

17 July 2015

MEETING NOTES

RE: BUILDING LEVEL PLANNING COMMITTEE #8
STRATFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
31406600



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

Meeting Date & Time: 13 July, 7:00-9:00 PM
Location: H-B Woodlawn Library

Attendees:

BLPC

Graham McBride – Asst. Principal H-B (Not Present)
Karen Gerry – Principal, Stratford program (Not Present)
Renee Harber – Asst. Principal Swanson (Not Present)
Carol Burger – H-B Staff
Kathleen Meagher – Director, Secondary Education (Not Present)
Eve Reed – Cherrydale Representative
Ray Sendejas – Cherrydale Representative (Not Present)
Dot Green – Donaldson Run Representative (Not Present)
Susan Cunningham – Donaldson Run Representative – BLPC Chair
Amanda Davis – Maywood Representative
David Barish – Waverly Hills Representative
Doug Taylor – Woodmont Civic Association (Not Present)
Caroline Holt – Lyon Village Representative (called in)
Deb Pearson – PTA Taylor (Not Present)
Jen Thompson – PTA Glebe (Not Present)
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

John Chadwick – Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
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

Scott McParrin - DPR
Jane Kim – DES

Other Attendees

Joan Perry, neighbor
Doug Gellir – neighbor

Design Team

Atara Margolies – Quinn Evans Architects
Tracy Hucul – Quinn Evans Architects
Jeff Luker – Quinn Evans Architects

Jeremy Chrzan – Toole Design Group
Lauren Delmare – Toole Design Group

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This was the eighth 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. REVIEW OF PROJECT SCHEDULE

- a. Ben Burgin (APS) thanked everyone for coming
- b. Atara Margolies (QEA) noted that this is a information focused meeting and that decision will be make at the next BLPC meeting
- c. Opened the floor for public comment, no comment.
- d. The project will not be brought to the School Board as an information item until early September 2015
- e. Shift to target September 24th Action by the board.

2. REVIEW OF BLPC 6

- a. Atara Margolies (QEA) reviewed the information presented at BLPC 7
 - i. C2 Terrace
 1. Auxiliary Gym below the Terrace
 - ii. C3 Link Building
 1. Bar Building creates the link
 2. Creates a new Atrium - important opportunity
 3. Create a new School Identity
 - iii. G2 Scheme - Hill
 1. Requires left turn lane - may be a problem
 2. Potential for parking below the field
 3. Expensive and disturbs the Park

3. HISTORIC PRESEVATION UPDATE

- a. Rebecca Ballo (CPHD) presented information on the historic significance of the school
 - i. The DPR property does not qualify for historic designation
 - ii. The School is listed on VA Landmarks and the National Register of Historic Places
 1. 8 of 11 criteria to be one a local historic district
 - iii. On the first day the students entered the school in the stair to the right of the gym. The rest of the week they enter the backside of the central stair.
 - iv. Important to protect the character defining elements and views of the building and its cultural history.
 - v. The students Lived in Halls Hill
 - vi. Building opened in 1951, design in the international Style, and most of the original character is unchanged
 - vii. Discussion on the history of Massive Resistance and Integration in Arlington and the role the school played during this time in history
 1. Policies developed to fight integration
 2. 1956 to 1959 the State was required to integrate by the Federal Government
 - a. Vehement opposition to the integration
 - b. Virginia Court ruling required schools that tried to integrate to close
 - c. Residents occupied schools to block integration
 3. Local black population was clearly segregated



- viii. Stratford was integrated
 - 1. Streets were cordoned off
 - 2. Police escorted the 4 student across field from Old Dominion
 - 3. Entered from doorway by the Gym
 - ix. Historic District Designation request is underway
 - x. School board will hear the request as information at August 13th Board Meeting.
 - xi. Charlie Craig is HP representative
 - xii. Apply Secretary of the Interior Standards for Historic Preservation, which were summarized and provided to the meeting attendees
- b. Question (Laura Edwards): How do we respond when all of the design options cross the students walking path which is a core preservation element? How to best work with the restrictions imposed by the historic designations.
- i. It will be a balancing act, but we must determine what is the most crucial & most significant historical elements of the building that need to be preserved.
 - 1. A visitor should be able to immediately place themselves in the site of the historic moment
 - 2. Maintain learning experience for future generations. The new construction should maintain a legible reading of the site.
 - 3. Do not create a false historic appearance

4. RESPONSE TO BLPC CONCERNS

- a. Atara Margolies (QEA) presented information with regards to the Tree Survey discussing the affected trees for each site design.
 - i. C2 affects the most trees
 - ii. C3 affects relatively few trees
 - iii. G2 significant number of Park Trees affected, but a survey of the park trees has not yet occurred.
- b. Atara Margolies (QEA) presented the GSF for each scheme.
 - i. The target for Phase 1 is 45,000 GSF and all the schemes are over sized
- c. Atara Margolies (QEA) presented clarifications on a few BLPC questions about building massing and section issues.
- d. Atara Margolies (QEA) noted the number of parking spaces that would be provided in the G2 parking garage.
- e. John Chadwick noted that daylight in classrooms is a very important criteria.
- f. Carol Burger asked that a program analysis be done so we can understand where the tipping points are for large program elements like the auditorium, gym, for Phase 1 vs Phase 2.
- g. Susan asked that APS take the question of whether we are or are not planning for Phase 2 to the School Board and APS agreed.
- h. John Chadwick said it would be possible that BLPC could recommend that either Phase 1 be built without Phase 2, or that the phases be built together. Stated that they could recommend that the site is not appropriate for a Phase 2 expansion citing specific concerns or constraints. The BLPC can recommend whatever they feel is appropriate.

5. TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

- a. Lauren Delmare (TDG) presented the Transportation update.
- b. Safety will be increased by a signalized crossing at Old Dominion and crossing guard(s) at other strategic locations. Desire to make this a walking Middle School in Arlington.
- c. TDG explained the anticipated drive rate, specifically highlighting that the drive rate is extremely conservative given a review of other APS locations and a review of student density surrounding the site.
- d. Students living within a 1/2 mile of other neighborhood middle schools are much more likely to walk than those living outside 1/2 mile
- e. Anticipate a relatively high walk rate due to a high rate of students within 1/2 mile (similar to Swanson)

- f. G2 drop-off queues have potential to back-up onto Old Dominion
- g. Explained the similarities between C2 and C3 and why a formal traffic study of C3 has not been completed. Noted that a formal study of any option recommended by the BLPC will be required.
- h. BLPC stated desire to improve Five Points
 - i. Sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements at Five Points are at a 90% design level as prepared by the County
- i. Question from Laura Edwards: Isn't the boundary going to affect the walk rate? Toole explained that it will not for the purpose of this discussion, because the ½ mile walk circle is going to be within the boundary.
- j. Everyone emphasized that the signal (whether a full signal or HAWK beacon) at Old Dominion will be key to implementing safe pedestrian access to the site.



6. DES TRANSPORTATION REVIEW

- a. Jane Kim (DES) stated that the #1 concern is the safety of the student getting to the school.
- b. Between APS and the County, adequate infrastructure will be provided for walking and biking students. They plan to get the neighborhoods within 1 mile radius to improve their sidewalks. Jane mentioned that she has already reached out to the Neighborhood Conservation Program Manager about this.
 - i. They are concerned about not just this property but the neighborhoods around it.
- c. DES Recommendations to the BLPC
 - i. Strongly encourage the BLPC to keep a version of Option A transportation circulation design on the table.
 - 1. VDOT approval of any Old Dominion access is required, so having an alternate design is crucial to moving the project forward
 - 2. Crossing guards and raised crosswalks could be added
 - 3. Include improvements to Vacation Lane.
 - ii. If we have Old Dominion access, it should be exit only in both directions (right and left) with a signal.
 - 1. Although it doesn't keep all traffic off Vacation Lane it does help cut Vacation Lane traffic in half
 - 2. The issues with providing access onto the site from Old Dominion include:
 - a. Concern with possible queuing onto Old Dominion
 - b. Widening of Old Dominion
 - c. Storm water impact
 - d. Regrading
- d. DES is concerned that adding a parent drop-off takes away site area, has a large affect on trees, takes money away from the school, and there are concerns that parents may not use the drop off area
 - i. BLPC believes that we can educate the parents to use the drop-off
- e. DES stated that it is unlikely the VDOT will pay for the traffic signal
 - i. The County's policy is not to pay for a signal that is only for one land owner
 - ii. DES also stated that the Five Points project is at 90% design completion and is primarily bike and pedestrian improvements.

7. BLPC DISCUSSION

- a. BLPC is concerned that the existing large elective spaces (Gym, auditorium, music room, etc.) are too small for 1300 students
- b. The site is different with 700, 100, and 1300 students. The BLPC wants to see a design for both a 1000 student school and a 1300 student school.
- c. BLPC would like more clarity about whether or not Phase 2 will be happening.
 - i. Would like to have a design that will be the best for the size of school that it will ultimately be.



- ii. Currently Phase 2 is awkward, conceptual design need for phase 2
- d. Concerns with the "Link" building as it related to Historic Preservation ideals.
- e. BLPC does not want to overly constrain the site
- f. BLPC requested that DES ask the county if we can turn Vacation Lane into a one-way street or Bus-only street during school hours.
 - i. DES stated that this is not the county's policy
 - ii. BLCP is asking for more flexibility on the county rules especially if they require us to move forward with site option A.
- g. Question about integration of Technology in the building (Carol Burger)
 - i. Scott (APS) noted that will be addressed later in Schematic Design
- h. Question if Wilson or Stratford will be opened earlier than projected.
 - i. APS noted that this will be highly unlikely.
- i. BLPC asked if the "Safe Route to School" improvements could be implemented earlier
- j. HP issued a list of Secretary of the Interior Standards
- k. APS explained that concerns about impact of construction on existing school program at H-B will be part of the use permit application process.

8. NEXT STEPS

- a. QEA will present information from the cost estimate.
- b. QEA will provide a summary of the number of proposed underground parking space for Phase 2
- c. APS stated that the cost estimate will be taken to the School Board and will be higher than initially expected due to the desire for Old Dominion access and int increase in construction costs. APS warned that this will delay the School Boards approval of the cost estimate but it will not affect our schedule.
- d. John Chadwick indicated that it is important for the BLPC members to be in the same place, even if it means taking more time and not meeting the August 13th deadline.
- e. APS stressed that at the August 3 BLPC meeting the committee should be prepared to recommend a preferred concept and a preferred fallback (site option A/A1 or A2) concept.
- f. The next BLPC meeting is Monday, August 3, 7pm-9pm, in the H-B Woodlawn Library.

END OF MEETING NOTES