



Location: Benning Stoddert Community Center
Meeting Date: 09 April 2015
Meeting Time: 6:00 pm
Subject: Community Meeting #4
Project: Benning Stoddert Community Center
Project #: 1415

Attending:

Karen Houser (KH)	DGS/Kramer Heery	Karen.houser@dc.gov	202 727 2800
Cynthia McClendon	DGS/Kramer Heery	cmcclend@heery.com	202 262 0850
Ella Faulkner	DPR	Ella.Faulkner@dc.gov	202 727 2800
Jackie Stanley	DPR	jackie.stanley@dc.gov	202 727 2800
Bob Widger (BW)	Sorg	BobW@sorgarchitects.com	202 393 6445
Clair Wholean (CW)	Sorg	Clairw@sorgarchitects.com	202 393 6445
Community Members			

Meeting held to update Community on the project.

Meeting Minutes

1. Introduction

- 1.1. KH introduced the team and gave an update on a few items as follows.
- 1.2. A contractor has been selected for the field lighting repair project. The fields will be unavailable for use for approximately one month while the work is underway. DGS will notify the community when dates are finalized for the work.
- 1.3. DGS is investigating the possibility of a second entrance to the parking lot. A traffic study is in progress to evaluate whether it is feasible for the project. DGS has hired a traffic consultant to coordinate a meeting with DDOT to discuss the second entrance.
- 1.4. KH noted that despite efforts to include the playground in the scope of the recreation center project, DGS has learned from cost estimates on the current design that including the playground in the current scope would put the project over budget. It is unlikely that additional DGS funds will be obtained to cover the cost of the playground; however there may be a possibility that the playground could be built in a second phase of the project if additional funds could be found.
- 1.5. Regarding the playground, KH also noted that the lease agreement between DPR and WTEF indicates that at the time of the Benning Stoddert renovation, WTEF will replace the playground that was removed when the tennis center was constructed. The playground to be

provided will be the same size as the one that was removed. Now that the recreation center construction is pending, DPR has reached out to the WTEF to begin negotiations over what will be provided per the lease. DGS and DPR will continue keep the community updated on new developments as they relate to the playground.

- 1.6. KH stated that the design for this project has progressed to 50% and has been revised to incorporate community feedback.

2. Presentation Overview

- 2.1. CW presented the design of the project starting with an overview of the site. The scope of work involves renovating the existing gymnasium, demolishing the portion of the building outside of the gymnasium, and constructing an addition. The addition is positioned to the east side and front of the gym, giving a new face to the building from the street. The entrance is centrally located and visually prominent.
- 2.2. One of the main features of the design is that the floor level of the addition will be at the same level as the gymnasium. The ramp inside the gymnasium will be removed, leading to more usable floor space. The addition will not need a ramp or stairs inside the building, so circulation is very efficient. There will be a change in grade level between the ground outside the addition and the tennis center, which will be mediated by landscape design using trees and plantings, creating a buffer between the Community Center and the Tennis Center. There are raised planters around the front and east sides of the building that flow into the patio in the rear.
- 2.3. Another main design feature is views out of the back of the building. The layout is configured to maximize views down the wooded hill to the south. From the entry vestibule, through the lounge, you can see through to the back of the building. The multipurpose rooms have full glass on the south side and open up to the patio.
- 2.4. The patio is not a raised deck; it is on grade, the same level as the adjacent ground. The size of the patio has been reduced since the last meeting in response to community input.
- 2.5. The site around the building will be modified to fit the design of the addition. The parking lot is reconfigured to add spaces, and there will no longer be spaces directly in front of the building, creating a more pleasant view of the main entrance.
- 2.6. The green roof and planted areas will absorb rainwater to meet LEED and Stormwater management requirements.
- 2.7. A bubble diagram showing adjacencies between program spaces was presented, followed by an updated floor plan. Rooms are arranged similar to the last layout, with a few changes. Both of the Multipurpose rooms now face the south side with the best view. The reception desk has an optimum position with a clear view into all other spaces in the building for security. The equipment rooms that provide space for mechanical, electrical, plumbing and IT equipment have been reconfigured. The rest of the layout is the same as the last scheme. All of the support spaces center around the lounge, the most active space in the building. The kitchen is in the center of the building and serves as a demonstration kitchen, and can be closed off when

not in use. Gym storage and lockers are in close proximity to the gym. Two (2) unisex toilets are accessible from the outside of the building. The northeast corner of the gym is opened up with glass interior windows and doors, creating a visual connection between the gym and the lounge.

- 2.8. This layout represents a compact, efficient organization of all the program spaces, with no wasted space. There are almost no hallways, as most of the circulation takes place through the lounge.
- 2.9. Exterior elevations of the building were presented. Bob W described the materials on the exterior of the addition, including ground face concrete masonry units, solid and perforated metal panels, and glass. The existing gym will be clad in fiber cement panels, giving it a new, clean look. There will be a canopy in the front of the building and the back, made of perforated metal panels. The metal panels will be painted a rust-color and the other materials complement this palette. The raised planters are surrounded by a low wall of the same concrete masonry units as the rest of the building. The masonry walls extend to a height where it conceals the gym, as well as hiding roof-top mechanical equipment from view.
- 2.10. CW gave an update on the project schedule. Sorg is currently preparing permit drawings, which will be submitted to government agencies for review. The Commission of Fine Arts has already reviewed the project and had no comments. The contractor will be brought into the project during the month of April, and we anticipate construction will start in June.

3. Discussion

- 3.1. An attendee commented that there were multiple versions of the design, and asked if the design will continue to change. KH and BW explained that the design has progressed to a point where the overall layout will stay as is. The design has changed along the way to incorporate feedback received from the community. The schedule is moving fast, with construction starting in the summer, so there will most likely be only minor changes between now and construction. In addition, KH noted that if the design changed dramatically, it would need to be re-reviewed by the Commission of Fine Arts, and there is not enough time to do this.
- 3.2. A community member asked if there are documents describing the design progression. KH noted that presentations are available on the DGS website, and meeting minutes are prepared of each community meeting.
- 3.3. A question was asked about having a design with multiple stories. KH and JS explained that it was determined early on in the project that this was not feasible within the project budget. The program of spaces fit into the current design is a one-story building and this works with the budget available.
- 3.4. The community was concerned that the added parking spaces may be used by visitors of the Tennis Center. JS explained that it will be up to the site staff to work with the Tennis Center on parking.

- 3.5. An attendee inquired about the budget. KH stated that per the mayor's proposed budget, the project budget is 5.35 million for construction; with an overall project budget of 6.75 million including soft costs such as design, legal, and program management fees.
- 3.6. A community member asked what the increase in square footage is from the existing building to the new design. The existing building is 11,561 SF, and the new building is 14,200 SF, for an increase of 2,639 SF. CW explained that unlike the compartmentalized arrangement of the existing building, the new layout is very open, so the building will feel larger and have much more usable space.
- 3.7. A community member asked about equipment in the Fitness Center. EF described the equipment that will be provided; it will include cardio machines and weights.
- 3.8. Use of the patio was discussed. CW explained that the various activities taking place in the Multipurpose rooms can move outside during warm weather, increasing the available space for other programs. EF noted that the patio could have tables or other outdoor furniture.
- 3.9. A community member brought up Deanwood Community Center, which is much larger than this project, as a comparison. KH and JS explained that Benning Stoddert has a smaller budget, so it is not feasible to provide the same amenities at Deanwood. DGS and Sorg Architects have worked hard to include as many amenities as possible within the constraints of the budget.
- 3.10. The possible location of the playground was discussed. DGS understands that locating it in the front of the site is problematic as children would have to walk across the parking lot. Other locations may present challenges due to sloping ground surfaces. When the time comes to build the playground the location will be carefully considered.
- 3.11. An attendee inquired if the existing stage in the gymnasium will remain. CW stated that it will be demolished to allow for larger court lines. The stage as well as the locker and storage rooms in the back of the gym will be demolished. The existing walls surrounding the gym will remain, as they are large enough to house the new regulation size court, once the rooms in the rear are demolished.
- 3.12. The question of a gym divider was brought up. This is not feasible within the project budget.
- 3.13. A community member asked if solar panels will be in the project. KH explained that there is a department responsible for evaluating projects where it is feasible to utilize solar power, and this project was not a candidate.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. KH noted that there will continue to be meetings to update the community on the progress of the project. During design meetings are held bimonthly, and once the project moves into construction, meetings will be held monthly. A representative from DGS/DPR also gives updates at ANC meetings.

- END OF MEETING -

Errors and omissions should be brought to our attention within ten business days so as to be made a part of this record.

Recorded by: Clair Wholean

Copies to: Karen Houser, Cynthia McClendon, Ella Faulkner, Jackie Stanley, Rachel Chung, Bob Widger