

6 July 2015

## MEETING NOTES

**RE: BUILDING LEVEL PLANNING COMMITTEE #7**

**STRATFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA  
31406600**

**Meeting Date & Time:** 29 June, 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 (Not Present)  
Dot Green – Donaldson Run Representative  
Susan Cunningham – Donaldson Run Representative – BLPC Chair  
Amanda Davis – Maywood Representative (Not Present)  
David Barish – Waverly Hills Representative  
Doug Taylor – Woodmont Civic Association  
Caroline Holt – Lyon Village Representative  
Deb Pearson – PTA Taylor  
Jen Thompson – PTA Glebe (Not Present)  
Rohini Chopra – PTA ASF  
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  
Charles Craig – HALRB Representative  
Rebecca Ballo – CPHD staff – Historic Preservation

#### APS Staff

John Chadwick – Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations  
Ben Burgin – Asst. Director, Design and Construction  
Bill Herring – Project Manager, Design & Construction (Project Point of Contact)

#### County Staff

Michelle Stahlhut  
Diane Probus – DPR  
Jane Kim – DES

#### Other Attendees

Mark Bildner – PFRC, neighbor  
Victoria Mendeling – neighbor

#### Design Team

Dan Curry –Quinn Evans Architects  
Julia Siple –Quinn Evans Architects  
Atara Margolies – Quinn Evans Architects  
Carl Elefante – Quinn Evans Architects  
Jeff Luker – Quinn Evans Architects



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Jim Elliott – Toole Design Group  
Lauren Delmare – Toole Design Group

This was the seventh 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. Opened the floor for public comment, no comment.
- c. Will revisit the need for additional BLPC meetings in July at the end of this meeting.

### 2. REVIEW OF BLPC 6

- a. Atara Margolies (QEA) reviewed the key decisions from BLPC 6
  - i. Site access solution needs to include a connection to Old Dominion
  - ii. Option A3 (addition on lower lot) removed from consideration
  - iii. Option G (wide loop providing in/out from Old Dominion) removed from consideration
  - iv. Plan for entire site (APS + DPR) and consider Phase 2
  - v. Provide a traffic signal at Old Dominion
  - vi. Consider historic views and perspective but should not impede good school design
  - vii. Survey results (12 responses) indicated preferences for site options A/A1, and building options A/A1 and C

### 3. UPDATED SITE & BUILDING OPTIONS

- a. All options have expanded bus drop-off at the existing bus loop
- b. Option C2 – Terrace
  - i. Connection from Vacation Lane to Old Dominion for student drop-off
  - ii. Can enter/exit from Old Dominion
  - iii. Existing bus loop widened for more capacity
  - iv. Entry/Drop-off Plaza at Level 1
  - v. No change to park or west parking
  - vi. Field shifts east, full size soccer and Frisbee field is maintained
  - vii. 145 parking spaces
  - viii. Stratford program renovated to a new media center that opens on two exterior courtyards
  - ix. Stepped retaining walls create new entry plaza and retain the field height.
  - x. Site road has 1 lane and a lane of parking.
  - xi. Toole is studying the traffic movement in and out from Old Dominion with consideration to adding a left turn in.
  - xii. Building mass is long and low with the new auxiliary gym located under the plaza and opening onto the field
  - xiii. Courtyard enhances the existing symmetry
  - xiv. Green roof on the new addition will be visible from the existing building and Old Dominion. Portions of the green roof will be accessible.



- xv. New ADA elevator will connect all floors
- c. Option C3 – Link
  - i. New parent drive from Vacation Lane to Old Dominion
  - ii. Entry Plaza / drop-off at west end of addition
  - iii. Signal at Old Dominion allows right and left exits
  - iv. No change to DPR or west parking
  - v. Three story bar building in vocabulary of the existing building.
  - vi. Enclosed courtyard – great opportunity for heart of school and usable space.
  - vii. Atrium provides the opportunity to preserve and protect the historic south façade. The glass block could be restored to original condition because the block wall would no longer need to perform like an exterior wall. The thermal barrier would now be the atrium ceiling.
  - viii. The massing is sensitive to the original architecture and follows the same pattern of reflecting the use of the interior spaces.
  - ix. A projecting form at the new entrance follows the vocabulary of the main entrance and the mid 1990s additions.
  - x. The vocabulary will be respectful and compatible with the historic building but the new addition will be contemporary and differentiated.
  - xi. Building location strengthen the circulation loop on all levels.
  - xii. Auxiliary gym and lockers will be placed in the existing Stratford Program area, this is the area that the auxiliary gym and lockers were originally located in 1949.
  - xiii. The media center will be renovated in the existing location. The design team will also investigate place the media center adjacent to the ground floor of the atrium.
- d. Option G2 – Hill
  - i. New parent loop off of Old Dominion
  - ii. Signal at Old Dominion allows right and left exits
  - iii. One level structured parking under drop-off loop
  - iv. No change to Stratford field
  - v. 135 parking spaces
  - vi. Structured parking with approximately 60 spaces below the parent drop-off.
  - vii. Structured parking is accessed from 23<sup>rd</sup> St. The design team looked at access the parking from the Old Dominion drop-off but the space required for ramping would drastically reduce the efficiency of the parking.
  - viii. Massing is concentrated on the west of the building. An internal circulation loop is created at the west.
  - ix. The media center is placed at the basement level in the plaza, allowing circulation between the music wing and the core classrooms at the west on the lower level.
  - x. The structured landscape provides a historically sensitive response to the building that is distinctly different from the building, provides symmetry, and additional exterior amenity areas.
- e. Massing Views from Old Dominion
  - i. This view is significant both because of the physical building and site relationships but also the cultural significance of this side of the building being the one used when the building was first integrated.
  - ii. The massing diagrams show that C2-Terrace provides the best opportunity to see the existing south façade and gym façade; C3 – Link maintains the view of the gym façade; and G2 does not prioritize preserving views from Old Dominion. G2 priorities views from the field and other student experiences over the Old Dominion perspective.
- f. Vacation Lane Study



- i. All options could incorporate additional improvements and parking from Vacation Lane.
- ii. This scheme proposes widening Vacation Lane as much as possible
- iii. Parking garage under the field with 135 parking spaces.
- iv. The field would either be left at the existing elevation or raised 5'.
- v. Vacation Lane is currently about 10' lower than the existing field so the grades would work well with the parking garage under the field.
- vi. It is not desirable to have student drop-off underground because of the challenges of ventilation and visibility.
- vii. The existing bus loop would be used for pedestrians and bikes only and the buses would drop-off along Vacation Lane.
- g. Updated Option Comparison Matrix
  - i. The matrix has been updated to reflect the options still on the table and the new options.
  - ii. Elements of the building and site can be interchanged. However the C3 site can only be used with the C3 building (Link).
- h. John Chadwick: C3 building provides a great heart of school experience and most flexibility for programming. Prefer options that put the road on the south of the site to keep it further from the building.

#### 4. TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

- a. Recent project activities:
  - i. June 24 – Meeting with County to discuss Five Points Intersection
  - ii. June 25 – Meeting with County to discuss Old Dominion access
- b. BLPC 6 Follow Ups
  - i. Field Study is necessary to verify if sidewalks would be required on private land.
  - ii. Sidewalks on neighborhood streets generally are installed within the County right-of-way and not on private property.
  - iii. If there is a need for an easement, County Real Estate Bureau works directly with homeowners to obtain one.
  - iv. Sidewalks can be funded through the Neighborhood Conservation CPHD program or through Capital projects through the Department of Transportation (DES).
  - v. Pick-up/drop-off related parking restrictions have been implemented adjacent to school property at several APS schools.
  - vi. Can be marked “No parking” or “No Stopping/Standing”
  - vii. Potential parking restrictions reviewed as part of the use permit process.
  - viii. Hypothetical boundaries would require redoing traffic analysis for all remaining options and unlikely to yield significant new insights.
  - ix. John Chadwick noted that the new Stratford will likely draw more students from the east.
  - x. Neighborhood Middle School Drive Rate by Bus Eligibility numbers presented.
  - xi. The Stratford drive rate is a conservative estimate based on Swanson and Williamsburg.
  - xii. Remote drop-off scenarios shown for Lorcom and Military. Toole recommends using both Lorcom and Miliatry for drop-off. The Lorcom drop-off is not optimal because it would require students on the south side of Lorcom to cross Vacation Lane but still worth pursuing.
- c. Evaluation of Old Dominion Access Options
  - i. C2:
    1. Inbound right and left turns from Vacation Lane
    2. Inbound right turns from Old Dominion
    3. Outbound right and left turns at full signal at Old Dominion
    4. No queuing issues



- ii. C2 Alternate Traffic Configuration:
  - 1. Inbound right and left turns from Vacation Lane
  - 2. Inbound right turns from Old Dominion
  - 3. Outbound right and left turns at full signal at Old Dominion
  - 4. Outbound right and left turns at Vacation Lane
  - 5. Signal queue is the same as C2, but signal timing reduces delay to Old Dominion. No queuing issues
- iii. C3:
  - 1. Hybrid of C and C2
  - 2. Therefore, note evaluated for intersection operations
  - 3. Inbound right and left turns from Vacation Lane
  - 4. Outbound right and left turns at full signal at Old Dominion
  - 5. Signal queue backs into drop-off queue. Recommend shifting the drop-off point further east.
- iv. G2:
  - 1. Inbound right and left turns at full signal on Old Dominion
  - 2. Outbound right and left turns at full signal at Old Dominion
  - 3. Signal queue back into drop-off queue. This is a VDOT and safety concern.
- v. See presentation slides for a summary matrix of the traffic operations recommendations.
- vi. Intersection Operations
  - 1. Each of the surrounding intersections was evaluated for the traffic impact with the existing condition and options A, C, C2, C2alt, and G2.
- vii. Parking Recommendations
  - 1. Recommendations presented based on the zoning requirements for 1000 and 1300 students. Parking for users of the park also included.
  - 2. TDM parking numbers reduce the number of parking spaces and reflect understanding of other opportunities and Arlington habits.
    - a. 14 visitor parking spots are included. Swanson only has 3. Toole used 14 because this was the highest number of visitors recorded during their middle school survey.

## 5. BLPC DISCUSSION

- a. Question about which options would be most desirable for pedestrians.
  - i. Lauren (Toole): Any right turn in from Old Dominion widens the opening of the curb cut and increases the potential conflict with pedestrians.
  - ii. All options include pedestrian improvements.
- b. Laura Saul-Edwards: Any opportunity for cameras to enforce behavior and ticketing? - County handles the enforcement and controls this issue.
  - i. Following the meeting Toole did further research: This website provides additional information on Arlington's red light camera program <http://police.arlingtonva.us/photored/>. Virginia requires passage of a local ordinance to implement red light cameras, and Arlington is one of the counties that has done so. Speed cameras are not legal in Virginia.
- c. Building Comments:
  - i. Carol Burger: Has the design team thought about a higher building. Like the C3 Link scheme but half the footprint in phase 1 and twice the height.
    - 1. Dan: We have looked at height opportunities at various spots on site but the high buildings are less compatible with the



- existing building massing and circulation and sometimes create limited daylight in areas where the building is set into the hill.
- ii. Dot Green: C3 massing is really exciting. Great opportunity for a wonderfully used atrium that is a great gathering space and easily supervised.
  - iii. Laura Saul-Edwards: Feels the development has really moved to the next level. Really like the internal flow of C3 and sense of community it could create and think it respects the existing building. Want to see more on C3 transportation.
  - iv. Caroline Holt: Consider the properties south of the site. C2 comes closer to this property and impacts trees. Try to limit the impact.
  - v. C3 massing could work with C2 site.
  - vi. Michael Henry: Question about the Historic Preservation features and how to sensitively respond.
    - 1. Carl: A good example is the entry portico. The original 1949 building had this feature made out of limestone, the 1990s addition made an entry in a similar vocabulary made out of concrete. We would do something out of a new material.
    - 2. Find vocabulary that responds compatibly but is contemporary and differentiated and not mimicking.
  - vii. Michael Henry: concerns about Phase 2 massing. May be an opportunity to add elements of C2 to give more space or allusion of smaller massing.
  - viii. Option C3 does not have program at the basement level. If the road was not there we could go down another level.
  - ix. Robert Dudka: If the south facades are covered it removes the opportunity for Arlington citizens to see and experience the historic significance. The rear of the building is important not only because of the physical attributes because of the cultural significance of this side of the building being associated with integration events. The exterior of the building is what HALRB has jurisdiction over; C3 would change the interior exterior relationship.
  - x. Robert Dudka: C2 alters the relationship to the landscape but maintains more view from Old Dominion. C2 does the most to preserve the historic significance.
  - xi. Renee Harber: C3 has great opportunity to teach kids about the historic context.
  - xii. Dot Green: Concerned about prioritizing the Old Dominion view and experience (while safely driving) above the educational experience for the students.
  - xiii. Laura Saul-Edwards: C3 protects the historic façade and provides educational opportunities in an atrium that can be well used.
- d. Site Comments:
- i. Doug Taylor: Like the G2 layout. C2 and C3 cut through too much vegetation.
  - ii. Susan Cunningham requests further information from QEA on tree survey and underground parking.
  - iii. Rohini Chopra: Likes the terrace and outdoor experiences provided in C2 site. Like C3 massing with C2 site.
  - iv. Study ways to do C2 and preserve more trees and open space.
  - v. John Chadwick added that APS would like to see the C3 building with the road on the south of the field.
- e. Educational components are pushing the BLPC away from strict interpretation of historic.
- f. Public Comment:

- i. Mark Bildner (PFRC): big improvement in what was presented; it's evident traffic flow through five points gets worse, what can be done to reduce this impact?
- ii. Old Dominion is designed as a highway; changes on Vacation Lane have more impact on local roads.

6. **NEXT STEPS**

- a. BLPC decided to add two additional BLPC meetings. July 13<sup>th</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- b. The next BLPC meeting will have more time for BLPC discussion and less presentation from the design team.
- c. BLPC members to email the BLPC chair, Susan Cunningham with comments if unable to attend.
- 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 13<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- e. The next BLPC meeting is Monday, July 13, 7pm-9pm, in the H-B Woodlawn Library.



END OF MEETING NOTES