

MEMORANDUM

To: Clifton Neighborhood of Cincinnati - Community Visioning Meeting

Date: October 24, 2017

RE: Recommendations to Cincinnati Public Schools for the
Clifton Area Neighborhood School (CANS)

Respectfully Submitted by Greg Otis, AIA - Facilitator

The purpose of the Visioning Meeting was to gather community members to discuss issues the community has identified as important with regard to re-establishing school operations at the Clifton School. Small groups were formed to discuss and make recommendations that would be formally presented to the Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) Administration and Board of Education.

The meeting was convened by representatives of CPS, Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC), Clifton Town Meeting (CTM), and CANS. Fairview Clifton German Language School (FCGLS) was also invited to participate. The recommendations are as follows:

Hilltop Campus Considerations:

- When considering the concentration and potential synergies of public assets at the intersection of McAlpin and Clifton Avenues, CPS is a critical broker in maximizing and leveraging the collective assets of CRC, FCGLS, and CANS for the benefit of the community. "Make the whole greater than the sum of the parts"
- Introduce a "Community Learning Center" (CLC), shared by CANS, FCGLS and the community, possibly in the Rawson farmhouse. (See CPS's Vision 2020 for CLC initiative)
- The Clifton School is a community treasure that should be updated to the latest educational standards and maintained, as such.

Clifton Community Aesthetics/Quality of Life:

- The building setback of the Clifton School should be respected and preserved across the Rawson property.
- As much existing green space should be preserved on the Rawson property, Probasco Fountain area, while others are created for public use.
- Maintain the pedestrian nature of the community.
- Route traffic off of Clifton Avenue. No new net traffic due to school operations.
- Preserve the Architectural heritage of the Clifton School and Rawson farmhouse.

Rawson Farmhouse Property Use:

- The character of the Rawson property should be maintained.
- Natural grounds of trees and lawn should host community functions such as universal access playground (natural vs. play equipment), community garden, and community kitchen that are geared toward education.
- Parking should be limited – concentrating most parking for school use toward the CRC lot.
- The Farmhouse should not be used for administrative purposes. Use of the building and grounds should be programmed and of culturally relevant and rotating content.

Traffic and Parking Management:

- Preservation of the Rawson Property should be manifest in exploring shared bus drop-off/pick-up lanes with FCGLS, use of nearby parking lots not in use during the school day, and alternative means of travel to school.
- CPS and the City of Cincinnati should conduct a traffic engineering study and make appropriate changes to ensure smooth traffic function at all times.
 - ie: Widen McAlpin
- CPS should further explore staggered start times of CANS and FCGLS, as well as multiple drop-off and pick-up points to reduce concentration of vehicular traffic.

School Indoor and Outdoor Recreation:

- Maximize recreational resources of CANS, FCGLS, and CRC (others) for mutual and community benefit.
- Investment should be intentionally made to complement total assets rather than duplicate.
- School facilities and operations should naturally blend into the community and be available for public use off hours.
- The natural character of the Clifton School and Rawson property and should be maintained and leveraged as an educational tool, classroom space, experiments, etc.
- Maintain open space for community-based programming throughout the CPS contiguous properties.

CPS/Community Relations:

- Trust needs to be re-established through integrity, communication, and action.
- Communication is the linchpin. The community needs a central means of communication between CPS, FCGLS, CRC, CCAC, CTM, CANS, and all the immediate neighborhoods they serve.
- Create momentum for CANS. "This is really happening". Share facts on the ground.
- The Hilltop Campus is a two-way investment that CPS and the community must support to be successful.
- Investigate other successful collaboration models that the community can look to for inspiration: Hyde Park School, Mt. Washington School and Rec Center cooperation, and unique aspects of Clifton that can be celebrated.
- CPS must communicate transparently and often with the community through to entire planning, design, and construction process.

Community Parking-Lot items to be resolved:

- Of the many on-line resources for information, the community would benefit from one central clearing house for information regarding the Hilltop Campus.
- In evaluating the design of the CANS building and grounds, who represents the community that will hold CPS accountable?

The contents herein are to be published to a public on-line forum for comment prior to the convening members of the visioning meeting formally presenting recommendations to CPS.

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