

This meeting was held at the Farina Administration Building to discuss the impact of the potential New High School at the Methacton High School Campus to its immediate surrounding neighbors. Representatives from the District, Architect, Construction Manager, and Civil Engineer presented and took questions from the immediate neighbors. Dr. Zerbe (DZ) introduced the conversation hoping that the evening could be a discussion of issues pertaining specifically to the neighbors who reside directly around the high school property.

The design team introduced the project to provide a background within which to frame the conversation. Once the introductions were complete, the floor was opened for questions, answers and general comments about the project and its potential or perceived impact on the surrounding properties.

Comments from the residents, in general, pertain to traffic, parking, storm water, construction challenges and other site related items. The specific comments in the order in which they were received are as follows. Note that the primary focus of the comment precedes the conversation information:

1. Storm water – a neighbor indicated they have concern about water that comes off the site and washes their driveway as outfall on Mill Lane.

Response: Chris Jensen (CJ) described the Storm Water Management (SWM) storage requirements which should alleviate that issue with the proposed design.

2. Storm water management – surface runoff – will it go into containment or sheet flow to neighbors? The neighbor described a trench that opened from the storm water runoff.

Response: CJ described the outfall along the Kriebel Mill extension – and the probable need to enlarge the pipe both in the site's current state and with the proposed design.

3. Well water - Many of the neighbors are on well water – concerned about the alleged artificial turf field contaminants. Will there be any testing conducted?

Response: Given that the site is not conducive to infiltration, the SWM will have impervious barriers to reduce possibility of the flow of contaminants into the soil.

4. Impervious surface - Is this project creating an increase in impervious?

Response: CJ indicated that the proposed concept is approximately 45% impervious and the current site is approximately 43% impervious.

5. Storm water management - Slow-release basins – Will it still conduct storm water to Mill Road exclusively? Is any water going to the outfall behind the transportation center?

Response: CJ indicated he has information from the prior playing field project and is working with both the conservation district and the prior engineer. The design team understands no additional outfall can go to the Anvil Road neighborhood and is working towards that with the proposed SWM plan.

6. Storm water management - Given the SWM increase on the site, is the impervious surface increase creating that same increase in the total runoff?

Response: CJ indicated that the entire site now has to be handled with SWM vs the fact that the prior project had little or no SWM. The proposed concept will result in a decrease in the rate of storm water from the site compared to the current condition.

7. Parking – the site construction process won't provide for the total parking requirements for quite some time. There will be times during the construction project where there will not be enough parking. How will parking and SWM handled?

Response: CJ indicated that there will be a significant phasing process designed to accommodate the needs, whether they be parking or SWM. CJ also showed how parking is proposed to be phased throughout the project.

Also, will there be times during the construction process that create more of the impervious that either the before or post construction conditions?

Response: Chris described the interim erosion control methods that will reduce these concerns.

The same neighbor on the corner of Kriebel Mill Road and Mill Road would like to see solutions to the current traffic issues. Will the district have specific measures in place to slow traffic and work on traffic flow.

Response: CJ noted that the traffic study is starting which will contribute to the solution. Dr. Zerbe asked that the team have communications with the neighbors to describe changes to traffic. The team will communicate when changes occur on a regular basis during the design and construction process.

8. Walkers – The neighbor on the other side of the intersection described the safety issue for walkers. Something needs to be done with crosswalks and sidewalks and a possible three-way stop.
9. A neighbor expressed concerns about the plan for how the site works both during construction and once it is complete - Plans and contingencies need some weight to them and the District needs to enforce these plans. The school and Township need to work

together to implement true traffic measures around the site both during and post construction. Contingencies should be in place in the event that the solutions do not work.

10. Building height – The resident at 1006 Anvil – the neighbors along the treeline – concern about a building that is three stories tall – lights will be facing the direction from the baseball field. What is the team thinking for the 4-5 houses directly along the property line.

Response: CJ described further landscaping and buffer. Also described the setback of 125' required by the Township and that the building will be further back than that. The public activities are on the central part of the site so those should not affect the neighbors. CJ also described the focused LED lighting which you will see from afar but will not create glare into houses.

Also concern about the roadway proposed behind the building.

Response: It's intended to be more of a limited access emergency drive. Devin Bradbury (DB) also noted renderings that will be created to depict what the building might look like from an individual's house. Those will be made available to the neighbors as the design progresses.

11. Storm water management – A neighbor has an issue with the head of Mill and Kriebel Mill where the water outlet was installed for the new playing fields. The neighbor provided a photo of a sheet water flow across the road from the water runoff. Hoping the gentlemen can connect with Doug Kenwood (DK) of the district. Also, will you be making any road improvements? The traffic situation is horrendous.

Response: The team indicates the traffic study may lead to some improvements. CJ also described the changes in traffic circulation proposed on the site that should remove some of the traffic from the roadways and internalize it to the site. The traffic study will describe any improvements on the roadways.

12. Traffic study – can there be a traffic study for construction traffic? The neighbor doesn't want to see trucks running down Anvil Lane. There needs to be a plan to be sure speeding dump trucks don't go down Anvil Lane.

Response: CJ mentioned that the construction contract can be written around access requirements for deliveries etc. This will be developed through phasing and construction. Considerations can be added to the phasing plan and construction restriction plan that can be shared with the neighbors.

13. Student gathering areas on the site - Corner of Germantown and Anvil – space between the treeline and road. What will be installed in those areas that may attract students? Where are the hangout places for students and will they create adverse situations with students “hanging out” for the neighbors?

Response: The courtyard was created to provide for student “hangout area”. It will happen internally to the building rather than on the outside of the facility. The athletics areas are the other primary student congregation areas. A landscape buffer will be included at the backside of the building to further separate students from neighbors. There is no plan for benches or structures that would encourage hang-outs along the buffer.

14. Kriebel Mill Road – Where is the student entrance. The student entry is directly across from the neighbor’s driveway. Can that access point be shifted? Headlights shine right into the neighbor’s house.

15. Access to Mill Road – buses currently line up in front of the school – will they line up on the access road?

Response: Answer is no. They will be internalized at the center of the site.

The access road also has significant grade which is a concern.

Parking lot lights – the same as current parking areas?

Response: Lighting is required for safety. The township criteria for light pole height and lighting intensity will drive the parking

16. Parking - How much parking is on the site vs what is currently provided?

Response: Currently we have 605 parking spaces. This plan shows 875 in order to remove the concern about encroaching upon neighborhoods and other parking lots.

17. Traffic flow – Is all bus traffic going to Mill Road vs traffic today from various locations? Traffic study can look at this issue. Concern about concentrating all of the buses to one location.

Response: Residents need to understand that buses will be more concentrated on Mill Road with this solution, however there may be less cars.

What is the phasing and timeline for the project?

Response: Phasing – 2 years or more to build new, 1 year to demo the existing building.

What will you do about parking during the construction?

Response: The beginning concepts of phasing have begun. Options will be developed. DZ also noted the district is wondering whether there is a way to move all buses off the campus during construction. The congestion is not necessarily about the buses but about the bus driver cars that absorb parking spaces on the site. If bus parking off site is not permanent it will at least be a temporary solution during construction.

18. Zoning and code - new building – it is conceptual – have you checked Worcester Township code to see if a three-story building is allowable?

Response: Three stories will require a variance. There are some setback requirements along Kreibel Mill Road as well. DZ also noted discussion points about zoning have been included in prior slides provided on the district website.

19. Roads peripheral to site – how will you deal with three agency roadways?

Response: When the traffic impact study is complete, the study will suggest who the traffic engineers will deal with for each.

The neighbor provided a piece of feedback – one of the community Facebook discussions was about parent drop offs – all comments on the Facebook page indicate the root cause is bullying on the bus.

20. Public Sewer - Some neighbors have issues – however positive items include tapping into public sewer – Then neighbor suggests perhaps the public sewer system might be offered to neighbors? Many of the neighbors might appreciate sewer connections.

Response: CJ discussed how the planning module is conducted for connection of the school (currently on its own sewer) to a public sewer system. That kind of planning requires discussion with Worcester twp. and Lower Providence Township (who accepts the flow). DZ suggested a separate meeting might be held to discuss this. DZ indicated the district can't pay the tap in fees but perhaps the sewer lines can be run. A meeting will be held to discuss it further.

21. Building Capacity - How many students is the new facility designed for compared to current facility? Does any of this population have to do with City view?

Response: The proposed concept is designed for 1645 students (which is 85% of the maximum that the facility can hold) - the current building is designed for 2150... So, with the 85% factor this facility is slightly smaller than the existing facility. That said, there is flexibility in the plan for expansion. The team also notes there are approximately 1500 students in the existing building.

22. Timeline - What is the timeline for the project?

Response: Design and permitting is one year, construction is two or more years, demolition and site restoration is one year. The Act 34 Hearing is currently scheduled for September 2025. Fall of 2028 the building is conceptually proposed to be ready to move in (contingent on design and approval timelines) . Possible opening winter of 2028/2029.

23. Alternative solution - If this new facility does not happen, is option B renovation?

Response: DZ described the four options originally considered. All are captured on the district website.

24. Tax impact - What is the financial impact of all four options on a typical family in the district?

Response: DZ described the presentation location on the website. He can also send the information if the neighbor leaves his email address.

25. Age of the facility - C-wing was under construction when the individual moved into the neighborhood. Think it was 2003 that they moved in.

Response: DZ described construction in 1961. The mid wings were 2003 -2004.

26. Other available sites – Are there other available locations for construction? - Haven't been to the website – has the district looked at a different property away from all the neighborhoods?

Response: The district has looked for other sites. Costs and limited availability of other sites have restricted this opportunity.

27. Proposed access road leading onto Mill – will the traffic impact study look at the buses on this access point? Will that be explained to the residents?

Response: CJ indicated this will be looked at in detail. The result of the study can be posted on the website, and another meeting can be held with neighbors to further discuss the study.

28. What is driving the need for this mega project? Parents? School Board? Complaints from students that the facility doesn't feel like a quality building. Who is pushing the most?

Response: DZ indicated it is not one particular entity. The process includes various community planning groups over time. The facility aged to the point that it required consideration of the overall facility once you look at that much overhaul of the existing 64-year-old facility.

29. Student enrollment increases – has that been taken into account?

Response: The building allows for 10% student growth over current population.

How long will that handle the student population?

Response: DB described the available conversion of spaces provided for in the facility plus additional areas (district admin Areas). There is ample room for managing growth.

Has an enrollment projection been completed that shows this capacity is accommodating the need?

Response: DZ described the enrollment projections showing a fall in enrollment over ten years.

Has there been discussion with the church about purchasing their property?

Response: DZ indicated the church has been there for quite some time and is unlikely to sell the property to the District.

30. Construction process - What is construction going to look like to the neighbors? A small project recently completed at the HS included construction trash blowing into their yard.

Response: Josh Grice (JG) described the abatement process and dust control measures that will be in place during the demolition process. Air quality will be monitored.

31. Pedestrian access - With a project like this, will sidewalks be considered to avoid having students on the roadway?

Response: CJ indicated the this will be discussed with the township who controls requirements for sidewalks etc.

Dr. Zerbe asked all parties to sign in so we can remain in contact with the individuals who attended this evening. The notes will be summarized and will be shared with neighbors. Questions that might come up afterwards can be addressed to Dr. Zerbe at dzerbe@methacton.org