Comprehensive Planning and Community Engagement

Fairfax County Public Schools

Comprehensive Planning Development Committee

September 2009

In the past...

- Staff reviewed issues of enrollment, capacity, programming, and capital needs as part of the CIP.

- Based upon review, staff would seek approval from the School Board for new capital projects, boundary studies, or program changes.

- When boundary changes were proposed, studies resulted in Town Hall meetings to develop plans for School Board consideration. No public input on the need for a study or the scope of studies.

- Public Hearings followed staff final recommendations.

- School Board vote.

What we noticed:

- The public needed more investment in the issues.

- Issues of boundaries, enrollment, school programs, and facility needs required a larger scope of study to implement improved short and long-term planning.

- A new process needed to be developed to identify issues and to build collaborative partnerships with school communities.

The Two Step Process:
Step #1, Comprehensive Planning Advisory Task Force

- A Task Force is created by the School Board.

- The Task Force is to review regional issues pertaining to issues of capacity, enrollment, programming, and facility needs responding to enrollment.

- The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Task Force concept is still in development.

Step #2, Comprehensive Engagement Planning Process

Objectives for this process:

- To review, validate, and determine issues and appropriate scope of study.

- To determine the most complete list of possible solutions to the issue(s) identified.

- To document all advantages and disadvantages of each potential solution.

- Community engagement process does not replace public notice and participation rights provided under current School Board policies.

Note: Please refer to the separate handouts for specifics.

Community Engagement

Exploration of the Issues, Phase I:

- Appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee (two representatives per school community).

- Staff provides preliminary report and resources.

- Committee selects leadership and internal structures; attendance is an important requirement.

- Committee validates scope of the problem(s).

- Confirms or suggests changes to scope to the School Board for action.

Solution Exploration

Phase II:

- The Committee gathers information to address the problem.

- Potential solutions including advantages and disadvantages are reported.

- Staff is present at all meetings providing resources.

- Attendance is taken at every meeting.

- All meetings are open to the public.

- Committee holds a series of community meetings to gather feedback resulting from their work.

Note: Dept. of Communications and Community Outreach to provide support

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- Committee submits report to School Board.
- Staff prepares report in response to Committee report.
- Both reports considered by the School Board
- First pilot process to be used for the southwestern overcrowded schools issue to include Clifton ES's renovation.

Some additional remarks:

- Town Hall meetings and Public Hearings on such important issues as boundaries will continue.

- Staff continues to prepare annual Capital Improvement Program.

- The Comprehensive Planning Process continues to be developed.

- This is a new process and further refinement is anticipated as we learn.