

PUBLIC FACILITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: May 14, 2015
TIME: 8:00 – 10:00 p.m.
PLACE: Wilson School
1601 Wilson Boulevard

STAFF COORDINATOR: Michelle Stahlhut, 703-228-3541

Site Location:
Stratford School
4100 Vacation Lane
Arlington, Virginia 22207

Applicant:
John Chadwick
Arlington Public Schools
2770 S. Taylor Street
Arlington, Virginia 22206

Architect:
Dan Curry, Project Manager
Quinn Evans Architects
2121 Ward Pl NW
Washington, DC 20037

Staff Members:

Michelle Stahlhut	CPHD – Planning	703.228.3541	mstahlhut@arlingtonva.us
Jane Kim	DES – Planning		
Diane Probus	DPR – Planning		
Justin Falango	CPHD – Planning, Urban Design		
Rebeccah Ballo	CPHD – Historic Preservation		

SUMMARY: Arlington Public Schools (APS) has begun the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) process and is starting the Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) process to evaluate a proposed renovation of and addition to the Stratford school building. The building will become a neighborhood middle school, and currently houses the Stratford Program and H-B Woodlawn Program. The BLPC and PFRC processes are both in the conceptual stage and major topics such as building placement, site access and circulation, parking, and historic preservation are currently being discussed.

BACKGROUND: There are a number of APS and County processes underway with regard to planning the ultimate expansion and renovation of the Stratford School site, outlined below.

APS CIP Process

The 2015-24 APS Capital Improvements Program (CIP) was approved by the Arlington School Board in June 2014. The CIP called for a process to determine the location of an additional 1,300 secondary school seats in the northern part of the County. The CIP also set the total budget for providing the seats (\$126,000,000) and the deadline for their delivery (September 2019). At the conclusion of a community engagement process which began in September 2014, the School Board gave final direction to APS in December 2014. At their December 18, 2014 meeting, the School Board voted to renovate and build an addition at the Stratford School site to establish a new neighborhood middle school with 1,000 seats with a project budget of \$29,200,000 for hard

and soft costs. The School Board also voted to construct a new school at the Wilson site, which would accommodate the existing H-B Woodlawn and Stratford programs currently located at the Stratford building.

Historic Designation

The Stratford school was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register in 2003, and the [National Historic Register](#) in 2004. In 1959 Stratford Junior High was the first Junior High to integrate in the state of Virginia. The architecture is also recognized as an intact example of an international-style school building in Arlington County and was one of the most modern school buildings in the area when constructed.

On March 31, 2015, the Historic Preservation Program staff received [a request for local historic district designation](#) of Stratford Junior High School Building as a local historic district. If this request were granted, a zoning overlay will be added to the site that will trigger review by the Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board ([HALRB](#)). A member of the HALRB has been asked to serve on the PFRC for this project.

County/APS Schools Review Process

At a joint work session with the School Board held on April 10, 2015, the County Board endorsed a planning process for the Stratford School site. The APS planning process for the Stratford School site will incorporate the APS process, the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC), and the County's Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC), and requires them to work in tandem in designing the new school. The design 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 reviewed by the County Board.

The BLPC consists of APS staff, teachers, parents and PTA members, representation from community groups, and County staff.

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 representatives, and at-large members. It also includes project-specific members representing Cherrydale, Donaldson Run, and Waverly Hills Civic Associations.

Site Characteristics:

The following provides additional information about the site and surroundings:

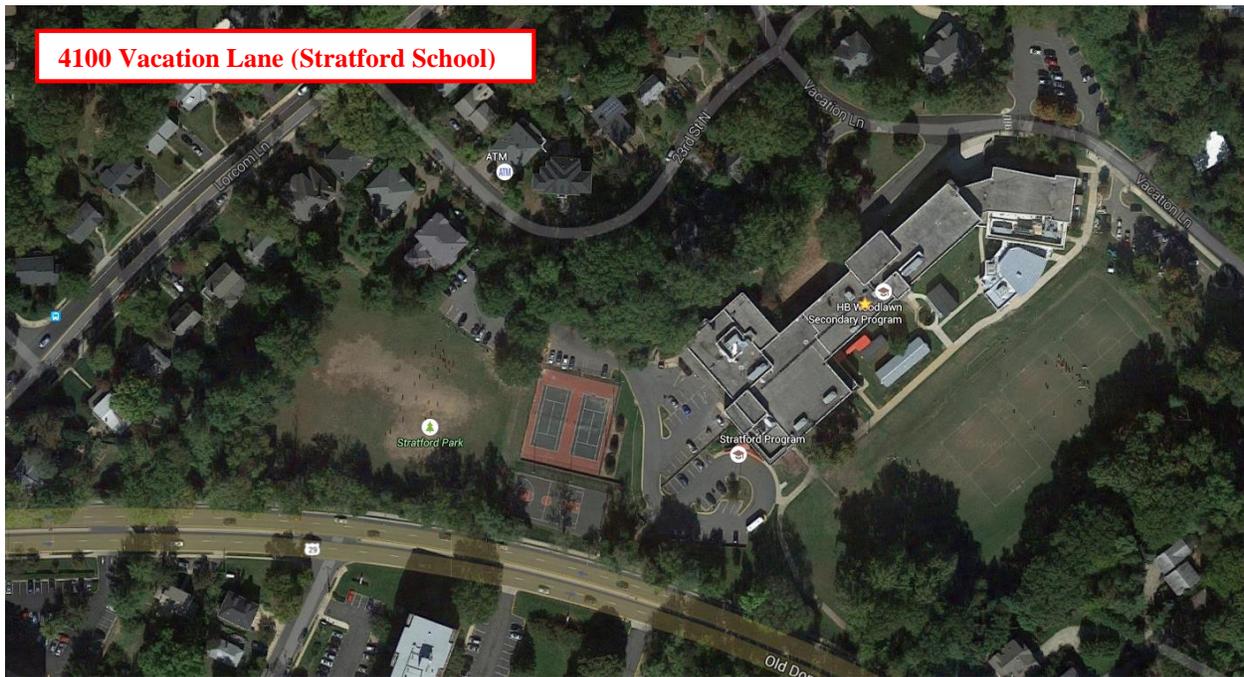
Site: The site is bound on the north by 23rd Street North and Vacation Lane, on the east by single-family homes, on the south by Old Dominion Drive, and on the west by existing County owned park facilities and single-family homes facing Lorcom Lane.

Zoning: The site is zoned "S-3A" Special District. The purpose of the "S-3A" Special District is to encourage the retention of certain properties in a relatively undeveloped state. Land so designated may include publicly or privately owned properties which have distinct and unique site advantages or other features so as to make them desirable to retain as active or passive recreation (including but not limited to: parks, schools,

pathways, and other public facilities). Schools are a permitted use by provision of a use permit subject to Section 4.15 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (ACZO).

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

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Cherrydale Civic Association and is adjacent to the Donaldson Run and Waverly Hills Civic Associations.



Source: Google Maps

DISCUSSION: The APS community process for the Stratford school site began on April 8, 2015. Since that time, the BLPC has met three times, with the most recent meeting occurring on May 4, 2015. This meeting included a discussion and selection of conceptual site options for the Stratford site based on a previous interactive site analysis exercise. The next BLPC meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2015. Presentations and Minutes from BLPC meetings can be found on the [APS Design and Construction: Stratford Middle School](#) website.

The PFRC first met on April 15, 2015 and discussed introductory items such as the role and charge of the PFRC and an overview of the use permit process. The project architects Quinn Evans provided [a presentation](#) on background information on the history of the site, sustainable school design, and a Toole Design Group transportation planner provided a short overview of the role of transportation analysis for the site. At the May 14, 2015 PFRC meeting, APS will be presenting a series of conceptual options for the Stratford site. A preview of the proposed options is viewable as part of their [May 4, 2015 BLPC presentation](#).

Proposal

The current Stratford school building is approximately 142,000 square feet and services approximately 700 students. The addition of 300 student will require roughly 40,000 additional square feet of education space. Arlington County owns parkland located directly to the west of the school building which includes recreation space as well as the parking area located off of 23rd Street.

Some conceptual site design issues to consider include site access and transportation impacts which may include coordination with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), grading as related to the addition or site access, historic preservation and historic district designation of the existing building and related design of the proposed addition, parkland impacts and coordination, and stormwater management.

Principles of Civic Design

The [*Principles of Civic Design in Arlington*](#) were developed by the PFRC in 2008 and are intended to inform the design of civic facilities in Arlington, including buildings and other projects, to ensure they meet community goals for attractiveness, durability, and functionality. The principles reinforce and supplement existing County planning documents and policies, and are meant to promote compliance with certain basic principles, but not to inhibit creative design. The Principles will inform and guide the PFRC's discussion of the proposed addition with regard to civic values, site and orientation, building form, and building details and materials.

Use Permit

The ACZO distinguishes between uses permitted "by-right" and uses allowed by "special exception." The use permit is one form of special exception, and is required for schools in the "S-3A" zoning district. 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 conditions include but are not limited to: construction, transportation, environmental impacts, and recreational fields. After the BLPC and PFRC processes are complete, APS will file a use permit for the proposed school addition. Use permits are approved by the County Board.