

Public Facilities Review Committee
 Stratford School Expansion
 Meeting Summary
 Thursday, July 16, 2015

Attendees

<i>PFRC Members (√ = present):</i>	<i>Arlington Public Schools (APS):</i>
√ Stephen Sockwell, Chair	Ben Burgin, APS
√ Todd McCracken, Schools	John Chadwick, APS
Jeff Certosimo, Housing Commission	Scott Prisco, APS
√ Elizabeth Gearin, Parks & Rec. Commission	Carl Elafante, Quinn Evans Architects
√ Michael Perkins, Transportation Commission	James Elliott, Toole Design Group
√ Nancy Iacomini, Planning Commission	Lauren Delmare, Toole Design Group
John Miller, At-Large	
√ Chris Forinash, Planning Commission	
Heather Obora, Schools	
Jason Widstrom, Fiscal Affairs Adv. Comm.	
√ Terri Prell, At Large	
William Staderman, Disability Advisory Comm.	<i>County Staff:</i>
√ Christine Ng, E2C2	Arlova Vonhm, DCPHD
<i>Stratford Project-Specific PFRC Members (√ = present):</i>	Jane S. Kim, DES
√ Mark Bildner, Cherrydale	Diane Probus, DPR
√ Carole Russo, Cherrydale (Alternate)	Rebecca Ballo, DCPHD
√ Anne Wilson, Donaldson Run	Christin Jolicoeur, DES
√ Stuart Dziura, Donaldson Run (Alternate)	
√ David Barish, Waverly Hills	
Paul Holland, Waverly Hills (Alternate)	
Ed Hilz, Urban Forestry	
√ Robert Dudka, HALRB	
Charlie Craig, HALRB (Alternate)	

Introduction and Announcements

PFRC Chair Chris Forinash opened the meeting at 7:35pm. The PFRC Guiding Principles for Stratford School were available for members to review. Chair Forinash informed committee members while the next scheduled PFRC meeting was on Thursday, September 17, 2015, this date might change.

Arlington County

Historic Preservation

Rebecca Ballo gave a presentation on the historic preservation context for the proposed addition, including both a consideration of the building’s architecture as well as the cultural significance of the school’s role in school integration in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A similar presentation was made at the County Board work session as well as at the most recent BLPC meeting. A link to a video found in the presentation, can be accessed [here](#). The presentation also described the status of the historic designation process currently underway.

DES Transportation

Jane Kim discussed three DES concerns with regard to the Stratford proposal:

1. Providing safe routes to schools

- a. Proposal should provide safe routes for both pedestrians and cyclists
 - b. Sidewalk improvements should coordinate with existing NC plans that can be implemented before school starts.
2. Five points intersection
 - a. Concerned about potential level of service (LOS) delays
 - b. Delays on Vacation Lane (seconds) as compared to delays at the five points intersection (minutes)
 - c. Full information and data on intersection delays will be available at the end of the year
 3. Old Dominion access
 - a. Concern about the resources that would be allocated to this route if parents don't use it
 - b. Vacation Lane will still need to be an option. DES formally requested that APS keep one alternative using this access as a back-up. There are no guarantees regarding the potential future use of Old Dominion for school access. This is a roadway we don't control.
 - c. DES supports an exit-only option on Old Dominion if it's chosen.

DES Environment

Christin Jolicoeur gave a presentation on the existing Resource Protection Area (RPA) that is partially located on the site. The RPA includes the head waters of Windy Run and is located on the NE side of Vacation Lane and on part of the school parking lot. The RPA, both a resource and a constraint, is protected by the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance. All the proposed options would appear to require an exception, which would result in a review process before a citizen board and mitigation requirements. Evaluation of development proposals that affect the RPA consider the current condition vs. the proposed condition and include things like impervious cover, vegetation impacts, and changes of use. The run currently flows through the storm sewer system and the majority is located downstream.

Arlington Public Schools

Review of recent meetings

APS staff and their consultants provided a recap of the most recent BLPC meetings. The BLPC understands that they need to carry forward an "A" option as a back-up but have indicated this is not their preference. APS indicated that consideration of the conceptual design scheme for the school addition will not go to the School Board until their September 10th meeting. A discussion of the HALRB designation will go to the School Board as an information item in August. A gallery walk for the school addition is scheduled for July 22nd at 5:30pm.

Revised Site Options/Building Massing

APS consultants Quinn Evans Architects (QEA) presented the remaining site options. Based on feedback from BLPC, the A3 and A6 options were removed. Quinn Evans Architects presented the following design options for committee consideration:

1. C2 – "Terrace"
2. C3 – "Link"
3. G2 – "Hill"
4. Enhanced Vacation Lane access for A options

QEA also presented an option comparison matrix that analyzed each option against several site and building criteria. They indicated that sole use of Old Dominion for both in and out access to the site is not workable for the Fire Department. They also clarified that while individual components of each scheme are interchangeable, the “Link” scheme doesn’t allow for mixing and matching parts of the proposal. For that scheme the site characteristics are linked to building characteristics. QEA consultants presented an analysis of open space for each scheme, including Phases 1 and 2. They also presented a tree survey, for APS owned property, and a tree impact analysis for each scheme.

QEA’s work started 6 months ago and they indicated that while they understood concerns about viewsheds, the constraint given to them was not to cross onto CB property. Since that time, the County developed design guidelines and they learned more about the school’s cultural history. The design team stated that they were trying to be responsive and keeping the existing school showed the most respect in that regard. In three different schemes, three different approaches to preservation were demonstrated:

1. C2:
 - a. Make impact low
 - b. Allow existing profile to dominate
 - c. Maintain view from Old Dominion
2. C3:
 - a. Respond to organization of existing school
 - b. Provide a logical extension of what’s there
 - c. Make classrooms parallel to classroom wing
 - d. Allow other program elements to follow precept of original layout
3. G2:
 - a. Prioritize leaving classroom wing alone
 - b. Respond to diagram in the nomination and respecting view
 - c. Limit impact to gymnasium wing

PFRC Discussion/Questions:

- Could Stratford be de-listed from the National Register if changes are made to the building?
 - Yes, if the criteria (both cultural and architecture) used to justify the listing were altered to be unrecognizable, it could be taken.
- Lot of discussion about the school expansion occurred in Donaldson Run, with a lot of dissention, with the exception being agreement about having an entrance from Old Dominion.
- Are there planned County improvements to the five points intersection?
 - Yes, but mainly pedestrian and bike improvements. They will include signal timing adjustments but are not meant to address LOS or to reconfigure the intersection.
- Can we add a left-turn only light (for N/S traffic) at five points?
 - Striping and timing have been looked at but the current design is how it works best given the existing roadway.
- Are there other open areas of the stream?
 - At the intersection with Nellie Custis and Lorcum.

- Any discussion at BLPC of whether or not Phase 2 will actually happen?
 - This will be discussed at the School Board in August. It's conceivable but APS staff is reluctant to give up the potential for future expansion here. BLPC conversation was about making sure we show Phase 2 on the design.
- Was 22nd Street N considered as a potential access point?
 - This option is unbuildable due to the terrain.
- C2/C3 are “green” but don't appear to provide good circulation for students
 - C3 is better (within the building) for students according to APS
- Flip Phase 1 and Phase 2 (A2/C2) so you don't eat up open space or cover the historic part of the building.
 - Gym is proposed in that space. The addition would have to go further into park space. Each phase has different features; Phase 1 has more classrooms space and windows are desired for both sides. APS would have to update kitchen/cafeteria with the increase to 1300 students.
- HALRB wasn't supportive of any of the schemes proposed, especially C3, which obscures view of the building. The C2 option allows you to see the building, especially from Old Dominion, but it changes its relationship to the landscape.
 - APS emphasized the needs of students and staff with regard to having good function inside the building and getting around efficiently.
 - APS feels these schemes do compliment the historic elements.
 - C3 courtyard enclosure option creates an atrium which could be the heart of the school, with both the administration and media center there. APS wants to celebrate moving forward, this is no longer a segregated school.
- Does HALRB want original face restored?
 - The glass block is already there. HALRB doesn't address the building interior. If we were only discussing the building, some schemes might work. But we have an important historic event that occurred here at the back of the building.
 - Staff not in total agreement that building was intended to enclose the rear landscape. Original design was to embrace the landscape. Building had academic wing in middle with two areas at the ends.
- Is HALRB saying no addition should be made here?
 - No, no one is saying it can't work programmatically.
- Is it important to have a loop? How much time does it take for students to walk from one end to another?
 - Students have a long way to walk either way, in a loop or in one direction. There is a desire to make it as efficient as possible.
- What about internal programming and mitigations?
 - Can happen but may limit future adaptability.
- APS, with the Wilson School, has decided it won't make it larger when it could be bigger on that site, but may be constraining other sides with more issues and less flexibility.

Traffic Data and Analysis

Toole Design Group (TDG) presented an update on transportation options, an analysis of the Old Dominion access driveway options, and future parking estimates. TDG indicated that a signal is warranted for Old Dominion for some movements, but not for in-only access. There are 60% more cars in the morning than the afternoon, which is more comparable to the Swanson school

than Williamsburg given the number of students in the ½ mile and 1 mile radius. The TDM scenario assumes a 5% reduction in driving to the site (87%). Approximately 14 parking spaces would be provided on the neighborhood streets for visitors.

PFRC Comments/Questions:

- Concern about too much being done to accommodate parents driving to school.
- Also concern expressed about parking in front of people's homes
- Concern that "A" option will be chosen because it's cheapest and easiest
- Why doesn't the County want Old Dominion?
 - Environmental impacts of grading the hillside and stormwater management
 - Issues with having a sloped road in inclement weather
 - Old Dominion can be supported, for an exit-only option
- Can't do a straw poll without a fully articulated option A; concept is going to School Board in September.

Requests for additional information:

- Clearly delineate, by the use of colors, the original school building and the later additions
- Include the limits of the RPA on all exhibits in the future
- Please explore an "A" scheme that doesn't disturb RPA, respects back of building, and puts massing on west side.
 - APS will be looking at an A option and show what the impacts are
- Propose alternate scheme on Vacation Land in AM/PM peak for no parking

Public Comment

- Hope to come up with a transportation "win". Parents aren't going to want to come through the area, they want remote drop-offs. We need to talk about changing behavior.
- Other creative solutions exist with regard to historic elements.
- Concern about vehicular/pedestrian conflicts.
- 23rd and Vacation is a log jam now without a lot of students; worry about extra traffic.

Next Steps

The next PFRC meeting is scheduled for September 17th. Staff and the PFRC chair will see if they can try and fit in another meeting before APS has to take concept design to SB. Meeting adjourned at 10pm.