

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL**

MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 11, 2010

Meeting No: 109

Project: Proposed Addition to Leith Walk School

Phase: Schematic

Location: Northeast Baltimore

PRESENTATION:

Larry Flynn, Director, Facilities Design and Construction Department for Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) introduced the project and provided background information explaining the proposed expansion and conversion of the existing Leith Walk Elementary School to an 1100 student preK through 8th grade neighborhood school. Tony Marshall, BCPS construction manager for the project, and Jayson Thoemke of Colimore Thoemke Architects provided additional details regarding the program and phasing of the proposed facility. Key elements of the presentation included:

- A master plan showing how the existing building would be incorporated into the full build-out;
- Moving the main entrance of the school from Sherwood Avenue to Glennor Road;
- Concentration of the play facilities to the corner of Glennor and Gleneagle Roads;
- Distribution of parking to various locations on the site;
- The intention to have the expansion relate directly to the existing building in materials and color.

COMMENTS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel felt that insufficient information was provided to allow for a full understanding of the project and its immediate surrounding. More complete information on the proposed building, site and landscape improvements is requested. The following specific remarks were offered based on the information provided:

- A. ***Edge conditions of the project including sidewalks, gateways, fences and landscaping*** – Panel members unanimously expressed concern regarding the lack of a clear design concept for these elements.
- B. ***The role of the attached Recreation Center Building***– There was considerable confusion regarding the future role and present condition of the attached (but separate) recreation facility attached to the end of the existing school near the corner of Sherwood Avenue and Glennor Roads. The Panel challenged that this component be either more seriously considered as an important part of the overall plan or be eliminated all together. Please clarify.
- C. ***The importance and role of the proposed outdoor recreation/play area*** – The Panel was disappointed that so little exterior space was allocated for play and

recreation but also felt the space that was primarily designated for that use was severely underdeveloped, particularly in light of the anticipated new role of the school in the community. Please provide more information and design intent at the next presentation.

- D. ***The “look” of the project*** – Some of the panelists felt that the design direction was reasonable, others suggested that the expansion could express more “joy” and be more playful and that rather than seek to match exactly the older building, that more creativity might be introduced which would more clearly define the original building from its newer addition. Concern was expressed that the completed building could be less massive and relate more to the scale of its surroundings.
- E. ***Storm water/Art design opportunities*** – It was suggested that more creativity be introduced in areas such as storm water management as “teachable moment” opportunities and that the conceptual inclusion of art (as in the 1% Art for Schools program) be incorporated at an early stage.
- F. ***Parking***– Seek opportunities to connect the separate pieces of the on-site parking or consider incorporating it more comprehensively into the landscape or storm water design.

PANEL ACTION:

Schematic approval withheld pending a more complete presentation of proposed design elements of the project.

Attending:

Larry Flynn, Tony Marshall – Facility Design and Construction Department, BCPS
Jayson Thoemke – Colimore Thoemke Architects
Jay Brodie, Paul Dombrowski – BDC

Ms. Eig, Messrs. Bowden, Britt, Cameron, Ramberg – Panel
Tom Stosur, Gary Cole, Laurie Feinberg, Sara Paranilam, Wolde Ararsa, Anthony Cataldo, Bob Quilter- Planning