

## Long Range Educational Facilities Planning Work Group

### Meeting #3

City Hall – Room 2000

Monday, April 8, 2013, 5:30pm

### Meeting Summary

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*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**

##### LREFP Work Group Members

Ken Billingsley  
Bill Campbell (*Attending for Karen Graf*)  
Ronnie Campbell  
Mayor Euille  
Chris Hartman  
Dr. Tammy L. Mann  
Judy Noritake  
Julie Rocchio  
Justin Wilson

##### Members not in attendance

Herb Berg  
Debra Collins  
Mark Eisenhour  
Yvonne Folkerts  
Karen A. Graf  
Dr. Madye Henson  
Keith Jabati  
Dr. Morton Sherman

##### ACPS

Bill Finn  
Laurel Hammig

##### City of Alexandria

Karl Moritz  
Pat Mann  
Katherine Carraway  
Ron Kagawa

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Karl Moritz, Deputy Director for the Department of Planning and Zoning, welcomed attendees and invited members of the Long Range Educational Facilities Planning Work Group (Work Group), members of the public, and City of Alexandria (COA) staff to introduce themselves.

Mr. Moritz turned the presentation over to Ken Billingsley, work group member, Alexandria resident and Director of Demographics and Information Services for the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

## **Presentation: The Larger Context: What's Shaping Our Future?**

Mr. Billingsley reviewed some of the larger trends shaping the region that will have an impact on Alexandria's school enrollment in the future. He referenced a report published in 2006 prepared for ACPS by a firm specializing in developing enrollment projections. He noted that it is a solid piece of research, employing many state of the art techniques; however, its projections for Alexandria's school enrollment were incorrect, in part because it focused on internal factors without taking into account external factors that could affect the city and its population.

Mr. Billingsley thought it important to address this report with the work group to illustrate:

1. The difficulty in projecting into the future when past trends no longer may serve as a reliable guide to what may lie ahead;
2. The importance of looking outward as well as inward as to what may lie ahead. Annual enrollment increases are related as much to changes in broader regional and national trends as they are to specific internal issues; and
3. The necessity of broad-based analysis to understand and then incorporate into any projections.

Mr. Billingsley discussed the parallels between Alexandria and neighboring communities, especially Arlington, and noted that there are tremendous interconnections that we should understand so that moving forward we feel confident with what we ultimately project. There are structural transitions underway that are reshaping metro regions – physical changes in the form of new development as well as demographic transitions within the built environment we already have. Mr. Billingsley noted that there is every expectation that the healthy growth the city is currently projecting is going to occur because:

1. Growth in Northern VA is continuing at a pace exceeding anything in our history. During the last decade growth in Northern VA was greater than what has occurred in 35 states; and
2. There is an expectation of an intensification of developmental pressures in coming decades in close-in suburbs of Northern VA in response to changing demographics and market dynamics.

Mr. Billingsley noted that the last ten years is an historic decade in terms of movement of people and is leading to subtle changes in population composition, and that these changes will affect enrollment.

Mayor Euille agreed with Mr. Billingsley's comments that it is necessary to look at the bigger picture in terms of what's happening in and out of Alexandria. He noted that the research conducted in 2006 by DeJong (an educational research firm) and research performed by other consultants, along with the formation of this Work Group were all in an effort to gain as much information from as many different sources as possible in order to project credible enrollment trends. Mayor Euille referenced issues with the development of Cameron Station and school enrollment projections for that neighborhood, sharing that while it is impossible to be exact, projections need to be closer than in the past.

Ms. Noritake and Ms. Rocchio agreed and referenced the similarities with Potomac Yard and Beauregard development plans. Ms. Rocchio shared that in 2003, children living in Cameron Station were already being moved to Patrick Henry because of over enrollment at Samuel Tucker School, illustrating that the projections at the time were already outdated. She is concerned with how the city is addressing new development and school planning.

Mr. Hartman asked Mr. Billingsley to elaborate on the similarities between Alexandria and Arlington, referencing a graph showing that, during the 1990-2000 period, the students-per-1000-population for Arlington increased while Alexandria's did not – while after 2000, this figure for both jurisdictions grew at the same rate. Mr. Wilson also pointed to Alexandria and Arlington's kindergarten capture rate in the 1990s as exhibiting a similar pattern. The group discussed the effect of urbanization and Arlington's having metro stations earlier than Alexandria.

Ms. Noritake pointed out that Alexandria and Arlington now both have a highly connected and multimodal transportation network which is increasingly attractive to families.

Mayor Euille stated that Arlington built schools to address their enrollment challenges, but Alexandria didn't because at that time we had underutilized buildings. Now available capacity is fully utilized and the City is at the point where we need more classrooms.

Mr. Mann brought up the point that baby boomers are moving out of their homes and families with young children are moving in. This alone could account for an increase in enrollment.

### **Work Program and Schedule**

Mr. Moritz briefly reviewed the proposed work program and schedule and asked for comments on the proposed timeframes, additional issues that should be addressed, and any other guidance that will help ensure the process has the desired result. Mr. Moritz shared that the work program envisions the creation of smaller committees to explore issues in detail for reporting back to the main work group, and asked work group members to select the committee(s) on which they would like to serve.

The four proposed committees would focus on:

1. Enrollment Forecasts/Demographics
2. Facility Capacity Needs Analysis
3. Educational Specifications/School of the Future
4. Student Assignment

Mr. Moritz briefly reviewed the rationale behind the work program and schedule, pointing out that deliverables of each committee are tied to the quarterly Work Group meetings. Information gathered from each subgroup would be discussed at the larger meetings where all group members can comment and make suggestions.

### 1. Enrollment Forecasts/Demographics

Mr. Moritz asked for any suggestions/comments for improving the enrollment topic.

Mr. Hartman asked if staff could reach out to the real estate community to get some sense of the ages of buyers and sellers in Alexandria, in an effort to quantify anecdotal references to the baby-boomer generation moving out and young families moving in. Mayor Euille noted that the Northern Virginia Real Estate Association maintains that type of information.

Ms. Rocchio relayed that the Parent Teacher Association Council (PTAC) is grateful for information presented by this Work Group, but are concerned that inaccurate information is being communicated outside of the group – specifically that the group reportedly has agreed to certain facts that it, in fact, has not. Ms. Rocchio asked that the Work Group establish the ground rule that members do not communicate outside of the group that decisions have been made until issues are voted upon. She wants to avoid the assumption that attendance in the room implies that decisions have been made. Ms. Rocchio further shared that she appreciates having the work plan schedule as it shows a timeline with report-out dates that can be followed.

Mr. Moritz asked the group if they were in agreement with Ms. Rocchio’s suggestion. The group agreed.

Dr. Mann concurred that there is now a very deliberative, thoughtful and participatory process in place.

Mr. Wilson expressed concern about the length of the proposed schedule, and suggested that exit ramps are necessary for some of the data the group gathers. For example, if Council is voting on a 10-year CIP, it might not be able to wait for the information the group is gathering on a particular subject. Mr. Finn pointed out that the staff did accelerate the initial enrollment forecasting for that reason – to get the information to the City Council in time for this year’s budget. Mayor Euille noted that the short-term enrollment and capacity issues are fairly clear, but the analysis of the long-range issues shouldn’t be rushed.

Ms. Campbell suggested that the city require developers to assume the expense of a new school/rec center/adult center in their proposals.

### 2. Facility Capacity Needs Analysis

Mr. Moritz explained that the work program schedule proposes working with the consultant that ACPS hires – conduct work over the summer, check-in with the group in October, and present the final report in January.

Ms. Noritake asked if ‘non-classroom’ includes joint community facilities/rec fields, because the A&E Scope is very building focused and did not address recreational needs. Mr. Kagawa agreed that the A&E Scope of Work should include site programming and building in the review process, citing Jefferson-Houston as an example. Mr. Moritz noted that the language will be edited to reflect that issue.

Mr. Kagawa expressed the concern that the CIP process begins in the fall, but the proposed schedule shows the bulk of the work products being completed in January. Mr. Moritz shared that while accelerating certain milestones would have been helpful in some cases, it was not feasible. He noted, however, that there are off-ramps so that when certain phases of the work are completed the information can be used for near-term decision-making. Mr. Finn pointed out that in October there is a scheduled report-out that will include update enrollment figures and the school facility and site inventory, so information helpful to the budget process will be available in the fall.

Mr. Campbell asked what data the group uses at this point as it begins its work. Mr. Finn said the group starts from the enrollment forecast that was completed in January. Mr. Finn mentioned that a forecast was needed for this year's CIP process, so the group provided an analysis, while maintaining that further work and analysis would be required.

Ms. Rocchio shared her concern that the Work Group did not explicitly endorse one of the three trend lines presented in the January forecast. Mr. Finn and Ms. Noritake recalled that there was a general consensus among work group members on the trend line, even though a formal vote was not taken, while Mr. Wilson agreed with Ms. Rocchio. Mr. Moritz reiterated that staff will be clear when asking the Work Group to agree/disagree on an issue.

Mr. Wilson expressed support for an approach that will explore more than one scenario and Ms. Rocchio requested that it not be recorded that the group is going down one path.

Mayor Euille suggested that at the next joint City/School Board work session, a group representative provide a status update.

### 3. Educational Specifications/School of the Future

Ms. Hammig clarified that the educational specification subgroup will expand upon what was completed for the Jefferson-Houston process, which was to develop the Pre K – 8 Educational Specifications. The work group will develop models for Pre K – 5, middle-, and high-school, but will not recreate the work already completed in 2011.

Ms. Noritake asked if this work will include site considerations and not just architectural considerations and staff agreed that it would.

Mr. Campbell asked if information is captured to show what is available prior to Pre K for residents, including availability, cost, quality and numbers of children. He shares the concern that many children 0-4 years of age in the city are without services. Dr. Mann confirmed data exists and can be collected.

### 4. Student assignment

Mr. Moritz suggested that at the deliverable for this work element is a set of principles that would guide priorities for student assignment, such as ability to attend neighborhood schools, magnet school opportunities, etc.

Ms. Rocchio shared that PTAC is interested in being a part of the conversation on student assignment.

Mr. Wilson asked if this topic can be moved up on the work program schedule, because of impending decisions that will need to be made by City Council and the School Board. Dr. Mann noted that this topic is predicated on long-term perspective, and shouldn't be shifted.

Mr. Moritz suggested the group could do some preliminary work to determine if basic principles could be agreed upon.

Ms. Noritake suggested that certain issues need to be addressed when assigning children to schools, such as siblings, neighbors, issues with transportation, and the burden on parents who are already struggling to get their children to where they need to be. Ms. Campbell concurred and mentioned that the lack of transportation to schools for some families causes a lot of difficulty.

Ms. Rocchio shared her assumption that the School Board would focus on short-term decisions regarding student assignment, and the work group would focus on long-range issues.

Mr. Wilson questioned whether student assignment is an issue the Work Group should consider. Mr. Hartman agreed that this work group is a facilities planning group and should not focus on student assignment. However, Mr. Campbell suggested that growth trends impact student assignment.

Ms. Noritake mentioned that in terms of identifying potential school sites, the work group needs to address student assignment. If the school sites are not in an area where students live, a transportation issue exists.

### Next Steps

- Staff will email work group members requesting subgroup preferences and comments on the A&E Scope of Work
- A&E Scope of Work will be edited to clarify that 'non-classroom' includes site characteristics and joint community facilities/rec fields
- Staff will contact the NOVA Real Estate Association for information on home-buying families with children
- Student assignment will remain on the schedule in its current form pending further discussion
- The next meeting will be held in July, specific date/time tbd.

### Meeting Handouts

Agenda

LREFP Work Program Outline Draft

LREFP Work Program Schedule Draft

A&E Scope of Work to Support Long-Range Planning Effort

Consideration of New Development in School Enrollment Forecasting

Requests for Presentation on School Enrollment Trends