Architect Robert T. Coles was the architect in charge of restoring the Apollo Theater. As renovations commenced, it became evident that traditional local theaters were a relic of the past, incapable of competing with the dominance of large corporations. With much thought and time, it was decided that the Apollo Theater would transform into something else.

The Telecommunication Center was conceptualized as a versatile space catering to diverse needs.

Equipped with state-of-the-art teleconferencing facilities, including cameras, monitors, and seating for 25, it aimed to facilitate distance learning and telecommunication. Complementing this, a computer lab was envisioned to provide educational opportunities in computing and Internet usage. Moreover, a producing room was marked for commercial use, envisioned as a revenue-generating asset.

The Apollo Theater had a goal to revitalize Jefferson Avenue by fostering community, commercial, and governmental access. A task force was assembled by Masten District Councilman Collins, comprising of representatives from the Arts and Black communities, Robert T. Coles, and key stakeholders like the Langston

Hughes Center and African Culture Center. Shifts in political leadership with the election of Councilman Byron Brown introduced uncertainty with the project’s trajectory. But Councilwoman Beverly Gray secured the initial financing for the project, albeit with modifications to the original vision. Coles mentioned the departure from the initial proposal, which had envisioned the building as a multi-screen theater (containing 3 large screens for viewing), and later an African Culture Center before settling on a public-access Television Center. However, resistance from political perspectives of what “public access” meant stifled progress, leading to disappointment among many, including the stakeholders. Moreover, skepticism pervaded neighboring businesses within the Jefferson Avenue Business District, questioning the unequal distribution of financial assistance from the

city. To address safety concerns and bolster community confidence, Councilwoman Gray championed the Jefferson Renaissance Security Program, aimed at enhancing visibility through increased security patrols and a Back-to-Work Initiative to train security personnel.

Despite these challenges, the Apollo Theater has evolved into a public-access facility, promoting community engagement through its technological advancements. However, in the era of platforms like YouTube, which offer convenient accessibility for content production, the building sees limited usage beyond commercial endeavors. Nevertheless, it continues to serve as a valuable resource for educational purposes in production techniques, fostering skill development and job opportunities at the individual level.