



Community Engagement Council Meeting
December 4, 2025 at 6pm
86 Wentworth Street

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Facilitators	Joanna Gilmore, LaSheia Oubre
CEC members	Zoe Barber, Julie Bowling, Millicent Brown, Walter Brown, Norm Dickerson, Jalen Evans, Shawn Gathers, Harlan Greene, Jerome Harris, Madison Lee, Eric Manning, Jim Newhard, James Njonjo, Sharon Ramirez, Luqman Rasheed, Daniel Schmidt
Advisors	Demetria Clemons, Omar Muhammad
Consultants	--
Liaison	Courtney Howard
Staff	Mark Berry, Paul Patrick
Invited Guest	M. Scott Harris (Associate Professor, CofC Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences)

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:03pm (LaSheia)

- II. Welcome (LaSheia)

- III. Walkthrough of CEC Google Drive (Joanna)
 - a. Request: add questions and concerns to shared document titled *Questions and Concerns* and/or write on sticky note
 - b. Review of document - Explanation of how the document was generated from ideas and feedback shared by the CEC during and since the last meeting
 - i. *CEC Mission, Objectives, Goals* (handout)
 - ii. *Value Statements*
 - iii. *Principles of Ethical Practice*
 - iv. *Simplified Rules of Order for Council Meetings* (handout)
 - c. Review of *Community Engagement Council Role* (handout)
 - i. Suggestion: prioritize harm avoidance prior to the sections on archaeology & research, interment, and memorialization and interpretation (Madison)
 - ii. Concern that the document defines an *informal* agreement for the College to route CEC recommendations to the Board of Trustees (BOT) despite recollections of a stronger commitment voiced by

President Hsu at the first CEC meeting on November 12. (Millicent, Jerome, et al)

1. **Decision:** facilitators to request [President Hsu's talking points](#) from the Nov 12 meeting and compare his planned comments to the document for clarification.
 2. **Decision:** strike the word *informally* from the relevant section of the CEC Role document
- iii. Concern that the document does not clarify a pathway for transparency on BOT discussions and decisions relevant to CEC recommendations (Jalen et al)
1. Discussion: BOT meetings and minutes are public
 2. **Decision:** Facilitators will provide CEC members with meeting dates/times of relevant BOT meetings
 3. Discussion: BOT executive sessions are not public meetings; however, BOT bylaws give the Chair the discretion to invite guests as appropriate. Minutes from executive sessions are not public.
- iv. Question about how CEC recommendations will make their way to the BOT (Omar)
1. BOT Property Committee chair will be invited to the CEC's January meeting
 - a. CEC will be asked to submit questions in advance of that meeting
 2. CEC liaison will regularly provide updates on CEC discussions to President Hsu and Cabinet
- d. Motion to table the vote to approve the mission, objectives, goals and CEC roles/authority (Millicent).
- i. Approved by consensus

IV. Workshop- *Ground Penetrating Radar: The Basics*

- a. Prepared and presented by Dr. M. Scott Harris, CofC Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences
- b. Key points
 - i. "GPR is great when it's great and horrible when environmental conditions are bad"
 - ii. Two GPR devices on display
 1. Larger push-cart model: 250 MHz (low resolution, more depth)
 2. Smaller box model: 800 MHz (high resolution, less depth)

- iii. Comparison of 2D GPR capabilities and 3D GPR capabilities
- iv. Analysis of Terracon's proposal with Harris' recommendations
 - 1. Terracon: 250 MHz
 - a. Harris: resolution is too low; suggests 400+ MHz
 - 2. Terracon: 25 cm spacing of N-S lines
 - a. Harris: too coarse; suggests full 3D
 - 3. Terracon: 2.5 cm trace interval
 - a. Harris: too coarse; suggests full 3D
 - 4. Terracon: information provided to Terracon
 - a. Harris: College should get raw data and field notes/report
- c. GPR does not solve all problems but can be used to guide the archaeology. You won't know what some of the anomalies are until you start to dig.
- d. 3D is the best GPR technology to use, particularly for "high-value targets"
 - i. Local company with 3D GPR: Impulse Radar
- e. Discussion
 - i. *How can you tell if there are layers of bodies in the ground?* You can use the 3D GPR software to extract layers to see what is beneath, but it may not pick up any bodies or grave fill.
 - ii. *Does GPR pick up soil anomalies, bones, someone not buried in a casket?* GPR will see if there was a shaft that had been dug. Will not see bodies. There's a good chance of missing a lot of the bodies via GPR. That's why archaeology is important.
 - iii. *Which GPR was used at the Post and Courier site?* Initial report showed nothing, but 72 bodies were found. Can ask Brockington or SHPO for report.
 - iv. *How problematic is asphalt for getting a good GPR reading?* Not a problem. *How problematic is concrete?* Problematic if it had been reinforced with rebar.
 - v. *Have these recommendations been shared with DES as part of the public comment period, as this is the first known analysis of the Terracon proposal?* They have not been submitted to DES.
 - vi. Concern from a CEC member that the College is going to move forward with the project regardless of the work of the CEC. *What happens to the dirt when it is removed? And the bodies in it?*
 - vii. Impact of flooding and rainfall on GPR reading

- viii. *Do we need to clear off the YWCA to do a good GPR reading? We can get the information needed without taking down the building or parking lot*
- ix. *What are the chances of missing a body? High. Archaeological excavation is the only way to know what is in the ground*
- x. *Should we discuss whether we should even dig up the bodies?*

V. Closing

- a. Consensus decision to meet once per month for 90 minutes (rather than one hour)
- b. Workshop presentation will be posted to the Google Drive
- c. Review all documents prior to the next meeting. Share feedback on the shared Comments and Questions document.
- d. Next meeting: Thursday January 8, 2026, 6-7:30pm at the CofC Lockwood campus

VI. **Action Items**

- i. Facilitators to request President Hsu's talking points from the Nov 12 meeting and compare his planned comments to the document for clarification
- ii. Strike the word *informally* from the relevant section of the CEC Role document
- iii. Facilitators will provide CEC members with meeting dates/times of relevant BOT meetings
- iv. From workshop discussion
 - 1. Get access to the raw data from the earlier GPR conducted on the 106 Coming site (Scott said that this is unlikely unless the GPR was paid for by the College).
 - 2. Request that moving forward raw data is shared.
 - 3. Contact Brockington & Associates for insight into the specifications of the GPR conducted on the Post and Courier site
 - 4. Question whether CEC should have a representative at Bot meetings.
 - 5. Plan to have a presentation from an archaeologist at an upcoming CEC meeting

VII. Additional discussion

- a. Request for a presentation from a historian about who is buried in the site (Julie)
- b. Request to hear from archaeologists and bioarchaeologists

- c. Should the CEC comment on the recovery plan being presented to SHPO?
(Jim)
- d. Monday December 8 at 6pm – Dr. Michael Blakey at Mother Emanuel.
Registration is required. Event is free. Registration link is on the Preservation Society website under the “events” tab. (Rev. Manning)

VIII. **Motion and recommendation** to the College of Charleston administration and DES/SHPO that 3D GPR is conducted prior to the demolition of the YWCA and removal of asphalt, as per Dr. Scott Harris’s suggestions, and that the demolition schedule is adjusted to reflect this change. *(Jim, Millicent, Jerome)*

- i. Meeting minutes will be shared with DES to share this motion
- ii. Recommendation will be submitted to CofC administration
- iii. Approved by consensus

IX. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 *(La’Sheia)*