

MCPS BURNT MILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



MEETING NOTES – 03 Project #20042

Meeting Date: July 29th, 2020
Time: 6:30pm
Location: Virtual Meeting

Issue/Revision Date: July 31,2020

Purpose: Work Session #1

ATTENDEES:

Seth Feriano	MCPS
Dennis Cross	MCPS
DJ Connelly	MCPS
Rosa Perez	MCPS
Stacy Ashton	Burnt Mills ES
Troy Clarke	Burnt Mills ES
Michael Miehl	Burnt Mills ES
Carrie Grundmayer	Burnt Mills ES
Patti Carey	Burnt Mills ES
Ebony Contreras	Burnt Mills ES
Amina Saleh	Burnt Mills ES
Chris Graves	Burnt Mills ES
Cathy Stewart	Burnt Mills ES/ Dumont Oaks Homeowner
Keishana Myrie	Burnt Mills ES
Ray Mensah	Burnt Mills ES
Rozana Miehl	Burnt Mills ES
Dale Leidich	MTFA
Meagan Jancy	MTFA
Braden Field	MTFA
Elizabeth Parry	MTFA
Shawn Benjaminson	Adtek Engineers
Mike Fahrner	Adtek Engineers
Jillian Storms	Maryland State Dept Education
Dan Wallace	Burnt Mills Citizen Association

DISCUSSION:

1. Project Team

- A. Representatives from MCPS Design and Construction were introduced with their respective roles
- B. The project design team from MTFA Architecture and Adtek Engineering were introduced with their respective roles.
- C. Dr. Ashton, Principal of Burnt Mills Elementary School introduced herself.

2. Presentation

- A. The design team walked the community through the existing site and noted aspects of the existing conditions that will factor into the design solution we are developing.
 - 1. Lack of sidewalks located on Northwest Drive limit walkability
 - 2. Cars, buses, and service vehicles all use the same entrance causing congestion
 - 3. Insufficient parking to accommodate school/community events, which often causes overflow onto neighborhood streets
 - 4. Main entry lacks a sense of identity toward the neighborhood
 - 5. Proximity of car drop-off to the main entrance
 - 6. Steep topography creates accessibility issues on the NW side of the site

- B. The design team reviewed the feedback it received through discussions with teachers and the leadership team of Burnt Mills, which summarized their vision for the school:
 - 1. Represent and serve the community
 - 2. Support family outreach and community events
 - 3. Be welcoming and comfortable
 - 4. Provide abundant daylight and views
 - 5. Opportunities for green spaces and outdoor classrooms
 - 6. Provide flexible collaboration spaces
 - 7. Address safety and security issues
 - 8. Provide adequate storage
 - 9. Be arranged to minimize noise and disruptions

- C. The design team presented three different concept design diagrams expressing possible organizational strategies for the new building program and the site:
 - 1. All options show two separate entrances to address traffic congestion. Buses would come from Childs Street, and cars would enter from Prelude Drive.
 - 2. All options show the "Main Entry" located adjacent to the admin area to address security and site visibility.
 - 3. All options show a secondary entrance and a vestibule entrance for the gym for community access.
 - 4. All options have a buffer between larger spaces such as the multi-purpose and gym and classrooms to mitigate noise issues.
 - 5. All options have a direct connection with PEP classrooms and outdoor play spaces
 - 6. All options provide options for outdoor learning spaces either in courtyards or between buildings.
 - 7. All options try to capture the media center as a focal point or "hub" for the school and community.
 - 8. All options involve a two-story building on the site.

3. MTFA facilitated a question and answer discussion with the online forum

Q1. Michael Miehl presented a wish list for the school including:

Mindfulness room, Water fountains w/ water bottle fillers (and filters), More bathrooms, Lockers (would be nice), Dedicated music rehearsal room, Playground right next to cafeteria, Keep greenspace / field (2-3 story building?), Big enough so we won't need portables, Prelude entrance for buses/cars (HIGH priority for neighborhood), 3 playgrounds: 1 pre-K, 1 grades 1-2, another for grades 3-5 and accessibility for nurse, and SAFE playground equipment, An actual foyer / welcome room, Elevator (ADA compliance), PTA closet (and workspace - would be nice!), Large health suite, Horizon dedicated room/space, Natural lighting, Gardens, More classrooms for Immersion, Better staff lounge.

A1. MCPS responded with a general walkthrough of the Educational Specification and noted that it covers many of the comments on Michael's "wish list". MCPS also noted that being a title one school, they will be provided with a lot of extra support spaces that the school will be able to use as they wish, such as the mindfulness room.

Q2. Jessica asked if the current plans were developed BEFORE the advent of COVID-19.

A2. It was noted that the schemes are being worked through currently with the present education specification guidelines from MCPS. MCPS noted that they are still looking into the design of future schools and the impact of the pandemic.

Q3. From Dan Wallace; The general transportation scheme, i.e. buses off of Childs Street and cars entering at Prelude Drive, does not address the community's opposition to buses traveling through the neighborhood. The community prefers access from Child Street to be pedestrian access only, while all bus and automobiles should come off of Prelude.

A3. The design team explained the reasoning behind choosing Prelude Drive for cars and Childs Street for buses.

- i. Prelude is able to handle higher volumes of traffic than Childs Street
- ii. There are potential safety issues with the steep topography at the north side of the site; cars will be able to handle this better than buses
- iii. MC DOT has voiced concerns of locating all access off due to anticipated congestion and queuing backups, preferring car access off of Prelude Drive and bus access off of Childs Street
- iv. Northwest Drive currently has no sidewalks, which creates safety concerns that access from Prelude Drive can help address
- v. It was noted that a traffic study is will be conducted and it will inform the access locations and final decisions related to access design

Q4. From Jillian Storms; Assume with the separate vehicular entries that there is no means to create a scheme is where the Administration Suite has "eyes on" both the bus loop and visitor parking?

A4. The design team noted that this is a priority for safety and will explore the adjacency of main and secondary entrances.

Q5. From Carrie: In the courtyard option - does the counseling space have windows or is it an inner room?

- A5.** The design team reiterated that these are simply diagrams, the actual design will try to maximize natural light for as many spaces as possible.
- Q6.** From Amina Saleh; So does this mean there will be 2 floors with multipurpose and Cafeteria being on the lower level and classes upper level
- A6.** The design team noted that the multipurpose and gym would be double height spaces and the idea is to stack classrooms, keeping kindergarten and PEP classrooms on the lower level and higher grades up on second floor.
- Q7.** From Cathy Stewart; Will there be space accommodation for before and after-school care (currently offered)
- A7.** The design team noted that there is space for this in the program
- Q8.** From Patti: Will the health room be included in the administration suite? And, will the health room be large enough to accommodate 3-4 beds, treatment room and an office for the Nurse, as well as desk space for the Health Tech?
- A8.** Yes, the health suite will be adjacent to the administrative suite and will accommodate the number of beds required by the educational specification, which will be in the range noted.
- Q9.** From Michael Miehl; High priority is to have playground and APR (cafeteria) close together to minimize time to walk there. The “hinge” model seems to allow more open spaces to permit playgrounds near the all-purpose room. “Future expansion” was mentioned with respect to the side entry model. I assume this means physical construction, not portables? Also, is there a way to make the school sufficiently big enough to avoid the need for an expansion in the first place?
- A9.** The design team noted the priority to have an adjacency between the APR room and playgrounds. The future expansion does mean physical construction, and the building will be built to the 739 core capacity to allow possible future growth in the student population and possibly building expansion in the future.
- Q10.** From Jillian Storms; Is there a need during certain after-hour activities where the bus drop-off area will be needed for parent/community parking as well?
- A10.** This directive for design would come from MCPS, but the design team noted that there are ways to use different colors to address parking within a bus loop and accommodate additional parking.
- Q11.** From Dan Wallace; MC Parks and Planning intends to add sidewalks on Childs Street. The small number of buses mentioned can be as many as 15-17 per day due to the Spanish Language Program. Add to those buses from middle schools and high schools, and you have many traveling regularly through the neighborhood. If there is still a child care facility in the new school, cars will travel through the community in great numbers.
- A11.** The design team stated that although buses are not small, they will represent less vehicle traffic than cars if cars accessed off of Childs Street. This was one of the observations and discussion points with MC DOT and resulted in a preference for car access off of Prelude Drive and bus access off of Childs Street.

Q12. From Ebony Contreras; She likes the idea of outdoor learning spaces and classrooms. She expressed a concern that additional health beds be provided with an increase in students. She also voiced concerns on how the interior classrooms will be designed and if the design will provide safety from active shooters and a safe space to hide.

A12. The design team reiterated confirmed they will design the health beds to the educational specification requirements, which will result in an increase over the current count. The design team and MCPS are focused on making security and safety a priority as we work through critical design solutions.

Q13. Would the First scheme have a secondary entrance off of the parking lot near the gym to provide after-hours access to that and the multi-purpose room so visitors don't travel through classroom wing? Otherwise, it looks like the 3rd scheme has the best relationship between the parking area and the after-hour facility uses.

A13. All options will provide a secondary access at gyms to accommodate community and after hour uses.

Q14. From Jillian Storms; How many seats will the Multipurpose room hold? Is there any school/community interest in having the gym connected to the multipurpose room when more seating area is needed on special occasions?

A14. BMES principal stated currently they have six lunch periods (one per grade level) due to limited space. The design team confirmed the multipurpose room will be larger than the current one and will be able to accommodate more occupants. The design team will work with MCPS to address the potential for a connection between the multipurpose room and the gymnasium.

Q15. In the event an ambulance has to be called to school, will there be a route for that purpose or will the bus route serve that function?

A15. Ambulances typically arrive at the front of the school where the address sign is located, but they would also have access to the bus loop as an additional rear access point.

Q16. From Dan Wallace; Commented on concerns of the parking lot being too large and asked if the bus loop could be used as overflow. He expressed the issue of having too much traffic going through the neighborhood as Burnt Mills is often busy.

A16. The design team answered that because the school will be larger and housing more programs they will need more parking for the support staff. Parking is based on the educational specification guidelines, staffing levels, and the proposed size and use of the school. It is likely that the bus loop can also be used as additional overflow/flexible parking during off-hours events.

Q17. From Mensahs; Regarding outdoor space, any ideas of a track?

A17. MCPS noted that tracks are typically provided at secondary level schools because they are part of the physical education curriculum.

Q18. From Ebony Contreras; Since we have so much tree area, maybe it would be nice to have a short nature walk trail instead of a track; it would connect with our mindfulness culture

A18. The design team noted they would take this suggestion under consideration and review with MCPS.

- 4. MTFA thanked everyone for attending and noted the next scheduled meeting. MTFA reminded everyone that the presentation and more information to follow along with the progress can found on the school's construction project website:**

1. <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/construction/project/burntmillses.aspx>

NEXT MEETING: Work Session #2 – meet with community on August 12th at 4:00pm to share project information updates, gather feedback, and review refined design concepts.

These notes represent a summary and the substance of discussions and decisions reached at the meeting. Please contact MTFA Architecture at once if additions or corrections should be made. Otherwise they will stand as an accurate record of the meeting.

Meeting Notes by: Dale Leidich and Elizabeth Parry

CC: File
Attendees

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