Minutes
2012 Bond Project Advisory Team (PAT) Meeting
Wilson Montessori School

MEETING #: 007

LOCATION: Wilson Montessori School

DATE / TIME: March 9, 2015 at 5:00pm

ATTENDEES: (those marked with a check were present)

- Beth Bonnette  Principal
- Jodi Aserkoff  Elem. Teacher
- Melissa Bohls  Lower Elem. Teacher
- Jeff Mollhagen  Teacher
- Deborah Cogley  Teacher
- Wendy Freed  Early Childhood Teacher
- Debra Loewenstein  Teacher
- R. Robbins  Teacher
- Ernesto Alfaro  Parent
- Elizabeth Eriksen  Parent
- David Jans  Parent
- Amber Moncla  Parent
- Ken Smart  Parent
- Patsy Cavazos  School Support Officer
- June Spencer  Friends of Cherryhurst Park
- David Funk  HISD Planner
- Bob Myers  HISD Designer
- Brian Alling  HISD Project Manager
- Parra Camilo  Neighborhood citizen
- Terry Smith  Smith & Company Architects
- Meredith Reed  Smith & Company Architects
- Michelle Dudley  Pfluger Architects
- Stefi Santa Cruz  Pfluger Architects

PURPOSE: The purpose of the meeting was to update attendees of the project status.

AGENDA:
- Review images of recent Wilson PAT and project team’s tour visit at the School of the Woods campus
- Questions and answers from PAT and project team

DISCUSSION:
1. Mr. Brian Alling, HISD Project Manager, welcomed the Project Advisory Team (PAT) members and thanked them for attending the meeting.

2. Several members from the PAT and Wilson Montessori staff as well as representatives of the architect firms participated in a tour of the School of the Woods Montessori in west Houston on February 20, 2015. Mr. Alling presented a slide show of pictures taken during the tour at the campus. Below are noted comments by the PAT and Wilson staff made during this PAT meeting regarding design elements of the School of the Woods.
   a. The 7th and 8th grade classroom area is a separate building on campus and has a central circular meeting area. The Wilson PAT members liked these elements of this area:
i. Raised carpeted seating is constructed in three levels to create a circular area for students to meet together and work.

ii. Lower tier seating surface is hinged to open and provides storage areas in the seating.

iii. The central meeting area is not part of a main campus circulation path which allows for more private conversations and counseling with students. The campus considers this area as the ‘heart of the school’ because its design and location facilitates the campus student needs and the Montessori curriculum.

iv. Classrooms are immediately adjacent to the seating area which allows for flexible use of the space throughout the day.

v. Students and staff meet in the space for collaboration meetings as well as to provide surfaces for students to use.

vi. Skylights are provided above the seating area which provide desired day lighting.

vii. Student lockers surround the seating area and are built to a height which provide a back for top tier seating and also provides central student storage spaces in lockers.

viii. Student locker height is also low enough to allow for visual observation of the entire seating room area and into other adjacent classrooms.

ix. The seating area has a curtain attached to a track which wraps around a portion of the area and provides a backdrop for student presentations.

x. A movable podium is located in the seating area and has a built-in storage cabinet in the base of the podium used for teacher supplies.

b. The 7th and 8th grade classroom area at School of the Woods also has the following noted design features:

i. Small staff offices and work rooms are dispersed around the area and have windows to allow for observation of student areas.

ii. Library and reference materials are on shelves distributed in several different areas of the building to allow for improved student access to the materials.

iii. Restrooms are provided in this building and are near the classrooms which allows the staff to better monitor students.

iv. Casework cabinet sizes allow for storage of Montessori teaching supplies and containers.

v. School of the Woods uses tables for student desks and are shaped to allow for flexible configurations for varying student collaboration projects.

c. Other noted design elements at the School of the Woods campus were:

i. The campus is made up of multiple different buildings which are connected by sidewalks and gravel paths.

ii. To facilitate the Montessori curriculum, there are numerous outdoor teaching areas which have park tables and benches, planters for various gardens and rain water collection elements.

iii. There is no central library at the campus. The resource and fiction materials are distributed throughout the campus’ different buildings and classrooms. The campus uses a database system which catalogs all documents and its location. Each building
area of the campus has a network computer to allow staff and students to log in and out the materials.

iv. There is no gymnasium, central dining or kitchen on campus. Students eat in their classrooms or outside at the park area and play outside in playground or hard surface areas.

3. Mr. Bob Myers, HISD Design Manager, discussed what to expect at the upcoming design charrette phase of the project.
   a. The charrette will most likely be conducted in conjunction with design charrettes for other HISD campus projects.
   b. Each project team will typically meet together with the architect teams and HISD representatives to collaborate the various project scopes, issues and possible solutions. Mr. Myers explained the shared charrette time is designed for working and sharing these issues and solutions and offers opportunities to explore other possible design solutions.
   c. Each campus' team will also have time to meet independently as well during this charrette phase to address the unique issues for each project and develop independent design solutions.
   d. Mr. Myers discussed with PAT attendees possible dates for the upcoming charrette. He indicated he would coordinate with HISD managers and other project teams for the schedule and communicate these dates to Principal Bonnette to share with the PAT members.

QUESTIONS/ANSWERS:
1. Ms. Michelle Dudley of Pfluger Architects asked a few questions to the campus staff for clarification of some of the noted Education Specification document and campus program requests. Principal Bonnette provided the following clarification items:
   a. The new cafeteria should probably be located in the new building addition.
   b. The current library is too small for a K-8 campus. The campus administration is open to considering distributing materials throughout the school similar to the School of the Woods. They are also open to a hybrid library design for the library material location and system.
   c. Counselor spaces are not programmed in the Educational Specification document. Yes, the campus has a counselor for 2 days a week and does need a space to meet in.
   d. Wilson also has a Magnet Coordinator and an Assistant Principal full time who require offices.
   e. The current computer lab is in a location projected to be remodeled for another use. The lab will need to be relocated elsewhere on campus.
   f. Art needs to be a very flexible, open, light filled space to accommodate puppet shows, murals, etc.
   g. In the 7th and 8th grade middle school new space design, the programmed kiva needs to be the heart of the space, central if possible. There will be two teams of 50 that could possibly share a single kiva. The campus also indicated there is a need a student-use training kitchen area as well.
ACTION ITEMS:
7.01 Bob Myers will coordinate with HISD Bond Design Department staff to schedule the upcoming Design Charrette and communicate with Principal Bonnette.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE NEXT PAT MEETING:
1. The PAT will be presented with a design charrette schedule update. Any images developed from the future charrette will be shared at the next PAT meeting.

NEXT PAT MEETING:  Monday, April 13, 2015 at 5:00 pm at Wilson Montessori Library.

Please review the meeting minutes and submit any changes or corrections to the author. After five (5) days, the minutes will be assumed to be accurate.

Sincerely,

Brian S. Alling
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