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**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR REVISION OF MURCH ELEMENTARY
PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION 184806**
February 21, 2017

WHEREAS, the Department of General Services (DGS), on behalf of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), has applied for a permit for construction in public space related to the modernization of Murch Elementary School (Application 184806); and

WHEREAS, ANC 3F strongly supports the modernization project, which is long overdue and will greatly benefit the residents of ANC 3F and surrounding areas for years to come; and

WHEREAS, ANC 3F recognizes the constraints inherent to the Murch site and appreciates DGS and DCPS staff efforts to coordinate design with the ANC and community, including meeting with the ANC review team and responding to our detailed technical questions; and

WHEREAS, the latest plans that DGS submitted on January 10, 2017 represent a marked improvement over previous iterations; and

WHEREAS, nonetheless, there remain numerous issues of design, landscaping, stormwater management, safety, ADA accommodations, and coordination with the ANC that directly impact public space and the community at large that require further revision;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ANC 3F calls for the revision of application 184804, as outlined below.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Commissioners Nugent and Dickinson are authorized to speak on behalf of ANC 3F regarding this matter.

ANC 3F approved this resolution at its meeting on February 21, 2017, which was properly noticed and at which a quorum was present, by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining.


Malachy Nugent
Chair, ANC 3F

Application 184806: REVISIONS NEEDED

Northwest Corner

It is our opinion that the retaining wall on the northwest corner of the site is not in the Park Service reservation. Please investigate the matter further. If it is determined conclusively that the retaining wall is not in the Park Service reservation, there will be a great deal more flexibility in how work in this area is pursued.

The failing timber retaining walls and stairs at the corner of Reno Rd and Ellicott St will be replaced with new poured concrete walls using a formliner. This corner will be a major entrance to the school and should have far greater prominence in the design; please reduce the height and the length of the retaining walls to provide a more welcoming and gracious pedestrian entry to the school grounds. The wall along Ellicott St can be lowered a minimum of 8 inches and the wall on the south side of the stairs along Reno Rd may be able to be eliminated completely, opening the area up visually.

Service Areas

Thousands of vehicles traveling in both directions on Reno Rd pass by Murch every day. Therefore, the view of the project from Reno Rd is extremely important to the community and to the ANC. Because "back-of-house" services such as trash/recycling, loading, transformers, bike lockers, etc. must be located along this frontage, it is critically important that they be adequately and attractively screened from public view.

The dumpster enclosure should be a minimum of 8 feet tall to screen the dumpsters and, because of the prominence of this area along Reno Rd, an attractive screening fence/gate will be necessary as well as an attractive interior wall façade. Please revise accordingly.

Other local schools screen the mechanical equipment by locating it behind the dumpster area, protected by a masonry wall. It appears there is ample space to provide a similar arrangement at Murch. Please revise this area to increase the height of screening walls and provide all material details to demonstrate attractive and adequate screening of services will be provided.

The retaining wall on the north side of the service court is shown on I.530, which is not included in the set. Note 2 calls for a retaining wall with a guardrail on top. A concrete wall to guardrail height to screen the service yard is preferred, and landscape materials shall be placed outside the service yard to further screen the retaining wall. Please revise accordingly.

Trees and Landscaping

The bioretention facilities along Reno Rd and Davenport St frontages are designed as prominent visual elements and their appearance is of great importance to the ANC and the community.

There are 13 different plant types proposed in the bioretention facilities, a complicated planting scheme that will be difficult for DCPS maintenance staff and local volunteers to maintain. Additionally, there will be large areas of bare ground during winter months. Please revise and greatly simplify the planting palette using only one or two very hardy "field" plants with year-round interest. The "field" can be augmented with the proposed shrub masses and clusters of several different accent perennials. In addition, rather than rip rap at the 8-inch pipe outfall/flow spreader, provide large tumbled river rock and several larger boulders throughout the bioretention facility to ensure year-round interest and enhance the dry river bed theme.

Similarly, the landscape design around the playground and other areas used by students may be too sophisticated for its purpose. Plant material selections need to reflect the reality of students running through the area and need to be installed with an initial size so that they will stand up to a large student population and to the use patterns of elementary school students. Please revise accordingly.

Please extend concrete to the back of the curb at the main entrance, as grass will not survive in this area where student drop-offs are likely to occur.

The plan maintains two square raised timber planters on the north side of the playground. Based on conversations with Ward 3 Arborist Evan Anderson, the trees are not in particularly good shape and are in danger of being root bound. Also, the timbers have reached their useful life. These two planters should be razed; please revise accordingly.

Planting beds (34 on CIV 301) between the soccer field and the basketball court will not withstand playground use. Please revise the surface material to something compatible with children running on it. If trees are desired, installing them in flush planting boxes with tree grates to protect the trees is preferred.

The planting in the front courtyard (36th Street) bears no relation to the bio-retention areas that are in the courtyard. The bio-retention areas shown on the civil drawings should be coordinated with the landscape drawings. Please revise accordingly.

The previous drawings show a turf soccer field. The current civil drawings call it synthetic turf.

The landscape drawings call it "athletic sod." Please confirm for the record that high quality synthetic turf will be used.

During our November 28 meeting, we asked where and how the 20 trees in public space that are proposed to be transplanted would be held during construction. This question has not been answered, beyond the statement, "MCN has not designated the location of the tree storage. Tree protection will be overseen by arborist and landscape architect." Please provide detailed plans for transplanting the trees and replacing them with new plants of the same size and species if they do not survive.

Stormwater Management

We have no new information on the soils to assess whether there should be concerns with the large R-tank installation under the soccer field. However, Sheet CIV801 Soil Boring Location Plan shows that there were no borings done in the location of the largest R-tanks. Please clarify whether borings will be done before installing the tanks.

It appears storm water may be trapped in the north corner of the window well near the cafeteria (BW 20.03). Please clarify the arrangements for drainage at this area.

Safety and ADA Concerns

Site drainage across the sidewalk at the main entrance on Davenport St will create unsafe icy winter sidewalk conditions. Please revise and add yard inlets as necessary.

Please provide specific information as to the extent, height, materials, finish, etc. of all fencing and railings visible from all public streets, including the two bioretention observation platforms along the Reno Rd and Davenport St frontages and around the Pre-K/K playground.

The plans reference sheet L530 for fencing and guardrails. This sheet was not included in the set of drawings provided to the ANC. Please provide as soon as possible.

The grading at the entrance is not compliant with ADA requirements of no cross slopes greater than 2%. In addition, throughout the site, wherever trails and sidewalks intersect the cross slopes cannot exceed 2%. Please revise accordingly.

Please provide details of the handrails on the ADA ramp on 36th St. to the Peace Garden area (Kaufman wing area).

Liaison with the ANC

The design, development and construction teams need to keep the ANC apprised of the schedule and any deviations on a regular basis. Please identify a member of the design, development and construction team to serve as official liaison with the ANC, who will provide monthly updates and present at the ANC meetings no less than quarterly. The liaison should be a person of sufficient responsibility that they can commit the project team to actions required to mitigate circumstances such as traffic control and parking issues.