

Roosevelt Modernization School Improvement Team (SIT) Committee
Friday, Sept. 19, 2014
9:00-10:00 in the MacFarland Middle School Auditorium

Project manager Teresa Luther welcomed the group and explained that most of the meeting would deal with an explanation of the planning around finishes and colors. A handful of explanatory display boards were set up on easels so the committee stepped forward to look at them. The final decisions on colors and finishes are up to the Department of General Services but they want to advise the committee as to the general direction of the plans. Finishes and colors in the presentation have been approved by DGS except for the new terrazzo (in the atrium) and the restroom tile finishes which are not final yet. The concept is to have all tile floors and full tile walls with dark floors and lighter walls, using school colors as accents.

Ms. Luther explained that the most current floor plans are on the website, with the “ANC Meeting Presentation” (which includes Powell Elementary School and the Twin Oaks Garden) <http://dgs.dc.gov/node/466772>; (click on the image below “Featured Presentation” and set up a free log-in with SlideShare to download the presentation which includes the floor plans.)

Asked about rumors that STAY is moving out of Roosevelt, Ms. Luther said that as project manager she has not been informed of any changes and DGS is proceeding with the current design configuration.

No community meeting is scheduled for the next few months because there have been no changes that are substantive. DGS attended the local ANC meeting mid-September to update them on finishes for the building.

Mary Rankin from Perkins-Eastman, architects for the project, explained the over-arching design principles that guided their decisions: first, they wanted throughout to pay homage to the 1930s building with its beautiful brick; second, they wanted to support school spirit; and third they wanted to respect the spirit of Teddy Roosevelt and bear witness to the different sections of the United States that were important to him, particularly as a conservationist and outdoorsman.

Atrium – The former courtyard at the center of the school will be entirely enclosed as an atrium. The existing brick walls with their beautiful red-orange color will be maintained. Virtually all the windows will be new but those facing the atrium will be refurbished with the original window frames preserved intact. New terrazzo floors will be installed in the atrium in a neutral tone plus accent colors in the stone - - the palette for the terrazzo had not been decided as yet. (Throughout the rest of the building the old terrazzo will be polished and re-used.)

In response to questions about acoustical problems in atriums at Eastern and Wilson, Ms. Luther responded that DGS is looking at sound panels to be added to Eastern atrium to deal with problem noise levels and that the sound at Cardozo High School is much better. Ms. Rankin explained that there would be decorative acoustical panels high up in the new atrium.

Skylights will be sloped with gutters to deflect rain and show; the specially designed glass will either automatically darken during sunny days or it will be programmed electronically to be darkened so that screened presentations may go on during the day. The monumental stair in the atrium is designed to also provide seating/gathering areas for students.

Decoration for the acoustical baffles and a sculpture or mobile in the atrium is included in RFPs that are going out soon to artists, looking for an international theme that reflects the multicultural aspects of the school (more about the call to artists below).

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Gymnasium - Ms. Rankin explained that the gym would mainly use the school colors but would keep the existing brick, windows and skylights. Wall pads and new seats will be blue and there will be public art and graphics on the walls as well as space for athletic banners. The new floor will be maple (logo for the center of the floor will be decided in March). There will be a divider so the gym can be used as two separate practice gyms but there will be no auxiliary gym. It will be set up to handle indoor soccer with light fixtures designed to deflect balls well. These will be new durable LED lights that won't have to be changed frequently. The gym's capacity is 1,050.

Media Center - Architect Abbie Cronin (Perkins Eastman) explained that the media center is designed in three zones: stacks, discussion/classroom area and computer area. It will be designed in neutral colors with brighter accent colors. They will report back on the number of linear feet of books that can be accommodated (approved by Ms. Brown at DCPS, the administrator in charge of library programs). Shelving will have wooden end panels with metal on the inside making it easier to see through and around it than with all wood. The ceiling will have a wood-paneled accent band. Directly outside the library will be the outdoor amphitheater that can serve as an informal study or lecture space (fenced, it will functionally be a part of the interior of the school).

Auditorium – With the auditorium, Mary Rankin explained that the architects are trying to preserve as much as possible - - but they had to take out the ceiling because of asbestos so there is new plaster in the ceiling. However they are preserving the center ceiling medallion. The elliptical curve in the ceiling “dome” was behaving oddly acoustically so it will be flattened and have an acoustical panel treatment but the center elliptical medallion will remain. Ms. Rankin explained that the “picture frames” in the walls will have acoustical panels as well. They will renovate and re-use the antique pendent lights. These will be supplemented with modern house lights so the space can easily accommodate a well-lit meeting as well as a theater-type production (there have never been windows in the auditorium). Auditorium seats will be refurbished and they will re-use the wood floor but with new carpeting in the aisles - - it will be a variegated abstract pattern of warm colors.

A new wood stage floor built will be built so it ‘gives’ properly for dance performances. The central lighting booth will be at the back with all new fixtures for microphones and speakers - - it will be a full working theater with capacity for 900 plus 120 in the balcony. Two bathrooms in the theater will be augmented by the public restrooms in the adjacent art area. These will be able to be used during performances without opening the entire arts area to the public.

Gallery (Arts Wing) – They are building out huge perimeter windows and bumping up the gallery with windows at the top to add daylight. While there may be some public art in this area it mainly will be for student art display with moveable gallery surfaces to hang artwork on. There will not be a lot of color, just accents so as not to compete with the student art. There are two art classrooms. This area was originally built in the 1970s and will have resilient tile floors. All case work will be wood.

Classrooms – There will be a signature color theme for each floor using color to break up some of the longer corridors. Classrooms will each have a color accented teaching wall. All wood floors will be replaced because the lightweight concrete underneath had asbestos in it and having to drill through that for mechanical access necessitated removing and replacing it all. New floors will be wood. Exterior windows will be replaced except for the interior windows that open into the atrium which will be refurbished old windows. Teaching stations, electronics, etc. are all determined by DGS.

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Questioned about whether the colors are overly dark in the classrooms, Ms. Rankin explained that they are using bolder colors in the corridors but will use a less bright accents for the teaching walls in the classrooms.

Stadium: The only notable change in the Stadium from what is on the website is with the concession stand and handicapped bathrooms which have been moved up near the press box. The current stadium bathroom space is being renovated for general community use but handicapped accessible bathrooms will be up near the press box. The concession stand will move to the same area, nearer the entrance to ease access (and hopefully increase sales). In the former plan, the handicapped accessible bathrooms serving the stadium were inside the building and hard to get to. What had been planned as the handicapped accessible toilets will now be given over to much needed athletic storage space. The athletic director is happy with the huge new storage room. The trainers' areas inside the building will not be able to look out on the field. No windows were included due to concerns for break-ins and vandalism. Trainers will still have easy access to ice and water.

The press box will receive a small renovation including an improved sound system for data and voice. The big sign will be repainted; current stadium seating will just be touched up and cleaned. Nothing will be done to the football field or the track (these were new several years ago.)

Lockers: Lockers will be 15 inches wide, but half-height. This is because full length lockers are only available in 12 inch widths which is too narrow for today's back-packs. STAY students will be assigned lockers.

Art RFQ - - Jennifer Battle from DGS filled in for Sandy Bellamy, Director for Public Art at DGS, who could not be at the meeting. DGS will soon send out an RFQ for artworks for Roosevelt which have been tentatively located in 13-14 possible locations at Roosevelt. For instance, a bust of Roosevelt, an interactive sculpture in the waterworks area, paintings in the panels in the auditorium lobby. In November an appointed panel to select artists will include students and community members as well as the architects and representatives of DGS and DCPS. The semi-finalists will do mock-ups of designs for a January panel meeting which will vote with a final selection in February. The panel will require a substantial commitment of time because of the number of submissions expected. One member of the SIT requested that the RFP include some things that are Roosevelt-specific as well as themes about the community and the school. The RFQ is now available on the DGS website at <http://dgs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dgs/publication/attachments/OCR%20Roosevelt%20Senior%20Highschool%20-%20Call%20to%20Artists.pdf> To get an idea of what is involved in the next step, a presentation of the semi-finalists for Ballou is available at http://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/embed_code/31674902

Construction Update: Paul Mueller from Smoot-Gilbane described the project team as working really hard in the building. They have demolished the 1970's infill arts area to make room for the water works outdoor courtyard area and have demolished the slabs in atrium. The old windows that are to be re-used have been shipped off to be refurbished. In the atrium they are working on footings for the skylight pillars which will be eight huge slender steel columns that have required a nation-wide search for suppliers. Duct work is moving toward completion as is most of the mechanical work. The walls will be next in in line to start construction. The pavilion area excavation is complete and foundation piles

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have been poured there. The new slab for the garage slab has been poured - - lots of concrete is being poured at this stage of construction.

Principal Ivor Mitchell on the International Program: Mr. Mitchell welcomed STAY Principal Eugenia Young, remarking on her genuine sincerity and the inherent difficulties of sharing the swing space building. He emphasized the Roosevelt high school program describing it as a matter of re-building hopes and dreams. With the modernization, he said students can finally believe in adult promises because they can see the long-postponed construction really happening.

Mr. Mitchell offered his interpretation of the newly designated DCPS international theme for Roosevelt, explaining that being international is the reality at Roosevelt - - you can't introduce something that is already there. Roosevelt has been acknowledging the international/multicultural reality of the school for years. DCPS has "introduced" the same idea but now will be providing the resources that have always been needed to "Rooseveltize" the new school. The modernization of the physical plant has to match the spirit of Roosevelt but unfortunately, he has seen an absence of interest in focusing on Africa or the South American and the Latino community generally. The prioritization is that Roosevelt stays for Roosevelt; the international theme is for students here now.

Next SIT Meeting: SIT meetings are regularly the third Friday of every month at 9:00, usually in the MacFarland auditorium. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 17, 2014.

Attendees:

Jennifer Battle - DGS
Bernard Brox – Roosevelt student
Abbie Cronin – Perkins Eastman Architects
Tracy Eichelberger – Roosevelt Director of Transformation
Miniabiyi T. Ford - Executive Director, Mignon Iniss Ford Foundation
Teresa Luther - DGS/McKissack & McKissack
Nancy Huvendick – 21st Century School Fund
Cheryl Miller – Roosevelt Parent, Roosevelt Neighbor
Ivor Mitchell – Roosevelt Principal
Paul Mueller – Smoot/Gilbane Construction
Kyle Whitley – DGS/McKissack & McKissack
Marvin Ochoa - Roosevelt Community Schools Coordinator
Mary Rankin – Perkins Eastman Architects
Juliette Serem – Perkins Eastman Architects
Jessica Valoris - Roosevelt Dream Director
Eugenia Young – STAY Principal

Notes: Nancy Huvendick, 21st Century School Fund - nhuvendick@21csf.org. Please contact me with corrections or comments.