

**Public Facilities Review Committee  
McKinley Elementary School Expansion  
Meeting Summary  
Wednesday, February 19, 2014**

**Attendees**

<b><u>PFRC Members (√ = present):</u></b>	<b><u>Arlington Public Schools (APS):</u></b>
√ Steve Sockwell, Chair	Ajibola Robinson, APS
Lander Allin, Schools	Scott Prisco, APS
Jeff Certosimo, Housing Commission	Jeff Hagan, HCM
√ Christopher Forinash, Planning Commission	Samuel Doan, HCM/Davey Resource Group
√ Elizabeth Gearin, Parks & Rec. Commission	
Karen Kumm, Planning Commission	<b><u>County Staff:</u></b>
√ Todd McCracken	
√ John Miller, At-Large	Marco Rivero, DCPHD
Heather Obora, Schools	Sophia Fisher, DCPHD
√ Michael Perkins, Transportation Commission	Lisa Mahr, DES
Terri Prell, At-Large	Vincent Verweij, DPR
√ William Staderman	
√ Gabriel Thoumi, E2C2	
Jason Widstrom, Fiscal Affairs Adv. Comm.	
<b><u>McKinley Project-Specific PFRC Members (√ = present):</u></b>	<b><u>Ashlawn Project-Specific PFRC Members (√ = present):</u></b>
√ Jason Ackleson, Dominion Hills CA	√ Josh Handler, Boulevard Manor CA
Brian Hannigan, Dominion Hills CA	√ Jana Lynott, Transportation Commission
Jenny Capone, Madison Manor CA	
√ Anne Ladewig, Madison Manor CA	
√ Tim Bakos, Westover Village CA	
Craig Esherick, Sports Commission	
√ Ed Hilz, Urban Forestry Commission	

**Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

**McKinley Elementary School Update**

HCM gave an update on the expansion and renovation at McKinley Elementary School. The project was presented to the Arlington County School Board at their February 6, 2014 meeting as an information item. The item is scheduled to next be heard at the March 6, 2014 School Board meeting for action. The architect is now in the schematic design phase, and has further refined the design so that the edge of the northeast addition is farther back from McKinley Road (approximately 124 feet, a reduction of approximately 23 feet from the previous design shown to the PFRC). This increased setback was accomplished by removing 3,000 square feet from the proposed addition. The design shown also proposes removing two parking spaces

from the expanded lot closest to McKinley Road in order to provide a landscape buffer between the parking lot and the road.

HCM also discussed two trees that have been identified as significant trees on the tree inventory, but which are likely to be adversely impacted by construction. They are tree #116, a red oak in the parking lot, and tree #96, the silver maple next to the pentagon. In order to have the best chance for saving Tree #116, ten parking spaces would need to be removed from the expanded parking lot. However, this would not ensure the tree's survival because the critical root zone is already compromised by the existing parking lot, and it would be impacted by other construction activities on the site. Many of the techniques that would otherwise be used to preserve the tree will not work on the site due to existing topography and needed grading to handle the existing runoff issues. If the tree is lost due to construction, the other trees in the line will fill in around it and reduce the impact of losing the tree.

HCM considered alternative designs for the south addition (the pentagon replacement) in order to try to save tree #96. These designs included a single loaded corridor and an addition that angles off to the west, similar to the existing pentagon. However, those had impacts including additional square footage, impeding circulation around the school, and possibly requiring retaining walls. The tree was rated priority one due to its large size and prominent location. The type of tree, silver maple, is known to become hazardous as it ages and this tree is older and may not be structurally sound for much longer. In addition, the tree is in a low point with water around the roots and would be impacted by grading and sitework.

Link to the HCM presentation:

<http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/105/PFRC%20-%2006%20-%20140219.pdf>

Scott Prisco reported that the project was well received by the School Board.

- The Pentagon demolition/replacement is the major outstanding issue due to the added cost; the Board wanted more time to consider the request and look for funding sources

Some of the comments related to the McKinley update included:

- A lot of thought was put into what can be done to save the two trees, and that the rationale for removing trees should be included in the application to help people understand why
- Positive reaction for the addition being pulled back from McKinley Road
- When will the final number of trees to be removed be known?
  - Probably about two months (April-May); need to be farther into the design development phase.
- Will there be the ability to build on top of the additions (particularly the south addition)?

- Would cost approximately \$100-200,000 extra
- Would need to sacrifice something from the budget
- Several more elementary schools are in line for expansion
- May not be the best money spent right now.
- The pulled back addition—is that the front door?
  - There will be a door at the end of the addition, but it will not be a main entry
  - The new second entrance will be to the gym. There will be accessible paths from the McKinley Road drop off area to both the new addition door and the new gym door.
- Will there be permeable surfaces/pavement?
  - Maintenance and cleaning after storms, especially with salt, sand, and mud is expensive and difficult
  - Permeable projects haven't been working as well as they should

### **Ashlawn Elementary School Update**

Scott Prisco gave a brief presentation to show the proposed changes with the use permit amendment, specifically identifying trees to be removed and where the replacement trees would be planted. A design change on one of the walls was also noted—the change was from glass block to brick to facilitate a more functional teaching environment. The presentation also covered the redesign of the ramp/stair design from Montague Street.

Easement and vacations discussions are underway with Dominion Hills Pool for the land needed to construct the N Montague St ramp (mainly having to do with the existing RPA within the DHP property and the adjacent APS property). The primary need is for site maintenance and other detailed responsibilities that will need to be shared with both entities.

- Notable lessons learned:
  - Communicate early in the process;
  - Anticipate large scale issues early in the process and highlight them to all appropriate stakeholders;
  - During the PFRC review process, have the site planning process occur parallel with the BLPC so all issues are discussed earlier and in greater detail;
  - Greater collaboration with DPR Natural Resources staff on identifying sensitive natural species/populations on a site specific basis.

Link to the presentation:

<http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/105/PFRC%20presentation%202014%202019.pdf>

Josh Handler of Boulevard Manor Civic Association gave some comments:

- Pleased that APS addressed the grading and tree maturity issue facing the southeast corner of the site. The extensive tree buffer was received positively.
- Pleased that the revised N. Montague Street ramp renderings may also provide the opportunity to save additional trees on the site.
- Outstanding Issues related to the proposed N. Montague Street ramp:
  - Concerned that the proposed concrete material of the ramp and related increase in impervious surfaces could have an adverse impact on stormwater drainage on the site. Possibly use “nature walk” concepts and permeable surfaces for the ramp/trail and still maintain ADA accessibility requirements.
  - Natural/wildlife concerns for a red salamander colony west of the site.
  - Maintenance of new infrastructure/hardscape may be an issue to consider for the future (noting the degradation of the current stairs on the N Montague St area as an example).
  - ADA should be considered from a neighborhood perspective. The neighborhood itself is not “ADA” and the back entrances of the school are locked from the outside (Mr. Handler did note that the principal may consider or is already implementing that the secondary back entrances be open in the mornings for 20-30 minutes).
  - Summary: Resource Protection Area (RPAs), effects on existing utilities/streets, driveways, and tree savings on the N Montague St ramp area are all issues that need to be considered.
  - Support for the 8<sup>th</sup> Road North/Wilson Boulevard connection from the Boulevard Manor CA is “not positive”.

APS + County Responses to Issues Raised by Mr. Handler:

- Vincent Verweij from DPR noted that the red salamander colony west of the site and the limits of disturbance will not be heavily impacted by the construction/implementation of the new accessibility ramp and stairs. The colony is further west of the site and the adjacent property will be fenced off (6’ high chain link fence) to impede entrance/exit to that area.
- Water runoff/drainage: cross-sloped ramp will not allow for large puddles in any one location on the site. It is correct to say that runoff will increase with more impervious surfaces proposed for the site. However, drainage will not be heavily affected. Concrete surfaces or the like last longer and can be better maintained than other options considered.
- Maintenance of trails/hardscape: CPHD staff noted that there is an existing condition within the use permit (landscape condition #13) which addresses landscape maintenance (all elements of landscaping) for the life of the use permit. However, staff will look in to whether or not the current language is clear enough to specify hardscape/on-site trails.

Some comments related to the Ashlawn discussion included:

- The ramp is an important means of egress for the school and should be built to ADA standards and must be kept clean of leaves and other debris for safety.
- How will the ramp be maintained?
  - APS staff will be responsible for maintenance; staff is getting better training to be able to properly maintain all the new landscaping as required.
- Trees need to be properly watered from installation to help with their survival.
  - DPR staff is partnering with APS staff on tree watering.
- What is the status of the 8<sup>th</sup> Road extension?
  - Not at full design yet
  - APS needs easements from the Dominion Hills Pool
  - Planning to move forward if possible

#### **Next Steps—McKinley**

The next steps in the process include:

- February 25, 2014—BLPC
- March 6, 2014—School Board action on final concept plan
- March 11, 2014—BLPC
- Next PFRC TBA

#### **Next Steps—Ashlawn**

The next steps in the process include:

- March 15 or 18, 2014—County Board hearing on the use permit amendment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.