

**Public Facilities Review Committee  
McKinley Elementary School Expansion  
Meeting Summary  
Wednesday, October 16, 2013**

**Attendees**

<b><u>PFRC Members (√ = present):</u></b>	<b><u>Arlington Public Schools (APS):</u></b>
√ Charles Monfort, Chair	
Lander Allin, Schools	Ajibola Robinson, APS
Jeff Certosimo, Housing Commission	Scott Prisco, APS
√ Elizabeth Gearin, Parks & Rec. Commission	Colin Brown, APS, McKinley ES Principal
√ Inta Malis, Planning Commission	Jeff Hagan, HCM
√ John Miller, At-Large	Peter Winebrenner, HCM
√ Heather Obora, Schools	Kevin Moran, HCM
√ Michael Perkins, Transportation Commission	Jim, Elliot, TDG
√ Terri Prell, At-Large	Tina Fink, TDG
√ Steve Sockwell, Planning Commission	
√ Gabriel Thoumi, E2C2	<b><u>County Staff:</u></b>
Jason Widstrom, Fiscal Affairs Adv. Comm.	Freida Wray, DCPHD
	Justin Falango, DCPHD
<b><u>McKinley Project-Specific PFRC Members (√ = present):</u></b>	Sophia Fisher, DCPHD
√ Jason Ackleson, Dominion Hills CA	Rob Gibson, DES
√ Brian Hannigan, Dominion Hills CA	
Jenny Capone, Madison Manor CA	
√ Anne Ladewig, Madison Manor CA	
√ Tim Bakos, Westover Village CA	
Craig Esherick, Sports Commission	
√ Ed Hilz, Urban Forestry Commission	

**County Board-School Board Joint Work Session**

PFRC Chair, Charles Monfort, provided a brief overview of the County Board-School Board joint work session that was held earlier in the evening, at the Reed-Westover Building. In his presentation, Chair Monfort briefed the County Board and School Board on the processes for Ashlawn and New ES#1. APS provided a presentation on the proposed McKinley School expansion. Key points raised by County Board and School members regarding the McKinley project included:

**Community Impacts:**

- Data on how the proposed square footage per student aligns with other elementary schools in Arlington should be provided, and if it is appropriate for instructional needs in the future. This will provided a better shared understanding of what the County/APS is attempting to accomplish.
- Preservation of open space is a priority and plans for open space/play fields should be known early in the process.
- Parking should meet zoning requirements, but APS should use both on-site and on-street in order to minimize the impact on open space and play fields.

### Sustainability:

- The County and APS should explore use of stronger impermeable surfaces as materials are improved upon.

### Use Permit Conditions:

- Each school site is unique with a different set of issues. Constructing schools is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor and the impacts of use permit conditions should be identified, and issues flagged, early in the process. There should be a plan for achieving a shared understanding of all use permit requirements.

### **Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

### **Baseline Transportation Study by Toole Design Group (TDG)**

TDG presented the preliminary findings of the transportation assessment based on data collected from four surveys (of students, parents, staff and visitors); assessments of arrival and dismissal travel patterns, mode counts, parking occupancy, and special event travel patterns and parking occupancy; vehicular turning movement counts and automatic traffic recorder counts; analysis of intersection vehicular capacity; and assessment of existing infrastructure along pedestrian and bike routes. Key findings included: 1) the need for improved crosswalks on McKinley Road; 2) speeding on McKinley Road and Ohio Street; 3) while the curb-side drops operate smoothly, improved pedestrian connections to the school are needed; 4) lack of a formal parent pick-up location and limited space for parking/standing vehicles at 11<sup>th</sup> and Potomac Streets; and 5) on-street parking to accommodate the existing school is sufficient. Follow-up includes additional field work, district-wide surveys, and recommendations to the BLPC and PFRC. The full Study will be available on the APS web site.

In response to a question about the potential for parking conflicts between the school and the neighborhood, the consultant indicated that there would be conflicts when there are special events at the school, such as back to school night. Also, there appear to be some conflicts with parent pick-ups on 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **Placement/Massing**

The design consultant, Hord Coplan Macht (HCM), will be leading a team of design professionals for the expansion and renovation of McKinley Elementary School. The following link provides more information on the firm and its experiences in designing schools at various levels: <http://www.hcm2.com/>. In its presentation to the PFRC (<http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/105/PFRC%20-%202002%20-%2020131016.pdf>) APS provided updates on the McKinley process to date, including the PTA/Community Meeting held on September 10<sup>th</sup>, and the three Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) meetings held to date. It is anticipated that the concept plan for the renovations and building addition will be developed during the months of September through November, 2013, with School Board action on the final concept design on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The schematic design will be developed during the months of December, 2013 through February, 2014, with School Board action on the

final schematic design on March 20, 2014. The use permit is scheduled to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and County Board in June 2014. Construction permitting is planned for the fall of 2014, with construction starting in spring 2015, completion in summer 2016, and occupancy in September 2016. The project scope includes an approximately 27,000 square foot addition with a height of 2-3 stories, comprising approximately 9 classrooms and 3 support rooms, and expanded common areas. Construction would be phased to allow the existing school to continue operation.

The school's design capacity is currently 443 seats; however, enrollment is currently approximately 537 students and many are located in relocatable classrooms. There are 36 parking spaces existing on site, at a ratio of 1 space per 15 students. The proposed design capacity is 668 students. The Arlington County Zoning Ordinance requires 106 parking spaces, based on ratios of 1 space per 7.5 students for staff parking and 1 space per 40 students for visitor parking. APS is considering 43-58 on-site parking spaces, which is dependent on the site design and building placement option.

At the second BLPC meeting held on September 24, 2013, 8 placement options were developed, and pros and cons were identified for each option (see pages 61-68 of the APS presentation). At the third BLPC meeting held on October 8, 2013, BLPC members were divided into three groups and, using color-coded building blocks, created 3 options refined from the original 8, taking into consideration interior uses and building/addition placement. The BLPC identified two preferred options: Option A-North, that placed the building addition on the northern side of the existing building; and Option B1-East, that placed the addition on the eastern side of the existing building, fronting on McKinley Road, and moved the play field further north. The BLPC also indicated that it did not want to totally eliminate all other options.

At the October 16<sup>th</sup> PFRC meeting, the original 8 options were discussed, as well as the 3 refined options. The comments provided by PFRC members included:

1. Option B1-East:
  - a. A 3-story structure adjacent to McKinley Road would be too imposing.
  - b. Provides a service entrance adjacent to McKinley Road which is not aesthetically pleasing.
  - c. Results in a very narrow setback; the existing setback should be respected.
  - d. Provides a civic presence.
  - e. Could be amended by rotating the addition and placing it parallel to the existing building.
2. Option A-North and C1-Northeast:
  - a. Service access along the northern boundary is problematic.
3. Option D-Southwest and E1-South:
  - a. A 2-story structure either replacing the pentagon on the southwest corner of the school or extending the current wing on the south of the school.

- b. Both options conceal the addition behind the existing wing on the south of the school, although both plans also call for a smaller addition to the front of the school which could improve the school's civic presence.
  - c. Might allow a consolidated parking lot/service access.
  - d. Respects existing setbacks
4. Options to eliminate from further discussion: Options E2-South (too costly), C1-Northeast (potential for inefficient circulation; does not offer advantages over the A and B options), C2-Northeast (potential for inefficient circulation; does not offer advantages over the A and B options; impacts the play field area), and B2-East (does not work well with site topography/context).
5. General comments:
  - a. An option that places the addition on the east side of the existing building should be considered.
  - b. Locating the service entrance in the front of the building adjacent to McKinley Road is not necessarily an impediment if designed properly.
  - c. There should be some separation between the service entrance and the pedestrian entrance.
  - d. Consider building up instead of out.
  - e. A topographic model is needed to show the steep elevations.

The PFRC decided to hold an additional meeting prior to the next scheduled meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup> to allow an opportunity for them to discuss more refined concept design options, and the consultant to respond to their concerns, before the School Board reviews the concept design as an informational item at its meeting on December 5, 2013. It was decided that the additional PFRC meeting would be held on Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, at McKinley School. The PFRC would continue to meet on Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Next Steps**

The next steps in the process include:

- October 22, 2014 – BLPC
- November 5, 2013 – BLPC
- November 12, 2013 – PFRC
- November 19, 2013 – BLPC
- November 20, 2013 – PFRC
- December 4, 2013 – BLPC
- December 5, 2014 – School Board information item (final concept plan)
- December 17, 2013 – BLPC
- December 18, 2013 – PFRC
- December 19, 2013 – School Board action on final concept plan

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.