

## **Project Planning Committee (PPC) Kickoff Meeting Minutes**

### **New Northern Adelphi Area High School Project**

**Date:** April 9, 2025

**Time:** 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM

**Location:** Virtual

**Facilitator:** Robert Nelson, Communications Manager, Department of Capital Programs

#### **Attendees:**

Aisha Barrios Negrón

Cordelia Polley

Frazier Richmond

Garry Dennis

Hiwot Haileselassie

Jason Fritz

Leroy Alicea

Monica Welch

Pamela Smith

Robert Nelson

Sandra Atkinson

Anthony Shumate

Nicole Isley-McClure

Rebecca Garcia

Scott Adams

Diane Carillo

Terri Dendy

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Robert Nelson opened the meeting by informing members that only the meeting minutes, not the recording, would be shared on the website. He confirmed that the minutes would be posted on the new Northern Project webpage, and a link would be provided.

Dr. Nicole Isley-McClure (Committee Chair) and Hewitt Haileselassie (Lead Project Manager) were introduced. Scott Adams and Jason Fritz (Civil Engineer) provided the agenda for the meeting.

#### **Purpose of the PPC**

Robert reminded members that the PPC serves to gather input from school and community representatives to help inform design decisions. While the committee does not have approval authority, its recommendations are highly valued by the project team.

## **Project Updates and Site Discussion**

### **Presented by Jason Fritz and Scott Adams**

Jason Fritz presented the site plan and provided updates on driveway access, coordination with the University of Maryland, and environmental considerations. Key updates included:

- Driveway access will be from Metzerott Road via a new signalized intersection.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in progress with the University of Maryland to share a stadium facility. UMD will primarily use the track for events, while the field will serve PGCPs needs.
- Environmental buffers due to streams and wetlands significantly limit development areas.
- Parking, student drop-off, bus zones, CTE wing, and loading areas were reviewed.
- Softball and baseball fields were discussed, with the baseball field located roughly 1,800 feet (or one-third of a mile) from the main building due to topography constraints.

### **Key Concerns Raised:**

- **Site Navigation:** Committee members requested that future presentations include visible pointers and orientation labels (e.g., north/south).
- **Pedestrian Access & Safety:** Concerns were raised about walkable access to fields and the possibility of unauthorized public access to school grounds. Members emphasized the need for fencing and pedestrian studies.
- **Transportation & Supervision:** Questions arose about students accessing athletic fields for practices and games. Members discussed the need for EMS access, potential shuttling, and ensuring ADA compliance.
- **Community Impact:** Members expressed the importance of insulating surrounding communities from increased traffic and disruption.
- **Future Site Visit:** The committee expressed interest in a field visit. Hiwot mentioned that most of the site is undeveloped and that a site visit is not recommended at this time.

- **Traffic Study:** Members requested data from recent or pending traffic studies for Metzert Road and surrounding areas.

### **Design and Facilities Concerns**

Discussion included the practice field near the tennis courts and field usage by sports like soccer, lacrosse, and baseball. Significant time was spent discussing the placement of the baseball field, which is approximately 1,800 feet or roughly a third of a mile from the main building.

Several committee members voiced concerns about the impact of this distance on:

- **Student Supervision and Safety:**  
Concerns were raised about how students would be monitored while traveling to and from the field for classes, practices, or games. Committee members noted potential risks in emergency situations (e.g., injury during play, need for EMS access) and emphasized that these logistics must be accounted for in safety planning.
- **Time Constraints for Athletes:**  
Members pointed out that the walk from the school to the field would significantly reduce the time available for warm-ups or practice. This could affect athletic performance and team scheduling. Suggestions were made to explore options for shuttle service or added parking near the field to reduce commute time.
- **Accessibility:**  
Committee members questioned how students with physical disabilities would be accommodated. There was also concern about spectator access, especially for family members who may have mobility challenges. It was suggested that accessibility and ADA compliance be carefully integrated into planning.
- **Student Participation:**  
Members from the athletics side expressed worry that students might choose not to participate in sports like baseball or softball if the commute to practice was too long or inconvenient. They emphasized the need for facilities that encourage, not discourage, engagement.
- **Community and Fan Access:**  
Beyond athletes, the committee discussed how this distance would impact fan attendance and the broader community's ability to engage with school athletics. The field's separation from the primary school and stadium could create logistical and cultural divides between student groups and sports programs.

The project team acknowledged the concern and explained that the placement of the baseball field is primarily driven by site constraints such as environmental buffers, elevation, and the existing structures. The northern area of the site, closer to Buck Lodge Middle School, offered the flattest and most suitable terrain for a regulation-sized baseball field, even though it's farther from the academic building.

Discussions will continue to explore transportation support, site security, and accessibility measures to make the field more usable despite its distance.

### **Floor Plan Review and Next Steps**

Robert Nelson and Scott Adams shared that floor plans were available for committee review but should not be shared publicly due to safety and confidentiality concerns.

### **Proposals Discussed:**

- Hewitt may arrange a separate pre-meeting walkthrough of the floor plans.
- Password-protected viewing options are being explored for secure access by committee members.

The school design was described as a five-story structure with integrated CTE wings, adapted to the site's topography. Public-facing spaces (gym, auditorium) are grouped together with administrative areas. This design is unique to the New Northern project and is not modeled after existing schools.

### **Next Meeting**

The next PPC meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 23, 2025, from 3:15 PM to 4:15 PM.**

Members are encouraged to review the building layout and floor plans before the next session and submit questions in advance to Robert Nelson.

### **Closing Remarks**

Dr. Isley-McClure encouraged committee members to share insights based on their school-based experiences. Robert Nelson emphasized that all input is valuable and that questions submitted by absent members would be incorporated into the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM.