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# The Akron Architectural Group

Braun & Steidl Architects ▪ GPD Group ▪ Hasenstab Architects, Inc. ▪ Moody Nolan, Inc. ▪ TC Architects, Incorporated ▪ URS

## AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Community Planning Meeting #2  
Forest Hill Community Learning Center  
Wednesday, March 23, 2005**

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### In Attendance

D. Spehar .....	AAG
G. Taylor .....	Akron Public Schools
K. Balchak .....	Akron Public Schools
B. Cacioppo .....	Akron Public Schools
C. Rakic .....	Akron Public Schools
J. Walker .....	Akron Public Schools
K. Stokes Horn .....	Akron Public Schools
D. Groeger .....	Akron Public Schools
C. Friedman .....	Akron Public Schools
J. Finley .....	City of Akron (City Council)
T. Long .....	City of Akron
H. Tomic .....	City of Akron
L. Jennings .....	Burges and Burges
C. Yaceczko .....	CPT

### Distribution

Project Managers	
M. Salopek .....	AAG
D. Mitchell .....	AAG
D. James .....	Akron Public Schools
J. Beal .....	Akron Public Schools
G. Taylor .....	Akron Public Schools
K. Balchak .....	Akron Public Schools
R. Jones Blum .....	Akron Public Schools
L. Duncan .....	City of Akron
T. Long .....	City of Akron
M. Williamson .....	City of Akron
D. Krutz .....	RKPS
L. Jennings .....	Burges and Burges

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The following is a review of items discussed at the meeting:

- L. Jennings emphasized the importance of the Community Planning Team’s input during the design and planning process to properly identify specific community needs to ensure a successful Community Learning Center.
  
- The Canton Schools bus tour was discussed. The following observations were made:
  - Liked automatic faucets, requested infrared in lieu of push buttons.
  - Liked group toilet rooms with the sinks visible from the corridor.
  - Liked the vestibule security at the main entrance.
  - Noted that there was video surveillance equipment.
  - Noted that the gym and auditeria were too noisy and needed acoustic treatments.
  - Noted that the gym locker rooms were too small.
  - Disliked the teacher dining area adjacent to student dining.
  - Disliked seating style for auditeria chairs.
  - Liked the electronic billboard in the auditeria.
  - Requested a coat room or area for hanging coats near the auditeria.
  - Noted that the corridor tack strips were too high.
  - Liked movable storage bins and bookcases in the classrooms.
  - Disliked the teacher’s wardrobe unit and teaching station.
  - Disliked large windows into corridors from classrooms. Thought they were a security issue and limited wall space.
  - Liked cubbies/lockers inside classrooms.
  
- L. Jennings led a focus group discussion. The following topics were discussed:
  - How do you think things are going in Akron:
    - Growing community, see new city amenities.
    - City is constantly modernizing.
    - Economy is changing for average “blue collar” families, it has become more challenging.
  - How do you think things are going in the Akron Public Schools:
    - Feel the schools are getting “cleaned up”.
    - Junior achievement program is beneficial.
    - Student safety is a concern.
    - Feel there is a genuine link between businesses and the schools.
    - Think that education is “going backwards” due to funding and staff cuts.
    - Class sizes have increased – up to 26 students per class.
    - Limited amount of teacher’s aides.
    - PTA membership is down.
    - Forest Hill has good parent/teacher interaction.
  - What are major issues facing the neighborhood and city:
    - Don’t feel as safe today as in the past. Feel that increased unemployment has resulted in more drug use and poverty.
    - Positive reaction to very diverse culture in the community.
  - How do you see the Community Learning Centers (CLCs) being utilized and who are potential partners in the community:
    - All agreed that the CLC concept is a good idea.
    - Would like to see increased involvement of the University of Akron student teacher program. Suggested a university classroom located within the CLC for day and evening U of A classes.

- The group noted that there are several community groups already active in the neighborhood that the CLC would like to team with (church organizations, the International Institute, etc.)
- T. Long suggested a “community outreach” space be provided for these organizations.
- Recreational athletics programs are very popular.
- Music and dance programs are missing. L. Jennings noted that he can take these types of suggestions and try to identify providers.
- Summer programs were suggested such as in-school camp or programs with the zoo.
- Safety town.
- Preschool care before and after school is greatly needed. B. Cacioppo recommended that 2 schools per cluster should have an Integrated Preschool Program (IPP) for non- and special-needs children. It was questioned if this would require additional space. It was noted that this type of program may help keep students from charter schools.
- Daycare could be provided by leasing space to a private group. Possibly integrated adult (senior) and child daycare.
- Provide adult computer training and open internet access for the community in the Media Center computer lab.
- Self defense and exercise programs.
- Scouting programs.
- Senior citizen volunteer program for tutoring students.
- Adult education programs such as parenting skills and nutrition classes.
- 12 step programs.
- Veterans programs.
- Kiwanis programs.
- Provide counseling space for the children’s services bureau.
- Provide dental and eye care services or a wellness clinic. Possibly team with the Akron Dental Institute or Akron Children’s Hospital.
- Is there anything you would not want to happen in the CLC:
  - If spaces are open to the community during school hours access to classroom spaces must be restricted.
  - Security for evening activities/group use is a concern. T. Long noted that any activities or groups must be approved by the District and the City and the CLCs are not intended to just be open to the general public. Some felt that increased evening activity might make the building safer. T. Long also noted that there will be office space for a City employee to monitor evening/weekend activities.
- Are there other concerns about the use of the CLCs:
  - Cost for maintaining the buildings was discussed. T. Long stated that the joint agreement between the District and the City defines how costs will be shared. APS will be responsible for general maintenance costs and the City will pay a set amount for utility costs. D. Spehar noted that the mechanical system will be more efficient than the current school and that it will be “zoned” to control separate parts of the building independent of each other to minimize costs. He also noted that the OSFC has specific guidelines for energy efficiency of the building construction.
- The group was commended on their focus and their interest in providing the necessary input to maximize the use of the CLC. Everyone present was reminded to try and bring along new Team members to the next meeting.

- There are three “Roll-up Sleeves Committee” meetings scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm. During these meetings a core group will refine the OSFC Program of Requirements to determine the appropriate spaces for this CLC. Following these meetings there will be another Community Planning Team meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.

The preceding is AAG’s interpretation of the meeting. Any changes, additions, or clarifications should be forwarded to our office as soon as possible. Unless these changes are furnished within ten (10) working days, it will be understood that all parties are in agreement with the preceding statements.