

Welcome

Principal McDonough introduced himself and thanked everyone for their attendance. He noted that HISD believed it was important to share with the near neighbors the status of the planning for Bellaire High School and request their input. He explained that the Project Advisory Team (PAT) has worked for almost a year to develop what the new Bellaire will be. He noted that Paul Hoffman, City Manager for the City of Bellaire was present and thanked him for attending. He then introduced Sue Robertson, HISD's General Manager of Facilities Planning. Ms. Robertson noted that Bellaire is in the second group of 2012 Bond program projects and the planning and design is underway. She reported that there will be a new building for most of the campus with only the new Science Building and possibly the auditorium remaining. She explained that the PAT has recently been reviewing "risk" factors as they review various options for ways to organize the facility on the site. The factors the PAT have used are Budget, Community Impact, Design Function, Safety, Schedule, and Student Life. She handed out scorecards and asked that each participant take a moment during the Architect's presentation to personally rank the factors from least to most important. She then introduced Melissa Turnbaugh of PBK Architects and asked her to present the four options most recently reviewed by the Project Advisory Team.

Options – PBK Architects

Ms. Turnbaugh introduced the remainder of the design team and gave an overview of the design and construction timeline for the project. She noted that the various options result in different construction durations. Mr. Jorge Tiscareno, also of PBK, reviewed each of the options that are currently under consideration and noted the Design/Construction Team evaluated the risk factors (shown in italics below the option title). He also noted that during their last meeting the Project Advisory Team evaluated each option and provided their own score. Ms. Robertson noted that at the conclusion of the presentation of the options that the neighbors will be asked to do the same. Mr. Tiscareno stated that the options are named based on the general location of the main entrance.

South Rice (Multiple Phases)

Safety 5, Budget 5, Student Life 5, Schedule 5, Design Function 5, Community Impact 4

This option commences with new construction on the existing parking lot at the northeast corner of the site with each of the remaining phases entailing demolition of existing facilities and construction of new in their place. Mr. Tiscareno pointed out that this option has most of the building along South Rice and noted that this option will require 3 or 4 phases.

There was a good deal of discussion regarding the City of Bellaire's regulatory and permitting process during which a number of neighbors expressed concern with the height of the facility. There was frustration expressed that the near neighbors were not involved earlier in the process. Mr. McDonough stated that the reason for the meeting was to gather input which is valued as the various options are considered. It was noted that nothing has been decided or permits requested. The reason for the meeting was to gather input from the community about which options will best serve Bellaire High School and the community.

Ferris Option

Safety 2, Budget 2, Student Life 2, Schedule 2, Design Function 2, Community Impact 5

Ms. Turnbaugh reviewed this option which builds the new facility on the existing athletic fields and creates new fields along South Rice Avenue. This results in the entry to the school facing Maple with a bus entrance on Ferris.

Maple Street

Safety 3, Budget 4, Student Life 4, Schedule 4, Design Function 3, Community Impact 3

It was explained that this option is a hybrid version of the two previous options. The new facilities face Maple Street but a new Auditorium maintains a presence on South Rice Boulevard which many have said is important.

Green Field

Safety 0, Budget 0, Student Life 5, Schedule 0, Design Function 0, Community Impact 0

Ms. Turnbaugh noted that this option is the only one that requires the Bellaire student body to leave the campus during the construction period. This allows a single construction phase and provides the greatest opportunity to design the most ideal organization of the school.

A neighbor asked the Bellaire City Manager if it is possible to construct the school with the same number of parking spots that exists on the site today. Mr. Hoffman noted that based on current city requirements that this would not be possible. However, he agreed with the neighbor who stated that the Bellaire City Council has the authority to vary the requirements. He also noted that due to the small site, the project will be a delicate balance between the needs of the school and the community. The City Manager was asked if it is the City's goal to reduce street traffic in the area. The manager stated that to his knowledge, the City has not yet set goals for the project.

A neighbor asked if there was any consideration to reduce the size of the student body. Ms. Robertson stated that currently this has not been a consideration. She requested however that she hopes the participants will document their concerns and suggestions, such as this one, during the small group exercise. Another neighbor stated he understood that there were a great number of students who are attending Bellaire even though they do not live in the Bellaire zone. Principal McDonough stated that approximately 20 percent of the student body is magnet or transfer students from outside the attendance zone. In response to a question he stated that he is not aware of any discussions underway to re-draw the current attendance zones.

Several neighbors expressed their frustration that the future capacity is less than the current enrollment. Ms. Robertson explained that the proposed facility is sized based upon 85% utilization, but one member noted that even at 100% utilization, the new facility will not provide sufficient space for the student body. Mr. McDonough noted that Bellaire currently provides education to 3,600 students while the buildings stated capacity is 2,800.

Small Group Discussion of Options

With the presentation of options completed, Ms. Robertson requested that the neighbors at each table use the response instrument provided and discuss each of the options and provide consensus feedback.

Prioritization Exercise

While each small group discussed the options, Ms. Robertson tabulated the individual responses and informed the group that they collectively prioritized the risk factors as listed below (most important to least important) which is similar (but not identical) to the PAT's ranking: Community Impact, Safety, Design Function, Student Life, Budget, Schedule.

Small Groups Report Out

Ms. Robertson requested that a representative from each table report on the main conclusions reached within their group. She stated that the results will be compiled, reported to the PAT and posted on the HISD Bond website.

Table 6 – Green Field option was the consensus choice but the group stated that building a school smaller than the current capacity is unwise.

Table 2 – Ferris Street option was the preferred choice of 3/5 of the group, with the Green Fields option being the choice of the others. The group would prefer that the parking garage not be built but if it is a requirement that it to be designed so that trash cannot be thrown from the garage onto adjoining neighbors' yards. The group noted that they were also concerned about the security of students using the parking garage and that a full time security presence in the garage will be required.

Table 3 – This group stated that the Green Field option was the consensus preference.

Table 5 – The neighbors at this table were divided, depending on the location of their residence. They generally preferred the Rice Street option but found the Green Field option the best in terms of neighborhood impact.

Table 4 – This group stated that South Rice option was unacceptable. They stated that HISD should limit number of students to the capacity of school. It was noted that the Ferris option results in central plant noise next to Valerie which is not acceptable. The group suggested moving buildings to the center of the site and locating the green space to the perimeter. Maple Street or Green Fields options were preferred, particularly if they could be built without a garage.

Next Steps

Ms. Robertson requested the neighbors' assistance in notifying the community of the upcoming Community Meeting by sharing flyers for the meeting with their church, community organizations and friends. She noted that they would also receive a flyer at their home.

Future meetings: PAT Meeting - August 4, 2014 1:00 pm
 Community Meeting – September 4, 2014 6:30 pm
 Both meetings will be held at Bellaire High School

Ms. Robertson thanked everyone for their participation and shared her email address: brober12@houstonisd.org and said she hoped to see them at the Community Meeting on September 4, 2014.