

**MINUTES FROM JULY 29, 2019 COMMUNITY MEETING
FOR PROPOSED MIDDLE SCHOOL IN CLIFTON HEIGHTS BOROUGH**

A. Parties for the Upper Darby School District:

(1) Dr. Daniel McGarry, Superintendent, Upper Darby School District, Dr. Greg Manfre, Director of Secondary Education, Upper Darby School District.

(2) Andrew R. Stoll, Esquire, Solicitor to the Upper Darby School District.

(3) Jason Sheridan and Abhishek Joshi, Pennoni Engineers, Civil Engineers to the Upper Darby School District.

(4) Michael Kelly, KCBA Architects, Architects to the Upper Darby School District.

B. Presentation by the School District:

(1) Introductions and agenda for this meeting. Dr. McGarry.

a. Dr. McGarry opened the meeting by providing introductions to all those in attendance. The introductions included those listed above, and the various other members of the School District who were also at the meeting.

b. Dr. McGarry started the meeting by stressing that he wanted to dispel rumors about the project, the history of the project, and the School District's transparency for the project. Dr. McGarry stated and showed those in attendance that all materials relating to the District's efforts to build a new middle school are posted on the School District's website. Dr. McGarry specifically advised that the materials were conspicuously posted to a "tab" on School District's website that is designated solely for the Clifton Heights project. The "tab" was created in response to feedback received from neighbors at School District's community meetings.

(2) Reasons why the School District needs a new middle school. Dr. McGarry.

a. Dr. McGarry briefly discussed the overcrowding in the schools, the use of modular classrooms, and stated that classes are being conducted in basements with no windows. Dr. McGarry advised that these settings were a product of the overcrowding and are not sufficient learning environments for the School District's students. Dr. McGarry stated that a new middle school was needed to address the overcrowding and issues created therefrom.

(3) The investigation performed by the School District to select the subject property for the new middle school. Dr. McGarry.

a. Dr. McGarry was questioned about numerous other potential locations for the middle school. Dr. McGarry responded to questions about the viability of each such location, and explained why the property in Clifton Heights was the most viable location for the school.

(4) Projected number and location of students to be assigned to this new middle school. Dr. McGarry.

a. Dr. McGarry was questioned extensively about where students who would be attending the new middle school would be coming from. Dr. McGarry gave thorough explanations as to where the students for the new school would be coming from. Dr. McGarry also stated that the School District did not plan to fill the new school to capacity when it first opened. Rather, upon opening, the District plans to have approximately 800-900 students in the school, but expects this number to increase over the school's existence.

(5) Proposed layout for the new middle school building, athletic fields, parking lot, access points and other site improvements for the new middle school. KCBA and Pennoni Engineers.

a. KCBA gave a presentation about the school's building, athletic fields, parking lot, and access points. KCBA received various questions about different access points on the property, and the general layout of the school. In response to questions about access points, KCBA advised that the property must have access points for emergency services. During KCBA's presentation, numerous community members asked questions about the School District's traffic study and what the School District has done to address concerns for traffic on certain streets near the proposed middle school. Dr. McGarry and Pennoni Engineers answered the questions relating to traffic concerns.

(6) Proposed building amenities and layout for the new middle school. KCBA Architects.

a. Consistent with the above, KCBA gave a lengthy presentation about the amenities and layout of the school.

(7) Availability of the athletic fields and gymnasium for use by the community. Dr. McGarry and Dr. Manfre.

a. Both Dr. McGarry and Dr. Manfre answered questions relating to the community's use of the athletic fields. Dr. McGarry gave detailed explanations about the School District's commitment to upgrading the athletic fields and making them available to the community. Dr. McGarry and Dr. Manfre advised that the School District is and continues to be committed to signing memorandums of understandings with community groups which evidence the School District's willingness to make the fields available to the community.

b. Dr. McGarry also stated that the School District plans to complete renovation of the athletic fields prior to the completion of the new middle school. This will allow the fields to be available for use while the school is still being completed.

C. Questions and Notes:

(1) The School District received various questions asking how the new middle school will affect individual properties.

a. The School District advised that notices went to adjacent property owners requesting that they contact the School District to schedule a meeting to discuss individual concerns.

(2) The School District received numerous questions about how the new middle school would affect traffic on specific streets around the new middle school.

a. The School District and Pennoni stated that Pennoni has done extensive traffic studies to assess how the new middle school will impact surrounding traffic. Pennoni's traffic study will be posted to the District's website.

(3) Why has the District not worked with the Borough of Clifton Heights for construction of the middle school?

a. The School District has and continues to make countless efforts to work with the Borough. Unfortunately, the Borough has not responded to the Borough's requests for collaboration on the project. Nonetheless, the District remains willing to work with the Borough so that the school can be a "win-win" for all involved.

(4) What is the difference between Act 34 hearings and the community meetings?

a. The Act 34 hearings are mandated by law. Conversely, the community meetings are not required, and are part of the School District's efforts to build a relationship with the community and address any concerns with the new middle school.

D. Moving Forward

(1) Because an overwhelming amount of the questions from the community members related to concerns with traffic, we will be posting Pennoni's traffic study on the website.

(2) As more responses are received from adjacent neighbors regarding scheduling meetings, begin to schedule adjacent neighbor meetings.

(3) Schedule the next community meeting.