

Recommendations from SHAPPE on the Master Facilities Plan – October 4th Meeting:

Some of the key initiatives driving the Master Facilities Plan (MPF) are outlined in the Master Education Plan. They include

- The conversion to Middle schools
- Thematic strands in feeder schools K-12
- Themed high schools
- Continuum of learning including special education and adult education

As many high schools go into planning following are some of the key concerns that emerged:

*Swing Space

It was clarified that Phelps will be worked on starting immediately so that it can accept the Spingarn students in the fall of 2007. These Spingarn students will also use the space available at Browne JHS, which will not immediately convert to the planned K-8 with Young.

Eastern students will move into Spingarn in the fall of 2007 placing two high school populations on the same campus. All administrators and parents present anticipated serious safety problems placing these two groups of students and later the Anacostia students on one campus using the same bus stop there on Benning Road. *The primary concern was for safety however and the fear is that as we raise the threshold on getting to school far fewer students will attend at all. Fear of gangs may be one large reason they don't attend. This has not yet been addressed.* One constructive suggestion was to:

- **Recommendation:** Make sure students return to Eastern and later Anacostia for athletic practice ensuring adequate space for both programs and minimizing opportunities for conflict.

Members of the Eastern community present want to make sure there is considerable research and a well thought out plan prior to any movement of their program.

Anacostia is supposed to swing into Spingarn after Eastern is completed. Most Anacostia students walk to school. Are there really the funds to transport 800 students daily and in a timely manner to Spingarn? The small size of the Anacostia site makes it clear that it would be difficult to locate the students there during construction, but a plan and adequate funding are crucial to the survival of the school.

While there is 10 million in funding in 2007 for the consolidation of SHARPE Health into Roosevelt this will precede the planning and modernization for Roosevelt. Roosevelt is to stay on site during construction. According to the MEP the fragile SHARPE health students will also be on Roosevelt's site during construction. The recommendation would be to

- **Recommendation:** Do the full planning for Roosevelt's program first followed by a plan and feasibility study to determine if this site can adequately accommodate Roosevelt's own program; the Roosevelt STAY program and the SHARPE Health program. This has to be done prior to closing SHARPE Health and moving any students.

Ed Schmidt of Fanning/Howey and Cornell Brown, head of the OFM indicated that they will be revisiting the Special Education Plan. This should be evident in the second round of meetings to be held the week of October 9th.

Hart students are scheduled to move into Douglas – will they be bussed from Hart? Ballou students are scheduled to move into Hart; will they report directly to Hart?

Schools swinging on site also have logistic and health concerns. Members of the Sousa community have indicated there were substantial health issues for staff and students on site. Cardozo is the first high school where construction is due to begin with students remaining. This planning does not appear to have started. A schedule of the capital work for the summer of 2007 will give some indication of how much can happen while students are not on site.

Inclusion of the principal and either the LSRT or a “school improvement team” in the planning immediately will be crucial for Cardozo. Cardozo, Roosevelt, Dunbar, Coolidge, MM Washington and Wilson are all scheduled to be constructed while students remain on site.

A final question on swing space refers to the cost – where in the budget are the costs of preparing the swing space and the costs of bussing students reflected?

***Adequacy of budget and plan for high schools:** The capital improvement plan included in the MFP is driven by a formula, for high schools this is 192 square feet per student and 295 dollars per square foot. At the SHAPPE meeting, Ed Schmidt indicated that a site by site analysis had been done and costs would be driven by this analysis. The CIP however records the formula driven numbers. This formula worked for Bell which was new construction; McKinley with all the challenges of that planning and construction came in at 270 square feet per student. Since all the high schools with the exception of Woodson will use the existing building, the square footage indicated as extra and “made available” is of great concern to the high school community. It may be that utilizing the stately historic structures that have terrazzo floors; fine wood work and many other quality construction features will require some flexibility and creativity.

- Recommendation: Clarify the definition of space which will not be modernized. This will help to avoid the problem at McKinley where 66,000 square feet were gutted and have been vacant for years among other issues.
- Require planning of the whole site during design making allowances for existing building features and make sure that formulas and design guidelines are not rigid and allow for common sense.

Small High Schools are not in line with the MEP.

With an enrollment of 350 students, high schools can provide only one section of each course in all of the content areas required for a regular diploma. To provide a more comprehensive program and meet the needs of a more diverse student population, schools would need to be significantly larger; providing two sections of each core subject would require 600 to 700 students, for instance. In SY 2006-07 DCPS will develop a plan to reorganize elementary, middle and senior high schools that are too small to offer a full program, using one or more options suggested in this section; close; share staff; rent space; relocate to a larger school.¹

To support the core academic program..., the WSF Committee is assuming that every senior high school must have sufficient enrollment to support the staffing required to offer all the courses needed to meet the graduation requirements (currently 23.5 units but soon to be raised to 26 for a

¹ DCPS Master Facilities Plan February 2006; page 100, 101

regular diploma) or partner with another school to ensure that it can offer a full academic program.²

There are currently 5 high schools in the Master Facilities Plan with proposed capacities below the 600 number deemed adequate: Luke Moore at 275 SWW at 350; MM Washington at 350; Banneker at 400 and Ellington at 500.

- **Recommendation:** Examine the capacity at SWW and MM Washington to see if prior to design completion they can be expanded to at least 400. Put in place policies; ie shared courses with partner schools, high school credit for college courses etc. to acknowledge and deal with inadequate size and also address equity for students at larger schools. See athletic site concern.

City Wide Needs for High Schools Identified in previous planning not addressed: In 2002 DCPS engaged in a year of citywide planning on high schools. There were at least three needs that emerged from that process that have not been responded to with this plan and the city's investment:

Recommendation: Ensure that the following issues are addressed in the MFP:

- An indoor track; students currently use either use the armory with tape on the wooden floor or go to the suburbs.
- A pool in Ward 8 for both school and community use. It was noted that there is a shortage of DC Recreation pools in this area making it hard for students and citizens to learn to swim.
- There is no smaller specialty high school east of the river; they are located largely in Ward 5 with two in Ward 2. Perhaps this need will be addressed with academies or the charter schools but it should be addressed.

In 2002 approximately 17% of students receiving special education services in high schools were classified as needing the highest intensity level. In addition 5 comprehensive high schools had a special education population of approximately 20%. This was and is in addition to the Special Education Centers located at MM Washington, Spingarn SHS, Mamie D Lee and Sharpe Health. There is no program aligned and no explicit planning for special needs students currently.

- **Recommendation:** The MFP should explicitly address the demographics and planning for SPED. How will mainstreaming work at high schools with a very high percentage of special needs students? How does the allotted square footage respond to this need?

Site size and Athletics

While the operational challenges with Athletics is noted on gages F26 through F28 for high schools; there do not appear to be strategies to address them unless they are each looked at in the particular educational specification for the school. Questions on that front include: Does the capacity and square footage for the high schools takes into account the site requirements for athletic activities- (needed field and track spaces)? In addition how does the location of a pool jointly used by the community affect the formulas for space for the high schools?

- **Recommendation:** The MFP should identify the adjoining recreation sites and enter into joint planning with DC Dept of Recreation and Parks on shared use for schools. Planning and policy should be in place so every student knows their rights and their choices in having access to an athletic program.

² DCPS MEP; Feb. 2006; pg.102

Do students from small schools have the option of participating at the larger schools? What responsibility does DCPS have in providing field space to the smaller programs, in providing equity of opportunity to those students in larger programs?

STAY Programs: The MFP does not make any allowance or mention of the STAY programs at Roosevelt, Spingarn or Ballou. These programs currently serve our most at risk youth and provide much needed adult educational opportunities.

- **Recommendation:** Include funding and planning to support the STAY programs in the CIP and the MFP.

Other questions that emerged: The principal of Eastern indicated that Dr. Janey had said Eastern and the DC Latin program will be a 6 through 12. This is not the indication in the MFP.

The old Bell is identified as “made available” when in fact RFP’s have been let on demolishing the building and converting it into a much needed soccer field.

Advice from Bell and McKinley:

Both schools strongly stressed the need to be involved in the early decisions. It is in the planning that the future mistakes start. Make sure you are part of the decisions where costs are being weighed and choices made. Cornell Brown indicated each school will have a school improvement team that will be consulted in the planning, design and construction.

Make sure you have someone to follow up on one year warranties and quality checks on all systems.

Discussion on transfer of custodians to central; SHAPPE asked if DCPS Office of Facilities Management was planning on having all staffing and reporting of custodians centralized. Cornell Brown, head of OFM (Office of Facilities Management) stated that this plan was in the works but had not yet been presented to Dr. Janey (a directive is being drafted for presentation next week). He said that OFM and the principals would be partners with joint evaluations of all custodial personnel. He indicated the principal would continue to direct day to day operations including hiring and firing. This would better enable him to have a comprehensive maintenance plan

Local school personnel present including at least 5 principals asked:

What is the rationale?

What is the benefit?

Will costs also be centralized? If most schools are understaffed because DCPS has not been using a square footage ratio, where will the additional funds come from to hire more custodians?

If the current reporting of the engineers to the OFM is any indication, people expressed enormous reservations on the viability of this course. This has not worked out; engineers for *the most part* (there are exceptions) do not respond to the on site principals; there is no allegiance, no support and no communication (ie when they will be taking leave etc.)

The principals also expressed dismay at the process. While Cornell Brown presented this idea some time ago; they were not notified or adequately consulted in the planning of this transfer. If this is to be a partnership it is a very poor beginning.

