



Franklin Design Review Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes Wednesday 12/13/23 at 6:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

School Building Committee Members	Design Review Committee Members
<input type="checkbox"/> Jonathan Yeo <input type="checkbox"/> Mark Chitty <input type="checkbox"/> Ayesha Farag <input type="checkbox"/> Maureen Lemieux <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anping Shen <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Levy <input type="checkbox"/> Liam Hurley <input type="checkbox"/> Julia Malakie <input type="checkbox"/> Pam Wright <input type="checkbox"/> Aaron Goldman <input type="checkbox"/> Jessica Allen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peter Barrer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ellen Light <input type="checkbox"/> Ambrose Donovan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Gillespie <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thomas Gloria <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Hnasko <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jonathan Kantar <input type="checkbox"/> SingNing Kuo <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amy Mackrell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carol Schein <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Siegel
DRC City Council & School Committee Member Reps.	DRC Project Community Reps- Franklin School
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emily Prenner <input type="checkbox"/> Andrea Kelley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Baccari <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Halle
DRC Committee Staff	General Public
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joshua Morse <input type="checkbox"/> Barney Heath <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alex Valcarce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Gilman <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jini Fairly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leah Daniel <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jake Picariello <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Haueisen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geoffrey Keenan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Airasian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nick Wong <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rick Sheiber <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Geffen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dominic Puniello <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ima Jonsdottir <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Raymond Design Associates <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Kaufman <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Donahue
CHA – Owner’s Project Manager	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tom Gatzunis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amanda Sawyer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aditya Modi	
HMFH Architects	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Liebman <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melissa Greene <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lori Cowles	

1. Welcome Public

2. Project Discussion

Melissa Greene started sharing the presentation and let everyone know about where exactly the project is in terms of the phase. She provided overview of the existing site, explained about different buckets & options that were considered. She also gave a detailed explanation about site option A2 and highlighted some notable features about it such as it had the optimum accessibility, it maximized the contiguous green space on the site, the pedestrian and bicycle circulation is the safest, including the conversion of the Cherry Street access to being all pedestrian and bike, and no more vehicular access off of that route which is quite narrow, the cost at this moment, you know, estimating versus the other one seems to be the most efficient and the sustainability is quite good, and it could have, you know, efficient design with limited earthwork, which would be low and body carbon and the bus drop-off and blue zone are all very efficiently able to be laid out in this option.

Jonathan Kantar asked how the people would get access to the gym apart from the school in events of voting, and in the evening during sports.

Melissa Greene responded there is an external entrance on the back side of the gym.

Jonathan Kantar inquired if that entrance can be more towards the parking lot as well as if there is any restroom access for public and after-hours sports. He emphasized that these routes should be direct enough for easy access.

Melissa Greene responded by saying that the project team will definitely be looking into that, and the idea is to prioritize everyday user over once a year user. The team understands that everyone will use the gym after hours and to facilitate that the academic wing can be blocked off by locking the doors and the admin wing can be open to public during afterhours and other uses.

David Gillespie asked how the front door got sort of pushed way back into the site.

Melissa Greene responded that it is because of the grading. The existing sidewalk is down at 90, and to get up without utilizing ramps and stairs which separate kids who are in a wheelchair from those who are not. The team wanted to make this path fully accessible, and not a point of division between the students.

Lori Cowles emphasized that there were two main drivers to push the entrance to the back i.e., Grade difference & having a play area in the front. We wanted to avoid stairs & ramps on the front.

Stephanie Gilman pointed out that this design gives the opportunity to have Southern exposure to the main entrance.

Melissa Greene mentioned that the design started with the traditional design in Feasibility study with the entrance at the front and the design eventually evolved overtime.

Jonathan Kantar added by saying that it doesn't seem so far from the street compared to like other schools where the entries are quite back where sometimes you don't even know where the entry is.

Joshua Morse mentioned that the idea was to create a strong entrance.

Ellen Light responds by saying that she really likes the design.

Melissa Greene starts explaining about layout and segregation of different rooms.

Steven Siegel asked if there was provision for privacy for teachers in the teachers dining room to block off the view and sound from the main lobby.

Melissa Greene responded if they close the door, they'll be in their Zen space, and we can also work through different options such as the entrance door could be shifted to the other wall, so it's a little less right off the lobby. We'll certainly talk to the teachers about where their spaces are when we get to that point.

Ellen Light mentioned that it's really a smart place to put it, because it's a second pair of eyes on the entrance.

Joshua Morse highlighted the fact that for the record that we have engaged with the staff a couple of times on the design just not on that particular issue.

Melissa Greene gets back to explaining about the layouts of different floors. Talking about the solar orientation of the building, she mentioned that this is as much true North South as we could get on the site, and that will allow us to capture the best daylighting in all of the classrooms and control it the easiest as well on the south, because we could introduce some sun shading to make sure that those classes don't get too blurry, and the North will just be easy.

Melissa Greene starts explaining about different sections and how far the school will be in distance from the abutting properties.

Joshua Morse emphasized that the project team will talk and discuss a lot about sensitivity to our direct abutters. The houses on Clark Road side have a 15Ft setback. So, a bit of time will be spent trying to cite the building and the exact location that optimizes not only meeting the educational program, but also being sensitive to our direct abutters, building heights, landscaping.

Melissa Greene confirmed that the team is trying to find that happy balance where the building looks friendly from Derby St. but, it's also not imposing on Clark St.

Rick Sheiber asked if the media room that is being referred to in the plans is library or some other room.

Lori Cowles confirmed that it is the library.

David Geffen, while referring to the future expansion area on the plan, asked when that was happening. Is it going to be part of this project after the building is complete and kids move in or is it something that will be in future?

Melissa Greene confirmed that it can be done in the future if required and not part of this project.

Emily Prenner added that in all our new projects, we always make sure that we cite a place where there could be a future expansion. So, this is not unique to Franklin, this is true for all our school buildings as we build them.

David Geffen followed up with a question that the elevation that you just showed of the rendering that building portion to the right is not future and the future expansion is beyond that, correct?

Melissa Greene responded that future expansion is not shown in the rendering.

Joshua Morse clarified that our current design capacity, or our design enrollment is significantly larger than the current enrollment and significantly larger than the projected enrollment. He also added that as previously mentioned by Emily Prenner, on all our school projects where we're building elementary schools that are less than 24 classrooms, we're identifying locations for future additions.

Mike Halle mentioned that about the Site plan, the question from transportation is still pending, whether the access from Cherry Street is viable. Traffic and pedestrian flow along with parent drop off still same as existing condition, which is parent drop off is immediately next to the sidewalk that's going to bring people in from Derby, and then you've got the crosswalks coming from either bringing people from Howard Street, where there's parking across Derby Street.

Melissa Greene mentioned that the team can look at maintaining the Cherry Street access, even if only for service vehicles and stuff. But if it's not viable, we would keep the access, and maybe it wouldn't be as highly used as we dream. But maybe we can keep working and find a way to get a crosswalk over there that would support that as well.

Ellen Light mentions that the plan is sound & makes sense and is happy with it.

Amy Mackrell supports the fact that the entry location is pushed back which creates a nice plaza, a buffer place between parent drop off and school.

Steve Siegel asked if this is a MSBA project?

Melissa Greene confirmed that it's not.

Jessica Baccari pointed out that the admin wing along with the gym is perpendicular to Derby St and asked if it can be angled by 5-8 degrees.

Melissa Greene responded that we can certainly discuss and explore it.

Jessica Baccari asked that current building has cupola on top and if something similar was planned to put on the new building.

Melissa Greene responded that the team would explore such features to preserve the history.

Joshua Morse opened the floor to questions from the General Public.

Geoff Keenan asked if appropriate measure will be taken to avoid people dropping off kids from Clark Road and Russell Road and during construction, where it should not be used to park trucks and workers coming up into the neighborhood to take breaks.

Joshua Morse responded that we will be sensitive to the drop offs on that side and keep a close eye on. The contractor will be required to submit construction plan and highlight parking and entry and the team will work with them and plan it better.

Geoff Keenan also seconded Jessica Baccari's comment on exploring the angles of the building, so it improves sight lines and sun exposure.

Rick Sheiber also reiterated that it would be nice if the building is angled more towards Derby St.

Ellen Light mentioned that we will try to angle it, if possible, but if not, it can be decorated with some textures and so it does not become an eye sore.

Geoff Keenan responded that that's fine, but we would prefer if it were angled if possible.

Thomas Gloria asked in addition to sight lines what considerations have been made in terms of sound issues, such as mechanicals on the roof of the building.

Melissa Greene responded that the team is yet to engage with our mechanical engineers, but we will make sure that there's not any sort of mechanical noise escaping our site and being a nuisance to the neighbors.

Meeting Adjourned