

**Enrollment/Forecasts Demographics Subcommittee Meeting
of the Long Range Educational Facilities Planning Work Group
Meeting #1
Nannie J. Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson Street
Monday, June 10, 2013, 6:30pm
Meeting Summary**

Meeting notes are recorded by City Staff to provide a written record of principal items of discussion, key comments, decisions of the Work Group, and comments from the public. They are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of the meeting.

Meeting Attendees

Subcommittee Members

Herb Berg
Ken Billingsley
Chris Hartman

Members not in attendance

Yvonne Folkerts
Justin Wilson

ACPS

Laurel Hammig

City of Alexandria

Karl Moritz
Steve Chozick
Pat Mann
Katherine Carraway

Community Members

James Durham
Ann Marie Hay
Megan Hay
Priscila Izar
Scott Newsham

Welcome and Introductions

Karl Moritz, Deputy Director for the Department of Planning and Zoning, welcomed attendees and invited members of the Enrollment/Forecasts Demographics Subcommittee (Subcommittee), Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), City of Alexandria (COA) and the public to introduce themselves.

Review the Role of the Subcommittee

Mr. Moritz gave an overview of the anticipated role of the Subcommittee as it relates to analytical work, review of findings, and reporting back to the Long-Range Educational Facilities Plan Work Group (Work Group) as a whole. Subcommittee members agreed to work to reach consensus on the best possible enrollment forecasts and report out to the Work Group on a quarterly basis.

Forecasting presentation

Mr. Moritz turned the meeting over to Pat Mann who presented staff's school enrollment forecasting history and projections to date.

Chris Hartman asked Mr. Mann if slide #8 was a good representation of the current percentage of children moving to Alexandria residences in the past. Subcommittee members discussed the elements and challenges facing the group in accurately forecasting enrollment. Ken Billingsley noted that looking at other indicators helps answer questions, i.e., looking at change in broad terms through 40-50 year history where underlying patterns of change are more apparent.

Mr. Hartman asked if staff anticipated an increase in the housing stock in Alexandria by 2040 and what need that might create. As it depends on a number of factors, i.e., the types of housing units, development size, new vs. existing construction, Mr. Moritz suggested that staff report back to the Subcommittee with estimates and findings.

Mr. Billingsley shared data indicating that the racial/ethnic composition of the region and schools is changing. He also noted that Arlington is becoming more affluent and that they are seeing an increase in public school enrollment. Mr. Moritz posed the question that if Alexandria becomes more affluent would it create a situation where parents are more likely to enroll their children in ACPS – to which Mr. Billingsley said he believed so. Staff agreed to report back to the Subcommittee with demographic trends and historical data for all neighborhood school divisions.

The Subcommittee discussed student-to-housing unit type ratio. Staff agreed to report back to the Subcommittee with more refined data concerning slide #24, Number of Units – which graphs the development forecast by residential unit type.

Discussion of Current Research Items

The Subcommittee discussed staff's community outreach strategy – created in an effort to gather more information concerning ACPS including reputation. As part of that strategy, staff is looking at talking with various stakeholders throughout the city including employers, real estate agents, and parents of school-age children.

Mr. Hartman suggested there was a correlation between school reputation and businesses – good schools are an asset for businesses when trying to attract potential employees. Mr. Hartman offered to contact fellow board members at Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP) to aid staff in organizing informational meetings with Alexandria businesses. Mr. Moritz shared that staff is planning to make a presentation to AEDP next month.

Discussion included the possibility of contacting private schools in Alexandria to determine their effect on ACPS enrollment. Herb Berg suggested looking into private K-5 schools and charter schools - and Laurel Hammig mentioned that it is also important for staff to look into area preschools.

James Durham echoed that investigating ACPS reputation is important, as well as looking at the larger regional trends that Mr. Billingsley mentioned to see how Alexandria compares. He also suggested organizing focus groups that compare Alexandria to Arlington and school reputations within and outside of ACPS; as well as determining which are the strong vs. weak indicators. Mr. Moritz said staff is including economic indicators as part of the research (e.g., home sales data).

Mr. Billingsley added that Alexandria historically has had the highest population turnover rate in the country, which suggests that there is also a high turnover rate among students in Alexandria schools – how does that affect school enrollment forecasts? Another community member, Megan Hay, asked the Subcommittee to address the issue of affordable housing and how it might impact school enrollment. Mr. Hartman asked if staff’s approach to some of this analysis will be on a school-by-school basis and Mr. Moritz confirmed that is the case. Staff will research these issues and include the information in a follow-up report to the Subcommittee.

Further discussion focused on the number of existing buildings currently owned by ACPS. Community member Ann Marie Hay asked for clarification on planned new construction or updates to existing facilities. Priscila Izar suggested the group look at using ACPS buildings for a variety of needs when/if school enrollment drops. Mr. Moritz noted that the Subcommittee and Work Group as a whole are looking at incorporating a plan for multipurpose buildings, and will reassess research findings and the level of need for new/updated schools on an annual basis.

Follow-up Issues

Ms. Hammig updated the group on the status of the A/E Consultant selection process and shared that ACPS is expecting to award the contract by the end of July. She also reminded members of the upcoming Work Group meeting on June 26th.

In addition to making a presentation to AEDP in July, Mr. Moritz shared that staff will also present to the Planning Commission in September. He asked the subcommittee for thoughts on the frequency of meetings and it was decided the Subcommittee will meet monthly.

Next Steps

- Staff will schedule a July meeting of the Subcommittee
- Staff will report back to the Subcommittee on the following issues:
 - Anticipated increase in the housing stock in Alexandria by 2040
 - Demographic trends and other analysis for school attendance areas (or similar geography)
 - More refined data concerning slide #24, Number of Units
 - High turnover rate among students in Alexandria schools – how does that affect school enrollment forecasts?
 - Affordable housing and how it might impact school enrollment

Meeting Handouts

Agenda

Expanded Agenda/Notes
LREFP Work Program, Outline and Schedule
Presentation