

New Elementary School at TJ Community Comments

June 15, 2016

Name (First)	Name (Last)	Share your comments with the staff team and committees:	Entry Date	Response	Response Date	Responding Party
Matt	Barrone	First, I wanted to thank everyone involved in this process. There are a lot of different stakeholders and it's hard to find a compromise that works for everyone. I wanted to speak up as one of the handful of residents on Arlington Blvd who will now literally have the elementary school in their backyard. If you look at the proposed diagram, my house is the third one as you make the turn from Old Glebe to Arlington Blvd and directly above the R in the diagram which represents the new ES drop-off loop. When I purchased my house, I knew I had the noise of Rt 50 in my front, but also knew I had the tranquility of trees and a quite parking lot in my back. This will now all change with the addition of the school and I have yet to receive a clear understanding of how close the parking lot and school will come to my back property and fence. There are currently beautiful evergreens and magnolia trees that give character and privacy to the area. Are they going to be removed and replaced with concrete? Also, what are we doing about the turn from Old Glebe to the Rt 50 Access Rd. It's a very narrow road and the turn provide little visibility to oncoming traffic, I've witnessed many a close miss to a head-on collision. Have we considered making it one way to allow for better traffic flow? Especially at drop-off and pick-up times when the queue could back up well into a road that is very narrow. I'd welcome any thoughts or feedback from those involved who has insights into my questions.	06/15/2016			
Brian	Meenaghan	I think it is imperative that the traffic and safety issues are resolved on 1st Rd South (speeding, wrong-way driving and bus usage). Additionally, I believe more parking may be necessary than what was discussed in the recent public review session. These issues will be materially impacted by the design of the garage associated with the school. In addition to the garage design, I would like to see the following considered: a fix to the light at 2nd and Glebe to allow smoother outflow at peak times (including church on Sunday), speed bumps on 1st Rd South, additional signage to make sure drivers know alternatives to enter and leave the site (like Old Glebe to 50 east), and full traffic planning for peak usage times. My worry about peak usage goes beyond what was discussed in the public meeting. If both schools release at the same or similar time, there will be an absolute crush of traffic. I also think that max-use times will severely strain the proposed parking facility. The estimates take 10% off the top for car-alternative incentive users which I believe may be unrealistic for snowy/rainy days. I was always told to plan for the worst and hope for the best. In regards to parking, I think the current plan plans for the best and hopes to avoid/ignore the worst-case scenarios.	06/15/2016			
James	Dankovich	Solar panels, like underground parking are not critical to educating our children, but are very expensive. It is probable the cost of the panels will be the same as the cost of underground parking. To me it is better to spend the money on parking and conserve open areas on the ground. Also, you can always buy & install rooftop solar panels later, you cannot dig a garage under an existing building later. Parking is critical to the success of a facility, real open areas are important to the education and lifestyle of our children, solar panels are a luxury.	06/15/2016			
Maureen	Critchley	As a resident who lives on S Old Glebe Road, I'm wondering what kind of events will APS NOT permit taking place in the NES' parking structure? (examples - flea markets, Master garden shows auto shows, and shows that have sometimes taken place in the TJCC such as home shows, antique shows.) And while we're on the topic, what kinds of events does APS envision would be permitted? Thanks	06/12/2016 11:35	APS could envision many uses taking place in the parking structure including county fair activities or support, farmer's market, etc. The subject event would have to lend itself to the level of overnight security available in the garage and would have to be appropriate to the space height restrictions and proximity to the neighborhood and school, of course. It is difficult to say at this time what events would not be permitted, that would have to be reviewed on a case by case basis, with impact on the neighborhood and schools among the considerations	06/14/2016	APS

Maureen	Critchley	<p>I understand the AC transportation commission feels that hawk lights are sometimes just as effective as traffic lights, and that I wonder if APS' consultants agree? <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I also wonder whether hawk lights may be used at "high volume" intersections that students use enroute to & from TJMS & NES that don't have APS crossing guards? If so, please mention which intersections might become less dangerous if hawk lights were installed?<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Thank you.</p>	06/12/2016 11:28	<p>HAWK beacons can be a very effective means of increasing driver yielding at marked crosswalks. They are particularly appropriate for multi-lane, high-volume, and/or high-speed roadways where crossing pedestrians have difficulty finding gaps in traffic. The conditions at a crosswalk must meet certain thresholds in order for a HAWK beacon to be "warranted." These thresholds are based on a combination of factors, including motor vehicle speeds, motor vehicle volumes, and pedestrian volumes, and that must be determined by an engineering study. In collaboration with Arlington County, Toole Design Group has been exploring the potential need for HAWK beacons and other safety features around the TJ campus. Decisions about off-site transportation improvements will be made with committee/community input during the Schematic Design phase of the project.</p>	06/14/2016	TOOLE
Melissa	Leupp	<p>I am writing with feedback regarding the design of the new elementary school. As the parent of a future Patrick Henry student, I attended the public meeting on June 8. My concerns arise, however, based on my 17 years as an APS early childhood/elementary school educator and occupational therapist. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>It is my understanding that "the biscuit" has the gym and music on the third and fourth floors of the school along with upper grade levels. The Biscuit also has the smallest footprint. Providing quality instruction with the gym and music in such close proximity to classrooms would be challenging and frustrating for teachers and staff. Today's students need fewer distractions not more. They also need time when they can move and interact. Gymnasiums are also potential sites for assemblies and other wonderful but noise-generating events. There is a reason that most schools have gyms located away from learning environments.<input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>My second concern with the gym location is security. Gyms are frequently used after hours and on weekends. Having the gym on the third floor provides access to more of the school for much longer periods of time without staff members present. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>My final concern is related to accessibility. Henry currently has at least three county-wide special education classes. These programs have students with various disabilities. With the Biscuit's small footprint, a limited number of classrooms are located on each floor. My understanding is that preschool or kindergarten classes would be on the first floor. The county-wide programs may need to be on or near the first floor for students with limited mobility. It is prudent to think about emergencies and how young students can exit in a safe, efficient manner among a group of 725.</p>	06/11/2016 22:59	<p>Comments Noted. Similar comments have been noted during BLPC, PFRC, and public meetings. The design team is working to address these issues in future schemes.</p>	06/14/2016	APS

Lisa	Turcios	<p>Forwarding from Arlington Heights Civic Association member (7th St S) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> we emailed a while back, I'm an AHCA member and resident and parent of two (that will go to the new school). <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I had meant to send feedback on the parking, too, but then that architect that is an AH resident as well, had send in a long letter with seemingly valid concerns and questions, and I thought we'd be hearing back on a response first - now I can't figure out what happened! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Including what happened to the parking! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My quick feedback on parking: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>-Bus loop to the north (closest to 50) is by far the best to keep buses away from the neighborhood and all the walkers. (Also idling buses are awful.) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>-in the side profile almost all the parking was almost completely ABOVE ground - AWFUL mistake. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Do not budge on this - the parking must be underground. And it should be completely underground- in the side profile it looked like the partially underground parking was only partial on one end but completely above ground on the other end. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> - the newest schemes are all only 4 story options!!!?? Really? Wow! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The biscuit is awful! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I like the lobster!! The school needs a bigger footprint and it needs outdoor spaces all around, like Discovery!!! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> - Tell the committee to look to Discovery for the ideal elementary school design and function, and look to the currently in progress HB Woodlawn construction for absolutely stunning ways in making the most of space options working with rooftops!! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>They are a little ahead in the design process and it looks amazing! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Accept no less for our kids in this neighborhood! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Also: Some of the options in the presentations are not always well enough labeled by APS to really follow and understand completely (for the person who could not attend)! <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Things are moving fast (as they should): it's so easy to miss the boat on comments when you, the committee members, need</p>	06/07/2016 4:44	Comments Noted.	06/14/2016	APS
Maureen	Critchley	<p>I heard someone say that the PFRC is moving along at a rapid pace, and will soon be voting on which architectural concept APS should accept. Does anyone else think we need to SPEND MORE THAN A FEW MINUTES DISCUSSING AND UNDERSTANDING the COSTS of the various concepts under consideration before we're asked which scheme we think is best?</p>	06/06/2016 21:45	The concepts schemes offered to date will generally be similar in cost for the building and site amenities. The largest driver of cost is the parking. As has been noted at previous BLPC/PFRC meetings, underground parking is more expensive in cost than surface parking. Order of magnitude cost per space for underground vs surface parking have been communicated to the Committees. In general, it has been noted that the further down the parking deck is excavated the more expensive the construction becomes.	06/14/2016	APS
Melissa	Williams	<p>Hello -- <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I'm very concerned about the estimation on parking figures. In the summer, South Irving Street and Second Street South are regularly chock a block with parked cars of people using the community center and fields. Estimating usage downward doesn't map to our local experience on this issue.</p>	06/06/2016 17:17	Comments Noted	06/14/2016	APS
Maureen	Critchley	<p>It will be helpful to know what kinds of activities are likely to take place "afterhours", and <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>what will the evening & weekend hours be for afterhours activities in the NES' gym?</p>	06/06/2016 17:10	It is not yet known exactly what after hours use will be, but given the history of after hours use at APS schools, it will likely be extensive. Using Discovery ES as an example, there is Parks & Rec use of the gym for league and recreational play after hours and weekends, and throughout the building in the summer for camps, the school has an Extended Day program, and PTA meetings occur regularly in the library. Summer school may occasionally occur in the building. The buildings are a community amenity and APS encourages after hours usage.	06/14/2016	APS
Carlisle	Levine	<p>I am most concerned that the new elementary school's design takes into consideration separating elementary school students from middle schoolers, since middle schoolers are so much bigger and are going through transitions that elementary school students shouldn't have to deal with. Also, please take into consideration traffic and safety for the elementary school students. Already, we have had incidents where the middle schoolers have been hit by cars on the way to school. Thanks!</p>	06/06/2016 9:44	Comments Noted.	06/14/2016	APS

Bruce	Boyd	<p>Many thanks for all your are doing regarding the new elementary school at TJ .</p> <p>I have attended the meetings the past two weeks(J une 1 and J une 8).</p> <p>I have a concern, and my concern is that it appears the agenda for the J une 15 PFRC meeting does not include any consideration or discussion of traffic. More specifically, there appears to be no consideration of traffic at two intersections: (1) S outh Old Glebe Road and 2nd S treet S outh, and (2) S outh Old Glebe Road and the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh..</p> <p>At both of the recent meetings, a woman spoke about data she and her firm had gathered regarding traffic. As best I recall, her data seemed to indicate that any increase in traffic as a result of the new elementary school would be at times different from the current drop-off and pick-up times for the middle school. It seemed to me that her main point was that the neighborhood could expect some increase in traffic, but that instead of the current situation in which there are two "peak times" (drop off for TJ in the morning and pick-up from TJ in the afternoon), there would be four "peak times" with the addition of a new elementary school (drop off for TJ in the morning, drop off for elementary school later in the morning, pick-up from TJ in the afternoon, and pick-up from elementary school later in the afternoon).</p> <p>This woman (whose name I cannot recall) acknowledged that there was concern about the intersections at Old Glebe Road and 2nd S treet S outh and at Old Glebe Road and 1st Road S outh, but she did not indicate (as best I recall it) what recommendations or even what plans she or her firm had in mind. It seemed to me that she was most concerned about getting to consensus around whether there would be "shared" parking or "non-shared" parking. S he seemed most concerned about this issue since it impacted the number of parking spaces that would need to be built.</p> <p>During the public comment portion of the J une 1 PFRC Meeting, I mentioned my concern about the increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic at Old Glebe Road and 2nd S treet S outh, and I expressed my hope that the PFRC would be looking at the issues concerning that intersection. I left that meeting feeling pretty sure that the PFRC had been - and would continue - looking at the issues concerning that intersection.</p> <p>At the J une 8 meeting, I mentioned my concerns (concerns that were also echoed by another resident of the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh who attended the J une 8 meeting) that there are speeders along the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh, and that there are people who drive the wrong way down this block (this block is a one-way street, with legal traffic going east-bound from Glebe Road to Old Glebe Road). I also voiced my concern about the intersection at Old Glebe Road and 1st Road S outh. The only take-away I received from the J une 8 meeting was the name and phone number of a person I could call if I observed Arlington County School Busses using the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh.</p> <p>Yesterday, I stood along my block (the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh) between about 2:15 and 2:35 pm. I noticed several cars speeding from Glebe Road to Old Glebe Road. More frighteningly, I noticed at least two cars who failed to stop at the stop sign where the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh intersects S outh Old Glebe Road. One of the drivers who failed to stop at the stop sign crossed S outh Old Glebe Road and entered the TJ parking lot.</p> <p>People along the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh have recently shared pictures and reports of people speeding and going the wrong way down our block. I am very concerned that people who speed along out block are likely to be in such a hurry that they will fail to come to a complete stop at S outh Old Glebe Road. That, of course, could result in a very serious accident.</p> <p>My larger point is this: With the increase in traffic (both pedestrian and vehicles), and with the increase in elementary-age children who will be attending a new elementary school at TJ, I think it is vital that the PFRC devote attention to the traffic at the two intersections I mention above. I am very concerned that the agenda for the J une 15 appears to give no attention to traffic at all.</p> <p>I should add that the Arlington County Police Department has stepped up its efforts to enforce the traffic laws along the 3600 block of 1st Road S outh, and I am grateful for that.</p>	06/10/2016	<p>Thank you for your input and questions related to traffic and the APS/Thomas J efferson project. APS's transportation consultant, Toole Design Group, has a thorough traffic analysis underway that uses modeling software to analyze traffic around the school site related to the middle school and future, new elementary school. That analysis includes a close look at Old S outh Glebe and, in particular, the intersections of Old S outh Glebe with 1st R oad S outh and 2nd S treet S outh. Although these issues are critical to the success of this project, they are not required as part of the first project milestone: the concept plan submittal to the S chool Board. For this reason, we anticipate presenting the results of the traffic analysis at a late J uly or early August meetings of the BLPC/PFRC (exact schedule is still being finalized with APS).</p> <p>Advancing in coordination with the traffic analysis is a careful consideration, in partnership with Arlington County transportation staff, of off-site infrastructure or operational improvements to nearby streets that could improve traffic conditions, bicycle and pedestrian safety/access, speeding, and other issues occurring nearby and related to transportation. Some recommendations that are adjacent to the school site and directly associated with the school project may be advanced as part of the APS project (i.e. on a similar timeline and through a parallel budget process), while others may be longer-term projects that are recommended for future implementation by Arlington County. These off-site recommendations will also be presented for discussion and consideration by the community at a late J uly/early August meetings of the BLPC/PFRC.</p> <p>We have made note of your input and concerns related to 1st Road S outh and S outh Old Glebe Road and will certainly consider this as the project advances, with the goal of working the County to address traffic concerns like this one. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this important project.</p>	06/14/2016	TOOLE
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