Facility Capacity Needs Analysis Subcommittee Meeting
of the Long Range Educational Facilities Planning Work Group
City Hall, 301 King Street, Sister Cities Conference Room 1101
Thursday, October 3, 2013 – 8:00am
Meeting Summary

Meeting notes are recorded by City Staff to provide a written record of principal items of discussion, key comments, decisions of the Work Group, and comments from the public. They are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of the meeting.

Meeting Attendees

Subcommittee Members
Judy Noritake

Hughes Group Architects
Amado Fernandez
Gavin Myers

Community Members
Amy Thomas

ACPS
Bill Finn
Laurel Hammig

City of Alexandria
Chris Bever
Steve Chozick
Ron Kagawa
Pat Mann
Amber Wheeler
Katherine Carraway

Welcome and Introductions

Laurel Hammig, Facilities Planner/GIS Specialist for Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) welcomed attendees and invited members of the Facility Capacity Needs Analysis Subcommittee (Subcommittee), Hughes Group Architects (HGA), ACPS, City of Alexandria (COA) and the public to introduce themselves.

Ms. Hammig reviewed one of the goals of the subcommittee, which is to undertake a School Facility and Site Inventory. The inventory was divided into two phases, the first being Building Interiors. HGA has been hired to assist with Phase 1 and Ms. Hammig explained that the majority of the meeting would be dedicated to their presentation of findings from the pilot school, Samuel Tucker Elementary.

Ms. Hammig explained that while HGA continues its work on other facilities in the coming months, the subcommittee will discuss how ACPS calculates capacity. Currently, a methodology exists for elementary capacity, but not for secondary.

HGA presentation

Amado Fernandez, HGA, gave an overview of the presentation and asked that at its conclusion subcommittee members make any recommendations to include additional elements in HGAs analysis.

Mr. Fernandez turned the meeting over to Gavin Myers, HGA, who began the presentation detailing HGA's goals and objectives for this project:

- Establish an inventory of school facility floor plans with supporting quantitative data for analysis
- Analyze existing educational space as relative to ability to meet current educational standards
- Evaluate appropriateness and viability as an educational environment
- Compare against benchmark standards (Virginia Dept. of Education (VDOE) guidelines)
- Provide data and baseline analysis to allow for informed decision making as to where to focus ACPS resources most effectively
- Empower ACPS and its Facilities department with a building information model as a tool for managing future changes and analysis
- Analyze existing auxiliary educational spaces as relative to current facility standards for education and community use
- Assess community use of educational facilities in terms of appropriateness and viability as an educational environment as compared to benchmarks

The group discussed afterschool program use for elementary-aged children, acknowledging that while more investigation is needed to determine which groups use these spaces and their specific needs, the three major groups are the Campagna Center, PTAs, and Recreation Parks & Cultural Activities.

The subcommittee agreed with the goals and objectives presented by Mr. Myers with the understanding that they will be regularly revisited and edited if necessary.

Mr. Myers presented the data HGA gathered on Samuel Tucker Elementary School, which resulted in a building information model. HGA surveyed every space in the building and Mr. Myers discussed the many data elements that comprise the model. Key metrics added into the model include foot candle levels, daylight assessment, acoustics measurement, whether smartboards or projectors are present, wireless access points, etc. Additionally, HGA took photographs of each space to add as documentation in the model.

Once all information is obtained, it can be exported in an Excel spreadsheet, in CAD format, into GIS, or can be parsed into schedules focusing on specific elements. The data also shows comparison against VDOE benchmarks.

The group discussed the myriad of ways that this information can be sorted and used, once it is included in the model. Judy Noritake asked how problematic components are addressed in the model that may give questionable results. Mr. Myers explained that, for example, if a mechanical unit is running when HGA is analyzing decibel levels, it is noted in the model that the results may be skewed because of it. Later, this particular space can be reanalyzed.

Ms. Hammig stated that the benefit of having this model is in having the ability to update it at any time with new and current information. It can also be sorted according to the elements needed for a particular analysis, meaning that it can be used by several ACPS and City departments.

The overall conditions of Samuel Tucker were fairly acceptable – as it is a newer school. Ms. Noritake and Amy Thomas noted that the VDOE guidelines most likely aren't keeping pace with change – meaning, for example, there will probably be spaces at the middle and high school levels that are designated as computer rooms, but VDOE doesn't require appropriate lighting for that use. They asked if HGA encounters spaces like this, how will they compare against the benchmark?

Mr. Fernandez said that it will be labeled as a 'computer' room and not generally as a 'classroom.' So, when a computer room is compared to the corresponding lighting level analysis, the data will show whether it requires a different lighting level. Mr. Myers reminded the group that HGA is focusing on educational uses for these spaces and approaches the data in those terms.

Ms. Hammig suggested that the subcommittee might want to consider recommending that ACPS create a separate benchmark from VDOE, once all of this data is collected. Ms. Noritake noted that it would be interesting to see if schools with poor results from this analysis coincide with low testing scores.

The group agreed that HGA is moving in the right direction and should continue with the other ACPS facilities under their scope of work. Ms. Noritake suggested that when this model reaches its full capacity, it will be an important resource for the City in terms of safety/fire/security issues – as it will provide one source of information with updated floor plans and information.

Bill Finn shared that in FY15, a similar analysis is planned for the exterior of ACPS facilities, including the evaluation of acreage of open space and recreational features, size and condition of playgrounds, natural resources, and site accessibility/traffic/utilities.

Next Steps

Ms. Hammig concluded the meeting with a reminder that the next subcommittee meeting is planned for late October/early November and will focus on capacity methodology.

Meeting Handouts
Agenda
Major Community Uses of Educational Facilities