

29 September 2015

**MEETING NOTES**

**RE: BUILDING LEVEL PLANNING COMMITTEE #10**  
**STRATFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**  
**31406600**



2121 WARD PLACE, NW, 4TH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20037  
202 298 6700

**Meeting Date & Time:** 31 August, 7:00-9:00 PM  
**Location:** H-B Woodlawn Library

**Attendees:**

**BLPC**

Graham McBride – Asst. Principal H-B  
Karen Gerry – Principal, Stratford program (Not Present)  
Renee Harber – Asst. Principal Swanson  
Carol Burger – H-B Staff  
Kathleen Meagher – Director, Secondary Education  
Eve Reed – Cherrydale Representative  
Ray Sendejas – Cherrydale Representative  
Dot Green – Donaldson Run Representative  
Susan Cunningham – Donaldson Run Representative – BLPC Chair (Not Present)  
Anne Wilson – Donaldson Run Representative (in place of Susan)  
Amanda Davis – Maywood Representative  
David Barish – Waverly Hills Representative  
Doug Taylor – Woodmont Civic Association  
Caroline Holt – Lyon Village Representative  
Deb Pearson – PTA Taylor  
Jen Thompson – PTA Glebe  
Rohini Chopra – PTA ASF (Not Present)  
Whytni Kernodle – PTA Key (Not Present)  
Joseph Delogu – PTA WMS (Not Present)  
Michael Henry – PTA SMS  
Laura Saul Edwards – PTA H-B Woodlawn  
Jeff Turner – FAC Representative (Not Present)  
Robert Dudka – HALRB Representative (Not Present)  
Charles Craig – HALRB Representative  
Rebecca Ballo – CPHD staff – Historic Preservation

**APS Staff**

Scott Prisco – Director of Design and Construction  
Ben Burgin – Asst. Director, Design and Construction  
Bill Herring – Project Manager, Design & Construction (Project Point of Contact)

**County Staff**

Diane Probus - DPR  
Jane Kim – DES

**Other Attendees**

John Daly, neighbor  
Joan Perry, neighbor  
Eric Dobson, neighbor  
Reid Goldstein, neighbor  
Candace Abbey, neighbor  
Mike Regan, neighbor  
Tegan Holtzman, neighbor  
Barbara Jazzo, neighbor  
Mark Miller, neighbor

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M. Lovigliu, neighbor  
Richard Giza, neighbor  
Vicki Mendelowitz, neighbor  
Chris Forniash, PFRC  
Nancy Iacomini, PFRC  
Betty and Stu Dziura, neighbors, PFRC

**Design Team**

Carl Elefante – Quinn Evans Architects  
Dan Curry – Quinn Evans Architects  
Lauren Delmare – Toole Design Group



This was the tenth meeting of the Stratford Middle School Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC). The BLPC is appointed by the Arlington School Board to assist the Facilities and Operations staff and advise the School Board on each major capital / renewal project.

Discussion points are summarized below. This summary presents Quinn Evans Architects' understanding of discussions, decisions, and recommended actions. We request that all attendees review these Meeting Notes and notify APS with recommended revisions or questions.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- a. APS opens the meeting by asking if there is anyone from the public who would like to comment.
- b. Joan McDermott (former chair of HALRB) states that she would like to see the process slow down. She mentions that the decision at the Wilson School was unfortunate. It appears that APS does not care about the history of the site. She stresses the need to preserve and highlight features of the historic event (of integration), as well as the architectural significance of the building.
- c. Scott Prisco (APS) responds that APS does value the history, but timing is also key as the school needs to open in 2019 to accommodate 1000 students.

**2. PROCESS AND SCHEDULE**

- a. Dan Curry (QEA) reviews schedule and mentions that the presentation to the School Board has been delayed from the 9/24 date and has not yet been rescheduled.

**3. RECENT MEETINGS**

- a. Carl Elefante (QEA) reviewed the following recent meetings that occurred between BLPC #9 and BLPC # 10:
  - i. School Board Work Session on 8/11
  - ii. School Board Meeting on 8/13 – Stratford Local Historic designation was on the agenda as an information item.
  - iii. HALRB Meeting on 8/19

**4. COST**

- a. Scott Prisco (APS) explained a bit about the cost challenges of this project. The estimates presented to the School Board on 8/11 are over budget, and the Board charged APS to return to them with schemes that meet the budget. Scott stated that the market factor (at 9.3%) is a challenge.
  - i. Laura Saul Edwards asked about the balance between the county budget and APS budget, and if there are projects where the county contributes more than 50/50 to community improvements. Scott Prisco responded that generally that has not been the APS experience.



**5. SITE AND MASSING UPDATE**

- a. Dan Curry (QEA) reviewed the four schemes that the team is continuing to study:
  - i. Terrace scheme:
    - 1. Dan stated that QEA is responding to HALRB's comments such as leaving the field centered, reducing the drop-off plaza, reducing the program and considering massing that is less impactful to the key views.
    - 2. Rebecca Ballo (Arlington County Preservation) mentioned the letter from the HALRB chair that was sent to APS last week.
  - ii. Link scheme:
    - 1. QEA is investigating reducing the program to reduce the budget.
  - iii. West scheme:
    - 1. QEA is working on a version of this scheme that is Phase 1 (1000 seats) only to reduce the massing and avoid the complex phasing issues presented by the original scheme.
  - iv. East scheme:
    - 1. Returning to studying the east scheme (previously known as A3). Looking at an alternate site approach with field centered on school. Studying connection options to the existing school.

**6. GROUP DISCUSSION**

- a. Doug Taylor asked if this moves the lot on Vacation Lane, and isn't there a grade issue there. Dan responds that the lot remains, and yes there is some grading to contend with.
- b. Laura Edwards asks if this East/A3 scheme would have Old Dominion access; answer is yes.
- c. Phase 2 would be at the west of the existing building.
- d. Lauren Delmare from Toole explains that the existing parking is sufficient for Phase 1 TDM parking program.
- e. Carl Elefante reminds the room that per the School Board QEA/APS is focused on 1000 seats, to open in 2019, for \$29.2 million.
- f. Eve Reed asks about travel time with the East Scheme.
- g. Graham McBride expresses concern about connectivity. He supports the idea of a separate 6<sup>th</sup> grade wing but is also worried about travel time between classes.
- h. Laura Edwards asks if the students would be allowed to walk outside from class to class.
- i. Graham and Kathleen Meagher respond that the Middle School rules may not allow it, and that adjusting schedules to have more time between classes to allow for longer travel time is difficult.
- j. Discussion about schedule for 6<sup>th</sup> graders and whether lunch and gym is all together.
- k. Request for further explanation on how the Old Dominion connection works with the East scheme.
- l. Question raised about whether the East massing can be modified to provide a better circulation connection.
- m. Charles Craig states that HALRB is not suggesting solutions or design changes; they are merely providing feedback and leaving it up to the architects to creatively solve the problem.
- n. Laura mentions the idea of there being several ways to look at Historic Preservation on this site. She mentions that Nancy van Doren of the School



- Board likes the atrium experience as the commemoration of the historic events.
- o. Chalres Craig responds that the Link scheme is the only one where HALRB feel that APS is not possibly complying with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
  - p. Rebeccah Ballo adds that yes there are different interpretations of the Standards but adverse impacts exist.
  - q. Dot Green states that the view from Old Dominion is being overemphasized; that we are turning ourselves inside and out and over-protecting that particular view.
  - r. Laura asks for more clarification as to what is being studied with the Link and Terrace schemes. Dan Curry (QEA) responds that the team is studying moving the vertical circulation core while still maintaining the circulation loop.
  - s. Question is raised about possibly reconfiguring the existing building; how many students could that support. Dan responds possibly 750.
  - t. What about relocatables with historic design guidelines? Rebeccah B responds that they are certainly allowed; just would want to coordinate the location of possible future relocatables.
  - u. Caroline asks how relocatables factor into the project re: historic preservation. Rebeccah said they are not required to be torn down, but they do impact the view shed.
  - v. Eve states that the East scheme is terrible for Middle School students.
  - w. Doug responds that the architects need to study the East scheme further so conclusions can be made; even though it was previously taken off the table.
  - x. Question is raised about possibly considering other sites in Arlington, and Scott Prisco responds that the charge here is to solve the problem on this site.
  - y. Eve asks if relocatables will inevitably appear immediately after construction is complete and Scott responds that if the growth continues at the current rate, it is likely. She notes that this site may never accommodate 1300 students.
  - z. Caroline says that therefore, this HP focus to leave the courtyard open will be lost when it is immediately filled with trailers anyhow. Asks if areas for trailers can be identified in the design guidelines. Rebeccah – yes.
  - aa. Graham states that the locker rooms may not be necessary; couldn't the Stratford space be used for classroom space instead?
  - bb. Wendy notes that at Middle Schools the locker rooms are used.
  - cc. Carol asks that elective spaces, amenity spaces and meeting spaces not be taken away. Carl responds that the team is aiming for 6/7 utilization to make better use of the space.
  - dd. Katherine (Kathleen) adds that it is challenging to get to 6/7 utilization in Middle School scheduling because of the team model.
  - ee. Doug asks about the BLPC #9 action items - Dan responds that we are working on the answers and they will be distributed. Several of the issues will be addressed in the revised schemes presented at the next meeting.
  - ff. Laura reminds everyone that there is one more meeting at which a decision must be made. Scott Prisco responds that the BLPC should take the time it needs, and that the School Board date can be delayed until October if needed. Doug adds that they need time after seeing the final schemes.
  - gg. Scott adds re: above discussion that the approach to utilization and teams is still being studied.
  - hh. Laura asks about 21<sup>st</sup> century trends and new technology? Carl responds that will be part of FF&E
  - ii. Dot mentions that the HVAC systems are working great and should be left alone.
  - jj. Review of BLPC voting rules.
  - kk. Discussion of when next meeting will be – current dates have conflicts; time and date TBD.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. Question about \$29.2 million – how was that arrived at if current schemes are so over budget? Scott answers that the original budget worked, but higher than predicted escalation, market inflation factors and community amenities costs have pushed the project over budget.
- b. Question about access and parking – what happens when teachers and parents don't follow the system? Why aren't we looking at 1300 students at once. Scott repeats that the charge to the BLPC is to focus on Phase 1.
- c. Question: Do all schemes have a connection to Old Dominion? Scott answers that yes, all issues need to be balanced and this is a community priority.
- d. Doug adds that if HALRB are effectively bringing East and West back to the table, can they please provide concrete feedback on the Link scheme?
- e. Question: both Wilson and Stratford are over budget – what about the third pot of money (\$16.6 M). Scott – we are pursuing that money.
- f. Nancy Iacomini (PFRC) mentions that she, Susan Cunningham and Joan Lawrence took a visit to the site and issued a memo that reflects their views, not the views of their respective committees.

**8. NEXT STEPS**

- a. QEA to continue to develop schemes.
- b. BLPC to coordinate with APS on date and time for next meeting.

END OF MEETING NOTES

