



VMDO Architects  
200 E Market Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
434.296.5684  
vmdo.com

## MEETING MINUTES

Date: 09/23/2020  
Meeting: Community Work Session #1  
Date Issued: 09/25/2020  
Sent To: Jamie Duffy, MCPS Project Manager  
Attached: Presentation Slides

*Poolesville High School*  
VMDO Project No. 1294  
Owner Project Number

### ATTENDEES:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Gary Mosesman	MCPS
Jamie Duffy	MCPS
Dennis Cross	MCPS
Debbie Szyfer	MCPS
Adrienne Karamihas	MCPS
Rosa Perez	MCPS
Ben Kaplan	Maryland IAC
Jillian Storms	Maryland State Dept of Education
Mark Carothers	PHS Staff Principal
Regina Grubb	PHS Staff
Rosalie Deoto	PHS Staff
Jennifer Marks	PHS Staff
Annemarie Sartschev	PHS Staff
Teri Gregg	PHS Staff
Susan Krouner	PHS Staff
Katie Horan	PHS Staff
Lisa Griffith	PHS Staff, PHS Parent
Laura Engler	PHS Staff, Resident
Ben Brown	PHS Parent
Julien and Beth Singh	PHS Parent
Michelle Hobbs	PHS Parent
Natalie Frazin	PHS Parent
Janet Levine	PHS Parent
Jen Brill	PHS Parent
Kari and Adam Auel	PHS Parent, PHS Alumni, Resident
Katie Longbrake	PHS Parent, PHS Alumni, Resident
Michael Huang	PHS Parent, Resident
Heidi Smith	PHS Parent, Resident
Theresa Wallingford	PHS Parent, Resident
Sandra Baggett	PHS Parent, PTSA
David Griffith	PHS Parent, PTSA
Valaree Dickerson	Town of Poolesville

Jerome J. Klobukowski	Town of Poolesville
Catherine Beliveau	Fair Access Committee
Kevin Schramm	Fair Access Committee
Jim Brown	Fair Access Committee
Laura Van Eperen	Fair Access Committee
Rob Winstead	VMDO
Maria Brinski	VMDO
Shawn Mulligan	VMDO
Noah Marble	VMDO
Ben Thompson	VMDO
Kristen Hill	VMDO
Aaron Mengel	Dustin Construction
Sarah Palmer	Dustin Construction
Claire Gunster-Kirby	(unknown)
N. Go	(unknown)
Pam Doring	(unknown)

**DISCUSSION:**

**1. Project Team**

- a. Representatives from MCPS Design and Construction were introduced with their respective roles.
- b. The project design team from VMDO were introduced with their respective roles.
- c. Dr. Carothers, Principal of Poolesville High School introduced himself and the project.

**2. Presentation**

- a. The design team walked the community through the project goals and parameters and the feedback it received through discussions with staff, teachers, and the leadership team at Poolesville High School, which summarized their vision for a school that:
  - i. Connects students from all houses, and engages them in PHS community.
  - ii. Is flexible enough to accommodate the varied curriculum, individual courses with multiple learning modes, and will support the school for many years to come.
  - iii. Is equipped with the right spaces, equipment, and technology to allow teachers and learners to work fluidly and creatively.
  - iv. Is supportive, and provides for student and faculty needs & wellness, full of light and air, promoting sustainability and ecological education.
  - v. Inspires and celebrates the unique place and community, and the high caliber and aspirations of the activity within.
- b. The design team reviewed the existing site and noted aspects of the existing conditions that will factor into the design solutions, including:
  - i. Environmental factors like prevailing winds and preferred orientation for daylighting and solar energy capture.

- ii. Existing history of construction and development on the site, and varied floor elevations.
  - iii. Site zoning, relatively flat topography, open space available for building, vehicular circulation, and existing setbacks and limits of construction.
  - iv. Existing spaces with 'good bones' that can be successfully renovated: Auditorium, Gyms.
  - v. Poolesville High School's unique academic community and Magnet program.
- c. The design team presented the site strategies that were explored during the feasibility study, and the three strategies that were studied in more detail, A Compact, B Campus, and C Addition + Renovation.
- i. All options accommodate the MCPS program, though some spaces may be slightly undersized in areas where program is located in renovated structure.
  - ii. All options include a blend of new and renovated construction.
  - iii. All options provide adequate parking, outdoor space, and accommodations for an addition to accommodate the full Master Plan capacity of 1,800 students.
  - iv. Strategy A 'Compact' proposes building a three-story bar addition connected to the existing Science Annex, with a two-story athletics wing. Most of the existing school building is demolished, except for the auditorium, which is renovated, and a performing arts wing is added to the west.
  - v. Strategy B 'Campus' proposes three separate structures connected by a covered walkway in a more collegiate feel. A three-story bar addition is proposed east of the existing Science Annex, a one-story athletic complex is built around the renovated competition gym, and a one-story visual and performing arts complex is built around the renovated auditorium.
  - vi. Strategies A and B are not feasible within the budget, but portions of A and B might be drawn into Option C which is within striking distance of the budget. Option C appears to be the most feasible path at this point.
- d. The design team presented a series of before-and-after images of transformational renovations to show how a fully renovated Poolesville High School could look.
3. VMDO and MCPS facilitated a question and answer discussion with the online participants.
- a. Questions are grouped into six categories: Site Strategy C; Security and Building Separation; Renovation and Project Phasing; Sustainable Design; Project Process, Scope, and Budget; Comments.

**Site Strategy C**

**Q1.** Catherine Beliveau: How much of the design would be what I would consider "wasted space"? (2 story foyer type areas that may look good, but have no utility)

**A1:** Rob Winstead: VMDO wants to make sure that every dollar is used for teaching and learning. We have discovered that the "magic" is not necessarily create a hard "binary" choice between what is a classroom and what is circulation, but to blur those lines and create spaces within the school that are both, like the Library and Dining Commons. If well equipped, (acoustically / lighting, etc.) these spaces can meet many learning needs outside of the traditional classroom. VMDO is constantly trying to make sure that those kinds of spaces are programmed so that teachers use them as part of the learning environment.

**Q2.** Michael Huang: Will there be any design considerations given the current impact of COVID-19 that would reduce transmission for viruses (i.e. HVAC improvements / separated spaces / etc.) and optimize safe in-person learning?

**A2:** Yes. Designing for health and wellness addresses many of the same concerns, including access to outdoor learning environments and fresh air, updated mechanical and filtration systems, flexible movable furniture, and providing for personal hygiene, to name a few.

**Q3.** Debbie: Will science classrooms be used only for science classes? Will they be in a section of the school all together?

**A3:** Rob Winsted: VMDO does not have a complete answer at this point. The existing labs are large and well-outfitted labs with a long serviceable life ahead. It is very likely that there will be a significant number of labs within that building. We continue to discuss “what is the composition of the learning communities” and “how are the various programs distributed throughout the school?” We maintain the idea to ensure we are not setting up a traditional type of school that rigidly creates parts of the school based on subject matter or discipline, but that we provide the flexibility and adaptability that any school will need in the future. We want to make labs that are accessible to students, so they do not have to travel to a far end of the building to access them.

**Q4a.** David Griffith: Is the need to save/use the science building driving the plan to renovate parts of the (very old) existing building? Or is it budget or something else?

**Q4b.** Pam Doring: I would like to know why Option C is being pitched so hard?

**Q4c.** Link Hoewing: The way this is presented it seems that C is the only real option that is being considered. While I get the security issues because of separate buildings, the reality is that the other two designs don't have to be set in stone. They are designs only and can be changed or is that wrong? Is Option C all we considering?

**A4:** Maria Bninski: VMDO tested a variety of site strategies and cost studies. Options A and B are not feasible within the budget, but portions of A and B might be drawn into Option C which is within striking distance of the budget. Option C appears to be the most feasible path at this point.

**Q5.** Denee Ferguson: Why are there two media areas?

**A5:** Rob Winstead: We've had fruitful discussions about the Dining Commons in this school and how much that is used. MCPS has had good luck with beginning to transform the Library Media Center to make it a more open and accessible space where students can eat and do other things besides access books. We will continue to have conversation around the line between the Library Media Center and the Dining Commons and how those could begin to merge into a space that is used more frequently than just the Cafeteria and Library Media Center alone.

**Q6.** Pam Doring: So, if option A is a 2.5-year build and NO portable and isolates students from construction dust/asbestos...isn't there cost saving in that option?

- A6:** The impact of construction duration, hazardous materials remediation, portable classrooms, and project phasing have been factored into the feasibility study cost estimates.
- Q7.** Regina Grubb: Looks like there would be one room for both wrestling and poms/cheer teams??
- A7:** Rob Winstead: The existing Auxiliary gym has multiple labels, including “Wrestling” and “Dance.” That space is oversized for either of those programs, so the idea would be to subdivide that space with either a moveable partition or permanent structure to create separate spaces for both Wrestling and Dance programs.
- Q8a.** Denee Ferguson: Will the new design provide enough seating that all students can sit in a chair? currently many have to sit on the floor - it’s gross
- Q8b.** Sandra Baggett : Will the cafeteria be able to accommodate all the student population?
- A8:** Shawn Mulligan: We will work closely with MCPS and PHS staff to ensure that the space and furniture match the school’s needs.
- Adrienne Karamihas: MCPS does not build high schools with auditoriums or gyms that can accommodate the entire student population.
- Comment 8:** Denee Ferguson: Clarification: it’s the cafeteria that has the seating challenges  
**Comment 8:** Denee Ferguson: Auditorium also cannot hold the entire student body
- Q9.** Heidi Smith: Will there be a Special Education expert consulting on the space to make sure that students with learning challenges are considered given all of the open spaces and glass yielding to sensory overload and learning distractions?
- A9:** Debby Szyfer: MCPS works closely with its in-house Special Education experts and teachers, who have been involved in the development of the program and will remain involved in the review of plans as the project develops.
- Q10.** Pam Doring: What happens to the Greenhouse/barn?
- A10:** Further evaluation of the existing structures needs to be conducted.
- Q11a.** Regina Grubb: On option 3, would the competition gym be renovated and as large as say Gaithersburg and paint branch HS?
- Q11b.** Regina Grubb: But will the main gymnasium be the size it is now, or will it be up to standards as the newer MCPS gymnasiums?
- Q11c.** Pam Doring: Do all three options eliminate the Aux Gym and leave the school with only one Gym?
- Q11d.** Pam Doring: Five rows of bleachers is a Middle School size gym.
- Q11e.** Lisa Griffith: But will the gym get renovated? Will we get actual bleachers?
- Q11f.** Heidi Smith: What is the number that triggers the need for an aux gym?

**Q11g.** Pam Doring: No one is asking for all students to fit in the gym. If the school does not get a big enough gym to split into two courts, that impacts more negatively than the current situation.

**Q11h.** David Griffith: Honestly a bit disingenuous to say that no school has a max capacity gym and not mention that other schools have multiple gyms. and that PHS will lose its tiny aux gym.

**Q11i:** Pam Doring: The school has those #'s due to physical constraints. PHS being a magnet school, it is has larger capacity, it can accommodate more students in the magnets that serve more county residents. So why build to current status quo?

**Q11j.** katejauch: Will gym and athletic facilities be updated so that there are railings on bleachers, wider doors, etc to be ADA compliant?

**A11:** The final size and design of the renovated competition gym is not determined at this time. Site Strategy C proposes renovating the existing gym. The current MCPS program for 1,499 students provides a gym with one competition court crossed by two practice courts separated by a retractable wall. A second, or auxiliary gym, is not included in the program until the Master Planned capacity of 1,800 students. MCPS requires a secondary, or auxiliary, gym when capacity exceeds 1,800-2,000 students. All new and renovated construction will be designed to meet current ADA requirements.

### **Security and Building Separation**

**Q12a.** Jillian Storms: Please clarify why the two separate portions of the proposed school cannot be joined?

**Q12b.** Pam Doring: What about the security of the students without having one secured building.

**Q12c:** Denee Ferguson: Option 3 does not completely eliminate the issue of having to go outside to move between buildings.

**A12:** Rob Winstead: Currently, the students pass between the Main Building and Science Annex. We have talked about the potential for a secure landscape; one that would be closed off by gates/walls/other things to provide students the opportunity to go outdoors, probably under cover between the two buildings. We have also talked about making hard connections between the two buildings, which raises some code issues that will have to be addressed but not insurmountable if that type of connection is desired.

**Q13.** Jen Brill: I think a main concern to a lot of parent/residents is that the school could be 100% locked down if it ever became necessary since we are far away from a police presence.

**A13:** We understand security is an important concern. The design team will work closely with MCPS and PHS to meet all required security requirements.

### **Renovation and Project Phasing**

**Q14a.** Pam Doring: How will asbestos be handled and the exposure to students if Option C is done?

**Q14b.** David Griffith: will construction stir up the lead in the water? especially while kids are still going to school there?

**Q14c.** Sandra Baggett: what about all the old lead pipes in the old building?

**A14:** Rob Winstead: Hazardous materials abatement will be a critical milestone in the phasing plan for construction. That work is done after any students are out of that portion of the building and it has been separated from any portion where students are. We try to take advantage of summers and holidays to do that kind of abatement to make sure that everyone is safe. That work is done prior to any significant construction to avoid any exposure or friable material making its way into occupied parts of the building.

**Q15.** David Griffith: So part of the existing building dates back to 1911?

**A15:** Yes, based on available record drawings.

**Q16.** Teri Gregg: So an incoming freshman's high school experience would be construction through their senior year?

**A16:** Rob Winstead: There will be three years of construction, so students on the campus during that time period, will experience some sort of construction at times. We believe there will be every effort made to separate the main instructional areas and the instructional schedule from the construction activities. The strategy we have developed will allow us to move most of students out of existing classrooms into new academic spaces. An incoming freshman will have the opportunity to experience something new during the course of their time at PHS.

**Q17.** Teri Gregg: Are hallway walls being made wider? Are ceilings being moved and raised?

**A17:** Wherever possible, similar to the example renovations we featured in our presentation, classrooms, learning environments, and circulation spaces will be improved.

### **Sustainable Design**

**Q18a.** Emma Laudadio: Interested in hearing some of the sustainable practices under consideration. There was mention of net zero in the future, so suspect design will accommodate future inclusion. correct?

**Q18b.** Michael Huang: There is a state requirement I believe for LEED certifications for new buildings, will this be implemented?

**Q18c.** Emma Laudadio: Interested in how building orientation is used to determine the type of windows to be used for energy efficiency.

**A18:** Rob Winstead: VMDO is definitely thinking about sustainability and it will definitely be part of the design process. VMDO has lots of experience with building rating systems, although not specifically with MCPS's Green Globes rating system, we are confident that we can deliver a project that will be high on the Green Globes rating system. As for sustainability, Montgomery County has some of the strictest stormwater quality requirements on the East Coast. VMDO's strategy is; if there is not a lot of budget for landscaping and outdoor learning environments, turn the stormwater system into learning environments and landscaping. We are hoping to have some very beautiful stormwater features and rain

gardens on the site to be used as part of the curriculum. We hope to create as many outdoor learning environments as the budget allows.

VMDO will make significant improvements with regard to building performance. Certainly, on any new additions or new structures to be added, we will do our very best to create low energy, high performing, healthy facilities. The renovations will be substantial in terms of the HVAC systems, which will have a huge impact on indoor air quality and healthy environments as well as the energy performance of the building. This building will be designed as a “Net Zero Ready” building, making sure that its orientation and roof structures, and electrical systems are set up to receive renewable energy systems when that becomes a possibility and a priority for MCPS. VMDO also uses healthy materials inside the building.

Maria Brinski: Currently, an exciting and important new theme in sustainability in architecture is “Embodied Carbon.” It takes a lot of energy to operate your building and a lot of energy to construct your building. There is a lot of encouragement to examine building re-use even if it is just the structural system. When we look at renovation or saving some materials that took a lot of energy to produce, bring to the site, and construct, that process can be very environmentally friendly.

Gary Mosesman: MCPS needs to not only meet the sustainability requirements, but potentially lead the way. There is a mandate in place at this time that we be 80% Greenhouse emissions by 2027 and 100% by 2035. This school is part of that initial step to begin looking toward the reduced Greenhouse mandate that is now required by Montgomery County.

**Project Process, Scope, Budget**

**Q19.** Brown Family: Is there a go/no-go decision point from a budget perspective?

**A19.** Rob Winstead: Budget is established at \$60.2 Million for Construction  
MCPS: The project is moving forward as \$60.2 million. The task is to meet that figure.

**Q20.** Link Hoewing: I think the question is around the fact that a huge deficit is looming, and we’ve heard capital budget cuts are coming. How will Poolesville fare?

**A20:** Due to the unforeseen budgetary constraints that COVID-19 has caused, all MCPS projects will be evaluated during the budget discussions for the upcoming fiscal years. At this time, we do not know what the possible budget cuts could have to the capital budget.

**Q21a.** Pam Doring: Very interested in costs of all three options and the, as well as indirect costs (both monetary and non-monetary) ... length of construction, disruption, dust and portables and cost of portables.

**Q21b.** Link Hoewing: What are the costs for each of the options? That was never mentioned.

**Q21c.** Kevin Schramm: What are the total construction costs for each option versus total operations cost?

**A21:** Total construction cost for each concept were estimated on current market conditions with built in escalation costs. Operational cost will be evaluated when the life cycle cost **analysis is conducted.**



The operational cost would be consistent among any of the schemes given the sections of the existing building that are to remain and fully renovated to current standards.

**Q22.** David Griffith: So MCPS budgeted more for Seneca Valley and Gaithersburg for total rebuilds?

**A22:** Seneca Valley and Gaithersburg HS were budgeted and designed/constructed under different types of school construction projects. Under the new Major Capital Projects program, school are being budgeted and designed/constructed differently based on the direction of MCPS.

**Q23.** Pam Doring: The build budget, where does the outfitting/equipping/furniture funding come from?

**A23:** The total budget for the job is \$71,313,000. Money for FF&E comes from the total budget.

**Q24a.** Claire Gunster-Kirby: Shouldn't the higher operational costs for Option C be a major drawback for that choice?

**Q24b.** Jerry K: So what you are saying is the life cycle cost saving of Options A of B over 50, 70, 100 years would not support spending more money to build Options A or B. Is that correct?

**A24:** These are 'relative' comparisons of operational cost related to the extent of new high-performing exterior envelope construction in the finished project. Since the Mechanical and Electrical systems will be similar for each scheme, which accounts for much of the operations and maintenance costs, there should be relatively small differences.

**Q25.** David Griffith: Will non-building things like the athletic fields /football stadium be renovated? Will they be used as staging for equipment and material? Can they be used for practices/games during construction?

**A25:** Rob Winstead: VMDO is trying hard to keep the boundary of construction impact as tight as possible to minimize the intrusion on the existing athletics facilities. These actions should allow the fields to be open and usable during the construction phase.

**Comment 25:** Katie Horan: Thanks for asking that, David. I was going to ask the same thing. Athletic fields/structures need serious love.

**Q26.** N.Go: Given that there are no students currently in the buildings, is it feasible for the surveys, etc. to be sped up?

**A26:** COVID-19 related closures has mixed results – while facilities are mostly unoccupied, there are more restrictions on occupation and use. Surveys are and will be conducted as efficiently as possible.

**Q27.** Jillian Storms: Will the chat be posted along with the presentation on the website? (Sorry if I missed if you already said this).

**Q28.** Jerry K: I assume this meeting is being recorded and the link to view/listen to it again will be sent to all of us. Commissioner Jerome Klobukowski

**A28:** Presentation slides and a summary of questions and answers will be posted on the MCPS project website.

**Q29a.** Claire Gunster-Kirby: Is the community center a separate project with separate County funding?

**Q29b.** N. Go: This has been very informative, but nothing has been mentioned about the possibility of having a mixed used facility with Poolesville for seniors, healthcare, and police/first responders. Has this been considered in the 3 current plans?

**A29:** Adrienne Karamihas: Any County projects would have separate County funding. At present, there is no funding for any additional building on this site, though the County has authorized funds for a Feasibility Study to explore options. MCPS and the design team are aware of this and will pursue as compact a footprint as possible to try to leave space for future development.

### Comments

**Comment:** Brown Family: Thank you; your explanations are quite clear.

**Comment:** Denee Ferguson:+1 on security concern, we are 20 minutes away from nearest police station.

**Comment:** Pam Doring: Having been a student at Linganore High when they did the renovation of "Center Court, new Gym, auditorium and such in the mid '80's...I can tell you from my personal experience something like "Option C" is highly disruptive to learning...In my opinion. BTW- the patchwork renovation done to LHS in mid -80s'...total demolition by 2008 and rebuild.

**Comment:** Pam Doring: The Aux gym is not oversized considering what other schools have, even Damascus.

**Comment.** Pam Doring: The identity is in the students being in the same building and having a gym they can have a student section at games like other schools and have practice spaces and a sense of pride. They need to be able to have a cafeteria area and classrooms where they can all see the board.

**Comment:** Pam Doring:I echo Teri Gregg's comment. Having been a student while my HS had a patch reno...Option C is highly disruptive.

**Comment:** Heidi Smith: Thank you!

**Comment:** Ben Brown: Thank you very much for this session!

**Comment:** Sartschev, Annemarie: Thank you for this presentation and the opportunity for input!

**Comment:** Carolyn Levine: Thank you!

**Comment:** Michael Huang: Thanks for the informative session.

VMDO