

23 April 2015

## MEETING NOTES

**RE: BUILDING LEVEL PLANNING COMMITTEE #2**  
**STRATFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**  
**31406600**



2121 WARD PLACE, NW, 4TH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20037  
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**Meeting Date & Time:** 20 April, 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  
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  
Michael Henry – PTA SMS  
Laura Saul Edwards – PTA H-B Woodlawn  
Jeff Turner – FAC Representative  
Robert Dudka – HALRB Representative (Not Present)  
Charles Craig – HALRB Representative  
Rebecca Ballo – CPHD staff – Historic Preservation

#### APS Staff

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

#### County Staff

Diane Probus – DPR  
Jane Kim – DES

#### PFRC Rep

Mark Bildner

#### Other Attendees

Carole Russo - Cherrydale

#### Design Team

Carl Elefante – Principal, Quinn Evans Architects  
Dan Curry – Project Manager, Quinn Evans Architects  
Julia Siple – Project Architect, Quinn Evans Architects  
Atara Margolies – Project Architect, Quinn Evans Architects

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Lauren Brandes – Oculus Landscape Design  
Jim Elliott – Toole Design Group, Transportation  
Mauricio Hernandez – Toole Design Group, Transportation

This was the second 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. OPTIONAL SITE WALK**

Several members of the BLPC joined APS staff and design team staff for a walk around the perimeter of the building led by Carl Elefante (QEA). Discussion along the walk covered access from Old Dominion, access from 22<sup>nd</sup> St, the field, the existing building and its relationship to the site.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

- a. Scott Prisco (APS) thanked everyone who came early for the 6:30 pm site tour and introduced the design team to begin the presentation.

**3. REVIEW OF BLPC #1**

- a. "This project will be a wonderful success if..."
  - i. Dan Curry (QEA) presented seven (7) themes that were common to the statements offered by the BLPC during the last meeting's visioning exercise.
  - ii. Ten draft value statements were presented that synthesize the statements from the exercise.

**4. ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL OBSERVATIONS**

- a. Mauricio Hernandez (Toole) presented a recap of the arrival observation on 4/16 at 9 am and the dismissal observation on 4/17 at 4 pm.
  - i. Overall, arrival and dismissal are very orderly and do not cause significant traffic back-up.
  - ii. There are concerns about visibility and safety at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Lorcom.
  - iii. Team should consider maintaining two separate locations for bus drop-off and pick-up.
  - iv. Some buses need to complete a 3-point turn to exit the loop and only 6 or 7 buses can queue at a time.
  - v. Most parents respected the rules but a few did not
  - vi. Presented the caveat that Thursday and Fridays are not typical "count" days.
  - vii. Susan Cunningham asked if Toole observed the poor visibility issues on Lorcum. Toole responded yes, and they observed that the bike lane designation on Lorcum should be reversed so that the bike lane is on the uphill and the road is shared on the downhill.
  - viii. Scott Prisco announced that APS requested that Toole return to observe a day with early dismissal when most or all students would be dismissed at the same time.
  - ix. Eve Reed asked about observing walkers. Toole responded that while they did observe some students walking to the school they did not have a conclusion to present at this time.



**5. ACCESS & TRANSPORTATION**

- a. Dan Curry (QEA) reviewed that Stratford is changing to be a neighborhood school.
- b. Pedestrian circulation around the school currently comes from all directions, but kids do not only walk where sidewalks are located.
- c. Parent drop-off is the least predictable and parents have been observed making U-turns in the middle of Vacation Lane.
- d. There are currently 13 buses for H-B Woodlawn and 6 buses for Stratford program. Currently, bus arrival is staggered.
- e. Early estimates for busing at new neighborhood middle school:
  - i. 1,000 students = 13 buses (Williamsburg has 13, Swanson has 9)
  - ii. 1,300 students = 17 buses
  - iii. No increase in buses (13 currently at H-B) because school is changing to a neighborhood cohort from a county-wide cohort. However, buses will be arriving at different times and not staggered as at H-B and Stratford currently.
  - iv. Question was raised about whether all Arlington buses of varying sizes would fit at the current bus loop locations.
- f. Current parking and future parking needs presented.
  - i. Currently 153 parking spaces on site.
  - ii. Phase 1 (1,000 seats) requires 158 spaces
  - iii. Phase 2 (1,300 seats) requires 206 spaces
  - iv. Does not include TDM yet which may adjust parking need.
  - v. Scott Prisco described the efforts at McKinley to reduce parking demand by a TDM plan that offers incentives to staff to carpool, bike, or use transit.
  - vi. DPR would like some spaces reserved for park users but number is not yet determined.
- g. Loading and service via 23<sup>rd</sup> St and this is unlikely to change.
- h. There are several areas of steep slopes on site where significant grading would be required to build anything.
- i. There are many entrances to the building at all four (4) levels that serve different programmatic elements in the building.
- j. A review of the adjacent sites includes parkland, a church, and many single-family homes. Multi-family residential is located across Old Dominion.

**6. BEST PRACTICES**

- a. Jim Elliott (Toole) began by following up on issues raised at BLPC #1. He mentioned three (3) priorities for Toole:
  - i. Prioritizing safety for all users
  - ii. Considering the complete trip of a user to and from the site
  - iii. Separating modes as much as possible while minimizing conflicts between those modes.
- b. A review of the "ideal" plan is presented where buses, cars and pedestrians are separated and conflicts between the two modes where paths might cross are minimized.
- c. Best practices for pedestrian access include safety, convenience, and accommodation of desire lines.
- d. Best practices for bike access include safety, convenient parking, and proper routes designed for bikes to share with other modes.
- e. Best practices for bus access include the ability to queue single-file with right-side drop-off, a one-way drop-off lane, and no areas where children are required to walk between buses.

- f. Best practices for transit access include a pedestrian route between school entrance and transit stop, bus shelters, conveniently located bus stops, and times and headways that work with schedule for students and staff.
- g. Best practices for drop-off and pick-up include one-way counterclockwise lanes, loading and unloading at the head of the queue, safe paths from car to school, and no backward movement required by drop-off vehicles.

## 7. HISTORY

- a. Carl Elefante (QEA) stated that the next BLPC meeting will focus more on the history of the building but there are two important things to know now:
  - i. This property is on the national historic register.
  - ii. There is currently an application in progress for Stratford to achieve local designation as well.
- b. Next time Rebecca Ballo will review the process associated with that designation.



## 8. OPEN SPACE

- a. Lauren Brandes (Oculus) presented several slides about the existing open space and recreation areas on the site and what sorts of additional open space amenities could be added.
- b. The arborist has begun the tree survey and will be identifying for the design team any trees of particular significance.
- c. Currently most stormwater on site goes to area drains and is piped away. Any run-off flows towards the low point on the site which is at the NE corner of the site where the stream and the RPA (Resource Protection Area) are located. Lauren briefly defines an RPA.
  - i. Joseph Delogu asked whether or not there are any retention areas on site currently. Lauren feels there are not, given the topo and the age of the site.
  - ii. There is a question about whether there ever was another stream on the property. According to Rebecca Ballo, the historic maps (Civil War era) of the site do not show any additional streams.
  - iii. Question was asked if this project triggers a SWPPP (??). Scott Prisco (APS) answered that a SWPPP (??) would be required for the area of disturbance only.
  - iv. Laura Saul Edwards asked what of the amenities listed earlier have been achieved at other schools and what can we do to be unique? Lauren responded that she will get back to the group with that answer.
  - v. Question was asked if the regrading for the sitework would be done at the same time as for stormwater or open space elements? Scott Prisco (APS) answered that all of this is part of the project and it will all be planned and implemented in a responsible manner.
- d. Julia Siple (QEA) presented several slides about how the orientation of the new building will impact how much daylight and the quality of the daylight that is brought into the building. Scott Prisco (APS) called this "school design 101" and explained that classrooms typically would be located along the face of a building that gets the most desirable light as students have been shown to perform better with appropriate daylight exposure. This explains why a building with the long face towards either east or west is not good school design.
- e. Doug Taylor asked if there is already a budget split between site and building. Scott Prisco responded that the early estimates are very high level and this is something that APS is working on and will continue to work on.
- f. \_\_\_\_ asked if QEA ever uses Lutron systems (or similar) to control lighting and Julia responded that yes, those types of systems can be used if the users understand how they work.

- g. Rebecca Ballo asked if only one building footprint shape was modeled and the answer was yes, as there is no building design yet.

## 9. SITE PLANNING ACTIVITY

- a. Julia Siple (QEA) briefly introduced the site planning activity.
- b. BLPC members split into four (4) groups, each with a 1" = 30' site plan and a kit of parts including recreation program elements, parking blocks (10 spaces each), a bus drop-off template, and blue and red foamcore pieces that represented floors for phase 1 and phase 2.
- c. Groups were also given markers to draw and note issues on the site plans.
- d. Twenty (20) minutes were allotted for groups to arrange the pieces and discuss site issues. Each group had one QEA staff at the table as moderator/supervisor.
- e. After twenty (20) minutes each group summarized its findings or ideas.
  - i. Group 1 :
    - 1. Focused on orientation of the building to capture the most daylight for classrooms.
    - 2. Proposed a loop road from Old Dominion that wraps around the DPR land and has parking along the edge.
    - 3. Emphasized a pedestrian connection through the site from 22<sup>nd</sup> St.
    - 4. Commented that the field would likely be turf as it is very hard to maintain grass on the field today.
  - ii. Group 2:
    - 1. Focused on separating modes by introducing a right-in/right-out bus drop-off drive from Old Dominion. Parent drop-off would be off Vacation Lane. To replace the parking lost, the lower existing lot on Vacation Lane would be expanded.
    - 2. Phase 1 building and Phase 2 to be build adjacent to each other at the southeast face of the building, creating a courtyard with the existing building.
    - 3. Proposed a stormwater element and/or playground between field and Vacation Lane parking lot.
  - iii. Group 3
    - 1. Focused on separating modes with buses off Old Dominion and parent drop-off from Vacation Lane. Road may possibly go through 23<sup>rd</sup> street instead of looping back to Old Dominion.
    - 2. Suggested that future parking demand may be met with structured parking over existing Vacation Lane parking lot.
    - 3. Proposed a possible road at the southeast side of the building if lower Vacation Lane parking lot also was a drop-off loop. Field may need to be reoriented to accommodate that idea.
    - 4. Phase 1 building would create a courtyard with the existing building. Phase 2 location not determined.
  - iv. Group 4
    - 1. Focused on building location, and proposed that architecture and siting of new building echo the existing building with stair towers expressed and similar orientation to the field. Group did not want new addition to conflict with existing gym windows.
    - 2. A walkway connection at either level 0 or level 1 could connect the existing building to the new building.
    - 3. Group also suggested the idea of a playing field located over structured parking at the DPR end of the site.



10. **NEXT STEPS**

- a. The next BLPC meeting is Monday, May 4, 7pm-9pm, in the H-B Woodlawn Library.

END OF MEETING NOTES

