

MEETING SUMMARY

Career Center Working Group

Meeting No. 4

Date: February 26, 2018

Location: Arlington Career Center

Participants: Kathleen McSweeney (K. McSweeney), CCWG Chair
Matt Mattauszek (MM), ACG
Sarah Johnson (SJ), APS
Michael DePalma (MD), APS
Robin Cook (RC), APS
Sarah Putnam (SP), APS
Derk Jeffrey (DJ), Stantec
Bill Bradley (BB), Stantec
Alisa Cowen, Career Center Advisory Group
Betty Siegel (FBC AWG)
Bryant Monroe, Wakefield HS PTA member/parent of student attending programs at Career Center
Cecilia Ciepela-Kaelin, Budget Advisory Council (BAC)
Cindy Krech, JFAC
Colleen Pickford, Advisory Council on School Facilities & Capital Programs (FAC)
Elizabeth Gearin, Planning Commission (PC)
Fikru Abebe, Ethiopian Community Development Council
Greg Greeley, Joint Facilities Advisory Commission (JFAC)
Jim Lantelme, Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC)
John Snyder, Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO)
Kia Haynes, Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC)
Kristi Sawert, Arlington Heights Civic Association
Lander Allin, Pike Presidents' Group (PPG)
Lida Anestidou, At-Large Member
Maura McMahan, Alcovia Heights Civic Association
Megan Haydasz, At-Large Member
Michael Shea, Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI)
Nancy Birnbaum, Arlington Tech Advisory Committee (ATAC)
Nathan Dudani, Wakefield (Student)
Pete Durgan, Penrose Civic Association
Polly Hall, Washington-Lee HS PTA member/parent of student attending programs at Career Center
Rafael Gould, Student Advisory Board
Sarah McKinley, Columbia Heights Civic Association
Susan Rochard, Arlington Tech Parent Group
Veronica Bartlett, Arlington Community High School (School Testing Coordinator)

1. WELCOME/INTRO

- K. McSweeney welcomed the group and reviewed the CCWG charge focusing on “providing options for optimizing” the Career Center site. She noted what was required per the charge *by* 2022 and what options might be an option *post* 2022.
- K. McSweeney also reviewed the CCWG schedule noting that in March the group will look at projections and site circulation in addition to putting forth an estimate; in April they'll discuss phasing; in May they'll define options and needs; in June they'll identify areas for further study (additional questions); and in July the group will finalize a report, which is due in August.
- A question was asked about how to bring in 800 students in 2022 after which another high school would be added to the site?

- A question was asked about when the CIP is finalized?
- A question was asked about whether the group will stick to the “hard stop” at 9:50?
- A question was asked about whether there will be local representation on the BLPC and PFRC?
- K. McSweeney reviewed protocols for including input from the public (as different from the seated members of the committee). She further noted that written feedback will also be accepted.
- A question was asked about providing longer public comment time if additional meetings were added to the schedule?
- A question was asked about how the community can effectively communicate to the individual members of the CCWG?

2. HIGH SCHOOL AMENITIES

- S. Johnson began a discussion about the amenities that any neighborhood high school has per Arlington and Commonwealth guidelines.
- M. DePalma provided an overview of Arlington County’s neighborhood high school facilities and amenities. He noted that the VA DOE provides minimum standards for schools.
- A question was asked about whether because the Career Center is not a “comprehensive” high school it’s not subject to VA DOE standards? ...the checked box for the gymnasium at the Career Center is deceptive because it’s not comparable to the competition gyms at the other high schools.
- A question was asked about the factors that influence APS’s decision to include certain programs (e.g. black box theater) at certain sites and not others?
- Michael closed by noting that the “TBD” on the site was partially up to the CCWG.

3. HIGH SCHOOL OPTIMIZATION SCENARIOS

- D.Jeffrey began by revisiting two points he made at the last meeting: he clarified his comments about what a dividing line might mean insofar as buildable area versus open and field space. He also noted that CCWG comments were being reviewed and coded by Stantec to help inform the process.
- D.Jeffrey introduced a baseline site optimization diagram that bisected the site into building area and parking/playfields.
- A question was asked about how a scenario might happen with students in school on site?
- D.Jeffrey reviewed what was true for each of the options – 8 points. He clarified that 75’ equates to 6 floors depending upon floor-to-floor height.
- A question was asked about whether the options include a competition gymnasium?
- D.Jeffrey established the baseline identical to the charge before defining two options – option one (plus 1300) and option two (plus 2300).
- A question was asked about whether animals on site were considered?
- A question was asked about whether a decision needs to be made now about what will happen in the future?

- A question was asked about whether there will be options that extend all the way to Columbia Pike?

4. GROUP EXERCISE

- M. Mattauszek introduced the group exercise. He reviewed each of the questions the WWCG members are to address.

- Comments were provided in response to the questions:

Question 1

- Agreed that concentrating density along 9th made sense as did structured parking. Discussed long-term purchasing the parking garage behind the Career Center. Didn't make sense to "horseshoe the building" and also don't want to be trapped by the building (not wedded to the building).
- Concentrating density along 9th or WRD is acceptable (some worries over constraining design due to phasing requirements). No concerns about structured parking. Concerns about the amount of natural light in the existing (or renovated) building.
- Agree about density on 9th. Firmly believe parking should be underground (not surface or structured). Concerned that the existing building limits possibility (how much nice could it look) plus costs of moving students during construction (if that were necessary).
- All open to concentrating density along 9th and WRD. Rely on structured parking is OK. Believe that the existing building could be reused.
- Yes, to A plus WRD. Yes to B. Same comments to C regarding whether retention of this building is beneficial. Not convinced that it is... so, no, to C.

Question 2

- We talked about going out to the Pike and putting the museum and library and ACH together near the Pike... they would serve as the community connections. We talked about massing things on one area to preserve open/field space. Talked about building over WRD to increase area.
- We would like to provide more green space on site and more natural light (and less bussing and more walkability). More underground parking and stack building to preserve space. Would like walkable field space in the area. And shared use is acceptable. The timeline is important – 10-15 years is too long – need to realize them in a short timeframe. Columbia Pike land acquisition is desirable.
- We talked about maximizing building height at the SE corner respecting building heights along the neighborhood side. Separating single-family homes with green space to lessen impacts. What are the implications of getting rid of PH and Fenwick. Although, the playgrounds are used locally like a public park by neighbors. A neighborhood park could be created elsewhere on site, though. Make the fields as multi-purpose as possible to maximize use for the high school.
- Making the site aesthetically pleasing, providing space for future uses (don't preclude options), serves the immediate and broader community, activating growth along the Pike.
- What is the highest and best use? Meeting the needs of the students who are here and prioritizing so that the school becomes a neighborhood anchor.

Question 3

- We strongly believe there be a physical connection to the Pike... cut straight through McDonalds. Moving some buildings and functions to the Pike... like the library. How do we integrate this space, the neighborhood, and the Pike?
- A presence within the area... either physical or via activities that draw people here. Improve pedestrian access between CC and the Pike. We won't see this site from the Pike, so how can you create visibility? How can the school tie into the economic development of the Pike? If site stayed here, what else could go on the Pike?
- What about the County purchasing the ECDC building... or moving the library to be a presence on the Pike? What about creating a pathway to create a loop for the buses? Could build a walkway from the third floor across 9th directly into the ECDC building to create one long 'L' building to extend the campus all the way to the Pike.
- Open to the presence of the school along the Pike possibly through acquisitions (depending on how long it would take to acquire and develop).

- Ditto walkway through Garfield Street area... might even have a view of the building if it were opened up. Could close 9th to regular traffic and only have it open for school-related access/egress and festivals.
- M. Mattauszek asked for written comments for the last three questions.
- K. McSweeney asked about priorities:
 - Transportation and site circulation
 - Parks and open space

4. WRAP UP

- Public Comment
- NEXT MEETING: March 10, 2018, 9am - noon

END OF MEETING SUMMARY
