

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
**URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE ADVISORY PANEL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** June 27, 2019

**Meeting #20**

**Project:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Imitative – James Mosher

**Phase:** Discussion #2

**Location:**

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**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Gavin Meyers of Hughes Group Architects presented the project: Renovate existing ~ 68,000 SF building, add ~ 12,000 SF to accommodate 405 Pre-K and elementary school children on 2.8-acre site. Community meetings were held on March 26<sup>th</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup>.

Planned increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic; bus traffic will remain the same. Primary drop will be on Mosher – connection between Calverton and Mosher to coordinate pedestrian circulation between the two schools.

Site Design Goals: Improve impervious surface (asphalt), relatively flat site topography, with the lower portion at the North edge of the site, but a retaining wall will be removed, and site regraded. Northwest addition, greening, relocation of service, reorientation of parking, and add playground. Program and square footage of the addition has changed slightly. Focus on:

- Enhance pedestrian experience: improved striping at crosswalks, increase paved area for more gathering space.
- Service will be recessed back from the street (vs. sticking out toward street)
- Existing walkway along Wheeler will be removed – utilize existing circulation, but minimize “cow-paths” w/ landscaping to direct circulation and minimize through traffic
- Grove of trees in the courtyard for learning –extension of the school
- Site will feature two separate playgrounds for different ages; greening and softening of courtyard; sitting areas and boulders will be added
- Number of shade trees will be doubled to enhance edges of school site
- Main entrance on Mosher (more formal entry – paving is different and size of paved area increased)
- Secondary entry on Warwick, 1933 entry on Wheeler will become a garden – no access from interior of building
- Revised classroom layout is similar to previous – significant update in service area of the addition (reduced by ~ 6,000 SF due to budget concerns). Programmatic change in auditorium – will become “Café-torium” connected to kitchen areas

- New glazing throughout existing – new will blend with the existing; simplify and compliment – reference the 1933 and the 1955 building phases

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Panel asked clarifying questions regarding the site:

**Q:** Is the gate to the field still in place? **A:** Yes

**Q:** How does the service yard work now? **A:** *Dumpsters are positioned behind two gates for perpendicular entry for trucks, all deliveries will be received at loading dock. Will be encased with screening / ornamental fencing.*

**Q:** Is the playground fenced? **A:** *Line of fencing between playground areas and the grove of trees is required by school (?). Laurie feels playground should be open and accessible to community on the weekends – goal of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools is to integrate w/ community.*

**Q:** How does the garden on Wheeler connect up with the program on the interior of the building? **A:** *It is only a visible connection.*

### **Site:**

- Consider ratios for drop off vs. bus: more pedestrian and vehicular expected than busses (only 2 busses) – intent that most of the students will come from southwest, but don't forget the multi-family housing to the north
- Be careful with reference to forest when there is only one tree and other characterizations that are not part of the current design
- Site plan hasn't addressed the concerns raised at last meeting
  - Southwest corner could be addressed to better the connection of two entrances and establish a zone of arrival and connection between the two entries
  - Courtyard space and connection to the promenade/ballfield – now blocked by grove of trees
  - Think about edges and how site engages the community through drop off, pedestrian connections, etc. Where is the main entrance? Functionally the main is at the south, but pedestrians enter site at different locations – the [building] program should inform what is happening on the site.
  - Use landscape to enhance / reinforce entrances with an additive approach
  - West entrance is conflicted – entry door vs. egress fire stair. Can egress door occur at the same location of west entry?
  - Recommended that node at Riggs and Warwick should be enlarged
- Zone on Mosher has potential for connectivity between places
  - Opportunity for differentiating the front of the school (more formal), including ground plane

- In the back of the building, the play area is [now] one experience, the grove of trees is another. Reinforce spatial connection and recognition of the physical connectivity and continuum between the outdoor spaces and ball field
- Green space needs to be more amenable to little kids wanting to run and play – explore opportunity for a much more playful feel
- Idea of hierarchy between the two entries is not that they “look” different – continue additive approach
  - If there must be two different entries, move drop off area closer to front to help connect the two better (line of sight to primary entry) Use south and west for “arrival zone” and establish a system of entries connected through the landscape
  - Even if “secondary” entry on the west side is the primary entry for only 20% of students, it should be treated as an arrival point.
  - Within zone, use layers – all paths do not need to be paved, could be mulched
  - Maybe stormwater management plan becomes an educational element to integrate with entry experience and be used as a playful connection between the two entries.
- What part does the east side lawn play? Is it a garden that should be walked to? Ambiguous now – small secondary path with benches with a few plaques? Continuous grass is not helpful to circulation. Consider soft paths that allow for the space to be used.
- Service entry closer to the North Promenade is not ideal, driven mostly by the function of the building
  - Poses a major problem to idea of the North Promenade being the “Public Promenade”.
  - Can the dumpsters be moved closer to Warwick but use landscaping to screen? Reorganize the building program / reshape the volume to open the area up and provide more generous circulation and line of sight at the back of the building.
- Anything extending beyond regulating line of existing building (west side) should align with ramp
- Landscape can organize site in a meaningful way, restore connection
  - Be careful of paths that no one wants to take
  - Goal of spaces should be a transition, not a buffer (maintain lines of sight)
  - Promenade is now a throughway but should be a connector to the school
- Entry elevation and entry geometry is beginning to be playful – nice job

**Next Steps:**

Discussion only.

**Attending:**

Tyler Dumont – Maryland Stadium Authority

Emily Dean, Marianne Frampton – MK Consulting Engineers

Michael Norton, Hyunhjoon Choi – Norton Land Design

Christa Kerrigan, Gavin Meyers – Waldon Studio / Hughes Group Architects

Mr. Anthony, Mses. O'Neill, Ilieva – UDAAP Panel

Laurie Feinberg, Renata Southard\*, Chad Hayes, Jennifer Leonard – Planning