

# 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**  
**Sam Salem Community Learning Center**  
**Wednesday, April 6, 2005 @ 6:00 p.m.**

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### In Attendance

F. Herr .....	Akron Public Schools
E. Marcius .....	Akron Public Schools
N. Bradbary.....	Akron Public Schools
J. Birath .....	AAG
L. Duncan.....	City of Akron
B. Duncan .....	City of Akron Planning
L. Jennings.....	Burgess & Burgess
M. Lewis .....	CTP
R. Wandy .....	CTP
D. Watt.....	CTP
K. Dormany .....	CTP
M. Vicbery.....	CTP
C. Werling.....	CTP
Mr. Salem .....	CTP
Mrs. Salem.....	CTP
J. Bunin, Jr.....	CTP

### Distribution

AAG Project Managers	
M. Salopek .....	AAG
D. Mitchell .....	AAG
D. James.....	Akron Public Schools
J. Beal.....	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. He emphasized that everyone must participate to ensure a successful Community Learning Center that meets the specific needs of the community.

- L. Jennings defined the meeting as a focus group exercise. He began by asking how is Akron, as a city, doing and how do you think things are going in Akron? Responses were:
  - There is a lot to do in Akron.
  - Akron is continually growing.
  - The new public libraries are great resources to the community.
  - Lock 3 is a fantastic place.
  - Entertainment costs are low.
  - Akron has good leadership.
  - Akron has a good school system.
  - It is hard to find a good job. A good job is one that pays better than ten dollars per hour.
  - There is not much manufacturing anymore.
  - The work force requires different skills in today's market.
  - Twenty-one percent of adults in the Kenmore cluster do not have a high school degree. Considering all of the higher education facilities in the area, this is a shame.
  - Community needs skill training.
  - The immediate neighborhood is lower income, most homes are very old and require improvements.
  
- L. Jennings asked how the Akron schools doing and how do you think things are going in the Akron Public Schools? Responses were:
  - Akron Public Schools are going great. There have not been any levies since 1993, which is unusual for an urban district.
  - The old buildings are in very good condition.
  - There are differences between schools. At some schools the children are out of control and discipline is lacking.
  - The curriculum is not equal at the schools.
  - There are too many students at various levels. There is too much focus on those who are behind and not enough on those in the lead.
  - OPT scores have gone up taking the district out of academic emergency.
  - Special education in the district is very good.
  - The OPT requirements will be detrimental to the district.
  - There are good and bad things that happen in each school building throughout the district.
  
- L. Jennings asked the question do we need a new Sam Salem CLC? Will it make a difference? Responses were:
  - There is a fear that it will not make a difference.
  - Less than thirty percent of Akron has a child in the Akron Public Schools.
  - It may create a way to bring the community back together.
  - There are current issues with vandalism and a new facility might be tempting to many to vandalize.
    - L. Jennings noted that the community will need to take ownership of the building. When this happens, as other locations across the country have experience, the chance of vandalism declines.

- Residents currently patrol the grounds, chase kids away when necessary and call the police out.
- L. Jennings asked if the new building will make a difference in the neighborhood? Responses were:
  - There may be opportunities to enroll troubled children into the community. This might be through intervention programs.
  - It is an opportunity to change the neighborhood only if it is addressing community needs.
  - This neighborhood has physical boundaries that define it.
- L. Jennings asked how do you see the Community Learning Centers (CLC's) being utilized? Responses were:
  - For various art and music programs.
  - Juvenal intervention programs.
  - For neighborhood recreation leagues.
  - To teach computer skills.
  - If you live in the neighborhood, you should have the right to use the facility.
  - Before and after school child care.
  - There is a senior community center on Kenmore. It is separated from the neighborhood and the new CLC could be good for the seniors living in the neighborhood.
  - Dance programs.
  - Summer programs for children.
  - Summer school for enrichment and catch-up.
  - Parents asked if the new CLC would be used during school operating hours for community. L. Duncan responded that it would be possible, but limited to small meeting rooms keeping the children separated from adults that may be there.
- L. Jennings asked is there anything you do not want to happen in the new CLC? Responses were:
  - Alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs should not be at the new CLC. Concern was expressed about having individuals with alcohol and drug problems being at a building that young children use. Even after school hours, the playground and multi-use field could have children playing on it.
  - Concern was expressed that the safety of the children should always be the priority.
- L. Jennings asked if there are other concerns about the use of the CLC?
  - If there is to be job skill training at night, childcare will need to be provided. Many community members do not have the time to attend classes in the early evening due to work schedules. L. Jennings responded that he is working with care providers and if there is a need for late night care, it could be provided.
  - How will the building be maintained? J. Birath responded that the buildings will be designed for sustainability and that the OSFC requires maintenance funding set aside for the new buildings.
  - Playgrounds need to have shaded areas for children with special needs.
- J. Birath issued a request for volunteers to join the Roll-Up the Sleeves (RUS) Team. There are two groups that volunteers are required for. The first is the Community Planning Team (CPT) that is composed of parents, neighbors and potential partners to review the proposals and

make suggestions. Those attending the meeting fall into this category. The second is the RUS Team that is composed of teachers, other staff and a few community members to get into the detail of the new Center and create the proposals to present to the CPT. The RUS Team will be meeting April 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:45pm in the LRC.

- J. Birath indicated that on Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am there will be a field trip to review Allen Elementary in Canton, an OSFC funded project that has recently completed construction. Directions were available at the meeting.
- The next community meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm at the same meeting space.

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.