

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
SCHOOLS COMMITTEE/
FACILITIES PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2011**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Walter L. Alcorn, Commissioner At-Large
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District
Timothy J. Sargeant, Commissioner At-Large, Chairman

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District

OTHER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Jay P. Donahue, Dranesville District
James R. Hart, Commissioner At-Large
James T. Migliaccio, Lee District
Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield District

FACILITIES PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Karen Hogan, At-Large, Chairman
Daniel Aminoff, Mason District
J. Ernest Jutte, At-Large
Howard Perlstein, Hunter Mill District

FAIRFAX COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Denise James, Director of Facilities Planning Services, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)
Mary Ann Tsai, Planner, Department of Facilities and Transportation Services, FCPS
Chris Caperton, Chief, Public Facilities Branch, Planning Division (PD), Department of
Planning and Zoning (DPZ)
Sandi Beaulieu, Planner II, PD, DPZ
William Mayland, Staff Coordinator, Zoning Evaluation Division, DPZ
Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission (PC) Office
Dawn M. Ashbacher, Assistant Director, PC Office
Jeanette Nord, Deputy Clerk, PC Office

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jodi Bennett, Hunter Mill District resident

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Planning Commission Vice Chairman Walter L. Alcorn constituted the Schools Committee at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Conference Room of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035, pursuant to Section 4-102 of the Commission's *Bylaws & Procedures*. He indicated that the first order of business was to elect a Committee chairperson.

Commissioner Alcorn MOVED TO NOMINATE TIMOTHY J. SARGEANT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE 2011 SCHOOLS COMMITTEE.

Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Upon inquiry by Commissioner Murphy, Howard Perlstein, Hunter Mill District representative on the Facilities Planning Advisory Council (FPAC), explained that FPAC was an advisory council to the Fairfax County School Board.

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Denise James, Director of Facilities Planning Services, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), explained that Chris Caperton, Chief, Public Facilities Branch, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), had contacted her regarding updates to the Comprehensive Plan Map. She explained that while many of the existing school sites were on the current map, they were not reflected in the Area Plans text. She added that further discussion revealed recommendations to identify additional school-related facilities, such as bus parking lots and/or adult education space, for future Plan amendments.

Mr. Caperton noted that DPZ planned to bring the Comprehensive Plan amendments before the Planning Commission in the spring of 2012, adding that the school-related items would be addressed in follow-on actions. Sandi Beaulieu, Planner II, PD, DPZ, added that coordination would continue with FCPS and FPAC in their development.

In response to a question from Commissioner Murphy, Ms. James stated that a bus depot was space to park FCPS buses. During the ensuing discussion, Ms. James said that student enrollment had increased tremendously and it had become quite difficult to accommodate parking for the buses. When Commissioner Murphy asked decreasing the number of half-empty school buses on the roads, Ms. James explained that while the FCPS had identified the problem, it was difficult to address because the County needed to provide all students public transportation for school, whether they used it or not.

Chairman Sargeant, Commissioner Flanagan, and Ms. James continued the discussion on school bus parking, fueling sites, maintenance facilities, and future possibilities for consolidation of some of the sites and uses.

Commissioner Hart noted that the public hearings for the Comprehensive Plan Map had been deferred indefinitely, which allowed for the existing language to be strengthened. He suggested that staff submit any proposed amendments for FCPS prior to advertisement of the public hearings.

Answering a question from Chairman Sargeant, Barbara Lipka, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office, said that the proposed follow-on language would be prepared by March 2012.

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2232 PROCESS

Mr. Caperton said that he had reviewed the Policy Plan related to bond-approved school improvements, noting that staff had understood that once a bond item was approved, it became part of the Comprehensive Plan and would be treated as a “feature shown.” He explained, however, that Elizabeth Teare from the County Attorney’s Office had advised against assuming that bond-approved items automatically became part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Caperton added that DPZ processed many school-related and bond-approved applications, adding that staff typically did not receive information for bond-approved items until the end of the process, allowing little, if any, time to review them. When Ms. James asked if he was suggesting a process wherein FCPS staff regularly informed County staff about approved bond items, Mr. Caperton confirmed that such information would not only be helpful, but added that staff would then meet with Planning Commissioners to review land use items coming to their districts in the future.

Commissioner de la Fe pointed out that the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors approved funds for County projects, not the projects themselves.

Commissioner Flanagan described an incident in the Mount Vernon District, where FCPS had turned over a high school athletic field to the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), considerably impacting the nearby residents due to the change in noise levels and types of events. He and Ms. James briefly discussed reviewing similar future transfers of property, since the impacts on the surrounding communities could be significant.

Commissioner Hart concurred with Commissioner de la Fe’s earlier remarks and cautioned against skirting Virginia statutes to avoid a rezoning process. Ms. James stated that the County was required to accommodate any increase in the number of students, to which Commissioner Hart responded that such accommodations must be made within the statute.

Commissioner Alcorn pointed out that “features shown” were part of the 2232 process, but simply provided a different way to achieve compliance with *State Code* requirements, adding that the process currently used for public utilities could also work for the County’s schools. He also agreed with Commissioner de la Fe’s remarks and added that the County’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) provided funds for County projects.

Chairman Sargeant suggested that FCPS streamline its current process, noting that early consultation with staff and developers would alleviate later problems. Mr. Caperton concurred and suggested that staff be copied on site plans, adding that staff’s inclusion earlier in the process would significantly reduce last minute questions and/or delays.

There was a brief discussion between Daniel Aminoff, Mason District representative on FPAC, and Ms. James wherein it was revealed that a scheduled building addition would have triggered a rezoning and, while it did not delay the project overall, its scrutiny raised questions regarding current procedures and the expedition of similar projects in the future.

Mr. Caperton said that DPZ staff would draft a streamlining process before the Committee’s next meeting. Ms. Beaulieu added that the Fairfax County Policy Plan’s Administrative Review Guidelines for telecommunications facilities contained a set of criteria which could easily be adapted to the

educational portion of the Policy Plan. Ms. James also suggested that submitting the Schools' CIP to staff shortly after approval by the Fairfax County School Board would also be helpful.

Karen Hogan, Chairman and At-Large member, FPAC, noted that FPAC's role was to strategically plan for school facilities and inquired as to how much flexibility the County had in spending bond-approved funds. In the brief discussion that followed, Commissioners de la Fe, Murphy, and Sargeant explained that the CIP process would provide flexibility to make changes for approved spending.

Ms. James pointed out that FPAC had been created to allow FCPS to make decisions regarding prioritization of school projects, which currently rested with County staff, and added that FPAC would be much more involved in the development of the schools' CIP over the next year. Commissioner Murphy and Ms. Hogan briefly discussed the recommendation and approval procedures for FCPS prioritization into the CIP, after which Chairman Sargeant stated the importance of ensuring that the items submitted in the FCPS CIP reflect its current needs.

Commissioner Hart agreed with earlier remarks about the flexibility of the CIP process, noting that bond-approved items would likely have limitations regarding their expenditure. Ms. James agreed, adding that while additional funds might become available for a bond-approved project, the bond funds originally approved would not be reallocated to another project.

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CO-LOCATION OF SCHOOLS IN MIXED-USED DEVELOPMENTS

Noting that co-location of schools in a mixed-use development was a major topic of interest in the redevelopment of Tysons Corner, Chairman Sargeant asked for input from FCPS/FPAC members. Mr. Aminoff said that coordination of efforts at the beginning of the development process was important to provide input from developers and citizens on the school plans.

When Commissioner de la Fe asked if school personnel had attended any the Tysons Corner meetings, Ms. James said that she had met with the Tysons Land Use Task Force regarding a dedicated site for a school. She added that FCPS staff had designed a five-story urban-style school and would be meeting with the developer and County staff for discussion, as there were no County standards for such a school.

Commissioner Alcorn recalled that in January 2009 the Tysons Corner Committee had held a meeting at which FCPS had discussed co-location and the need for urban school standards. He said that FCPS should meet with Planning Commissioners and developers to coordinate the development of criteria for urban school standards. He also pointed out that the standards should be developed regardless of the extended timeframe for their construction.

During a brief discussion regarding the design of the urban-style school, Ms. James said that the school and related athletic field would occupy six acres. Commissioner de la Fe stated that his vision of an urban school included one multi-story building with five or six floors dedicated to school activity. He added that if it were determined that the school was not needed, the County could use the space otherwise for revenue. Chairman Sargeant suggested drafting urban school design standards, particularly given the density of parts of the County. Ms. James pointed out that

the current stand-alone building design resulted from a request by County staff, who provided the criteria for the school's design.

Mr. Perlstein expressed a desire for FPAC to meet informally with developers to discuss the urban school design. He said that Commissioner de la Fe's vision of the school currently existed in New York, adding that he and other members of FPAC had the same vision for the County. Commissioner de la Fe suggested meeting with the Tysons Partnership as well as Barbara Byron, Director, Office of Community Revitalization.

During the brief discussion that followed, Committee members encouraged creativity in school planning, noting that other developers would follow suit. When Chairman Sargeant suggested that new public/private partnerships could possibly form, Mr. Perlstein pointed that many public schools were often used for private community activities. In addition, Commissioner Flanagan added that public/private partnerships for art programs would serve the County's educational system very well.

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WORKING TOGETHER

Chairman Sargeant identified the following issues to collaborate on:

- Updating the Comprehensive Plan Map
- Reviewing the 2232 processes
 - Incorporating the Administrative Review criteria of the Policy Plan into the Education section
- Drafting design standards for co-location
 - Receiving input and using the Schools Committee as a venue for professional input from
 - County staff as well as others, e.g., private developers
 - Acknowledging/understanding FPAC's active role in the CIP process

J. Ernest Jutte, At-Large member, FPAC, noted that the Comprehensive Plan might need to be revised to accommodate strategic planning and co-location of the schools. Chairman Sargeant suggested that staff review the applicable language for discussion at the Committee's next meeting.

Commissioner de la Fe noted that the CIP Process occurred annually, while that the next FCPS bond referendum would not take place for two years. A brief discussion followed with Ms. James regarding items that were planned for the upcoming CIP.

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Answering a question from Commissioner Murphy, Ms. James said that six new members had been elected to the Fairfax County School Board.

Chairman Sargeant announced that the Schools Committee would meet again on Wednesday, January 18, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., in the Board Conference Room. (*Note: This meeting was subsequently cancelled and rescheduled to Thursday, March 29, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Conference Room.*)

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.
Timothy J. Sargeant, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Jeanette Nord

Approved: March 29, 2012

Kara A. DeArrastia, Clerk to the
Fairfax County Planning Commission