

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SCHOOL FACILITIES AND CAPITAL PROGRAMS
MEETING MINUTES
May 10, 2021 – 6:30 PM
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

In Attendance: Barbara Kanninen, Gregory Marcus, Jeff Chambers, Michael DePalma, James Meikle, Lisa Stengle, Sarah Johnson, Mike Freda, Heather Carkuff Joson, Rosa Cheney, John (Chair) Giambalvo, David Goodman, Charles Goyette, Cynthia Hilton, Sally Hoekstra, Steven Leutner, Colleen (Vice Chair) Pickford, Adam Rasmussen, Stacy Snyder, Greg Lloyd, Dede Curteman (BAC Liaison)

1. Minutes from the April 12, 2021 meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment: No non-FAC community members were in attendance.

3. John Giambalvo's Discussion: John has two months left as Chair of FAC. Please learn about SB candidates and participate in upcoming caucus. The upcoming joint FAC/JFAC virtual meeting will be on May 19th, from 7-9 pm. John is grateful that we live in such a wonderful community, but disheartened by growing anger exhibited by some citizens in school and community issues and conversations.

4. Welcome Marcus Gregory: Mr. Gregory was happy to join the FAC meeting this evening. He stated it was great to be a part of the crew, and thanked everyone for welcoming him as part of the team.

5. Liaison Updates:

Adam Rasmussen, ACTC: There have been some problems recording meetings and making the recordings available; you can now access YouTube recordings from the committee website. Bus loads are being increased from 11 to 21, and some changes are being made to certain routes. John G. asked if there are enough qualified bus drivers – Adam will ask at the next meeting. Special routes are being added for SOLs and in preparation for summer school. Transportation staff expect to be back to normal in the fall. With school moves and the opening of Cardinal, staff are working with the administrators at each school to determine their transportation needs. At Carlin Springs ES and Campbell ES, some infrastructure upgrades are needed to making walking safer – temporary traffic modifications have gotten some negative feedback. Roadwork is

planned near Walter Reed and the Career Center – Phase 1 includes work between Rt 50 and 5th St S; Phase 2 includes protected bike lanes between 5th St S and Columbia Pike.

Cynthia Hilton, Aquatics Committee: Committee members are concerned about plans for the Career Center not having a place holder for a pool. Heather asked about schools being able to use the new County Aquatics Facility – possible obstacles are the distance from the Career Center site, and the needed bussing. Adam asked if there is a pool placed at the Career Center site, what do we lose? Rosa asked whether the opening of the Aquatics Center would move community member use out of school pools, possibly allowing for more student/school usage.

6. Return to In-person Instruction SY21-22, presented by Michael DePalma: School capacity based on distancing is being adjusted to 3 feet. Occupancy – max number of students based on square footage. Capacity is similar, but also takes into account educational guidelines (ie: max number of kids allowed in a K class). APS gives schools baseline capacity numbers; admins need to come back with actuals. Classroom layouts are wildly different across APS. Cafeteria spaces provide special challenges – 6 ft distancing in cafeteria seriously reduces the total capacity. Music classrooms with large student numbers also presents challenges. It's possible distancing requirements may be lifted before fall. Decisions about whether instruction is altered are made by the Dept of Teaching and Learning.

7. Capital Improvement Plan Update, Stengle & Chambers:

AND

8. Career Center Discussion, Stengle & Chambers:

Items 7 & 8 – The two presentations were combined to allow for more conversation. The 1-year CIP from last year will move forward. The current CIP will be for 3 years, but it needs to be flexible and have funding that goes beyond 3 years.

Career Center plans: There is the possibility of relocating Arlington Community HS. The current proposal for the site includes a large field and green space, new ACC Bldg, the current ACC building, play space, and parking. Staff is reevaluating some aspects of the ed specs, to figure what is required for the programs in those buildings. Jeff Chambers went over next steps, including taking down the Fenwick Bldg, and moving the Montessori play space to the fields. (see Next Steps chart below.) No definitive budget estimates were provided for the project.

Click to pan around the document

Next Steps – Career Center Campus

Schools/Programs	May-21	Construction			Upon Completion
		Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	
Arlington Career Center	In ACC building	In ACC building	In NEW ACC building in central location on site.	In NEW ACC building in central location on site.	
Montessori Public School of Arlington	In MPSA building	In MPSA building	In MPSA building; Existing ACC undergoing renovation.	In 2021 ACC building	
Arlington Community High School	In Fenwick building	Relocated to another location; Fenwick demolished during Phase I.			
Fields and Green Space	Corner of 7th St S & Walter Reed Dr	Not available; MPSA playground relocated to existing ballfield.		Not available; Existing MPSA demolished; new field and green space under construction.	7th St S from Walter Reed to Highland
Parking Lot on Premises	In central location on site	Temporary surface lot on corner of 7th St S & Walter Reed Dr	Temporary surface lot on corner of 7th St S & Walter Reed Dr	Above ground parking garage on 9th St S	

Kitchen renovations needed at 8 school: Ashlawn, Barrett, Campbell, Carlin Springs, Drew, Randolph, Science Focus, and Swanson. Providing nutritious meals requires more prep than the current “serving kitchens” currently have.

Entry vestibules upgrades needed at 10 locations: Campbell, Hoffman Boston, Jamestown, Kenmore, Langston, Long Branch, Nottingham, Science Focus, Swanson, and Tuckahoe. Timing established by priority order provided by Safety, Security, Risk and Emergency Management staff. In schools that need both vestibule and kitchen upgrades, work will happen concurrently.

HVAC upgrades are planned at 19 facilities: includes increasing ventilation and filtration to achieve MERV-13. Some systems. More details are included in Jeff’s presentation.

The Heights: Providing accessibility and covered walkway for Shriver program, and short-term parking. Option A (staff recommendation) comprehensively addresses short-term parking, on-site accessible parking, on-site parent pick-up/drop-off, covered accessible entrance, and field space needs.

Turf Fields: Will be funded only if the County moves forward with the joint effort. This work cannot be funded with bonds.

Projections: Career Center – Lisa Stengle went over the various proposals for the Career Center and proposed new seats for HS, MS and ES, though the need is currently not for ES seats. Career Center vision was for HS seats, but planning now could include MS seats which will be feeders to Arlington Tech. Virtual schooling could reduce the need for in-person seats, but APS does not want to estimate and count on this yet before seeing

what the demand is for virtual over the next few years. Lisa also shared the timeline for meetings and working groups over the upcoming weeks and months.

John G. recognized the quick timeline here for making a decision concerning millions of dollars, and hoped that the process can be lengthened in the future. He is also concerned, with the current environment and budget deficits, that this Career Center project could be seen as tone deaf by the community. Could there be federal covid funding to deal with some of our project needs (like HVAC)? Jeff said staff is only counting on the funds we know we have, and not possible future funds.

In the conversation that followed, various committee members shared their thoughts and questions:

Rosa thought this version of the plan is closer to a highest and best use of the land than the previous plan. She also stated that APS core values – specifically stewardship, for FAC – should be measurable. How do we set priorities? How do we measure success or failure? What criteria is used to determine priority for things like kitchen upgrades and HVAC, for instance? How do we know if a certain plan or project is the best use of our funding?

Cynthia asked if there could be consideration for moving around some of the buildings in the current proposed layout? Jeff responded that this is not an actual design; that is being worked on. The graphic simply shows the footprint for a similarly-sized building in Falls Church. Many possibilities exist. Staff want to build a new building without disrupting other programs on the site.

Stacy suggested adding clarification to the layout slide to indicate this is not the final design. She agreed with John's worry that this is only a 3-year CIP. She liked the particulars of the Career Center project, but was worried about unknown future projections and budget capacity. What is the cost of relocating Arlington Community HS? On top of other projects, will we have enough funds for this project and meet the needs of the county?

Adam asked about the fields – when will the current ball field taken out, and what was the timeline for construction of new field? Jeff didn't have specifics – a new field likely wouldn't be completed for about 3 years. If SB proceeds with the project, the design process will take at least a year. Concept design would come first.

Chip agreed that the process in future needs to allow for more input from FAC and similar advisory committees. He thought other options would be looked at for adding HS seats, like adding student seats at The Heights. He's not sure that some of the recent decisions are in the best interests of all APS students.

John G. asked whether the SB or APS realistically looked at additional options to add seats? Lisa responded that the Ed Center would have flexible seats, and that the SB feels like a lot has already been invested in the Career Center.

Steve echoed previous comments about wanting FAC to have greater input in this process. He also thought other options across the county should be assessed or reassessed, including Kenmore, VA Hosp Center site, etc. He suggested postponing the parking and other projects at The Heights. He would also like to accelerate kitchen upgrades, since the schools involved often have higher FRL rates.

Chip commented that he would like to see a cost breakdown, especially regarding transportation for the CC project. The Career Center site is very walkable – why not a neighborhood campus?

Rosa pointed out that all comments seem to point back to the ability to measure whether a particular plan or project is worth the dollars and meets current and future needs.

David was also concerned about costs, especially transportation. He stated a self-professed bias for neighborhood schools. He admitted that they don't often improve equity issues, but do help with neighborhood feel. Are inertia and nostalgia the reasons some choice programs continue?

Stacy stated that we need to think about full project costs. Could there be structural ways and ideas to better use the facilities we have, like adding more student seats to the Heights?

Jeff stated that the current study is looking at all the costs for this project.

John G. wondered if Career Center site could house both a Tech Ed Center and a neighborhood school?

John G's main points after the discussion:

- 1. The CIP process and advisory council involvement need to be lengthened and improved to allow FAC to fulfill its purpose of providing thorough, thoughtful, and educated feedback.**
- 2. The FAC and the community need more transparency about costs involved in option schools compared to neighborhood schools.**
- 3. He is not comfortable with the FAC fully endorsing the Career Center project. There are equity issues between schools in the north and south parts of the county. He thinks the project may be a good, creative idea, but feels there are more pressing issues within APS, and that the FAC has not been given sufficient time and information to support.**