

**APS South Arlington Group  
Meeting #2 – July 1, 2015  
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Columbia Heights Civic Association**

The second meeting of the “APS South Arlington Community Working Group” to site a new elementary school focused exclusively on possibilities for properties currently owned by Arlington Public Schools. The meeting was led by the Working Group Chairman Greg Greeley and School Board Member Barbara Kanninen. Arlington Board Member John Vihstadt did not attend.

The group discussed each of the current sites, based on GPS maps supplied by APS. The following is a discussion of some of the main points of each site.

**Abington School.** Abington, on South Woodrow Street, didn’t appear to have a lot of extra space on its site. But it is located near the Arlington Trades Center. Some participants wanted to explore the possibility of building a school on the Trades Center, but were dissuaded by others who had toured the facility, and reported on its very crowded services. In fact, the County is actively looking for additional space for its basic services. This site includes all of the County’s heavy duty equipment, parking and maintenance facilities for buses, the police impoundment lot, the fire training center, and other facilities.

**Barcroft School.** The Barcroft School on S. Wakefield doesn’t have a lot of extra space.

**Campbell Elementary.** Located on S. Carlin Springs Road, has some forested area behind it, and faces County forested land to the east and north. There is a possibility that the County may swap one property with the Arlington hospital, with the possibility of an area becoming available farther North on S. Carlin Springs Road. But there is no firm timetable for such a possibility.

**Patrick Henry and the Career Center.** Patrick Henry on S. Walter Reed Drive is an overcrowded school with a number of trailers. It is an old, one-story structure that can’t accommodate extra stories. It could be expanded, but the County doesn’t believe this is the best use of its money, producing only a few seats vs. building a new school. Also, John Chadwick reported that the County would prefer to conduct a larger planning study for the entire site, which would include revamping the Career Center into another full high school. The Fenwick Building on this site is another consideration. It’s a County building but the land itself is owned by APS.

**Carlin Springs/Kenmore Middle School.** APS owns a large campus that now includes Kenmore Middle School (on Arlington Boulevard) and Carlin Springs Elementary (accessed through Glen Carlyn Rd.). Two years ago APS proposed a second elementary school on this site but received pushback from neighbors. Transportation would be difficult, as access to the proposed site would have been available primarily from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street South, which is a narrow, dead-end street. A large grassy area in front of Kenmore is often used for parking during events and some thought it would not be ideal for a school.

**Claremont Elementary/Wakefield High School** – These two schools are very near each other. Claremont Elementary is on Chesterfield Road, across the street from a large property that encompasses the Wakefield High School campus. There is a field on the Wakefield site, across the street from Claremont, large enough for a new elementary school. In addition, there is a row of 14 plots of land in front of the Claremont school, facing S. Buchanan Street. If the County were able to purchase some of these homes the land could be incorporated into the school land, which would create more land for buildings or playgrounds. This would have to be a long-term acquisition plan.

**Drew School.** Drew, accessed from 22<sup>nd</sup> Street South, currently houses both a neighborhood school program and 400 students in the Montessori program. A number of groups have recommended removing the Montessori program, since its success has resulted in Drew neighborhood students having to attend Hoffman-Boston. Removing it may reduce overcrowding, both at Drew and at nearby Oakridge. It is unclear whether a new building could be built behind Drew, as it consists of a steep hill.

**Hoffman-Boston.** Located at the western portion of Columbia Pike area, with one side facing Rte. 395, it's southern side faces the Army Navy Country Club. The Hoffman-Boston campus might be able to accommodate another building, but there is limited access to the school from 13<sup>th</sup> Road South. It's difficult for students to walk there, even those for whom this is the "neighborhood school."

**Thomas Jefferson Middle School and Community Center.** This location has already been studied by APS and a plan for a new school on its Northwest parking lot has already been conceived. According to the County and APS' charge for this working group, this site will automatically be included in the list for consideration.

**Oakridge Elementary and Gunston Middle Schools.** These two schools are very near each other. Oakridge has access through 24<sup>th</sup> Street S., while Gunston's entrance is on S. Lang Street. The two schools are separated by wooded areas. Gunston's large playing fields are located on 28<sup>th</sup> Street. Dr. Kanninen pointed out that these fields are heavily used by Arlington Parks, whose ball fields are oversubscribed.

**Randolph Elementary.** Randolph is on S. Quincy Street between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets. An open area behind the school is on a steep grade making its potential development challenging.

After a lengthy discussion of all APS properties, the representatives present were asked to place one dot on discussion sheets hung around the room for each property. After this vote four schools emerged as preferred sites for initial consideration. Drew received 10 votes, Oakridge/Gunston received 8, Claremont/Wakefield and Henry received 5 each.

Several participants felt that this vote was unfair, and that a more representative vote might result if participants were able to vote for their top three choices. A second round was conducted, and the same four schools emerged as the top choices. Another two—Hoffman-Boston and Carlin Springs, emerged as “Tier 2” choices.

The final votes were:

	First Vote	Second Vote
Abington School	1	3
Barcroft School	2	6
Campbell	0	0
Patrick Henry/Career Center	<b>5</b>	<b>19 – Tier 1</b>
Carlin Springs/Kenmore Middle	0	7 – Tier 2
Claremont/Wakefield High	<b>5</b>	<b>14 – Tier 1</b>
Drew School	<b>10</b>	<b>22 – Tier 1</b>
Hoffman-Boston	2	9 – Tier 2
Thomas Jefferson	1	1
Oakridge and Gunston	<b>8</b>	<b>22 – Tier 1</b>
Randolph Elementary	2	3

It was agreed that the facilities not identified as Tier 1 options would be eliminated from the list for consideration at the present time. Tier 2 options may be reinstated if needed.

The next meeting of the Working Group will focus on county-owned property that should be considered as potential sites for the new elementary school. Future meetings will also consider sites not owned by the County or APS, as well as program options, which might have the potential to increase capacity without actually building new structures.

**Materials:**

**APS Web site:**

<http://www.apsva.us/Page/1>

**PowerPoint for Meeting #2:**

<http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/07012015%20SARL%20Site%20Selection%20Presentation.pdf>

**Meeting Minutes:**

<http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/SAWG%20Meeting%20Minutes2.pdf>

**Dot Exercise Summary:**

[http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/DOT%20EXERCISE%20SUMMARY\\_MTG2.pdf](http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/DOT%20EXERCISE%20SUMMARY_MTG2.pdf)

**Elementary Capacity Utilization Map (2014-15):**

[http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/ES\\_CAP\\_2014.pdf](http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/ES_CAP_2014.pdf)

**Map of South Arlington Public Schools and Public Parks:**

<http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/110/SARL%20Schools%20and%20Parks.pdf>