

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2 Site Selection Advisory Committee

Summary of Meeting of Wednesday, January 11, 2012

Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School Cafeteria
7:00 p.m. to 10:20 p.m.

Opening of Meeting

Site Selection Advisory Committee (SSAC) representatives and alternates were greeted and asked to check in and sign a confidentiality agreement that is necessary for the committee to operate, when necessary, in closed session in order to discuss candidate sites that are private property. This is consistent with requirements of the *Maryland Open Meetings Act*.

Forty-seven representatives were identified to participate on the SSAC. Present at the meeting were 43 representatives (or a designated alternate if the representative was not in attendance.) The SSAC was seated in an area set aside for representatives; the public was seated behind the representatives.

Mr. Bruce Crispell, director, Division of Long-range Planning, Department of Facilities Management, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) introduced Ms. Della Stolsworth, meeting facilitator, Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County (CRCMC). The CRCMC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing quality dispute prevention and resolution services to individuals and communities in Montgomery County. Ms. Stolsworth possesses extensive experience facilitating community group processes. Ms. Stolsworth's services are free, as are the services of two volunteers who provided assistance in scribing notes.

Ms. Stolsworth had all members of the SSAC introduce themselves and state their affiliation. Ms. Stolsworth then presented the agenda and provided ground rules for the process. Mr. Crispell described materials that were provided to each SSAC member. These materials included the following:

- A description of the site selection criteria that will be used to evaluate sites;
- A description of activities for each meeting;
- A description of the process that leads up to Board of Education action on a site;
- A copy of the November 8, 2012, memorandum from Dr. Joshua P. Starr, superintendent of schools, to the Board of Education, describing in detail how the site selection process would be conducted; and
- A map and a table listing the 25 publicly-owned candidate sites that have been identified for review.

An additional 13 privately-owned candidate sites have been identified. However, the committee did not receive these sites since there was insufficient time for review.

Mr. Crispell stated that the Site Selection Advisory Committee is not a decision making body. The SSAC is an advisory committee, providing input to Dr. Joshua P. Starr, superintendent of schools, so that Dr. Starr can make an informed recommendation to the Board of Education. Mr.

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Crispell also indicated that the SSAC report may include minority reports by any representative of the committee if they either disagree with the recommendations of the SSAC or if they wish to include information that they do not believe is adequately covered in the SSAC report. The SSAC report, along with any minority reports, will be transmitted to the superintendent of schools and to the Board of Education at the conclusion of the SSAC process.

It was noted that the total of 38 candidate sites to be reviewed by the committee includes the original 10 sites reviewed by the previous Site Selection Advisory Committee plus 28 additional sites proposed by representatives of the new committee. Every site that was proposed by any representative of the new SSAC was included in the list of sites to be considered.

Presentation of Publicly-owned Candidate Sites

Ms. MaryPat Wilson, real estate specialist, Real Estate Management Team, Department of Facilities Management, presented a Power Point presentation of candidate sites. The presentation began with general information regarding the site selection process and included projected enrollment information that results in the need for a new middle school in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) Cluster. The majority of the presentation consisted of aerial maps of each candidate site, with the characteristics of each site in terms of owner, location, size, access, topography, current use, assessed value, and any additional relevant comments. Ms. Wilson reviewed all of the 25 publicly-owned candidate sites.

Mr. Crispell presented a slide that provided a timeline for building a new middle school if it were to be built on the location of a currently operating elementary school in the B-CC Cluster. All seven of the operating B-CC Cluster elementary schools, and Westland Middle School, were submitted as sites to be evaluated by the committee.

An operating elementary school site might accommodate the new middle school if the elementary school were relocated to another site. The information Mr. Crispell presented showed that such an approach would delay the opening of a new middle school by at least two years beyond the requested opening in August 2017. This delay results from the need to conduct a site selection process for a replacement elementary school, followed by the planning and construction of the elementary school. The elementary school would need to move to the replacement location before the new middle school could be built on the former elementary school site. The earliest completion date for the elementary school would be August 2017, and the earliest completion date for the middle school would be August 2019.

In addition, Mr. Crispell stated that this approach would significantly add to capital costs, since both a new elementary school and a new middle school would have to be constructed. It also was noted that with the exception of Westbrook Elementary School, all the elementary school sites are less than 10 acres, and at Westbrook Elementary School a large portion of the 12.5 acres owned by the Board of Education is not usable since it is located in stream valleys.

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Mr. Michael Shpur, architect, Division of Construction, Department of Facilities Management, then presented a slide, providing information on the minimum acreage necessary to construct a middle school. The figures that Mr. Shpur discussed assumed a flat usable site with no trees and no stream buffers. Under these optimal conditions, the minimum acreage for the new middle school was determined to be 10.1 acres. This figure did not include building setbacks and other site specific issues that could result in more acreage being required.

Following the presentation of the information by Ms. Wilson, Mr. Crispell, and Mr. Shpur, the committee members voted on the following matters:

- A committee member recommended that a vote be taken to eliminate all of the existing elementary school sites as being unsuitable for further consideration. A vote was taken and 38 of the 43 SSAC members voted to eliminate the currently operating elementary schools; 5 members voted to continue their inclusion. Therefore, the 7 sites that are currently operating elementary schools were eliminated from further consideration.
- A second vote to eliminate all publicly-owned candidate sites outside the B-CC Cluster was recommended. Five of the 25 publicly-owned candidate sites are outside the B-CC Cluster, including the former Montgomery Hills Jr. High School, the Radnor Center, Tilden Middle School, the former Kensington Elementary School, and the Montgomery County Bus Lot. A vote was taken and 21 of the 43 SSAC members voted to eliminate these sites; 22 members voted to continue their inclusion. Therefore, the 5 publicly-owned candidate sites outside the B-CC Cluster continue to be under consideration.
- A third vote to eliminate publicly-owned candidate sites of less than the 10.1 minimum acres needed to construct the middle school was recommended. Five publicly-owned candidate sites, including Leland Local Park, the former Rollingwood Elementary School, the former Montgomery Hills Jr. High School, the Radnor Center, and the former Kensington Elementary School have fewer than 10.1 acres and were included in the vote. Thirty-six of the 43 SSAC members voted to eliminate these sites; 7 members voted to continue their inclusion. Therefore, the 5 publicly-owned candidate sites of less than 10.1 acres were eliminated from further consideration.

Following the votes described above, Ms. Stolsworth conducted a process whereby each of the remaining sites was discussed in terms of pros and cons. Ms. Stolsworth systematically asked each SSAC member to offer either a pro or a con for the site under review or a “pass” if the member had no comment or if their pro or con had already been stated. The process continued until no one had any further comment to offer. The pros and cons were recorded on flip charts and will be included in the final report of the committee.

During the discussion of the Tilden Middle School site on Old Georgetown Road—in the Walter Johnson Cluster—a recommendation to remove this site from consideration was made.

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- A fourth vote to eliminate the Tilden Middle School site on Old Georgetown Road from further consideration was taken. Tilden Middle School is outside the B-CC Cluster and it will be used in the future as a holding center for secondary schools undergoing modernization. (This will occur when the Tilden Middle School modernization is completed in August 2018 at the Tilden Lane location.) Thirty-two of the 43 SSAC members voted to eliminate this site; 11 members voted to continue its inclusion. Therefore, the Tilden Middle School site was eliminated from further consideration.

During the discussion of the Rays Meadow Local Park site it was noted that this land is adjacent to Rock Creek and is within the flood plain. Therefore, construction of a middle school at this location would not be allowed.

- A fifth vote was taken to eliminate the Rays Meadow Local Park from further consideration. This vote was unanimous with all 43 SSAC members voting to eliminate this site. Therefore, the Rays Meadow Local Park site was eliminated from further consideration.

During the discussion of pros and cons of each candidate site, a number of questions seeking additional information and clarification were raised. Representatives from MCPS, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), county executive agencies, and the County Council responded to these questions. In addition, representatives from the Parent Teacher Association, homeowners association, and municipalities with knowledge regarding a particular site provided information to the committee. A list of follow-up questions was maintained and staff from the various agencies on the SSAC will provide the requested follow-up information at the next meeting of the SSAC on January 25, 2012.

At the end of the SSAC meeting, time was set aside for members of the public attending the meeting to make comments. Ms. Stolsworth facilitated this comment period and several observers spoke. At the conclusion of the comment period, Ms. Stolsworth requested the SSAC members complete the feedback forms that were provided. The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

On the following page is the list of publicly-owned sites reviewed by the SSAC, including their acreage and indicating sites eliminated by the SSAC.

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Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2 - Public Candidate Sites			
			Committee Action
Number	Site	Acreage	Jan. 11, 2012
1	Rock Creek Hills LP	13.30	
2	North Chevy Chase LP	31.03	
3	Lynnbrook LP/ES	10.04	
4	Leland LP	3.71	Eliminated
5	Rollingwood ES	4.07	Eliminated
6	Rosemary Hills/Lyttonsville LP	17.10	
7	WSSC Lyttonsville	11.99	
8	Former Mont. Hills JHS	8.67	Eliminated
9	Grace Episcopal School	10.94	
10	Norwood LP	17.50	
11	Bethesda ES	8.42	Eliminated
12	Chevy Chase ES	3.78	Eliminated
13	North Chevy Chase ES	7.94	Eliminated
14	Radnor Center	9.03	Eliminated
15	Rock Creek Forest ES	7.95	Eliminated
16	Rosemary Hills ES	6.07	Eliminated
17	Somerset ES	3.71	Eliminated
18	Tilden MS	28.06	Eliminated
19	Westbrook ES	12.46	Eliminated
20	Westland MS	25.09	
21	Former Kensington ES	4.54	Eliminated
22	Rays Meadow LP	11.09	Eliminated
23	Meadowbrook LP	44.72	
24	Montgomery County Bus Lot	17.47	
25	SHA Property/I495 Intersection	7.60	