

MEMORANDUM

To: New Elementary School at Reed Team

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Subject: Notes from Transportation Meeting #1

This following contains our notes from the first transportation meeting presented to the BLPC and PFRC for the new Elementary School (ES) at the Reed site, which occurred on February 21, 2018. These notes are meant to accompany the presentation slides used at the meeting to help document the presentation, the questions and discussions that took place during the meeting.

Meeting Notes

- Welcome/Opening Remarks
 - BLPC and Benjamin Burgin from APS (Ben Burgin) gave opening remarks on the meeting, including an outline of topics
 - Other updates
 - Kristin Haldeman (Director of Multimodal Transportation Planning with APS) talked about how the walk zones will be updated throughout APS
 - Kristin provided evaluation packets for members of community to take and evaluate the proposed walk zones for the new ES at Reed
- County Staff Presentation – Jane Kim with DES
 - Staff recommendation for development
 - Library parking on site
 - Existing number of parking spaces needs to be maintained
 - 33 parking spaces for library use (not necessarily staff) (must be maintained)
 - All APS parking on site
 - Number of spaces is adjusted based on actual needs
 - Number of spaces can be adjusted based on TDM
 - Parking to be provided on site to preserve parking for the future use around the site
 - Zoning would require 97 staff parking spaces and 19 visitor parking spaces

- Maintain existing site amenities
 - Fields
 - Trees
 - Open space
- APS needs to justify a lower number of parking spaces
- Next steps: transportation study, coordination with school/library/retail, VDOT coordination for Wash Blvd
- Questions for County Staff:
 - Q: who provides crossing guards? A: [Jane] County provides crossing guards and doesn't need VDOT approval
 - Q: how have reductions been handled lately? A: [Jane] Reduction made through TDM, and availability of on-street parking network. At McKinley on-street parking was used, and it works for the school and community (according to teachers present at meeting)
- Transportation & Parking (Rob Schiesel with Gorove/Slade Associates)
 - APS Go! Survey
 - Mode split data from APS shows similar results across the board
 - Decrease in SOV mode shares for staff in 2016 vs 2013
 - Pedestrian Access
 - APS Go! data shows a strong correlation of walking to distance students live to school. Thus, efforts to increase the walk mode split should focus on areas close to the school first and work their way outwards.
 - Discussion of APS walk zone policies and definition of preliminary walk zone and expandable walk zones for the new ES at Reed
 - Separate analysis of walking quality was performed, what Gorove/Slade referred to as a 'Walkshed analysis' (not to be confused with APS walk zones)
 - Crossing quality within the potential Reed walkshed is relatively good – most high-volume streets have traffic signals with crosswalk and pedestrian signals. There are some streets with long crosswalks (over 35 feet) without traffic signals, notably on Patrick Henry. Some of these can be mitigated through improvements (such as a crossing guard).
 - There are significant gaps in sidewalk coverage in some areas in the potential walk zone. Almost all of these gaps are on residential streets. This is not uncommon in residential neighborhoods in the County, including those already in walk zones. This neighborhood is known for being very walkable, so residents are likely used to the lack of sidewalks on some streets.
 - Comparison of potential walk zones and walk shed analysis shows that expandable walk zone already includes PUs that are shown to have high quality in the walk shed analysis

- Gorove/Slade asked for input and discussion on what improvements can be made to make some poor walking quality areas better? And what areas not in the walk zone should be included.
- Pedestrian Questions and Discussion
 - Kristin talked about the online survey and paper copy that are available at meeting
 - Q: there is one planning unit around Westover park that wasn't included. Why? A: [Kristin] PU might cross I-66. We can check that.
 - Q: County has been narrowing roads. Does that impact walking? Are side-streets getting more traffic? A: [Rob] Walking along routes that have been calmed usually helps pedestrian experiences. Though increase in side street traffic could degrade some of the residential streets. We'll make sure to take a look at the traffic volumes we collected for the study to see what residential streets may have more than usual traffic volumes
 - Q: Why aren't areas across Washington not included? A: [Kristin] APS took a conservative approach. This is a preliminary walk zone, with community engagement the zone can be expanded.
 - Comment: If you are comfortable crossing for library you should be so for school.
 - Q: Standard for sidewalk is 5'. Would we expand substandard sidewalks to meet standard? A: [Jane] sidewalks should be added to streets with no sidewalks first, before fixing substandard ones
 - Q: Residents know the needs for sidewalk and walk zones. How do we capture those comments? A: [Kristin] Residents can access the survey to provide comment
 - Q: 601 students were identified for the school in the potential walk zone. Does that include the expanded walk zone? A: [Kristin] might be the preliminary walk zone but will confirm.
- Parking Demand
 - Based on data, peak parking for Reed would be 128 parking spaces
 - Reasonable TDM would bring demand number to 119 spaces (reduction in staff drive-alone mode split to 80%)
 - Q: Estimates are based on 725 students? A: [Rob] Yes. Q: Does that include extended day? A: [Rob] Yes
 - Last few approved schools have been approved with less parking. As Jane said earlier, schools can get an exception for a variety of reasons.
 - Site parking peaks around 2pm (the Northwest and 18th Street lots)
 - Goal of the parking demand study is to solve typical weekday parking
 - Commercial parking peaked around lunch time
 - Most efficient parking lot layout would be approximately 25,000 square feet of paved parking lot. To accommodate all of the demand on site, this would lead to significant loss of greenspace. Most likely a non-efficient layout would happen due to site geometry and grade changes.

- A compromise would have a small lot with some parking spots as well as new restrictions on-street near school
- The parking decision will come down to trade-offs of not being able to place all parking on-site
- Other questions to answer: Is shared parking possible? Can library and school share parking on site?
- Parking questions & comments
 - Q: Can all the staff be accommodated on lots? (without new parking on-site) A: [Rob] No. Rob pointed out the vehicles parking on-street on the infographics.
 - Q: Member suggested that you start with all on-street and reduce until there is enough on-street capacity. Can impact on closest homes be reduced while allowing on-street parking?
 - Q: What can the county do (toolbox) to manage the supply using restrictions to make residents feel more comfortable about on-street parking (e.g. 2-hour parking on all streets where we want retail parking – to keep library and APS staff off of those streets).
 - Q: Member commented that parking for non-school related activities (soccer, fields, etc.). How many homes do not have driveways? This needs to be walkable, so that less drive to school.
 - Q: Comment that most recreational use will happen after school hours, avoiding the peak of APS staff demand.
 - Q: How will additional on-street parking affect retail? Can you protect retail parking? A: [Rob] Tools are available to manage parking. We will need to with County to pick the right tools if we decide that's the best strategy.
 - Q: Can APS tell teachers not to park on-street? A: APS mentions that all schools have Transportation Plans and Parking Management Plans (PMP) to outline guidelines and expectations for each site. Unrestricted on-street parking is a public asset for use by anyone.
 - Q: Was December 12th (coldest day of year) a good day to collect data? A: [Rob] Rob answered that data shows it is a pretty typical weekday (75th percentile sales day for a weekday for the one store we have retail data from). Usually cold weather leads to more driving, but warm weather could impact this area differently. Is a warm day more active than a lunch rush hour on Dec. 12? We will do an adjustment with spot counts of parking on a warmer day to help inform conclusions of the transportation study.
 - Q: did the study account for parking on street by residents? A: [Rob] The study did, and the figures represent them. The exact location of vehicles parked in exhibits were based on assumptions
 - Q: This data is based on a 725-seat school and not a 1000-seat school. A: [Ben] yes, analysis is for 725 seat school.
 - Q: There are issues, like parking behind retail and on Washington Blvd. How do we keep parking open for retail parkers? A: [Rob] Operational solutions need to be explored. Limited on-street parking to library patrons and retail visitors could be done with time restrictions.
 - Q: Think of Swanson, that pushed parking on to the street because of trailers. Did the 12/12 data collection capture this? A: [Rob] Yes, that would have been captured in the 12/12 data collection.

- Parent Pick-up/Drop-off (PU/DO)
 - Gorove/Slade presented several types of facilities, identifying pros/cons of each
 - Tollbooth style queue best for AM, problematic for PM
 - Airport style queue best for PM, doesn't always work best for AM
 - Recommendation for 30 vehicles to queue at Reed. Gorove/Slade showed graphics identifying how much room this could take on site. Recommendation is design well and have a good operation plan instead of dedicating more geometry than needed on site (balance with greenspace).
 - Q: Not all school has 'kiss and ride' in the afternoon and they work fine. A: [Rob] It depends on the characteristics of the school (geometry, operations, alternatives). Although there may not be a visible queue, there's likely 20-40 cars there, whether they're parking on street or in a lot or waiting in the queue.
 - Q: Parents would use 19th Street with trail for PU/DO.
 - Q: PU/DO can be extended in the northern parking lot. PU/DO will also be done across the street. A: [Rob] It is preferred not to split the PU/DO into different areas. The results of the capacity analysis will also help determine where is the best place (traffic capacity wise) to place PU/DO.
- BLPC/PFRC Discussion
 - The queue will be affected by where the doors are placed. Believes that the building scheme will be a determinant factor of where PU/DO happens.
 - Many parents are dropping off kids on the way to work. And it won't be tidy because it is on an arterial.
 - Q: How comfortable are neighbors are with a reduction in parking? A: [Hans] this should be discussed by neighborhood associations. This is also about trade-offs, and cost-benefit of alternatives
 - When looking at parking utilization at County, efficient is approximately under 90% utilization for parking. Can we target a goal of on-street utilization around the school, and work back from there?
 - Q: If you look at peak hours, they occur when residents have already gone to work, or when school parking is empty. Parking could be shared by residents and the school. A: [Jane] stated that the competing uses (library and retail) means that we can't completely rely on on-street parking. Requires a holistic approach that includes all stakeholders.
 - Q: What tools does DES have to help manage parking? A: [Jane] On County street, DES can look at the surrounding streets and consider curbside management parking. Library does not open until 10am, so sharing might be possible
 - If parking cannot be found in Westover, patrons will go elsewhere.
 - Temporary on-street parking for handymen needs to be considered as well
- Public Comments

- Q: Concerned that school will not provide enough new on-site parking. Concerned that parking is already a problem. A strict towing policy is something that the retail community prefers not to implement. Retail owners are opposed to any solution that doesn't protect their parking
- Q: At Yorktown there is similar situation to library at Reed
- Q: Cannot have 1,000-seat school at this site, as the preliminary results of the parking study shows.
- Q: Toll booth style drop-off seems unsafe. A: [Rob] staff are good at patrolling queue to make sure that system works, and that it remains safe.
- Q: Optimum use of parking in the neighborhood. How big was the sample data set for the parking data collection? A: [Rob] one day with parking collected every 30 minutes.
- Q: Where will the entrance be? Its location will affect the recommended layout and determination of how on-street parking will be used.
- Q: How can members of community answer questions about walk zone and thoughts? A: [Kristin] a link and packet are provided. Anyone in a civic association can provide input online by walking at their leisure and input their concerns and thoughts
- Q: Walkability zone can be expanded. If people can visit retail and library, and cross Washington Blvd to do so, then a walk zone can be expanded.
- [Hans] Members to go back to groups and discuss what they think regarding what was discussed today
- Next Steps & Adjourn
 - Process and analyze traffic data
 - Second transportation meeting in March
 - Responses to comments from today's meeting
 - March 8th & 22nd – School Board meetings
 - April TBD – kick off for Schematic Design