

PUBLIC FACILITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: October 16, 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)
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 205
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.

field in the northeast corner of the site, with the parking lot and bus circulation route to the east of the school. There are relocatable classrooms located to the east of the school as well, adjacent to the existing ball field. Playgrounds and outdoor classroom space are also found on the site, to the south and to the west of the building. Finally, there is a pedestrian access point from 11th Street to the north. There is a significant grade change from the south side of the site (high) to the north side of the site (low). Below are images depicting the existing site conditions:



Main entrance and bus loop



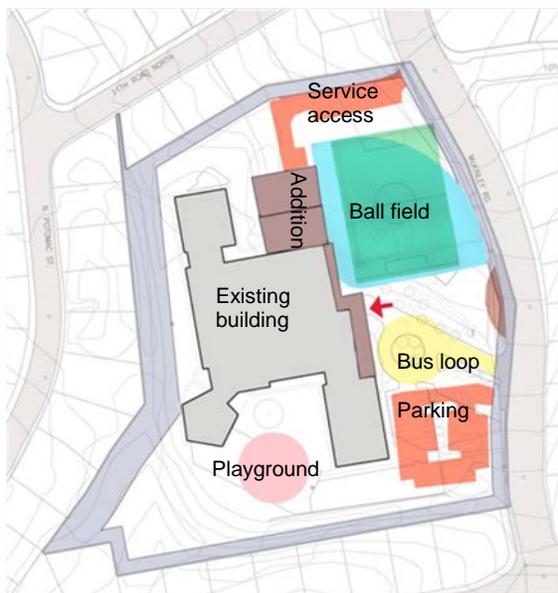
View of the north side of the school looking east toward McKinley Street. Grade change and relocatable classroom are both visible.



Outdoor classroom located on the west side of the elementary school

Addition Siting and Massing Options: At the BLPC meeting on September 24, the committee went through a series of exercises to identify potential locations for the proposed addition, as well as whether the addition would be two or three stories. During the discussion, a total of eight (8) scenarios were developed (5 primary and 3 variations on the primary scenarios). At the BLPC meeting on October 8, the committee reviewed the scenarios for siting the addition and worked on an exercise to consider how the functions of the school should be grouped. As a result of the exercise, the BLPC identified two (2) site options for further discussion. The two options are identified below.

Site Options: A – Addition to North



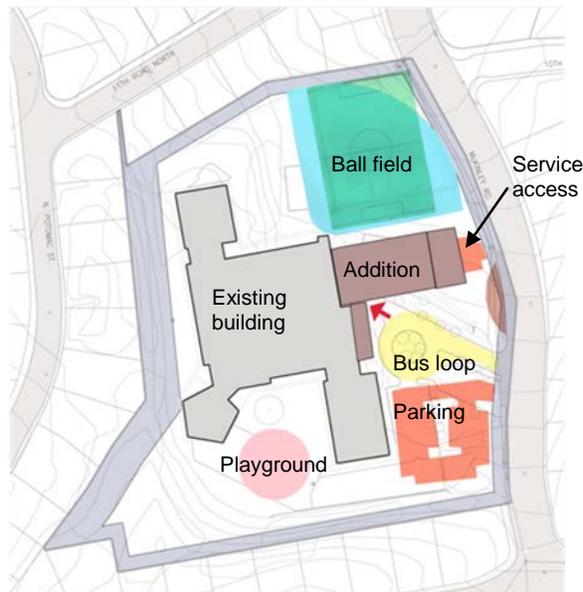
PROs

- Provides a new front face for school
- Takes advantage of existing grades
- Good construction access
- Retains most of play field area
- Service at side of school

CONs

- Must relocate portables during construction - \$\$
- Not optimal solar orientation
- Additional circulation around double height gym

Site Options: B1 – Addition to East



PROs

- Provides a new front face for school
- Good construction access
- Good solar orientation
- Takes advantage of existing grades

CONs

- Must relocate portables during construction - \$
- Site divided - May hinder pedestrian access to north
- Service at front of school
- Views from neighboring homes to east

Images: HCM presentation 10/8/2013 (full presentation available at <http://www.apsva.us/Page/21234>)

Both of the site options identified by the BLPC could have two (2) stories, three (3) stories, or a combination of both depending on the topography. Because of the significant grade change between the main entrance of the existing school and the ball field, the addition would work with the grade change such that the addition would step down the existing hill and be in scale with the existing one-story school building. In addition, both of the proposed site options are compatible with the *Principles of Civic Design in Arlington*, which include:

- Respect neighborhood context and important historic structures.
- Develop massing strategies appropriately scaled to the site and neighborhood
- Optimize open space for public relaxation and recreation, and minimize building footprint and areas used for parking, on-site roads, and service drives
- Orient the primary building entrance to the appropriate adjacent street or public space so movement and entrance to buildings are natural and intuitive.

The two (2) proposed site options also relocate the existing service entrance from a prominent location adjacent to the main entrance to either the north end of the proposed site option A (via a proposed new service road along the northern property boundary) or the east end of proposed site option B1 (via a new access point from McKinley Street). Over the course of the next few weeks, APS and the architect HCM will work to develop a concept design based on the identified site 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 50-55 parking spaces onsite by expanding the existing parking area. 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.