

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SCHOOL FACILITIES AND CAPITAL PROGRAMS

MEETING AGENDA

May 12, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Key ES, Cafeteria

1. **Welcome**
2. **Approve Minutes**
3. **Magnolia Bog – Doug Martin & Alonso Abugattas, County Master Naturalist**
4. **Year End Report**
5. **Committee Assignments and Reports**
 - CCPTA – Don Weinstein
 - MC/MM Program – Heather Obora
 - McKinley – Kelly King
6. **Project Updates – Scott Prisco**
 - Ashlawn
 - New ES
 - Wakefield
7. **Next Steps**
 - CIP Update / Discussion
 - General Discussion

Upcoming Meetings:

- 2015-24 CIP Work Session #1, Tuesday, May 13th, 7 PM – Rm. 101
- 2015-24 CIP Work Session #2, Tuesday, May 20th, 7 PM – Rm. 101
- Joint School Board/County Board CIP Work Session, Wednesday, May 21st, 7 PM – Location TBD
- School Board meeting: Thursday, May 22nd, 7:30 PM
- 2015-24 CIP Work Session #3, Tuesday, May 27th, 7 PM – Rm. 101
- School Board meeting: Thursday, June 5th, 7:30 PM
- 2015-24 CIP Work Session #4, Tuesday, June 10th, 7 PM – Rm. 101
- Next FAC meeting: ***Monday, June 9, 2014 at the Ed Center***

**Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC)
Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2014**

Members in attendance: Hans Bauman, John Chadwick, Christian Dorsey, Laura Saul Edwards, Mike Freda, Greg Greeley, Rebecca Hunter, Jennifer Jackson, Kelly King, Keith Klein, Greg Lloyd, Paul McAree, James Meikle, Ron Molteni, John Peck, Scott Prisco, Natalie Root, Erin Russo, Jason Rylander, Pam Silberstein, Meg Tuccillo, Jeff Turner, Janine Velasco, Don Weinstein, and Lionel White.

1. Welcome: Chairperson Janine Velasco called the meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Library at Abingdon Elementary School. She noted that several representatives of the Abingdon Parents Capital Investment Coalition were present, who had graciously offered to provide the FAC members with a tour of the building. Janine proposed that the start of the business portion of the meeting be delayed until after the tour.

The tour required 20 minutes, during which the Coalition members pointed out problems with the building, including water stained ceiling panels, uneven HVAC temperature control, and rooms that weren't optimally sized. Jim Meikle and Scott Prisco informally discussed the steps being planned to address these problems—some of which are linked to the CIP options being considered by the School Board. Janine invited the Coalition members to stay for the business portion of the meeting (and most did).

Janine congratulated FAC liaison/member Erin Russo on being selected as the principal of New Elementary School #1. Given her current position as an Assistant Principal at adjacent Williamsburg Middle School, this selection should enable Erin to effectively bridge the gap between the two schools.

Janine also congratulated Rebecca Hunter and Greg Greeley on being recognized by the School Board for their major contributions to APS.

Finally, Janine wished John Peck all the best on his imminent move to a new job in San Francisco. It was noted that John has a wealth of knowledge about the history and architecture of APS that will be missed.

2. Approval of Minutes: The draft minutes from the April 2014 meeting were briefly discussed, and then approved without changes.

3. Barcroft Magnolia Bog Presentation: Doug Morton, APS and Alonso Abugathas, Arlington County Parks, provided an informational presentation on this highly regarded nature retreat. The bog is unique for this area and is a habitat for rare fauna, such as the gray fox, and rare flora, including the yellow pimpernel and swamphaw. Mr. Abugathas described the elements of a bog, noting that our magnolia bog was created by storm water that had infiltrated into

the ground, forming 18 separate freshwater springs. The area is fully native, and has never been built on.

Unfortunately the bog has been stressed by erosion, with problems partially caused by the adjacent APS facilities. To restore the bog, Mr. Morton presented an action plan and schedule, which includes items such as a new storm water infiltration facility. The plan should protect against natural hazards up to the level of 100-year storms. Work will begin in June. Adjacent playgrounds will remain open as long as possible.

4. Committee Assignments and Ambassador Reports:

- Don Weinstein provided a brief overview of the CCPTA's April meeting, noting that much of the session was devoted to a presentation/discussion of the CIP, led by John Chadwick.
- Jim Meikle said that the new MC/MM budget would be stable at \$7.5 million.
- Kelly King said that the "gallery walk" at McKinley Elementary School on 21 April went quite well, albeit with low attendance.
- John Peck, as an Ambassador, offered to share a personal "white paper" that he has been preparing that suggests possible changes to school boundaries that would improve diversity and walkability within Arlington. He noted that the purpose of his paper was solely to encourage discussion. It was noted that the paper does not constitute an official product of either the FAC or of APS. On a related topic, John Chadwick noted that there was a Freedom of Information request being processed by APS that seeks release of an internal study on school boundaries. While APS will comply with the law, the report (which will be released to the full public, and not just to the requester) has not been through any public review and comment process.

5. FAC Annual Report: As briefly discussed at our Special FAC Meeting on 12 May, Janine announced that it is now time for the FAC to prepare its annual report for the School Board. The report will outline our work and deliberations over the 2013-14 school year, offering, as appropriate, recommendations, criticisms, and words of praise. John Chadwick asked to receive the report within the next two weeks.

Janine distributed copies of the initial draft to the members, which includes sections written by Jason Rylander, John Peck, Janine, Kelly, and Don. She urged members to begin reviewing the draft, and to provide possible additions, deletions, and corrections. Coordination will be done via e-mail, with Don incorporating changes and rapidly sending revised drafts to the members to review. If no objections to the revisions are raised after two days, the changes will be considered approved. Janine, Jason and Don will do the final proofing and editing, before sending the report to John Chadwick.

Don asked Scott Prisco to provide him with 5-6 photos to incorporate into the report.

Janine noted that the “Priorities for Next Year” section of the report needed to be discussed this evening. Several items were suggested, which will be added to the report. Additional items may be sent to Don via e-mail.

The idea of adding a “Lessons Learned” section was briefly discussed. The consensus was that this would be a good topic for discussion at our June meeting, but would be beyond what we could hope to add to the report within the next two weeks.

6. CIP Discussion: The bulk of the meeting was devoted to discussing the CIP plan, as presented last week to the School Board (with two FAC members physically present and many more watching on the live video stream). John Chadwick led off the discussion, noting that this year’s CIP process was uniquely complex and challenging at all levels. APS will be short about 7,000 seats in 10 years. The CIP must address that situation while accepting the realities of limited funding plus the need to coordinate school needs with those of the overall county. Only within the last week has better financial information been available to inform the discussion. As Mr. Chadwick stated, “we can build what we need, but cannot afford to complete them all when we would like to.”

The FAC’s subsequent discussion was broad ranging and lengthy, as the FAC (and APS) struggles to find the best strategy to expand the number of student seats and provide greatly needed renovations to existing buildings within finite funding. It was clear from FAC member comments that while everyone supported the overall goals, there were many differing opinions on how to achieve them. There was a discussion of risk management: a small number of new buildings represents less project and cost risk than a larger number of building expansions. Mr. Chadwick also discussed the urbanization of Arlington County, which will likely lead to the continuing need for more student seats, the use of vertical school building, and better using each site to its maximum advantage.

There was additional discussion of the funding for the More Seats program, and the need to look to the County Board to provide support. Christian Dorsey discussed the difference between funding and financing. The potential bond referendum was discussed, including what it would provide money for.

In light of our meeting location, and the presence of the Abingdon parents, the FAC repeatedly reminded itself that the need to renovate Abingdon Elementary School, while important, would not in itself provide additional seats.

Jason Rylander and Janine proposed composing a letter to the School Board, with a copy to the County Board (the FAC cannot directly petition the County Board).

Following extensive discussion, the following motion was proposed: "The FAC supports the CIP option being considered by the School Board that includes funding for: construction of New Elementary School #2 in South Arlington, renovations to Abingdon Elementary School, construction of a new middle school

possibly at the Wilson site, renovations to Washington-Lee High School, the conversion/expansion of the Career Center to a broader secondary school role, and funding for the MC/MM program related to these efforts. The FAC hopes that many of these efforts will begin as soon as possible to provide greatly needed seats and building renovations."

After discussion, it was clear that several FAC members had issues with specific elements of the plan, in particular the proposed schedule.

The motion was accepted by a show of hands. A letter will be prepared for the School Board outlining the areas of the CIP that the FAC generally supports.

7. Project Updates: Due to the late hour, Scott Prisco provided a highly condensed report, noting: the expansion of Ashlawn Elementary School is progressing on schedule, major construction equipment will soon arrive at the New Elementary School #1 construction site, and work is underway on the new geothermal fields at Wakefield High School. Kelly King noted that an Ashlawn BLPC is scheduled for 19 May.

8. Next Meeting: The FAC plans to meet next on 9 June, at Hoffman-Boston Elementary School, for our final meeting of the year.