

School Adequate Public Facilities Program and Funding Review Committee

AGENDA
Meeting #5
May 8, 2013
6:00 pm

- Review and Approval of the Meeting Minutes of April 24th
- Review of Issues Identification to Date and Revise as Necessary (Handout)
- Evaluate Issue 1 -Timing of providing adequate school facilities to match the planned growth in the County.
 - Review findings including the identification of potential impediments to school construction.
 - Discuss potential Alternative Solutions.
- Next meeting School Construction Funding, Review of Counties APF Survey and Student Yield Factor Evaluation (if finalized).

**This agenda is tentative and is subject to adjustment at the discretion of the Committee.*

School Adequate Public Facilities Program and Funding Review Committee

Issues Identification Worksheet (May 8, 2013)

- **WORKING DRAFT** -

Charge - The Committee shall evaluate the County's approach to ensuring adequate public facilities for schools in the development approval process to determine if the current policy is achieving the stated goals. The Committee should also develop solutions for addressing the timing of providing adequate school facilities to match the planned growth in the County. The Committee should work with designated staff to explore the feasibility and make recommendations on the best method to work through the issues related to school redistricting, school capacity allocation, and the timing and methods of school funding and construction.

School Adequate Public Facilities Regulation

Issue 1 **Timing of providing adequate school facilities to match the planned growth in the County.** School capacity in specific school districts has not kept pace with residential growth.

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date:

1. Redistricting to balance student attendance.
2. Increase the number of schools serving the student population **by forward funding schools.**
3. Expand critical elements of the school such as classrooms and cafeterias to accommodate growth.
4. **Target school capacity to geographic areas in need.**
5. **Consider developer built schools or additions/renovations. (Board of Ed. Staff cautions that additions may trigger the need for retrofitting and doing required renovations to gain State Board of Education approval. These improvements would likely have to come from other funding sources)**
6. **Consider Temporary reassignments of new projects not yet built to schools with projected capacity. A similar approach that was taken with the 2009 Redistricting.**

Issue 2 **Student Yield Factors.** The computation and use of Student Yield Factors on a county wide basis may not reflect potential differences in neighborhood student generation rates.

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date: Prior to offering solutions, the Committee agreed to test the hypothesis that Student Yield Factors significantly

vary throughout the County. This will be done by spot testing certain school attendance zones in suburban and rural areas. **The differences will be tested to see if they are significant enough to change policy.**

Issue 3

School Capacity Measurement. If all schools are capped at State Rated Capacity, over time, there could be an impact on the County's ability to obtain State funding once all the existing school allocations are used. This would occur only if mitigation for the lack of school capacity is not allowed. (*From Public Outreach Meeting*)

Issue 4

DRRA School Allocations. The payment of contributions to mitigate student impacts does not necessarily insure that the CCPS will be able to build the commensurate school capacity in the appropriate locations by the time the students attend the schools.

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date:

1. Evaluate the possibility of directing mitigation payments or infrastructure improvements to provide capacity in the affected region or school.
2. Increase the rate of school construction.
3. **Encourage developer consortia to provide adequate resources to fully mitigate the deficiencies. This concept might include Developer reimbursements for excess capacity created.**
4. **Encourage school sites and facilities expansion in DRRAs as direct mitigation for the lack of school capacity.**
5. **Create residential density incentives, where appropriate, to add value to projects that can be used for school capacity mitigation. Granting density bonuses in the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) for school sites is an example of how this could be implemented.**
6. **Encourage school mitigation discussion and strategy prior to the approval of the Preliminary Plan by the Planning Commission.**
7. **Provide school site needs regionally to encourage the proffering of sites.**

Issue 5

Minor Subdivisions. Minor subdivisions that would create more than 3 new lots must sit on the school allocation waiting list for an indeterminate number of years until capacity becomes available. (*From Public Outreach Meeting*)

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date:

1. Cap the number of years, **say 5 to 6**, a minor subdivision must sit on the waiting list before it may receive allocations.

2. Evaluate the allowance for minor subdivisions with more than 3 new lots to pull from the bulk set aside. **As part of this alternative evaluate historic use of the amount of capacity being set aside for bulk school allocations.**
3. **Permit minor subdivisions that are deed restricted for intra-family transfer only to use bulk allocations.**

School Construction Program

Issue 1 The County's school construction program has not been able to keep pace with the BOE's enrollment and capacity projections **in certain areas of the County.**

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date:

1. Evaluate the ability to expedite school construction by forward funding every other school to accelerate the Board of Education's construction program. **The result may be to seek funding from the State for every other school. Fiscal Services Staff cautions that forward funding every other school may inadvertently relieve the State Government from funding responsibilities. It is recommended that County School Construction needs to use a strategy that maximizes State funding. Spreading County forward funding over two schools may better maximize State participation.**

Issue 2 **Use of Existing School Capacity.** Existing school capacity in school and in relocatables is not being maximized. *(From Public Outreach Meeting)* **Any alternatives regarding moving relocatable classrooms needs to be sensitive to the Cost/Benefit of the action. A 2005 Analysis by the BOE will be helpful in analyzing an alternative involving the moving of portable classrooms. Any further analysis should include the fact that 61 units are State owned.**

School Construction Funding

Issue 1 **State Share Funding.** State funding sources do not keep pace with the identified construction needs in the County or Statewide.

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date: Better position the County for State Funding. **(As discussed under School Construction Program Issue 1 above.)** Identify and implement alternative revenue sources. Potential sources discussed were income tax increases, real estate taxes, transfer taxes, increased excise tax, increase DRRA contributions impact fees and/or cost saving measures **(such as shared facilities).**

Issue 2

County funding. Whereas the combined revenues received from projects making mitigation payments through a DRRA and the School Construction Excise Tax approximates the costs per dwelling unit, there are a large number of projects with preliminary plan approval and school allocations including St. Charles that do not pay an additional cash contribution to cover the funding shortfall. Note that St. Charles makes contributions through school site donation and infrastructure improvements to serve sites.

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date: Identify and implement alternative revenue sources. Potential sources discussed were income tax increases, real estate taxes, increased DRRA contributions, impact fees, transfer taxes, **utility taxes** and/or increased excise tax.

Issue 3

Total Costs of School Construction. The planning for funding of school construction needs to include all costs associated with the start up of a new school including furnishings, equipment and the initial costs for staffing.

Alternative Solutions Discussed to date: Include total costs associated with school construction in the fiscal planning for new schools or expansion of schools.

Issue 4

Competing Needs. Program changes such as all day kindergarten and State required renovations compete for funding which could otherwise be used for building capacity.

School Adequate Public Facilities Regulation

Issue 1--Timing of providing adequate school facilities to match the planned growth in the County. School capacity provision in specific school districts has not kept pace with residential growth.

Summary of Findings

There are 18 schools over State Rated Capacity. The elementary school level countywide is over state rated capacity by 418 students. The high school level is over state rated capacity by 724 students. The Committee received testimony that certain schools have not been able to accommodate the number of students enrolled during lunch periods resulting in more than the typical 3 lunch periods. The Projected Enrollment and Capacity analysis (Step Charts) indicates the need to open a new elementary school by 2018. Based on the Enrollment and Capacity analysis, the need for a new Middle School will occur approximately in the years 2020-21.

Regarding residential growth, the 2006 Comprehensive Plan envisioned a managed growth rate of 1.95 % per year increase in residential housing unit to the year 2025. Since 2005 the housing unit growth rate has maintained an average of 1.7 % per year. The actual rate has been less than the planned growth rate.

Alternatives Identification

1. Redistrict school attendance zones to balance student attendance.
2. Increase the number of schools serving the student population by building new schools at an accelerated rate.
3. Expand critical elements of the school to accommodate growth such as classrooms and cafeteria capacity.
4. Build new schools on the same site, where feasible.

Alternatives Analysis

An evaluation of the benefits, costs, effectiveness and consequences to be provided as directed by the Committee.

Recommendations

To be determined by Committee evaluation of the Alternatives Analysis.