

PUBLIC FACILITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: November 20, 2013
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: McKinley Elementary School Library
1030 North McKinley Road

STAFF COORDINATOR: Freida Wray, 703-228-3541

Site Location:
McKinley Elementary School
1030 North McKinley Road
Arlington, VA 22205

Information:

Applicant:
Ajibola Robinson
Arlington Public Schools
2770 S. Taylor Street
Arlington, Virginia 22206

Architect:
Peter Winebrenner; Principal
Hord Coplan Macht (HCM)
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Alexandria, Virginia, 22314

Staff Members:

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SUMMARY: Arlington Public Schools (APS) is proceeding through the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) and the Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) processes for an addition and renovations to the McKinley Elementary School. The processes are in their conceptual stages, and major issues such as building placement, parking, and site circulation are currently being discussed.

BACKGROUND: The 2013-22 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) was approved by the County Board in July, 2012. The CIP included funding for 1,875 new elementary school students as a result of increasing enrollment within the school system. The plan includes funding for construction of additions at three (3) existing elementary schools, and the construction of two (2) entirely new elementary schools on APS property. The APS’ “Multi-Site Study” was completed in Spring 2012 and identified the locations and priorities for the construction projects. Use permits for the Ashlawn Elementary School expansion and the new Elementary School #1 on the Williamsburg Middle School campus were approved by the County Board in May and September 2013, respectively.

As with the two previous school projects that have been reviewed over the past year, the planning process for the McKinley addition will incorporate the APS process (BLPC) and the County’s process for public facilities (PFRC), and requires them to work in tandem in designing the school’s addition. The process will include three (3) phases: a conceptual phase, a schematic phase, and a final phase during which a use permit for the project would be requested and

reviewed by the County Board. The use permit is currently anticipated to be heard at the June 2014 County Board meeting; however, this date is preliminary and subject to change.

The BLPC consists of APS staff, teachers, parents and PTA members, representation from community groups, and County staff. The McKinley Elementary School BLPC website is <http://www.apsva.us/Page/21234>.

The PFRC is a County Board-appointed committee consisting of representatives of the Planning Commission (one of which is designated by the County Board as Committee Chair) and several other commissions, APS, and at-large members. It also includes project-specific members representing the Dominion Hills, Madison Manor, and Westover Village Civic Associations. The PFRC website is http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/Commissions/PublicFacilitiesReviewCommittee/pfrc_main.aspx.

The following provides additional information about the site and surroundings:

Site: The site is bound on the north by 11th Street North, south by 9th Road North and North Quantico Street, east by North McKinley Road, and west by North Potomac Street.

Zoning: The site is zoned “S-3A” Special Districts. Schools are a permitted use by provision of a use permit subject to [ACZO Section 4.15](#).

Land Use: The site is identified on the [General Land Use Plan](#) (GLUP) as “Public”

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Madison Manor Civic Association and is adjacent to the Dominion Hills Civic Association. The Highland Park-Overlee Knolls and Westover Village Civic Associations are located across I-66 from Madison Manor. Representatives from the Madison Manor, Dominion Hills, and Westover Village Civic Associations will be represented on the PFRC.

- Utilize universal design to ensure open and welcoming accessibility for all citizens.
- Explore adaptive reuse of significant existing structures and building elements and consider possible future reuse of new buildings.
- Optimize open space for public relaxation and recreation, and minimize building footprint and areas used for parking, on-site roads, and service drives.
- Support joint development and use of school and county facilities when in the best interest of both entities.

Siting and Orientation

- Orient the primary building entrance to the appropriate adjacent street or public space so movement and entrance to buildings are natural and intuitive.
- Emphasize pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit over automobiles in building placement, entry, and architecture.
- Ensure building and site are functionally and spatially coherent, facilitating the flow of people to, from, and within the site.
- Create “positive” outdoor spaces with a pedestrian emphasis.

Addition Siting and Massing Options: At the BLPC meetings on October 22 and November 5, the committee went through a series of exercises to refine concepts developed during previous meetings. At the meeting on October 22, the BLPC reviewed a total of eight (8) scenarios (4 primary and 4 variations on the primary scenarios). During the discussion, the BLPC identified several options for further review. At the following BLPC meeting on November 5, the BLPC reviewed four (4) concept designs that had been developed based on the discussion at the October 22 meeting. Those options are presented below. It is anticipated that the BLPC will continue discussing the four concept designs at the meeting scheduled for November 19.

Each of the concept designs reviewed by the BLPC includes an option to replace the existing pentagon as part of the addition. The architect continues to study the pentagon, which is an approximately 5,000 SF addition constructed around 1971. Based on the preliminary studies, renovating the pentagon is expected to be significantly more expensive than renovating other areas of the building due to the building type. No final decision has been made as to whether the pentagon will be renovated or be wrapped into the proposed addition. Option 1 is the only concept design that would require that the pentagon be replaced; the other three options either show the square footage of the pentagon included in the proposed addition (Options 2 and 4) or show the pentagon remaining (Option 3).

Note: all images are from the presentation given to the BLPC by HCM on November 5, 2013. The full presentation is available at: <http://www.apsva.us/Page/21234>.

Option 1: Addition to the South

Option 1 places the addition on the south side of the existing building. In this concept design, the 2-story addition replaces the pentagon which is currently located on the south side of the school. The existing parking area is expanded to approximately 61 parking spaces.

CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 1 – SITE PLAN



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CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 1 – NE AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



Desirables and Opportunities:

- Maintains existing pedestrian route around the school, especially from the entrance off 11th Street (southwest corner of the site).
- Provides for expanded open spaces and allows for two playgrounds (one in the existing location along the southern boundary near the parking area and one near the open space to the north of the site)
- Reduces potential visual and scale impacts to neighbors to the east of the site.
- Provides the opportunity for an outdoor classroom or other passive open space between the new wing and the existing classroom wing.

- Maintains existing building setback from McKinley Road.

Issues and suggested improvements:

- Potential visual and scale impacts to the neighbors to the south and west of the site.
- The primary addition would be somewhat concealed, although there would be opportunities to improve the civic presence with the minor addition to the entrance and the expansion of the gym.

Option 2: Addition to the East

Option 2 places the addition to the east, and uses the existing topography to construct a two and a half story addition. In this option, the top level of the addition is at the same height as the existing building, and steps down into the slope for the additional level and a half. In this option, the pentagon is shown as demolished and the additional square footage is included in the addition. If the pentagon were to be retained, the proposed addition would be reduced in size. This option also expands the parking area to approximately 61 spaces.

CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 2 – SITE PLAN



CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 2 – NE AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



Desirables and Opportunities:

- Creates a new civic presence adjacent to McKinley Road
- Provides for expanded open space, especially in the event the pentagon is demolished.
- Reduces potential visual and scale impacts for residences to the south and west of the site.
- Uses the topography of the site to reduce potential height impacts (the roof of the proposed addition would be at approximately the same height as the roof of the existing school).
- Good solar orientation.

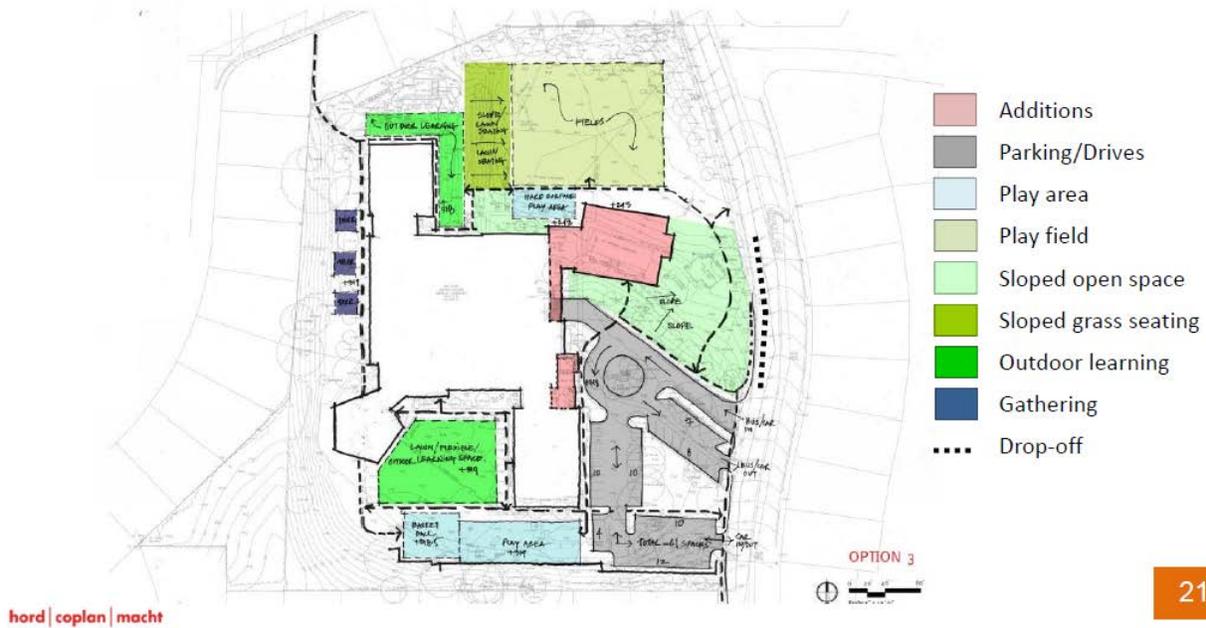
Issues and suggested improvements:

- Potential visual and scale impacts to the residences to the east and north of the site.
- Pedestrian circulation around the building is impacted, especially for students who access the site from the 11th Street side.

Option 3: Addition to the East (Relocated Gym)

Option 3 also locates the addition to the east, and is similar in terms of scale and location to Option 2. The primary difference is internal: in Option 3, the existing gym is converted to classroom space and the addition holds a new gym along with new classrooms and support space. This option shows the pentagon renovated and not demolished; in the event that the pentagon is demolished and the square footage incorporated into the proposed addition, the addition would be slightly closer to McKinley Road. This option proposes an expanded parking area of 61 spaces.

CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 3 – SITE PLAN



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CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 3 – NE AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



Desirables and Opportunities:

- Creates a new civic presence adjacent to McKinley Road
- Provides for expanded open space, especially in the event the pentagon is demolished.
- Reduces potential visual and scale impacts for residences to the south and west of the site.

- Uses the topography of the site to reduce potential height impacts (the roof of the proposed addition would be at approximately the same height as the roof of the existing school).
- Good solar orientation.

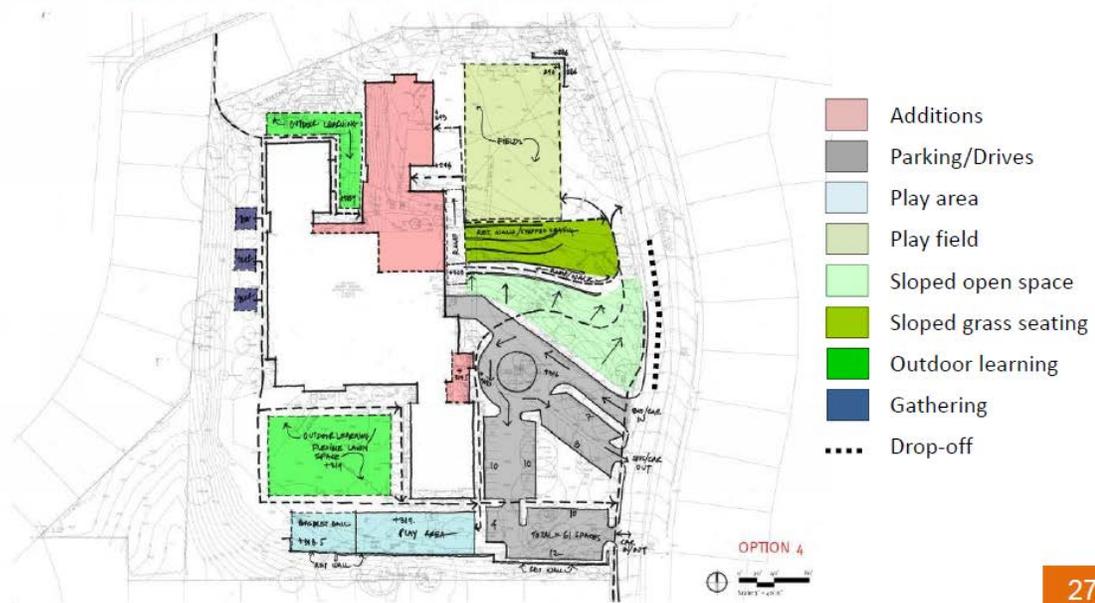
Issues and suggested improvements:

- Potential visual and scale impacts to the residences to the east and north of the site.
- Pedestrian circulation around the building is impacted, especially for students who access the site from the 11th Street side.

Option 4: Addition to the North

Option 4 proposes a two and a half story addition to the north of the existing school. This option would also work with the existing grade such that the top level of the addition would be at the same height as the existing building and the remaining level and a half would step down towards the north and the level of the existing play field. This option would also provide for an expanded parking area of approximately 61 spaces.

CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 4 – SITE PLAN



CONCEPT DESIGN: OPTION 4 – NE AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



Desirables and Opportunities:

- Uses the topography of the site to reduce potential height impacts (the roof of the proposed addition would be at approximately the same height as the roof of the existing school).
- Reduces potential for visual and scale impacts for residences to the south and the west of the site.
- Maintains existing building setback from McKinley Road.

Issues and suggested improvements:

- Potential visual and scale impacts to the residences to the north of the site.
- Pedestrian circulation around the building is impacted, especially for students who access the site from the 11th Street side.
- The playfield in the northeast corner is slightly smaller in this option than in the other options

Site Circulation and Transportation: The County Board identified site circulation as one of the main issues to be discussed during the public process for school design. Staff has identified a number of goals with respect to circulation and transportation that should be discussed during the public process for incorporation into the building and site design:

- Emphasis on multi-modal transportation opportunities
- Incorporate building access and circulation into building siting
- Examine existing/proposed transportation impacts to surrounding communities and incorporate into design

- Implement County standard for sidewalks, streetscapes, and driveways

Toole Design Group (TDG) has conducted a baseline study of the existing transportation conditions at McKinley Elementary, and is in the process of developing recommendations based on both the baseline study and additional surveys and data collection that are being completed this fall. The baseline study Executive Summary is attached to this report. Among the key findings are:

- According to the parent survey, a relatively good number of students (47%) living within 1 mile of the school either walk or ride their bike as their typical mode of travel to school.
- Staff travel to school is primarily via private car, with 93% of respondents reporting this as a primary travel mode. Four percent of respondents reported utilizing a carpool. Staff survey response rates were remarkably high, with 99% of school staff responding.
- There appears to be sufficient on-street parking within the vicinity of the school to accommodate staff and visitors.

Parking: There are 36 existing parking spaces. Section 14.3 of the ACZO calls for one (1) parking space for every 7.5 students of design capacity for employee parking at elementary and middle schools, plus one (1) space for every 40 students of design capacity for visitor parking. Based on the proposed design capacity of 665 students, the ordinance would anticipate approximately 89 employee parking spaces and 17 visitor parking spaces for a total of 106 parking spaces. Each of the proposed site options would accommodate approximately 61 parking spaces onsite by expanding the existing parking area, and up to an additional 26 spaces on McKinley Road in front of the elementary school. Although this increases the number of parking available onsite, it would not meet the Ordinance requirements. However, the Ordinance allows the parking requirements for elementary schools (among other listed public uses) to be modified provided that the modification will preserve and create recreational facilities and provided that a transportation demand management plan is submitted that demonstrates that the modification will not adversely impact the neighborhood. One of the primary goals that was identified by the community is the preservation of the existing ball field located in the northeast corner of the site. Due to site constraints, the only potential location to increase the parking on site consistent with the Ordinance standards is where the ball field is currently located. Therefore, a modification of the parking requirements will need to be considered.