

THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN HERITAGE ROOM

Meeting Minutes – November 04, 2004
4130 WWPH at 5:30pm

ATTENDEES:

Karl Lewis, Deena Alansky, Elizabeth Bender, Luis Van Fossen Bravo, Myrven Caines, Sandria Caines, Salome Gutierrez, Cathy Bazán-Arias.

MISSION:

The mission of Latin American and Caribbean Heritage Room committee is to establish a Heritage Room that is representative of the cultural heritage of the Latin American and Caribbean region predating 1787.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To inaugurate the Latin American and Caribbean Heritage Room on or before 2010.

Presentation

This meeting focused on a discussion on 501c3 non-profit status for the Heritage Room. The attendees unanimously agreed it would be beneficial for the Heritage Room to seek non-profit status. The discussion bifurcated to requirements, including the mission statement, bylaws, submittal of reports (once grants are sought); benefits beyond the construction of the Room, including continued cultural events held at the Room and scholarship funding; and the name of the organization we would want to submit (LA&C Heritage Room versus LA&C Group or variations, etc.). It was agreed that the name and mission should highlight the **Heritage Room project** as main benefactor.

The following comments were brought up:

1. What is the policy regarding Room enhancements (beyond construction)?
2. Food at the Holiday Open House should be independent of electrical outlet plugs (for heating, re-heating or cooling). Set up starts at **11:30am**.
3. Some of the current offices need to be re-evaluated.
4. It was emphasized we need a Publicity Chair or Co-Chairs for future events to handle mailings, web postings, and submittals to newspapers, radio stations and other media venues.
5. Dr. Lewis commented that for outsiders, or new attendees to our meetings, it may not be clear how some of our activities and event participation benefit the Heritage Room.
6. Deena announced that we are now able to see the statistics of the traffic from our website (WWW.HERITAGEROOM.ORG) through WWW.STATCOUNTER.COM. Deena provided the username and password and Cathy will send it to the Board on Friday 05Nov2004.
7. Cathy acknowledged Sandria's recommendation for the PSLC (Pennsylvania Statewide Latino Coalition). Her recommendation led to Cathy's involvement in PSLC starting in 2002 and GACLA (Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino

Affairs) starting in 2003. Both efforts promote the work the Latino community conducts in Pittsburgh and, in particular, Cathy highlights the efforts of the Heritage Room in her official minutes to both organizations.

Discussion/Action Items:

- **The original DCED** (Department of Community and Economic Development) **submittal** for funds originated by Dr. Roy Flores and supported by State Representative John Maher **has been officially canceled** as of October 2004. The reason was that apparently the original fall 2002 submittal was incomplete and the DCEC was not able to contact our Committee on time. Also, there was some misunderstanding at the DCED offices; the DCED was under the impression we had received funds and sent a final notice for a Close-Out Report to the CCAC (Community College of Allegheny County) Foundation (addressed to Dr. Roy Flores). By the time the CCAC was contacted and in turn touched bases with the Nationality Rooms Program, it was too late to make the appropriate adjustments. Once Cathy was able to contact the DCED and CCAC Foundation staff, the matter was straightened out. However, due to the fact that we no longer have a direct contact with the CCAC Foundation and that the communication is evidently compromised without a proper liaison, the DCED recommended the submittal be cancelled and a new submittal be made through the University of Pittsburgh or another 501c3 non-profit organization. Mr. Richard Wagner, Compliance Manager at the DCED closed the file on 19Oct2004.
- The attendees agreed that it would be key to **maintain some of the officers for another year** or so to carry through our first grant submittal and the 501c3 non-profit status. They also agreed some key positions need co-chairs and/or extra support so that we have a more complete board represented at meetings.
- The **mailing for January/February 2005** will focus on our efforts to obtain significant funding (grants, endowments, etc.) and designs for the Room.
- On 04Oct2004, Cathy received, two **DVD videos sent by Silvia Lazo and Paul Grove of SL Productions** to our committee to promote the work of two Latino artists. The first DVD is “Gal Costa canta Tom Jobim”, the second one is “Caballero de Fina Estampa” by Caetano Veloso. The meeting concluded with the viewing of two presentations from each DVD. Everyone agreed they were superb pieces and commented on the orchestras that accompanied each singer. Cathy will contact Silvia and Paul to once again thank them for their gifts. Luis will see if these videos can be shown to students and faculty at the University of Pittsburgh. The DVDs are on loan at the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) at the University of Pittsburgh.
- There was a discussion about **allowing personal links to personal web sites**. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting.
- Deena volunteered to have a **coffee sale** as part of the Holiday Open House on December 4th. The coffee would come from Project New Hope. Cathy will verify the availability of electrical outlets and other equipment necessary to have the coffee sale.

Old Business:

1. Heating and Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) changes: Cathy to follow up with Luz and Maxine Bruhns on what the final decision was for the ceiling layout of the duct work. Special note: On Wednesday 10 Nov 2004 Maxine Bruhns contacted Cathy. Ms. Bruhns explained that the new nationality and heritage rooms have been subjected to upgrades in their hot and cold air distribution and technology (Ms. Bruhns was not aware of the technology upgrades being conducted). On Tuesday 09 Nov 2004, Ms. Bruhns was able to ascertain that the upgrade to the new rooms (LA&C, Turkish, Welsh, etc.) required installation of duct work in the middle of the rooms, a drop down ceiling in some cases, and an overhead projector. A fire alarm, sprinkler system and additional duct work were also installed (this may mean savings to all rooms down the road). Ms. Bruhns spoke with Mr. Park Rankin of the University of Pittsburgh about the layout and Mr. Rankin mentioned that there was a miscommunication likely due to a change in his e-mail address. Ms. Bruhns is organizing a meeting with the new room committees and their architects sometime after the Holiday Open House.
2. The board needs to work on the promotional pamphlets and brochures (see 18Nov2003 and 16Feb2004 minutes).

New Business:

The mailing for January/February 2005 will present the new efforts to seek significant funding for the Room to finalize the Preliminary Design phase and move on to the Conceptual Design. It will highlight the calling for preliminary designs and recent efforts to obtain funds to move forward to the Conceptual Phase.

Action Items as of the end of the meeting:

- Salome will coordinate the 2004 Holiday Open House. Cathy will provide her with the names of the dancers and volunteers who have contacted her about the performance.
- Luis will see if about sharing the DVDs Silvia and Paul sent with students and faculty at Pitt.
- Cathy will contact some board members about co-chairing their duties.
- Cathy will contact Luz and Maxine Bruhns to see about the final decision on the duct work in the ceiling of our Room (CL 318).

The next meeting will focus on seeking 501c3 non-profit status and the air mailing.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday January 20, 2005.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.