



Lumpkin's Jail Site Project

On the Richmond Slave Trail



For Immediate Release

Internationally recognized experts from SmithGroupJJR to work with Richmond community on Lumpkin's Jail Site Project

Richmond, VA, Feb. 07, 2017 -- The internationally recognized Cultural Practice of SmithGroupJJR and its team of museum and cultural experts has been engaged by the City of Richmond to work with the community to propose the best way to use and interpret the important site of Lumpkin's Jail and its critical role in African-American history.

Building upon "Richmond Speaks," the City of Richmond is initiating the first stage of the process to develop the actual Lumpkin's Slave Jail Site as the seed project in Shockoe Bottom along the Richmond Slave Trail. A series of community consultation meetings to be led by the SmithGroupJJR team are being scheduled.

"The Richmond slave trade is a national story that has been buried for over a century. It's time for that story to be told," says Senior Vice President [Hal Davis](#), SmithGroupJJR's lead architect and planner for the project. SmithGroupJJR is one of the firms that led the design and construction of the recently opened National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC.

Lumpkin's Jail, a notorious element in the national slave trade based in Richmond during the first half of the 19th Century, was archaeologically excavated in 2008 revealing the original foundations, stone and brick walkways and over 6000 artifacts. The site is considered one of the most important American archaeological efforts of the past decade.

Thousands of slaves were held in Lumpkin's Jail while awaiting sale at one of the many slave auction sites in Shockoe Bottom. Lumpkin's Jail was also designed to beat, whip, and discipline slaves.

The first in the series of community consultation meetings will be held at Virginia Union University on Tuesday, March 7th from 5:30 until 8:00 pm EST. All members of the public are invited to attend and provide feedback.

Contact Information: 804.646.7322
City of Richmond Project Manager: Jeannie Welliver

Defining the Project Scope

What If, What Then: The Lumpkin's Jail Project Scope

What if

...A story of National historic significance lay buried for over 150 years?

...A bitter story of human bondage, slavery, suffering, and sale was repressed and left untold?

...An archeological team uncovered the actual foundations, cobblestone and brick walkways touched by the thousands of slaves held in this inhumane prison?

What then?

These are the core questions at the heart of the scope of the Lumpkin's Jail Project.

A domestic slave trade thrived in Shockoe Bottom for over 60 years, ending with the Civil War occupation of Richmond in 1865. Lumpkin's Jail was an essential element in that business; preparing slaves for market and torturing slaves who were deemed disobedient. Dubbed the Devil's Half Acre, Lumpkin's Jail story was repressed, buried, and then forgotten...until now.

The archeological uncovering of the site has motivated the City of Richmond to finally tell this story. It is hoped that this will be a seed project to stimulate the further investigation and interpretation of the slave history of Shockoe Bottom, Richmond, and the United States. This project will begin a healing process through remembrance and learning.

Through a community collaboration process, a stellar team assembled by SmithGroupJJR will listen and then prepare a responsive proposal that addresses the best thing to be done with the Lumpkin's Jail Site and story.

The Lumpkin's Jail Project Community Consultation Process

Purpose and Definition

The SmithGroupJJR team has developed a series of structured community meetings that will be implemented throughout the Concept Design Phase. These meetings will begin where the "Richmond Speaks" process left off and will collect and synthesize community advice and guidance on the best use of the Lumpkin's Jail Site both as a first step and as a seed project of a greater plan. Therefore, the Community Consultation process will be structured to build consensus around the plan and proposal the SmithGroupJJR team develops and recommends to the City of Richmond.

The process will integrate community guidance into each milestone deliverable and its final concept proposal. For this reason, each meeting will have a structured agenda and specific set of outcomes it desires from each consultation. In the end, the process is designed to create a community collaboration and build a coalition of support for the final proposal for the Lumpkin's Jail Site.



Contact

Media Contacts

Jeannie Welliver
City of Richmond Project Manager
804.646.7322
Jeannie.Welliver@richmondgov.com

Hal Davis
Project Prinipal-in-Charge
SmithGroupJJR
202.974.0779
Hal.Davis@smithgroupj jr.com