridian) MLK preached there on several occasions
- Roscoe Jones – Freedom Scholl worker @ headquarter in Meridian (came to meeting)

#### **Comment Station # 2: Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting civil rights sites in Mississippi? What are they?**

- They Redline the city so most African American residents could only go to schools on the west side of town which included Booker T. School.
- The Railroad track marked the split
- Churches & schools should be sites because they are old, they are important for history.
- The old jail where 3 civil rights workers were held for many hours until midnight is an important site. They were going to the church.
- Andrew Goodman / Michael Schwer (from North), James Chaney (from Meridian)
- Philadelphia does a great Black Hisotry Program (play) for black history month (Neshoba Youth Coalition)
- The jail would not be the best place to interpret site. This was not a happy ending. Mt Zion United Church is a better place to tell the civil rights story.

**Comment Station # 3: What sites or places related to civil rights history would you suggest for consideration as part of this study? Why?**

- Philadelphia Coalition – Reconciliation –Neshoba County.
- Old Neshoba – Driving Tour (see brochure)
- Call for Justice – Attorney General -2008 Indictment (8 living at this time, but all since died)
- Meridian Federal Courthouse – FBI Office
- Mount Zion Church
- Benwalt Hotel
- Neshoba County Courthouse
- McCelland Café
- Mt. Nebo Church
- Latimer’s Funeral Home
- Rock Cut Road / Jolly Farm
- Bogue Chitto Swamp
- Booker T. Washington School
- Okalona College – (see folder)
- Meridian Freedom School / COFO Bld.
- Meridian Old Baptist Seminary – Freedom School
- COFO Office in Philadelphia?
- Rock Cut Road – Murder Site
- Old Baptist Church – Largest Freedom School

**Comment Station # 4: What ideas or comments would you like to share with us?**

*Includes responses from the Q & A Session*

- Add Mt Zion to the study. Hundreds from around the world visit, meditate and pray on the grounds. The workers heard about the plight of the church’s burning, came with love in their heart for other human beings. People cannot wrap their brain around the inhumanity- this is why people come with questions.
- Mt Zion - 8 miles east of here. People come and consider it holy ground. Cemetery – most people at the church that night were buried there. The urgency is that people present will be gone soon. Witness to beating at the church.
- Share NPS terminology NM, trail, ect. Parks are not just grass and trees.
- 1964 News media assembled in Benwalt Hotel
- Acquisition – partner or purchase? Ex. NPS easement of an active church at Reconstruction Era NM.
- Can’t tell story of jail without Mt Zion. Mt Nebo Missionary was also center of CR for Freedom Riders, housed there.

- Rock Cut Road & Farm where murders happened and the bodies were buried. All connected sites.
- 1951 Radio Station – Charles Evers, 2<sup>nd</sup> African American DJ
- Booker T. Washington School – first to get an education
- Philadelphia good community to raise children.
- Jail tells a piece of the story – other places important too.
- When people come, they want to see all the sites associated with Freedom Summer murders. Need to tell full story all sides.
- Collaborate to tell this history (See driving tour)
- Community looking for outside support and funding
- Driving tours are happening
- Where & how do we finance putting together the story?
- Stewart Rockoff – MS Humanities Council attended Jackson MS Meeting
- What are the benefits to becoming a NPS site? To preserve and interpret complicated stories for the long term. More visitors could arrive to seek out NPS site with tourism dollars, potentially.
- Money & jobs could be a benefit.

#### **State Map Notes (Potential Sites)**

- Mt Zion Church
- Neshoba County Courthouse (2005 trial and MLK speech)
- Olona - teachers in MS trained here, Okolona College burned in 1926.
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## **MS Civil Rights Sites Special Resource Study**

### **Public Open House Meetings – Flip Chart Raw Comments**

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Meeting Location: Biloxi

Time: 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm (Thursday, May 10, 2018)

#### **Comment Station # 1: What are the most important stories and people associated with the civil rights movement in the state of Mississippi?**

- Have markers for lynching's at each individual site. Every site where a mob gathered should be remembered so we never do this again.
- There is still an underlying feeling of oppression in MS. We need to do more to engage heritage.
- There were 3 wade-ins not just bloody Sunday. The northern area needs to know more about the southern area & vice-versa.
- Kathy England – from Hattiesburg, a member of NAACP. She is still alive and head of EECHO (Empowering, Economics, Environmental on Climate and Health Organization). She should be interviewed.
- Dr. Mason practiced medicine into his 90's. He helped everyone (Whites & Blacks) especially because they were poor. He didn't have a race barrier. He would trade chickens plus other things for payment. He helped others live a longer life through education his passionate medical treatment.
- Mr. Clay built a courthouse – buried old city cemetery. Did other buildings. He took red brick and made spirals w/no rebar. They are still standing today.
- Black Fisherman (Mr. Ellis) came from LA w/ shrimp boats. They were independent & owners of their own boats. Mr. Ellis had 3 boats employed quite a few people.
- Dr. Mason known for wade-in protests, but his foundation was of a very professional & caring doctor who broke barriers in local medical field. Surgeons at the medical hospital, one of the first black residents of local hospital.

#### **Comment Station # 2: Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting civil rights sites in Mississippi? What are they?**

- Main Street Baptist Church meetings & hub. Our Mother of Sorrows Catholic Church/school
- Neighborhood walking area – Main Division St. area. Ex. Perseme a house to show where they lived a normal 1960's African American home.
- Dr. Faison's house in Gulfport, worked with dr. Mason on Biloxi wade-ins MS (30<sup>th</sup> Avenue)
- Wade-ins happened in same area. One area in front of Gulfport veterans admin. The lighthouse could be a focal point.

- Idea – come down Main Street, or a church, the walk to beach, re-march the footsteps. “the beach was something to overcome – vast area.”
- Need an educational aspect – a publication, Map w/dots & pictures w/ info. Phone App. Tour w/sound and use oral history.
- Provide a sensory experience.
- Ethel clay, encourage 2<sup>nd</sup> Wade-IN – Dr. Mason. 13-14 yr. old, a school teacher in Biloxi can provide ephemera to ground the project
- Oral history needed from people involved
- Hold a “Civil Rights Festival” one weekend a year to commemorate people. This could help meet the cost feasibility criterion.
  - Fewer resources & volunteers
  - Like trolley tour @ Clarksdale
  - Site would include beaches (Wade-ins)
- Used to have chain link fences to water across beach. Formerly a sea wall; beach created in mid-1950’s – 26 miles to protect sea wall from hurricane damage, not recreation.
- “Gone but not Forgotten on the MS Gulf Coast” – Facebook group that posts historical photos (closed group) – Paul Tisdale, city councilman, FB group access.
- 100 men Delta blue association in Bay St. Louis, a venue where African Americans performed when they couldn’t perform elsewhere. Recently revived, restored. Blue note – black juke joint on Main Street.
- Trail through state – link to the five sites
  - Neshoba County.
  - M. Evers House
  - Dr. Mason Office & Wade-in beach & Division St. & Beck Park
  - Other NAACP Offices
  - Travel through areas and visit points is more interesting than one site.
  -
- Desegregation at schools, but each different.
- Gulf area –more free blacks and acceptance here in MS. More of a melting pot on coast & more diverse.
- Consider Biloxi because traffic from other places is higher here than Sumner, Delta. More tourism & Festivals. Cruises on the coast. Ect.
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**Comment Station # 3: What sites or places related to civil rights history would you suggest for consideration as part of this study? Why?**

- Transportation Term. In Jackson where “Freedom Riders” were arrested
- Pearl River County Schools last to integrate (1970s)
- Keesler Fields (Army Corps Field) – one of places where Tuskegee airmen did basic training

- Rust College est. 1866 – in Holly Springs by Freedmans Aid Society (Story of white teacher educating under the guise of being “missionaries”
- Okolona, MS OK Junior College
- Rust College Singers
- Black Landowners/agency
- Bethel AME (Vicksburg)
- Piney Woods School
- Southern Christian Institute (Eventually became part of Tougaloo)
- Natchez College Campus
- Active Klan Sites & groups in MS ( past – historic)
- March from Memphis to Jackson (66’) led by Meredith, where he was shot (look for starting point landmark)
- Willie Ricks also used the term “black power” here reinforced the term during this event

#### **Comment Station # 4: What ideas or comments would you like to share with us?**

*Includes responses from the Q & A Session*

- With Technology being a driving force, what apps are you looking at for a walking tour, for example?
- How does this work w/ the national heritage area (Gulf Coast National Heritage Area) How are you working together? Recent Research.
- (DR Mason Jr.) In 2017, African American & Civil Rights research identified sites & how they should be used. DMR has worked with us. Park John Henry Peck across street. Nicholas House – legacy school, & Building
- How many sites can be dedicated? What is turn around? Do you have a committee assembled to help with the study?
- I was on activist in 60’s (Wade-ins 14yrs old) We have markers & pictures. I have contacted other participants to see if they are on the beach. I have a list of participants. Is there a structure that could recognize this? I identified sites in Biloxi – post office on Main Street. NAACP youth branch. I was taken to a building-cell-no longer standing can this be recognized? Voter Registration @ Main Street & lee Street. Youth branch sat in at Woolworth, Greyhound bus station.
- How many parks do we have in MS? What about establishing new parks? Are there any points of contact of the project? Is this the first meeting you have had in Biloxi?
- You have a unique opportunity. Civil rights composed of our neighbors & teachers – those who participated - should be about the community as a whole.
- Some of the 5 sites are more prominent. May not know Dr. Mason in Northern MS. He was a good man – he is @ the bottom because of how history evolved.
- Dr. Mason Jr. – Dr. Mason’s history was longitudinal. Physician – civil rights until day he died. Wade-in witnesses should be recognized. Hope these are good starting places.

- How were sites chosen? MS has highest # of confirmed lynchings. Is anything going to be done to commemorate this?
- Are there a certain # of sites that can be chosen?

### **State Map Notes (Potential Sites)**

- University of Miss – Integration James Meredith
- Rust College – Holly Springs
- Jackson – Transportation Terminal – Freedom Ride
- March from Memphis to Grenada – Willie Mukaset –Ricks (Coined “black Power” before Carmichael)
- Hattiesburg – Dahmer, Black USO
- Pearl River County – Schools last in state to integrate
- Dr. Dunn’s House, Gulfport. 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
- Keesler Field – one of the sites for Tuskegee Airmen to take basic training, site bulldozed rebuilt location unknown