

**Fairlington Citizens Association
Executive Board Meeting Minutes
Fairlington Community Center
3308 Stafford Street South, Arlington, VA
February 11, 2015, as approved**

Board Members Present

President Guy Land
Secretary Carol Dabbs
Treasurer Ed Hilz
Director Gretchen Fallon
Director Joe Hartman
Director Mark Jones
Director Doug Penn
Director Chris Weathers

Members Absent

Vice President Kent Duffy

Special Presentation

Capt. Stuart Ellis, Third District Commander, Arlington County Police

Public Comment Period (speakers limited to 3 minutes each)

Jim Huryz spoke about his objections to the plans for the expansion and renovation of Abingdon Elementary School (AES), which he believes will have a detrimental impact on neighborhood. He has asked his attorney to figure out impact of traffic & people on the community.

Gaston Araos— would like to become very involved; he is a 3-year resident of Ward VI in Fairlington Villages, which is in Alexandria. He brought up the problem of cars parking on a curve near where he lives, and asked if we have a plan to address it, and mentioned that pedestrians and moms pushing carriages are especially affected. President Land responded that when Arlington re-paves streets, they re-stripe per current law. The blocks mentioned currently have essentially no remaining parking markings. We usually find out in advance what streets are likely to be repaved in the next season.

Jen Davies—who is the co-president of the AES PTA and Chair of the BLPC, indicated her appreciation for the involvement of FCA and our listening to consider community perspectives as plans were developed for the expansion and renovation of AES.

Ward Foley, County staff manager for a portfolio including the FCC mentioned that Parks and Recreation is going through an audit of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and that there is still a little more work to be done at the FCC. Inside, some doors are to be moved, and hand-dryers in restrooms replaced with models with less than 4 inch depth. Patrick Mallon is now acting manager at Arlington Mill, and Robin McEwen is acting manager at FCC. Treasurer Hilz asked if his responsibilities extend to the playground on FCC grounds. Foley responded that he is only responsible for the building, and that Kevin Stelicka,

covers buildings and grounds. The FCC playground is scheduled for changes in FY 16 or FY 17. They are handled by Lisa Granville's shop, but he's not clear on the status of that process.

Call to Order

The Executive Board meeting was called to order at 8:20 p.m. President Land noted that a quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

There was consensus to approve the meeting agenda distributed by President Land on February 9th, as there was to take items out of order.

Approval of Minutes

Secretary Dabbs circulated a second draft of the January minutes this afternoon. With the addition of names on page 2 regarding the Fairlington 5K, those minutes were unanimously approved by those directors present.

Officer Reports

Vice President—none, absent

Treasurer

The monthly financial report was sent to the Executive Board by email on February 9th. It included the following items. Board members were encouraged to ask questions about directly of Treasurer Hilz.

- Bank Accounts;
- Certificates of Deposit, which showed the change to a ladder of maturities is complete;
- February AFB P&L, which showed that the 12 month rolling average has decreased for the 4th consecutive month; and
- General Ledger for January 1-15, 2015.

Treasurer Hilz indicated that our income tax returns have been prepared; we will have to pay about \$900 for 2014 as well as estimated taxes of about \$2,000 for 2015. The Audit Committee, consisting of Vice President Duffy, Treasurer Hilz, and Director Joe Hartman will review the returns prior to submission.

A question was raised regarding AFB Editor compensation; consensus was that since she's working on the March edition, she should be paid for it.

Secretary

Google voicemail topics this month included the usual sorts of messages, including AFB deliveries and ads, condominium business, and a realtor asking to use our social media to advertise an open house.

The FCA Briefing for the Public on the expansion and renovation of Abingdon Elementary School (AES) was held on January 26th at the FCC. Notes from that briefing form Appendix II to these minutes.

The FCA Listening Session on Abingdon Elementary School (AES) renovation and expansion for near neighbors in Fairlington Villages, Park Shirlington, and Shirlington House, was held February 10th at the Fairlington Villages Community Center (FVCC). Notes from that session form Appendix III to these minutes.

Other:

Fairlington Farmers Market—not discussed due to lack of time.

Fairlington-Shirlington Neighborhood Conservation Plan—not discussed due to lack of time.

Unfinished Business

Fairlington 5K

Director Hartman indicated that the silent auction will occur on Wed 8th, and that Fairlington Villages has waived the fee for using their Community Center. The Committee is working to mitigate traffic problems. They are more advanced in their planning than at this time last year in planning.

New Business

Walter Reed and Four Mile Run intersection improvements

Treasurer Hilz indicated that there is a concern about whether the right hand slip lane will be eliminated as proposed; it causes difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists. He moved that we support elimination. Secretary Dabbs asked about right-hand back-ups, and amended his motion to request that the County implement means to mitigate of right hand lane backups that might result from eliminating the slip lane. The amended motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Abingdon Elementary School concept design

President Land distributed copies of a draft resolution, passage of which was moved by Treasurer Hilz and seconded by Director Hartman. President Land circulated copies of the site plan and building plan which the County staff will inform the School Board is under consideration. Treasurer Hilz explained the relative roles of the Public Facilities Review Committee and Building Level Planning Committee roles. These plans came about over several months of discussion, and President Land described them. Secretary Dabbs pointed out the advantages of pulling the maximum number of cars off public streets and obviating the need for the public to walk through the school to attend events in the gym. President Land mentioned that the existing parking/driveway plans are predicated on APS leasing 15 parking spaces from Fairlington Villages; an alternate would create another 15 parking spaces on AES grounds. He further mentioned the concerns of Courtbridge II—preserving their buffer (800 sq ft), but at the cost of 3000 sq ft more of parking on site, and the proximity of the gym, which has been reduced to concern about soil stability during and after construction. Secretary Dabbs pointed out that the

most controversy has been about parking and parent drop-off/pick-up, and therefore it has been recognized that the County is not completely consistent in its approach to these matters, which is why Guy included the second paragraph. The next steps are the APS presentation to the School Board, School Board approval/not, School Board presentation to the County Board, and then County Board approval/not. The motion passed 8-0-0, which President Land will convey to the School Board by letter tomorrow. In addition, he plans to speak in favor of current plans at the presentation to the School Board by APS staff. A copy of that resolution forms Appendix I to these minutes.

Meeting with Alexandria traffic staff—not discussed due to lateness of the hour.

Spring program lineup—not discussed due to lateness of the hour.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and passed at 8:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Dabbs, FCA Secretary

Appendix I to 2/11/15 FCA Executive Board Meeting Minutes
Abingdon Concept Design Resolution
Approved February 11, 2015

Resolved, that the Executive Board of the Fairlington Citizens Association endorses the concept design for Abingdon Elementary School as approved by the Building Level Planning Committee. This includes the original “lot loop” design for traffic circulation and parking and Option C1 for the general layout of the building.

Resolved further, that the Executive Board urges Arlington Public Schools to expeditiously develop a comprehensive transportation demand management (TDM) plan (including rationalized bus routes, alternative transportation options and incentives, and Safe Route to School strategies, such as “walking buses”) for its schools and integrate this into its planning for new or expanded schools, including Abingdon Elementary.

Appendix II to 2/11/15 FCA Executive Board Meeting Minutes
Notes
Fairlington Citizens' Association Information Session on
Abingdon Elementary School Expansion/Renovation
January 26, 2015
Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S Stafford St

President Guy Land opened the meeting with an explanation of the reason for this information session: to enable Fairlington residents and nearby neighbors to learn the status of the planning for the Abingdon Elementary School (AES) Expansion/Renovation. He indicated that there are two advisory committees, one to the County Board, and one to the School Board, each of which has two representatives of FCA. He introduced Aji Robinson, the Arlington Public Schools (APS) project manager for the AES Expansion/Renovation.

Mr. Robinson made a power point presentation, including a description of the construction of the existing AES facility; the two advisory committees; the site plans under consideration (including the use of a driveway along the length of the building to provide emergency access to the current gymnasium and future additional classroom space); the "lot loop" which allows 33 cars to be on-site for drop-off/pick-up instead of stacked up on nearby public streets; meeting zoning standards of 115 parking spaces for a school of 725 students by adding 10 spaces to the parking lot, leasing 15 parking spaces from Fairlington Villages, and counting 11 on-street spaces; and the preference of the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC—advisory to the School Board) for the lot loop site plan and building plan C (distinguished by construction of a new gym immediately adjacent to the parking lot). He pointed out that APS will continue refinements to the site plan and building plan as the process continues. He provided assurances that tree preservation is intended, and estimated that the selected options would result in only about 600 square feet less open space, and 800 square feet more of impervious surface. He also provided a summary of the taste-test of the architectural styles which might be used for the addition and renovation.

A question and answer session followed. Below is a summary of the questions and answers provided.

- Should we not mitigate traffic impact, either before or concurrently with planning for drop-off/pick-up options? These can occur at the same time, and we must recognize that no design is final until the County Board approves it, and they can still amend it. So possible conflicts between the Safe Routes to School grant to the county and APS adherence to zoning requirements can be resolved at that level.
- Is the information about Safe Routes to School for AES available now? No. This will be developed by Toole (contractor) during Phase II of their work, still to come.
- Will the existing building continue to be used during construction? Yes.
- Twenty years ago, parents were discouraged from letting their children walk or bike to school for safety reasons; has there been any change to increase their safety in doing so now? There will not be a change to the Ft Reynolds path, used by the majority of walkers, because the access road alongside the school building can be utilized; and there are two locations in Fairlington Villages without sidewalks—Abingdon and 31st St and Abingdon and 29th St—which would be relatively inexpensive to fix.

- Is Wingate I within walking distance; would it make sense to add a crossing guard there? This is a good example of considerations to be done, although there are only two current crossing guard locations, and boundaries are likely to be in flux over the next few years.
- (Comment) The national Safe Routes to School group has good examples of means to make alternatives to driving safe on line.
- Why are there not multiple drop-off/pick-up sites? Principal wants close proximity of car and bus drop-off/pick-up sites so that faculty can continue to supervise arrivals and departures. Abingdon has a great control system for drop-off/pick-up.
- Does the Toole survey show where children are walking from? It is APS policy that bus transportation is only provided for students who live one mile or further from school, but parents may request bus service if they live closer (and presumably pay for it). Many parents prefer to drive their children to school due to elapsed time required for bus routes that of necessity wind their way through neighborhoods, necessitating earlier pick-up times than needed if driving.
- Who owns the playing field? Will it be better cared-for after the renovation and expansion construction? The field is not likely to be fully improved, because it is not full regulation size, but it is likely to be somewhat improved. All fields on APS grounds have joint use between APS and county recreational functions.
- When will the Fairlington Villages (FV) Board Meeting at which consideration of leasing spaces to APS take place? An initial proposal will be made at the February 5 meeting. It is not known when the Board might vote on such proposals, but FV Board meetings are open to FV owners.
- At what hour in the morning would parking spaces allocated to AES use need to be vacated? At 8 am.
- Is there any way that parking requirements can be lowered from 105 in lots to 95? While these numbers are not set in stone, they do consider both teachers' and visitors' needs, based on the student population of the school.
- Has there been consideration of counting parking on nearby public streets? Yes, but there is a conflict at the beginning of the day—many residents are still parked on the street at 8 am, when teachers need to be at school.
- Is it possible to identify which teachers need to have parking close to the school? Many teachers have sporadic needs to carry in large quantities of materials.

Prepared by Carol Dabbs, FCA Secretary

Appendix III to 2/11/15 FCA Executive Board Minutes
Notes
Fairlington Citizens Association Listening Session on
Abingdon Elementary School Expansion/Renovation
February 10, 2015
Fairlington Villages Community Center, 3301 S Abingdon St

The session was introduced by Guy Land, President of Fairlington Citizens Association, who explained that the intent was to seek opinions and questions from residents living nearest Abingdon Elementary School (AES) on some items that have been discussed by the two committees providing advice to the School Board (the Building Level Planning Committee, or BLPC) and to the County Board (the Program and Facilities Review Committee, or PFRC). During this period, the APS staff and contractors have refined and updated plans considered by both committees.

The easier part has been the consideration of building layouts; the BLPC voted 16-1 (with the Court Bridge II representative in opposition) for building option C-1, and the PFRC also favors this design. Land explained the layout (characterized by construction of a new gym large enough for school-wide gatherings adjacent to the parking lot, conversion of the old gym into a larger cafeteria adjacent to the playgrounds, and addition of a classroom tower on the north side of the building). He explained the advantages of each of these features, compared to other options considered. This building plan is what is planned to be presented at the meeting of the School Board on Tuesday, February 17th.

The Site Plan, which identifies the locations of exterior features, such as playgrounds, playing field and track, parking, bus and car drop off traffic patterns, and a service road, has been much more contentious. At present, APS proposes 15 fewer parking spaces than called for by zoning regulations, pending reaching agreement with Fairlington Villages to lease 15 spaces on a long-term basis, most likely in the Community Center (tennis court) parking lot, which is adjacent to a frequently-used walkway from 31st St to the proposed new entrance to the school. In addition, there is discussion of adding 5 spaces to that lot, by eliminating islands and extending it beyond the current edge to the end of the tennis courts. Another possibility would be to authorize FV staff to park in lot 41, so that teachers and school visitors can use street parking on 29th St. FV board also asked APS to find out what the signs on 31st St prohibiting parking during school hours mean. If agreement is reached, lease terms could consider payment and/or other considerations. Land indicated that it might also be possible to count parking spaces on public streets beyond 29th St., but we do need to remember that teachers want and need guaranteed parking close to the school, because they often carry significant amounts of materials for teaching. He further pointed out that the zoning regulations calling for 116 parking spaces for school staff and visitors for a school with 725 students are intended to protect against residential street parking being usurped by school staff and visitors.

A Question and Answer Session followed:

Q—Are there incentives for teachers and staff to use public transport, walk, or bike to school? During discussion, a follow-up comment was made that such incentives often are left “to be determined” in use permits.

Q—Should there be police presence more regularly or randomly to encourage adherence to the rules for street parking and drop off of students?

A—Residents were encouraged to attend tomorrow’s FCA meeting and discuss this with Capt. Ellis of the 3rd district in Arlington, who will be speaking then.

Q—All of Abingdon St. needs attention; there is parking permitted so close to the exit from the FVCC lot (tennis courts) that oncoming traffic cannot be seen prior to entering the street.

A—The re-stripping of the parking areas should have followed current law, which allows for such sight lines.

Q—Will there be a conflict on the service road between trucks and walking children? Where will the trucks turn around?

A—The principal of AES has mentioned restricting truck access to the service road to pre-planned times, when student will not be on the service road. There is adequate paved area for turn-around near the cafeteria, which will require similar coordination.

Prepared by Carol Dabbs, Secretary, Fairlington Citizens Association