

**Public Facilities Review Committee
Abingdon Elementary School Expansion
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, October 15, 2014**

Attendees

<i>PFRC Members (√ = present):</i>	<i>Arlington Public Schools (APS):</i>
√ Stephen Sockwell, Chair	Scott Prisco, APS
√ Todd McCracken, Schools	Ajibola Robinson, APS
Jeff Certosimo, Housing Commission	Peter Winebrenner, HCM
√ Elizabeth Gearin, Parks & Rec. Commission	Paul Lund, HCM
Christopher Slatt, Transportation Commission	Maureen Wiechert, HCM
Christopher Forinash, Planning Commission	
√ John Miller, At-Large	
Heather Obora, Schools	<i>County Staff:</i>
Karen Kumm, Planning Commission	Marco Rivero, DCPHD
Jason Widstrom, Fiscal Affairs Adv. Comm.	Arlova Vonhm, DCPHD
Terri Prell, At-Large	Dennis Sellin, DES
√ William Staderman, Disability Advisory Comm.	Rachel Jackson, DPR
<i>Abingdon Project-Specific PFRC Members (√ = present):</i>	<i>Observers:</i>
√ Guy Land, Fairlington CA	Jim Hurysz, Resident
√ Kent Duffy, Fairlington CA	Joan Buhrman, Resident
√ Bobby Crider, Courtridge I Claremont CA	Joya Kilpatrick, Resident
√ Charles Matta, HALRB	Lisa Lartius, Resident
√ Ed Hilz, Urban Forestry Commission	Linda Solheim, Resident
√ Patrick Kenney, E2C2	John Solheim, Resident
√ Christine Ng, E2C2	Rachel Epstein, Resident
	Linda Robinson, Resident

Introductions/PFRC Charge/Site Tour:

PFRC Chair Steve Sockwell opened up the meeting by welcoming those present. Committee members and attendees introduced themselves and gave the name of the organization or committee they were representing. Chair Sockwell gave an overview of PFRC, its charge, and the committee's standard review process. Attendees then headed outside for a site tour but due to inclement weather were unable to complete it. After participants reconvened in the library, County staff gave an overview of the Principles of Civic Design.

APS Presentation:

APS staff introduced the design team, led by their consultant Hord Coplan Macht (HCM), for the Abingdon project. HCM is the same consultant that completed the McKinley Elementary School Addition that was recently approved by the County Board.

APS staff provided an overview of their capacity needs, recently adopted CIP, and proposed budget for the addition. APS also clarified the roles of the various review committees that are simultaneously meeting to discuss this project. The proposed project scope would include a 136-seat addition, increasing school capacity from 589 to 725

seats. This would be accomplished via a building addition and extensive interior renovations. The estimated project cost is \$28.75 million.

HCM

HCM presented the proposed project schedule and updates on the Abingdon process to date, including the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) meetings held on September 16, 2014 and September 30, 2014. It is anticipated that the concept plan will be complete by February 2015 and the schematic design phase will continue through April 2015. APS anticipates obtaining the required use permit by September 2015, starting construction in April 2016 and being ready for occupancy in September 2017.

HCM consultants also provided an overview of their preliminary site analysis, which included the existing site context, transportation networks, property setbacks, topography, and zoning requirements. The consultants presented several concepts developed by participants at the second BLPC meeting for this project that considered how the existing building and playfields, in addition to the desired additional space, could be configured/reconfigured on the site using blocks. Consultants also discussed their desire to find ways to incorporate sustainability into the design.

The design team presented the early findings of shovel tests performed on the site by their archaeology consultants. The analysis was done in light of the site's history as the location of Fort Reynolds. While the final report is not complete, the consultants reported that their early findings did not show evidence of cultural resources due to the extensive cut and fill that has already taken place on the site for the original construction and prior additions. Lastly, the consultants described the work that Toole Design Group will complete as part of their multi-modal transportation study for this project.

Arlington County Presentation on the Use Permit Process and Parking Requirements:

Staff gave a brief overview of the use permit process and parking requirements for the proposed addition. The use permit offers a process for considering and approving such uses, subject to special conditions particular to the character of the use. Potential areas that may be addressed by condition are construction, transportation, environmental impacts, and recreational fields. After the BLPC and PFRC processes are complete, APS will file a use permit for the school, including the proposed addition.

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 725 students, the ordinance would require 97 employee parking spaces and 19 visitor parking spaces for a total of 116 parking spaces.

PFRC Questions/Concerns:

1. What is the current school enrollment?
 - 627 students

2. Is a vertical addition feasible?
 - It would be challenging for APS to manage the construction required for a structural addition with students in the building. As a result, this would require swing space or a large number of relocatables in order to limit disruption of service. On a site of this size, that is very difficult to achieve. However, APS is still evaluating where a vertical addition may occur. It is also possible that new additions may have more than one level.
3. When calculating capacity, are you looking at ways the existing space could be better utilized?
 - Yes, APS is considering opportunities to maximize use of the existing building as part of this process
4. What is the tree inventory and assessment process?
 - Trees of at least 3” caliper are graded from 1-4 (1 is good)
 - Look at the McKinley School materials for an example of how they are evaluated
5. What groups are being represented as part of this process? Concern raised that neighboring condo association, Courtbridge II, was not formally represented
 - APS policy is to include civic associations. After the BLPC process began, they became aware of all of the neighboring residential communities (e.g., Courtbridge I and II, Fairlington Villages, Park Shirlington)
 - Joan Fuhrman of the Courtbridge II condominium association will be added to the Project Specific PFRC Membership roster for the Abingdon project moving forward.
6. Research zoning requirement for adjacent yards
7. Check the ownership of the adjacent property, its likely Dominion Power, but there may be an opportunity to add open space.
8. What is the scope of the examination in looking at areas outside the site for parking? What is the feasibility of using the Trade Center for parking?
 - Opportunities for off-site parking are still being evaluated
 - The Trade Center has a significant grade change and doesn’t currently have a lot of excess room for parking, but it will be evaluated.
9. What are the implications of the archaeological study on this project?
 - The site has been manipulated so much over time that anything of value is probably buried down. As of now, there are no implications on this project.
10. Is Fort Reynolds Park county property?
 - Yes, this is a county park located on county property that is not being considered as part of this project.

Public Comment:

There was concern that information shared at the BLPC did not include consideration of preserving open space as part of the parking discussion. APS staff explained that the two committees have different charges so that may be why it wasn’t discussed at BLPC yet.

They further clarified that the options being discussed at BLPC are not final answers, just a part of what the consultants consider in their analysis. As the process moves forward, BLPC and PFRC meetings will feed off one another and topics will likely overlap.

A question was asked regarding the presence of asbestos in the building. APS indicated that they would conduct a thorough environmental analysis as part of this process and assured nearby residents that it would continue during construction. APS was also encouraged to find out if there are endangered bird species living on the campus.

APS was asked to research who is responsible for the paved pathway to 31st Street. Lastly, a community member commented that a recent transportation study done for the Park Shirlington site plan application has a lot of relevant data that could be of use for this project. APS staff agreed to forward this study to their transportation consultants.

Next Steps

The next PFRC meeting will include a presentation of baseline transportation data from Toole Design Group, more ideas from HCM regarding site opportunities and development, and responses to questions raised in this meeting.

The current meeting schedule for the remainder of the year is as follows:

- October 28, 2014 – BLPC
- November 18, 2014 – BLPC
- **November 19, 2014 – PFRC**
- December 2, 2014 – BLPC
- December 16, 2014 – BLPC
- **December 17, 2014 – PFRC**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.