

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Joint School Board/County Board Work Session
October 17, 2017

Item C-1-a

The Arlington School Board convened on Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 7:03 PM at 1644 N. McKinley Road, Arlington, VA.

Present were:

School Board

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Reid Goldstein, Vice Chair
James Lander, Member
Tannia Talento, Member
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Dr. Patrick K. Murphy, Superintendent
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

County Board

Jay Fisette, Chairman
Katie Cristol, Vice Chair
Christian Dorsey, Member
Libby Garvey, Member
John Vihstadt, Member
Mark Schwartz, County Manager
Hope Halleck, Clerk

Also present were:

John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Linda Erdos, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Ben Burgin, Assistant Director, Design and Construction
Samia Byrd, Assistant County Manager

1. Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Kanninen called the meeting to order. She welcomed the opportunity to discuss plans for an elementary school at the Reed site with the County Board and to hear the after action report on the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) and Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) process for Fleet Elementary School.

2. County After Action Report/Discussion of Fleet Elementary School BLPC/PFRC Process

Ms. Byrd summarized processes followed to identify the site for Fleet Elementary School, including the work of the Thomas Jefferson Working Group, the South Arlington Working Group, and the joint BLPC/PFRC effort. She reviewed pre-planning efforts that resulted in a more manageable selection process and allowed a focus on transit oriented issues. She also highlighted benefits of the joint process, such as support from the leadership team in planning the work of the two groups. Information posted on both the County and School websites resulted in stronger communications, and other benefits of the joint process included less duplication of efforts resulting in efficiencies. Ms. Byrd confirmed the draft report will be finalized and shared with the community in the near future.

As County liaison to this effort, Ms. Cristol appreciated the opportunity to work together, to identify issues of mutual concern, and to develop common expectations. Dr. Kanninen, the APS liaison, appreciated the work of committee chairs. Ms. Cristol suggested that the Joint Facilities Advisory Commission (JFAC) could continue this practice for future projects. Board

members recognized the overlapping responsibilities of the BLPC and PFRC, and the group discussed combining them into one committee. Most Board members agreed that because there are distinct charges, interests and needs for each group, they did not support merging the two. In closing, the Boards thanked the committees and staff.

3. New Elementary School at Reed Site

Mr. Burgin explained that a neighborhood elementary school at the Reed site was approved in the APS 2016-2025 Capital Improvement Plan. He described the current Reed Building structure and functions, noting it houses the Westover Library and the Children's School and Integration Station programs. He explained that as the school facility is developed, the library will remain open while the other programs will move to a new location in July 2018. Reed will then be used to house the Stratford Program until it's new facility opens in September 2019. Mr. Burgin described the neighborhood, history and features of Reed, and reviewed actions taken to date, confirming a coordinated BLPC/PFRC process will be implemented. After describing the membership and charges to the BLPC and the PFRC, he reviewed key project milestones including the opening date of September 2021. After presenting sustainability goals and considerations, Mr. Burgin highlighted the public engagement plan for the process.

As County Board liaison to Reed, Mr. Vihstadt appreciated community support and recognized the need to minimize disruption of the neighborhood. Noting several factors affecting the community, some Board members encouraged staff to focus on traffic and construction concerns as the project moves forward. The group also discussed aspects of the project timeline, and the County Board encouraged the PFRC to focus on minimizing costs. Mr. Fisette appreciated the emphasis on sustainability and future adaptability at the site. Staff provided information about the size of the current building, and confirmed that parking will be included in the current budget. In closing, the Boards thanked the members of the BLPC and PFRC.

4. Career Center Project Planning

Dr. Kanninen recognized the work of the Joint Facilities Advisory Council (JFAC) and the APS Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC) in developing a draft charge for the Career Center Project. Mr. Fisette also appreciated this work, noting that it focuses on a large site and will involve phased development. Ginger Brown, Chair, JFAC, and Stacy Snyder, Chair, FAC, then explained how the draft charge was developed with input from the committees. Ms. Brown outlined information that the two groups reviewed, including consideration of the School Board Motion from June 2017 approving the addition of 700-800 seats at the site and other data on capacity at the site. She confirmed that the plan is for all existing programs to remain at the site through the initial phase of development. Ms. Snyder spoke to long-range planning for the site, and confirmed that the committees support long-range planning for future projects as well. After reviewing elements of phased development, Ms. Brown shared highlights of the charge including the underlying goals as well as site specific goals. Ms. Snyder then outlined elements of the charge for 2022 and beyond, including site specific considerations of using this location for a 4th high school. Facility specific goals, capacity phasing goals and transportation and parking goals were also highlighted. Ms. Brown then reviewed the study area description, noting that there is space between the Career Center and Columbia Pike that the JFAC and FAC felt should be included in the site considerations.

Dr. Kanninen thanked Ms. Brown and Ms. Snyder and asked the Board members to provide feedback on the draft charge. Ms. Van Doren commented on the strong programs currently housed in the Career Center and Dr. Murphy confirmed these programs will be maintained and strengthened as this process moves forward. Ms. Van Doren supported using this new approach on any site being considered as it will help inform and strengthen future decisions of both Boards. She also stressed that APS will need to add 800 seats at this site, and she commented on the importance of keeping an awareness of cost throughout planning processes.

Mr. Lander reviewed FAC discussions of this project, including the importance of considering functionality of facilities. He recognized that families make decisions about where to send their students based on functionality, and encouraged the Boards to remember that possible program moves will affect families. Ms. Snyder confirmed that the FAC keeps in mind the broader focus of effects on all of APS as they look at specific projects. Ms. Brown also recognized the importance of designing flexible facilities with space that can be adapted as needs change. Mr. Lander appreciated this input and encouraged the group to include functionality in the charge. Ms. Talento noted transportation needs of students attending the Career Center to travel to jobs or internships. Noting the variety of instructional programs housed there, she also encouraged involving students in planning for the site.

Ms. Cristol suggested adding an instructional component to the Career Center planning group, however recognized the importance of a manageably-sized committee. She and Mr. Dorsey were cautious about including a possible move of the library in the charge, and encouraged exploring the option of maintaining the library as a joint use facility at the site. Mr. Dorsey also suggested including County's Economic Development Office in discussions, and encouraged ongoing communication with the County as the process moves forward. Mr. Vihstadt appreciated the draft charge and agreed with considering how development might support and strengthen the neighborhood. Ms. Garvey agreed with the need to keep a focus on costs, and also on ensuring the committee is a manageable size. She was very supportive of this collaborative approach and encouraged continued joint efforts. Mr. Fisette also appreciated the focused, phased approach and asked for a bit more clarity on how the process will move from phase to phase. He agreed that continued work is needed on how to address the library in the charge. He then reviewed the timeline and next steps to reach a consensus on the charge.

Ms. Van Doren spoke to the County and Schools' collaborative effort to maximize the use of alternative transportation for the Career Center site. Mr. Goldstein appreciated the work that has been done, and encouraged more collaboration between APS and the County planning staff. Dr. Kanninen confirmed that consideration of the instructional focus will be a large part of the APS process as planning moves forward, and she reiterated the Board's belief in the great programs at that site. She agreed that discussion should continue on looking at keeping the library at the site, and recognized that this facility may well include joint use and both entities would support the plans. Mr. Lander also encouraged considering some additional representation on the planning group of stakeholders who live south of Route 395.

5. Closing Comments/Adjournment

Ms. Stengle then briefly described community engagement opportunities for this process and reviewed key points from the discussion. These included plans for County and School staff to clarify aspects of the charge, including the focus on 800 seats, estimating costs, and a process to consider instructional focus at the site. Also, the Boards supported encouraging the use of public transportation, integrating the library into the site and considering joint opportunities there, and looking at membership to ensure it includes all affected communities.

Dr. Kanninen thanked Ms. Stengle for her support as well as all staff and the Board members for the robust discussion.

The meeting adjourned 9:06 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Barbara Kanninen, Chair
Arlington School Board