

July questions from ACC BLPC-PFRC

Landscape/Site

Q: To the left of the existing ACC parking garage, the proposed planting area, seems like a lot of real estate with no program. What are we doing there? Community Gardens, etc?

A: Green space around the parking garage and existing ACC building will be developed in the future work which will prepare for MPSA to relocate into the repurposed facility. That work will not be included as part of this use permit but will be developed with public engagement in the future.

Q: Are there only trees on 9th and Highland? I am confused by slide 53 (Looks like you forgot trees along wall where truck is sitting).

A: This service roadway between the garage and the existing ACC building (shown on slide 53, meeting #5) is still being developed, and as currently shown will not be wide enough for trees. Trees could be added in addition to existing trees on the north side of this required service area.

Q: Would encourage APS to check with County arborist when it comes to planting in the planting strip. Want to avoid the loss of trees, as some trees in Arlington Heights had to be removed from the planting strip like (which has occurred on Highland and Irving).

A: The County Arborist reviews and approves all planting plans.

Q: What kind of resources does APS have to maintain terraces and other landscaping?

A: Bio ponds and other stormwater infrastructure are maintained by an outside service contractor who specializes in maintaining stormwater infrastructure. The balance of the site is maintained by the custodial staff with occasional support by the APS Grounds Crew after a specified maintenance period by the firm that planted the landscaping material and trees expires.

Q: Will playgrounds be constructed by the new MPSA? If we are building a new playground for the existing Montessori, can it stay for community building instead of being ripped out?

A: The new playgrounds around the existing MPSA building are required to be installed prior to the start of construction on the new ACC structure in order to maintain the program. The new equipment is intended to be installed in such a way that it could be relocated to the new MPSA location in the future and the entire site of the existing MPSA site will be redeveloped as determined in a future process with public engagement.

Q: Will the playgrounds be fenced off as they are today? (Specifically, the new play areas for Montessori school which are so close to the street?)

A: Play areas will be fenced in to prevent students from running into the street.

Q: On the site plan, what is the area to the right of the Montessori school that is a faint green color? This color is not on the site plan key.

A: The existing site condition of shrubbery & grass between the two sidewalks exiting the building will not change.

Q: Field 4 between Highland and MPSA would remain for MPSA. Why is this being shown as new? Is this play equipment new for MPSA? Is there a boundary for which program is using which play space?

A: This primary play space will be redeveloped for the MPSA program.

Q: What is the purpose of field 3 (the central, square playfield)?

A: The area shown as Field 3 is designed for outdoor Physical Education (PE) space. The County Department of Parks and Recreation has noted that it will be used for youth programs during off hours and is available for community use when not scheduled.

Q: Why do we have Synthetic turf? What type of artificial turf is this going to be?

A: APS school fields are used to support the instructional program. Natural grass fields are impacted by the weather and damaged if used when they are wet. Synthetic turf fields can be used continuously.

The type has not been determined other than it will be permeable.

Q: Will the area between the current library and new facility be covered by an awning?

A: No

Q: What is the lighting scheme for driveways and walkways? How will you ensure pathways will have consistent lighting?

A: The lighting scheme will be addressed when obtaining the building Use Permit phase. It will meet the code for illumination and be dark sky compliant.

Q: Is there a covered walkway from the garage to the old school?

A: The garage is intended to connect to the existing ACC building.

Q: Can the utilities be undergrounded?

A: Generally, APS prefers to underground utilities when it is not cost prohibitive. Utility undergrounding will be determined by the time the County issues the Use Permit when there can be discussion about this shared responsibility. APS will also need to consider the timing of future work on the site to avoid replicating work.

Q: Where will the flagpole be placed? (Consider a central location)

A: Virginia requires that each school have a flagpole; the location of flagpoles (for ACC and MPSA) will be determined with construction documents.

Building

Q: Did anything change about the massing or were there just façade changes since previous meetings? Please indicate new changes. Would they consider a further stepdown on 7th Street.

A: Some detail refinements were made, and additional views of the 7th Street and field sides of the building were added to better understand the massing and facades. These elevations show the building stepping down to one story on 7th Street. Also, initial materials were indicated on the facades. The Streetscapes along 7th Street South and South Highland will not be addressed in this Use Permit.

Q: Can the metal panels on the building be made more “earthy” with certain browns or greens to make it less industrial looking? Do the metal panels really follow the civic design principle of considering the surrounding buildings?

A: Colors will be selected with APS guidance to the architects in the construction documents; Final selections will meet the civic design principles and be informed by input gathered in meeting 5 & 6.

Q: The site plan shows many different materials. It feels like maybe there is too much going on. How many different types of materials will be on the building? Will there be a presentation of materials with samples?

A: Brick, metal and glass are being considered and will be confirmed with the construction documents. Material and colors will be informed by the civic design principles and input gathered in meeting 5 and shared publicly once selected.

Q: Will there be a green roof to manage storm water issues and cool the structure?

A: APS will consider a green roof, solar array and reflective roof with construction documents prepared for final bid and after obtaining the use permit.

Are there enough exits from the new building for dismissal and evacuations? Where will students gather during fire drills?

A: All schools are designed to meet fire and building code requirements regarding exits. Specific evacuation plans will be finalized with input from the County Fire Marshall and the County Inspection Services Division ISD in order to secure a building permit.

Q: How will the doors be labeled? Suburban schools are using large numbers.

A: APS numbers each exit starting with the main entrance. This is a routine safety practice for fire/emergency response purposes.

Q: Is there any other goal with the terraces/courtyards beyond aesthetic and greenery?

A: The terraces will provide alternative secure space for students to gather or work individually during the school day, some spaces will also be developed to support teaching and learning where appropriate and possible.

Q: Will the two MPSA entrances be open at all times? The red marked entrance is only used at dismissal.

A: The Highland Street entrance is open for arrival and departure. The secure entrance at the Administration Office is used throughout the school day.

Q: For the new MPSA in the old ACC, will there be a new main entrance off 9th St.?

A: Plans to adapt the current ACC for MPSA will be developed as a separate project to be constructed following completion of the new ACC school facility. The future phase process will determine if a new entrance is needed.

Q: Please provide more information about targets for CO2 emissions and how they fit in Arlington's goals around how our buildings impact climate change. When will this information be available?

A: These goals will be established in the During the Construction Document Phase for Board consideration as we get into the details of what is possible and the cost of various options.

Parking

Q: Will the multipurpose field be completed before the parking garage? Specifically, how will phasing affect the parking for teachers who are operating in the school before the parking garage is built? Please clarify the phasing.

A: The phasing plan is to:

1. Build a new playground for MPSA on Highland, away from the construction area.
2. Build the new ACC facility with construction equipment on the South Walter Reed Drive side of the building.
3. Build the parking structure; the current parking lot will remain in use until the parking structure is complete.
4. Convert the existing parking to a synthetic use field, after the parking structure is ready for use.

Future planning and public engagement to determine usage of outdoor spaces around the existing ACC and development of space if the MPSA building is removed including plans for streetscape around that area will take place following this Use Permit Award.

Q: Will there be security cameras in the garage?

A: Yes, there will be security cameras in the garage.

Q: Will there be 2 entries/exits from the garage for safety?

A: There will be multiple pedestrians exits/entries, the current plan includes one vehicle entrance.

Q: The garage ground-floor is exposed with the screen stopping short so you can look directly in. Is that the intent and why? Security reasons? Will decorative screening be able to cover gap.

A: Based on the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), APS will design the garage to be visible for passive security. The exposure as shown will not change. You can learn more about the principles of CPTED at this home page: www.cpted.net

Q: What does the biophilia themed screen mean? Is the “biophilic” design just an artistic, themed screen? Is it going to be something living on the wall? Or just a fake theme?

A: While actual plants & water are ideal, designs with natural themes that mimic nature also bring benefits to a project. We are not planning live plantings on the parking garage.

Q: Are these colors placeholder colors? Considerations? Already chosen?

A: Colors will be selected in the construction phase following guidance from APS to include input from this group.

Q: Can APS work with the County about what the Delta will be for the parking garage? (Delta is the difference between the number of planned vs permitted parking spaces.

A: APS staff and the County staff have been conversing for a long while on this issue, with the goal of being able to agree on the number of spaces when the project is presented to the County Board for Use Permit approval.

Q: Ideally, I want the garage entrance mid-block, but would the garage at the middle block windows from the school to the parking garage?

A: The location of the garage across from the existing ECDC is felt to be the most appropriate location based on multiple competing issues including, lowering the garage to be as low as possible without excessive excavation, prohibitive cost of underground parking, visibility for CPTED Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and reserving space adjacent to the legacy ACC building for future uses.

Note, this project aligns with 2 recommendations from Community Facilities Study

- Make maximum use (and reuse) of the facilities we have, ensuring that existing space is efficiently used, and that new space is adaptable for future purposes.
- Uses land most efficiently

Q: Will there be a roof over the parking garage? Should there be a roof? Could have photobiotic use on the roof. Is there budget to enclose the upper level of the garage and give it a roof that could have other uses?

A: No, plans for the garage are not budgeted to include a roof for alternative uses.

Q: Could parking be placed under the main building?

A: At this point, the project is on course to be within the budget. Underground parking would add significantly to the project scope and increase construction time and cost. The project budget does not have allowance for significant additions to the scope. Further, the plan is already potentially subject to volatility of the construction market, which could impact on currently assumed escalation rates.

Q: How much would it cost to put the garage underground?

A: Based on the last time this was explored the cost per space was more than 2-3 times the cost of the type of above-ground structure being considered. The cost of an underground parking garage with artificial turf field space on top was estimated at \$35 million in June of 2018.

Underground structures are forever, whereas above ground stacked structures can be removed or modified in the future if needed. At present, the project does not have allowance for significant additions to the scope. Further, the plan is already potentially subject to volatility of the construction market, which could impact on currently assumed escalation rates.

Accessibility

Q: Will there be an elevator in the parking garage?

A: The APS proposal includes 2 elevators in the garage.

Q: Will there be enough ADA parking on the ground floor for staff AND visitors? Will these spaces be assigned? Will there be van-accessible spaces?

A: There will be ADA parking spaces for staff and visitors as a proportion of the total number of spaces provided, including van-accessible spaces. Typically, such spaces are not assigned to individuals by APS. Please click here for more information on the [MMTA Study](#).

Q: Will handicapped parking spaces be scattered throughout the garage? (It doesn't make sense for that to be the case.)

A: The location of designated accessible spaces will be determined in the Construction Documents prepared for the use Permit application. The ultimate size and layout of the parking garage will be informed by:

1. The School Board decision about the size of the new facility
2. Any following adjustments to the transit study
3. Cost estimates and project budget
4. Any further requirements stipulated by the County for the Use Permit.

Final drawings will be made public Fall 2022 at the time of the Use Permit Request.

Q: Will the paths of travel be wide enough and fully accessible? Yes What is the width of all the walkways?

A: The paths of travel will be designed in the Construction Document Phase culminating in the Use Permit application, and they will be fully accessible. APS typically plans for a minimum of 60 inches of clear width. The paths will be shown in the Construction Documents for the Use Permit Application.

Q; Will the playground surfacing be ADA accessible and include ADA transitions from pathways to the playgrounds?

A: APS is planning for ADA accessible surfacing and transitions from pathways.

Q: Where are the curb ramps and what type of detectable warnings are being used for vehicle/pedestrian crossings?

A: Ramps will be provided at walkways where there is a curb. Detectable warnings will be truncated domes.

Transit

Q: How will buses be managed in the shared space? Would three shorter bus lanes be better than two long bus lanes? How will exit time be managed for the buses?

A: It is believed the current plan shared in meeting #5 for the buses is appropriate and the safest option and what is consistent with the standard procedure at other APS sites with multiple facilities. At departure all buses exit once staff confirm the walkways are clear. For arrival buses depart once they are empty.

Q: If walking/biking into the site, can students access the buildings without coming into conflict with the vehicular/bus driveways? How will APS mitigate conflict between vehicles and pedestrians?

A: Vehicular traffic on the site will be confined to school buses and authorized service vehicles. Barriers and curbs will be placed to protect student pedestrians or cyclists at bus/street crossing points. A new stoplight and new crosswalk mid-block will be in place on South Walter Reed for pedestrians and cyclists as well.

Q: Slide 23, unclear on 9th St. – is there a protected bike lane? Are bikes expected to be parked in the garage?

A: Streets are controlled by the county. South Ninth Street is considered a bicycle arterial and is being reviewed by the County in the context of the Complete Streets program. The County is considering a protected bike lane on Walter Reed, and a protected entrance into the campus for bikes. APS is required by the Use Permit to provide secure / covered bike parking for staff. The Use Permit also established the number of parking spaces for student bikes. APS intends to use building overhangs to provide areas of covered parking.

Q: Will there be e-bike secure parking?

A: Secure e-bike parking will be provided only for staff

Q: How will the construction fence work since the buildings are so close? Not a lot of space between the new and old buildings – does this pose safety concerns?

A: APS has a construction manager advisor working to provide planning for construction phasing and one of the tasks is to address safety issues.

Requests/Questions specifically for next meeting presentation

Q: Can we be clear about existing trees that can be preserved? Will there be another discussion where we would learn which trees exist vs planned?

A: Trees that can be preserved will be delineated after consultation with the county arborist on the condition of existing trees. This will take place as part of the work preparing the Use Permit application.

Q: According to student comments, they are excited about learning outside. Where will that happen? Could we see enough details to visualize an outdoor class, etc.?

A: These spaces will be further developed with the site plans in the Construction Documents Phase.

Q: Please provide more details of streetscape improvements overall on 9th Street.

A: More detail will be provided as the plans develop by the Use Permit phase.

Out of Scope Remarks/Suggestions

Q: Encourage APS to think about replacing the little league field if the Montessori building is going to be demolished. Could there be a baseball field placed in the corner?

A: APS provides fields that are used for health and physical education and recess. Sites are planned based on the needs of the students and the instructional program. APS allows the Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) and the community to use the fields outside of school programming. In Phase 2, APS will work with Arlington County on the plans for the larger field space replacing MPSA, and specific uses will be considered at that time. .

Q: If we are going to move the school (MPSA?), we need to think about what we will do for them.

A: Planning for MPSA's into the repurposed ACC building will get underway this fall. Renovation is scheduled to begin in fall 2026, and the building will open for MPSA in fall 2028. More details will be provided in future processes and the FY 2025-34 CIP