

# APPENDIX 8

## 2.17 Landscape Visioning

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**Meeting Date:** 10 December 2019

**Project:** 19025 | Florence Roche Elementary School

**Participants:** Gail Sullivan; Studio G Architects (SG)  
 Meryl Nistler; Studio G Architects (SG)  
 Sylvia Mihich; Studio G Architects (SG)  
 Keihly Moore; Studio G Architects (SG)  
 Marylee Mercy; Studio G Architects (SG)  
 David Stephen; New Vista Design (NV)  
 Florence Roche Elementary Staff Members (FR)  
 Mariana Mariscal; Terraink (TI)  
 Kelly Ashton; Terraink (TI)

**Prepared By:** Kelly Ashton

**Discussion:**

The purpose of the meeting was to charrette ideas for the new Florence Roche Elementary School using design principles presented by David Stephen with New Vista Design.

- I. Process
  - A. The landscape team presented photos and examples of Universal Design for Outdoor Learning (UDL for Outdoors), sustainability, alternative play, and play spaces using both traditional and natural elements to inspire ideas and to receive feedback to inform the design program and elements.
  - B. TI then provided an activity sheet to encourage the Florence Roche Staff members to list opportunities, challenges, current seasonal activities, and future wishes for their site. The goal was to gain as much information as possible about the current challenges, resources, and desires we should consider while re-designing the new school landscape.
- II. The important takeaways received from the community feedback were as follows:
  - A. OPPORTUNITIES:
    - 1. Access to the existing wetlands to incorporate as lessons into the curriculum.
      - a. Currently, the kindergarten and some middle school classes are utilizing the existing wetlands; however, it would be used by more students if these areas were more accessible.
    - 2. Visible Sustainability.
      - a. Utilizing stormwater management infrastructure, recycling and composting, harvesting food etc. as teaching moments/opportunities.
    - 3. Safe access and circulation to the existing greenspace.
      - a. Avoid the need to cross busy drive aisles to access existing green space: highly encouraged.
  - B. CHALLENGES:
    - 1. Currently, there does not exist one outdoor location large enough to accommodate the entire staff and school population together in one gathering.
      - a. Approximately 645 students (120 per grade K-4).
  - C. All existing outdoor spaces that could be used for learning/recreation are distant from the building.

1. It is a challenge to have lessons as there is not enough time to get everyone out to the space.
- D. PE teacher expressed strong challenges due to no separation between the PE space and the recess space; there is also not enough room to accommodate indoor recess.
1. The current play space is an extremely small, flat, hardscape (encapsulated; arsenic underneath).
    - a. Required capacity: 120-140 students (6-7 classes at a time). Currently, 4-5 staff;120 students during recess at one time.
    - b. No easy access to open green space just to run.
    - c. No areas for imaginative play.
    - d. No connection to nature.
    - e. Strong need for planted and shaded areas with benches and seating nooks for both the staff and the children to rest from play.
  2. Minimal opportunities to utilize outdoor areas that can be enjoyed throughout all of the seasons.
    - a. Discussion proposing the use of surfacing and overhead elements to provide for all weather conditions, in addition to creating warmth/shade, etc.
  3. Circulation of entire site (Middle School North, Middle School South, and Florence Roche Elementary) creates many areas of pedestrian crossing.

E. FUTURE USES

1. The staff members of Florence Roche Elementary are excited to explore future uses of the site for:
  - a. Outdoor classrooms (in close proximity to the building).
  - b. Outdoor gathering spaces (to accommodate the entire school population).
  - c. Community Gardening (for food production and to potentially include the overall Town community; potential gardening on roof decks).
  - d. Sustainability (to be incorporated into the curriculum, site, and building).
  - e. Natural play elements (to be built into the landscape).
  - f. Challenging play pieces (for all users/universal design) to develop gross motor skills.
  - g. Hanging / spinning / obstacles / climbing / balancing.
  - h. Imaginative and pretend play to develop creativity.
  - i. Experiential learning to develop curiosity and critical thinking skills.
  - j. Connections to existing trails and wetlands.
  - k. Improved vehicular/pedestrian circulation.
  - l. Open green space to encourage active recreation.
    - i. Students love to play soccer on the bball court (potential for better enclosed multi-use court).
  - m. Some hardscape space to maintain current activities.
    - i. Students love to play basketball and to draw with chalk.
    - ii. Favorite play time is during the winter (in the snow).
  - n. Water features (built and natural) as an element of soothing, audible interest.

- F. The exercise asked the staff members to rank their opinion of the most important design opportunities as it relates to the site; listing the most important as #1; the results were as follows:
1. Playground.
  2. Outdoor Learning Spaces.
  3. Recreation.
  4. Natural Resources.
  5. Safe circulation/parking.

<b>Next Steps:</b>	<b>Action by: TI   Client   Other</b>
1. Landscape Program to be created	By: TI
2. Building site location to be finalized	By: SG
3. Feasibility narrative for site to be written	By: TI
4. PDP to be submitted to MSBA	By: SG (end of January/beginning of February)

*If there are any errors or omissions in this Meeting Notes, please report them to Kelly Ashton within three business days to ensure correction. Report written on 11 December 2019.*

