



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of May 14, 2022

DRAFT

DATE: April 26, 2022

SUBJECT: U-3468-16-1 USE PERMIT AMENDMENT for a below-grade parking structure with a lighted synthetic turf field above; located at 1601 Wilson Blvd.; (RPC# 16-032-001).

Applicant:

Arlington County School Board
1726 N. Quincy St.
Arlington. VA 22207

C.M. RECOMMENDATION:

ISSUES: This is a use permit amendment request for The Heights Building (formerly the Wilson School) to add a below-grade parking structure with a lighted synthetic turf field above and the following issues have been identified:

- 18th Street North Width and Parking Lane: The applicant, Arlington Public Schools (APS) proposes to narrow 18th Street North from 38 feet to 30.5 feet, removing the parking lane along south side of the street adjacent to the school property. This is not consistent with the Western Rosslyn Area Plan (WRAP) recommendations, which include a parking lane along the south side of the street. Removing the parking lane could cause significant operational issues for APS buses and prohibit parking on the north side of the street. To prohibit parking on the north side of the street twice a day or more would limit the street's public use to an extent not previously planned.
- 18th Street North Streetscape: APS proposes removal of the parking lane along south side of 18th Street North adjacent to the school property. The area formerly a parking lane would be incorporated into a revised streetscape proposed to be 22 feet 8 inches wide including a 7-foot 8-inch boarding/alighting zone, 5-foot tree zone, and 10-foot clear sidewalk. As stated above, removing the parking lane is not consistent with the WRAP recommendations and raises operational concerns. If the parking lane on the south side

County Manager:

County Attorney:

Staff: Olivia Sontag, DCPHD, Planning Division
Robert Gibson, DES, Development Services
Jeremy Smith, DPR, Planning and Development

of 18th Street North is to remain, the resulting streetscape width from the curb to the face of the parking structure would be approximately 15 feet which could include a 13-foot combined boarding/alighting zone and clear sidewalk with a 2-foot-wide planter strip and seating along the parking structure wall. Street trees would not be able to be accommodated due to the space needed for bus operations including boarding, alighting, queueing, and circulation. This streetscape along APS frontage would support APS operational needs without narrowing 18th Street North. The staff's proposed streetscape is consistent with the WRAP recommendations.

- 18th Street Operations: APS proposes garage access from 18th Street North. This proposed access point would be within the portion of 18th Street North that APS anticipates closing during arrival and dismissal. During this period APS proposes limiting access to the garage to ADA PUDO activities only. The proposed garage access poses a significant operational and safety challenge that APS will have to manage during arrival and departure periods. Arlington County Police and Arlington County Department of Environmental Services do not currently have surplus resources available to manage the closure of 18th Street North twice a day throughout the school year. During the closure of the street, for APS operations, APS will be solely responsible for the safe movement of buses, vehicles, cyclists, and students within this space. Staff is considering a new condition that would require APS to get approval for and implement an operations and safety plan for 18th Street North closures.
- Field Elevation: APS proposes the field at an elevation of 180 feet, at grade with The Heights Building level 1 and Rosslyn Highlands Park at the southeast corner of the field. In 2017, APS proposed the field at an elevation of 175 feet. Lowering the field elevation to 175 feet, could provide many benefits to the site including better integration into Rosslyn Highlands Park with at-grade field access and visibility from the midpoint of the east field entrance to the Park, an opportunity for an accessible entrance to the field from Quinn Street providing improved access for students and the public, a less imposing wall along 18th Street, improved conditions for street trees along 18th Street, better visibility of the architecture of the school, and better lighting for Shriver Program classrooms at the ground level.

No recommendation is provided at this stage, as staff is continuing their evaluation and considers the input from the commissions a valuable step in this process for a project that has difficult issues to address.

SUMMARY: This is a use permit amendment request for The Heights Building (formerly the Wilson School), which houses the H-B Woodlawn Secondary Program and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Program, to add a below-grade parking structure with a lighted synthetic turf field above. The County Board approved the 180,000 square foot new school with a design capacity of 775 students in February 2017, but deferred consideration of the APS proposal for a parking garage with 93 spaces and a lighted recreational field on top until removal of the temporary fire station from the site occurred, which was a decision in response to concerns raised by staff, various county committees and commissions, and County Board members. The County Board requested that additional information for the site's parking demand be collected during the period that the

temporary fire station occupied the site and justification for an additional 93 spaces located on-site be provided. With this information, there would be an opportunity to better study the parking demands of the school after it opened and an on-site garage could be further considered, ensuring that the minimum parking needs of the school were met, and excessive parking was not constructed. The school opened in September 2019 and the temporary fire station was removed in November 2021.

The subject use permit amendment request for The Heights Building proposes a below-grade parking structure with 61 spaces in addition to the 100 permanent parking spaces provided for APS use in the adjacent Aubrey parking garage for a total of 161 parking spaces. To address County Board concerns, APS collected data on traffic and parking demand up until the relocation of the temporary fire station which they've provided in a Multimodal Transportation Assessment (MMTA). The proposed design capacity for the school remains at 775 middle and high school students across both programs. The garage includes an entrance/exit on 18th Street North, a covered entrance to the Shriver Program, options within the garage for secure staff bike parking and covered student bike parking, and storage space for APS equipment. Above the garage, APS proposes a lighted synthetic turf field at an elevation of 180 feet with amphitheater seating in the northwest corner where the field tilts upwards to accommodate the Shriver Program entrance and entrance/exit to the parking garage. The proposal has been reviewed by the Public Facilities Review Committee, the Park and Recreation Commission, and will go before the Planning Commission on May 2, 2022.

BACKGROUND: The following timeline provides background on The Heights Building from approval of the West Rosslyn Area Plan (WRAP) in 2015 to present.

- July 2015: The County Board adopts the WRAP.
- July 2016: The School Board approves the Schematic Design for The Heights Building with a field/garage. The County and School Boards approve a license agreement permitting a temporary fire station on APS property and delaying construction of a field/garage until the temporary fire station is removed.
- September 2016: The County Board approves Rosslyn Highlands Park and the Coordinated Open Spaces Plan.
- February 2017: The County Board approves the WRAP developments, including the Penzance Site Plan, the Queens Court Site Plan, and The Heights Use Permit but deferred consideration of the proposed 93 space parking garage until removal of the temporary fire station. The School Board approves the demolition contract and construction begins.
- September 2019: The Heights Building opens.
- May 2021: School Board Work Session #1 - Superintendent's Proposed FY 2022-24 CIP presentation which includes The Heights Phase 2 options for the field/garage.
- June 2021: The Heights Phase 2 "Option A" discussed at the Joint CIP Work Session with the County Board. The Heights Phase 2 "Option A" is approved in the School Board Adopted FY 2022-24 Capital Improvement Plan.
- November 2021: The temporary fire station is removed from the APS site.

- December 2021: APS completed data collection for the Multimodal Transportation Assessment (MMTA).
- January 2022: Rosslyn Highlands Park is completed.
- February 2022: APS submits an application for a Use Permit Amendment to construct a parking garage with a field on top.

The key differences between the February 2017 proposal and current proposal for the field and garage are summarized below:

	2017 Proposal	2022 Proposal
On-Site Parking Garage (in addition to the 100 permanent spaces in the Aubrey parking garage)	93 Spaces (specific uses not defined)	61 Spaces (preliminary designations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 ADA Accessible • 2 ADA Accessible (Van) • 14 Visitor • 30 Long-Term Staff • 2 Staff Loading/Unloading • 6 Maintenance and Delivery
18th Street Width and Parking Lane	Parking Lane 38' street width	No Parking Lane 30.5' street width
18th Street North Streetscape	14' sidewalk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10' clear sidewalk • 4' tree zone 	22'-8" sidewalk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10' clear sidewalk • 5' tree zone • 7'-8" boarding/alighting
Field Elevation	175' elevation (at-grade alignment with Rosslyn Highlands Park at middle of field, not aligned with Heights Building level 1)	180' elevation (at-grade alignment with Heights Building level 1 and Rosslyn Highlands Park at SE corner of field)

Address (RPC): 1601 Wilson Blvd. (RPC# 16-032-001)

Site: The site is bound on the north by 18th Street North, on the south by Wilson Boulevard, on the east by the existing Rosslyn Highlands Park and Penzance site plan (SP #445) containing two residential towers and Arlington County Fire Station #10, and on the west by an existing 7-11 retail store and N. Quinn Street.

Neighborhood: The subject property is located within the North Rosslyn Civic Association and is adjacent to the Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Association and Colonial Village III Homeowners Association. The Queens Court Apartments, Atrium Condominiums, and Aubrey Apartments are also adjacent to the school site.

Zoning: The site is zoned “S-3A” Special District. Schools are a permitted use by provision of a use permit subject to Section 4.15 of the [Arlington County Zoning Ordinance \(ACZO\)](#).

GLUP: The site is identified on the [General Land Use Plan](#) (GLUP) as “Public”.

Existing Development: The site is currently developed with The Heights Building (formerly the Wilson School) which houses the H-B Woodlawn Secondary Program (H-B) and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Program (Shriver). The County Board approved the new school in February 2017 and the school opened in September 2019.

Figure 1: Existing Development



Proposed Development: The following figure depicts the proposed below-grade parking structure with 61 spaces, entrance/exit on 18th Street North, a covered entrance to the Shriver Program, bike parking, storage for APS equipment, and a lighted synthetic turf field above the garage with amphitheater seating in the northwest corner where the field tilts upwards.

Figure 2: Proposed Development



Transportation: The Heights Building is located in Western Rosslyn, making it one of the most transit accessible school sites within the County. Considering that the school is located in the heart of a multi-modal neighborhood with the majority of students in the two programs offered transportation via school buses, the Heights Building should be a transit first or school bus first model for the County. The project is the home for both the H-B Woodlawn Secondary Program and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Program. Each of these programs have different transportation characteristics than typical neighborhood school programs.

The H-B Woodlawn Secondary Program is a County-wide choice program for students between 6th and 12th grade. The program supports students from all over the county and the majority of students are offered transportation to the school via school bus. The Shriver Program provides a tailored education program to secondary-aged students ages 10-22 with special needs. Catering to the needs of each student, APS provides door to door transportation for students of the Shriver Program. To do this, APS uses a small fleet of school buses with ADA lifts, each operated by an attendant that aids in the loading and unloading of students.

Streets and Sidewalks: The Heights Building has street frontage on three sides of the site: Wilson Boulevard to the south, 18th Street North to the north, and North Quinn Street to the west. The proposed parking structure and field front 18th Street North and North Quinn Street. 18th Street North is a *Neighborhood Minor* local (non-arterial) street and North Quinn Street is a *Type B - Primarily Urban Mixed-Use* arterial street.

18th Street North – 18th Street North was recently reconstructed as part of the Phase 1 development of the Heights project along with the construction of the Queen’s Court project. The street provides a 38-foot cross section with a 7-foot parking lane on the north side of the street, two (2) 11-foot-wide travel lanes and a 9-foot-wide parking lane. The 9-foot parking lane on the south side of the street is wider than typical parking lanes to support school buses and APS uses. On the north side of the street a 14-foot-wide streetscape is provided along the Queens Court development and the Rosslyn Highlands Park playground. The streetscape provides an 8-foot clear sidewalk and a 6-foot-wide street tree zone with bioretention planters. Along the APS frontage is a 7.5-foot-wide sidewalk that is intended to be replaced with the proposed Phase 2 project of the school.

18th Street North between North Peirce Street and North Quinn Street is planned to be opened to public traffic in the summer of 2022. The street was closed to the public while construction activities progressed in the WRAP area. The opening of the street has been coordinated with the end of the school year to limit operational changes late in the school year for APS.

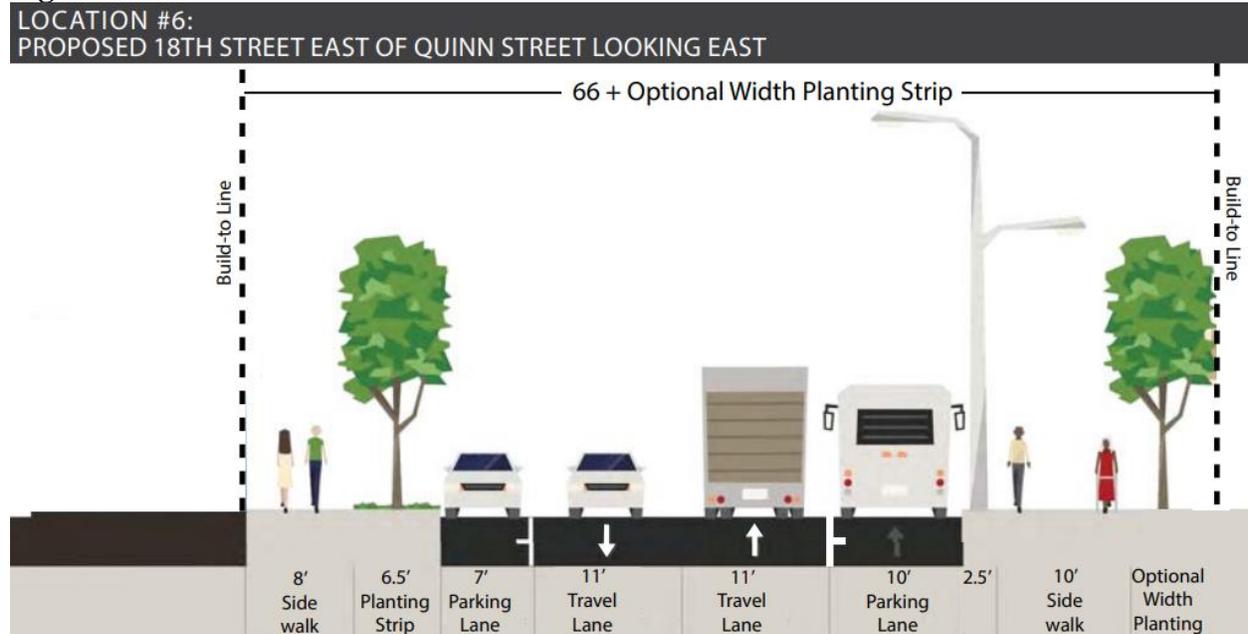
APS has proposed to reconstruct 18th Street North and the streetscape along their frontage. The proposal would narrow 18th Street to 30.5-feet, removing the parking lane along the south side of the street. The area formerly operated as a parking lane would be incorporated into a revised streetscape proposed to be 22-feet 8-inches wide. The 22-foot 8-inch streetscape would provide a 7-foot 8-inch clear landing area for bus boarding and alighting, a 5-foot-wide street tree zone and a 10-foot clear sidewalk. As APS has operated Phase 1 of the Heights development, APS has identified that it is critical to have a minimum of a 7-foot clear landing area to support ADA bus

operations along the curb at 18th Street. To accomplish this APS has proposed to narrow the street and remove the parking lane on the south side of the street.

The applicant’s proposed 18th Street North segment is not consistent with the WRAP. The WRAP depicts a 39-foot-wide street to include an 11-foot travel lane in each direction, 7-feet of on-street parking on the north side of the street, and a 10-foot-wide bus parking lane along the south side of the street. The WRAP also depicts a 2.5-foot curb and lighting zone, a 10-foot-wide sidewalk, and an optional width for street trees along the back of sidewalk. The WRAP streetscape could support APS’s goal for a minimum 7-foot clear landing area by integrating street lighting with the poles used for field lighting at the back of sidewalk on the garage structure.

The County does not support the proposed narrowing of 18th Street North because it does not comply with the WRAP recommendations, and it could cause significant operational issues along the street, impacting APS proposed bus operations without otherwise prohibiting parking on the north side of the street. To prohibit parking on the north side of the street twice a day or more would limit the street’s public use to an extent not previously planned or contemplated. This will be discussed in more detail below as part of the discussion section. Staff recommends updating the APS proposal to be generally consistent with the WRAP streetscape and street cross section.

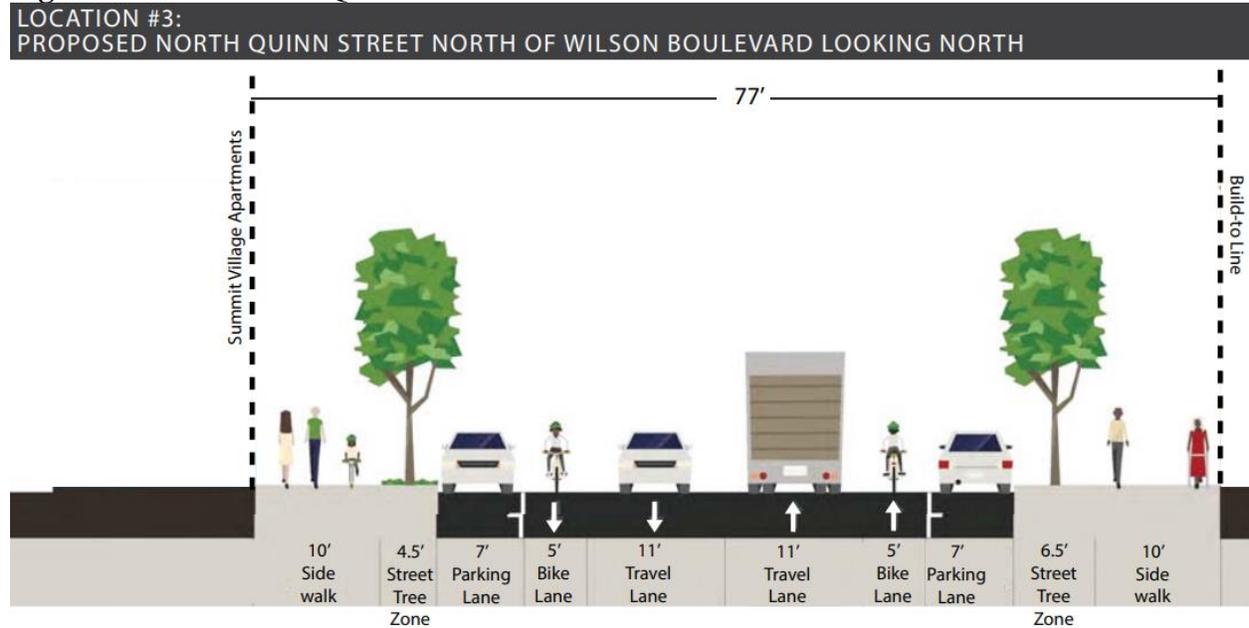
Figure 3: WRAP 18th Street North Section



North Quinn Street– The proposed North Quinn Street segment is generally consistent with the WRAP. Overall, the 46-foot-wide street includes an 11-foot travel lane in each direction along with 7-feet of on-street parking and 5-foot bike lanes on both sides of the street. The sidewalk along North Quinn Street is proposed to be a minimum of 15 feet wide. This streetscape includes a 5-foot-wide street tree and furniture zone and a 10-foot clear sidewalk.

Following the construction of Phase 1 of the Heights, new ADA parking spaces were constructed along North Quinn Street to support operations at the school and the broader community. Those 3 spaces were reconstructed to be wider than the typical 7-foot parking lane. The additional width was achieved by removing the street trees in that area thus narrowing the streetscape. These wide ADA spaces allow vehicles to deploy an ADA lift for either side of the vehicle or the rear of the vehicle. With construction of Phase 2 of the Heights, staff recommends APS consider moving these spaces north along the North Quinn Street frontage such that they are closer to the proposed Shriver entrance. This can be accomplished administratively after County Board approval with approval of the final civil engineering plans.

Figure 4: WRAP North Quinn Street Section



Site Circulation & Drop-off and Pick-up Activities: Review and planning for site circulation was a critical part of the public review of the project with Phase 1. The project proposes to provide separate and dedicated zones around the school for the different arrival and departure modes to the school:

Pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users – The main entrance to the building was constructed along the pedestrian walkway on the east side of the building and it primarily supports the H-B program, but it may be used by all to access the building. This entrance provides access to level 1 (ground floor) of the building. Additional entrances were constructed around the school including along the Wilson Boulevard frontage, along the northern building façade, along North Quinn Street at the loading dock, and along North Quinn Street as an entrance to the Shriver program at the G1 level of the building.

Phase 2 of the project proposes a covered walkway connecting 18th Street North to the entrance of the Shriver program on the G1 level of the building. This walkway would be adjacent to North Quinn Street and covered by the field above. The walkway would include a gradual slop down toward the Shriver entrance at the G1 floor elevation from the higher elevation at the corner of

18th Street North. Users of the garage are proposed to access the school through the Shriver entrance at the G1 level of the building.

Drop-off and pick-up by parents – The project proposes dedicating curb space along the site frontage, as well as setting up pick up and drop off (PUDO) locations near the site that are convenient to the travel patterns of parents. With the construction of Phase 2, curb space along N. Quinn Street is available to support students arriving and departing via family vehicles. APS and Arlington staff will work together to best identify curb space around and in the proximity of the school to support student PUDO activities. To limit impact on the surrounding roadway network, DES staff recommends establishing multiple locations around the school to support student PUDO. Over time it is anticipated that the specific locations for PUDO activities may be changed to best support the student community and address congestion and safety issues associated with student PUDO activities.

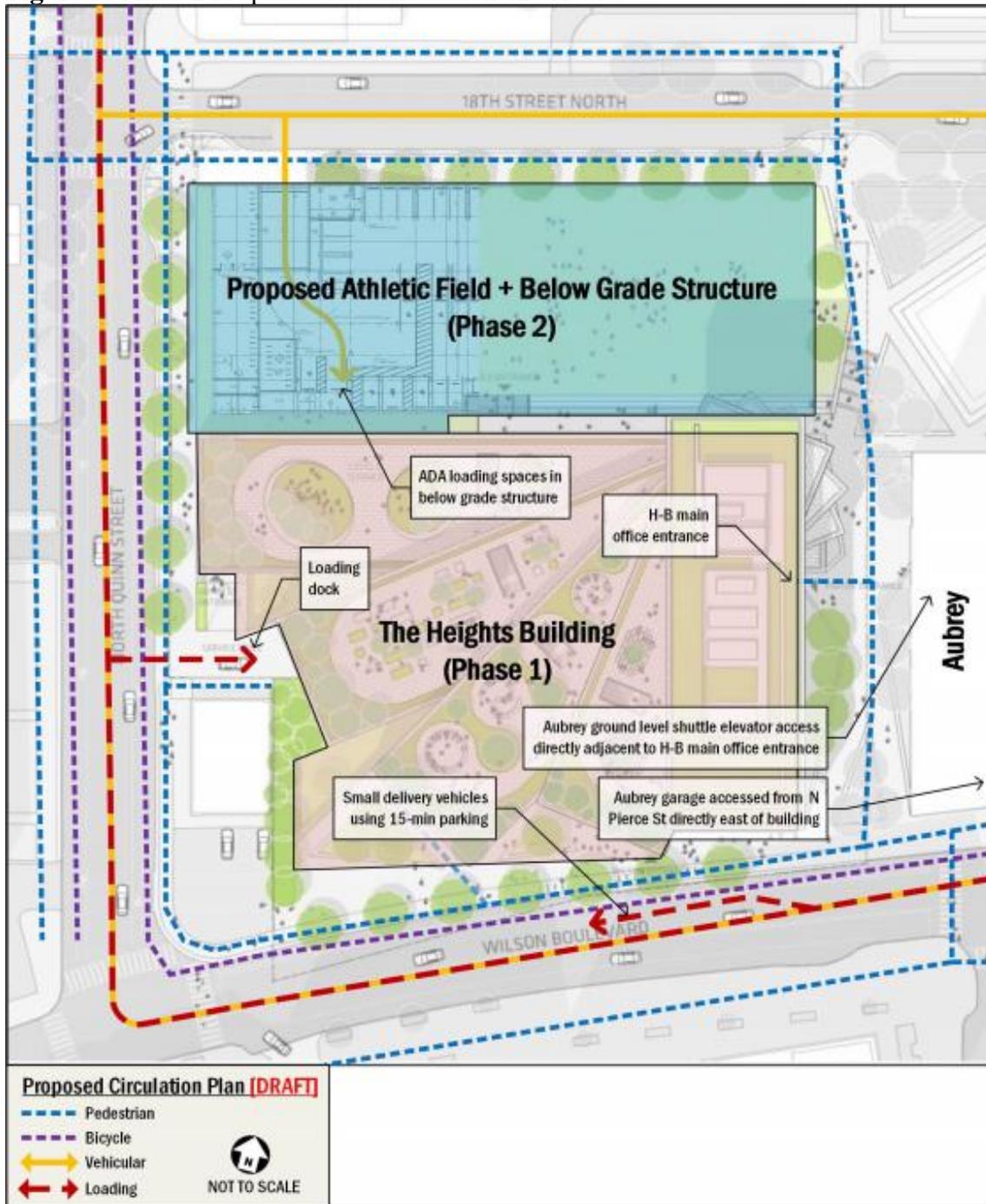
With the Phase 2 project, APS is proposing to dedicate ADA space within the proposed garage to support ADA PUDO activities. APS has identified that ADA PUDO typically takes an extended period of time (10-15 minutes). During the operations of the existing Phase 1 development of the site APS has identified operational challenges with their reliance of on-street ADA spaces to support ADA PUDO for students. To support a higher level of service of the Shriver student population the provision of covered ADA PUDO space within the garage has been identified as a driving force for the project.

Arrival and departure by school bus – The project proposes bus drop off and pick up along 18th Street North. Specifically, to support the unique needs of Shriver students arriving and departing on school buses, 18th Street North is proposed to be limited to school bus traffic only during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal. During arrival and departure, school buses are proposed to queue in two lanes to provide enough storage capacity to support both H-B and Shriver buses arriving at the same time with a unified bell time for both programs. Additional discussion on 18th Street North operations and design are discussed below.

Garage Access – APS has proposed garage access from 18th Street North. This proposed access point would be within the portion of 18th Street North that APS anticipates closing during arrival and dismissal. During this period APS proposes limiting access to the garage to ADA PUDO activities only. The proposed garage access poses a significant operational and safety challenge that APS will have to manage during arrival and departure periods. Arlington County Police and Arlington County Department of Environmental Services do not currently have surplus resources available to manage the closure of 18th Street North twice a day throughout the school year. During the closure of the street, for APS operations, APS will be solely responsible for the safe movement of buses, vehicles, and students within this space. A new condition could require APS to get approval for and implement an operations and safety plan for 18th Street North closures.

By spreading arrival and departure activities out, using multiple site frontages, the concentration of traffic impacts can be reduced. The image below illustrates site circulation for the project.

Figure 5: Phase 2 Proposed Site Circulation and Access



Bicycle Access: The school has convenient access to the County’s bicycle network of trails and on street bike lanes. With the construction of Phase 1 APS delivered bicycle parking facilities and amenities to support the site. On street bike racks are provided around the site along Wilson Boulevard, at the main entrance to H-B on the east side of the site, and adjacent to the Shriver entrance. Temporary bike lockers are provided adjacent to the Shriver entrance for staff. Additionally showers and lockers are available in the school to support staff that commute via active transportation modes.

Phase 2 of the project proposes construction of 54 covered visitor bicycle parking spaces along the entrance to the Shriver program. Within the garage 28 secure bicycle parking spaces are proposed for staff members.

Transit: The school is located approximately a quarter mile west of Rosslyn Metro Center. Rosslyn Metro Center is served by the Orange, Blue and Silver Metrorail lines and is also a regional bus transfer center. Along Wilson and Clarendon Boulevards, both ART (43, 45) and WMATA (4B, 38B) operate high frequency bus service. The site is supported by public transit better than any other school in the County.

Parking: With the construction of Phase 1 of the project zero (0) on-site parking spaces were approved by the County Board and the provision of on-site parking was deferred for consideration until Phase 2. At the time of approval, Arlington County agreed to provide APS with 100 spaces dedicated for APS use in the parking garage adjacent to the site at the Penzance project within the Aubrey building. With construction of the Penzance project completed, APS has been operating with 100 spaces provided in the Aubrey garage for their exclusive use. The spaces are accessible by staff via a dedicated elevator providing access between the G1 level of the garage and the walkway located between the Heights building and school, at grade. The elevator is located less than 25 feet from the main H-B entrance. With a few exceptions, the proximity of the off-site parking provided in the Aubrey garage is as close to the school as any on-site parking at other APS facilities throughout the county, albeit below grade. APS has also leased an additional 30 spaces within the parking garage located a little more than a block way at 1776 Wilson Boulevard.

Phase 2 proposes providing 61 parking spaces below the field to support the parking demand and needs of the H-B and Shriver programs. APS would continue to utilize the 100 spaces provided in the Aubrey garage and APS would stop leasing additional off-site spaces. In total APS proposes 161 spaces to support operations at the site.

APS proposes to use the 100 spaces in the Aubrey garage exclusively for teacher/staff parking. The spaces below the field are proposed to be used as follows:

- Thirty (30) – Staff parking spaces
- Fourteen (14) – Visitor parking spaces
- Seven (7) – Standard ADA compatible parking spaces
- Six (6) – Van or maintenance vehicle parking spaces
- Two (2) – ADA Van compliant parking spaces
- Two (2) – Staff loading and unloading spaces

The spaces are anticipated to be distributed as shown in the image below:

Figure 6: Parking Garage Use Distribution



Based on Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (ACZO) requirements for middle and high schools the site would require 409 total parking spaces for the project.

Parking Calculations for The Heights Building						
ACZO Requirement for Employee Parking						
	Employee Parking Ratio	Number of Students	Required Parking Spaces	Proposed Parking Spaces		
Middle School	1 Space per 7.5 Students	275	37	-		
High School	1 Space per 10 students	500	50	-		
Employee Parking Sub Total		775	87	130		
ACZO Requirement for Assembly and Visitors Parking						
	Fixed Seating	Number of Fixed Seats	Sq. Ft. of Area	Number of Students	Required Parking Spaces	Proposed Parking Spaces
Middle School Visitors	1 Space per 40 Students			275	7	14
Main Gym	No	-	8,000		160	-
Gym/Multipurpose Room	No	-	1,200		24	-
Auditorium Theater	Yes	400	-		40	-
Black Box Arena	No	-	3,000		60	-
Field Amphitheater Seating	Yes	302	-		31	-
Assembly and Visitor Sub Total		702	12,200		322	31
Total ACZO Required Parking					409	

The Zoning Ordinance calculates the required parking for middle school and elementary schools differently than the parking requirements for high schools. Both look at providing parking for faculty and staff based on the number of students at the school (275 middle school students and 500 high school students). For middle and elementary schools, additional visitor parking is required based on the number of students at the school. For high schools, additional visitor parking is based on the amount and type of public assembly space proposed in the project. Section §14.3.7.c of the Zoning Ordinance permits the County Board to modify parking requirements for schools to balance other County environmental and recreational goals and objectives. For the proposed parking plan, APS is requesting a modification of the parking (discussed in more detail below).

Transportation Demand Management: Phase 2 of the project proposes no changes to the transportation demand management plan or conditions for the school as approved in Phase 1. In March 2021, the County Board approved an omnibus use permit amendment to 33 school use permits, including The Height Building, incorporate updated and standardized Transportation Demand Management and bicycle parking requirements, and delegate authority to the County Manager or designee to allow future modification of these requirements administratively going forward, if in concurrence with the Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools or designee.

DISCUSSION:

Adopted Plan, Policies, and Regulations: Zoning Ordinance Section 4.1 “S-3A” Special District, the Master Transportation Plan (MTP), the Public Spaces Master Plan, the *Principles of Civic Design* and the Western Rosslyn Area Plan (WRAP) Guiding Principles provide guidance for the construction of a new school at this site.

Zoning Ordinance: The following provides a summary of Zoning Ordinance requirements applicable to the Wilson School project:

Use Permit: A use permit is required for schools in the “S-3A” zoning district. The use permit offers a process for considering and approving such uses, subject to special conditions particular to the character of the use.

Setbacks: Setback standards for buildings in the “S-3A” district are as generally defined in the Zoning Ordinance Section 3.2.(6) Bulk, Coverage, and Placement Requirements. District Use standards (§4.2.4) for middle schools and high schools allow modification of setbacks and the density and dimensional standard for all buildings, accessory buildings and associated structures within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District as shown on the General Land Use Plan, where it finds that the development project is consistent with the Guiding Principles and other policy guidance in the WRAP and provided height does not to exceed 175 feet.

General Land Use Plan (GLUP): This site is located in the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District, a special planning area of the GLUP. It has been established that the primary goal of redevelopment in this area is the replacement of aging public facilities. It is envisioned that the school development area would achieve several goals including but not

limited to a multi-story secondary school; athletic fields and interior space within the school to be used jointly by the school and the community; and energy efficiency and sustainability.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan: Per Virginia Code §15.2-2232, public facilities shall not be constructed unless they are found to be consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan or part thereof.

Western Rosslyn Area Plan (WRAP): The WRAP identifies several key ideas central to redevelopment within the study area as they relate to the subject use permit amendment application.:

- Providing flexible, contiguous open spaces and recreational facilities that meet the needs of APS and the community;
- Minimizing conflicts between emergency vehicle operations and other traffic through the area;
- Providing improvements to the street network to enhance circulation and mitigate the impacts of new development.

The WRAP also identifies elements as components of the Concept Plan which guide the sites' redevelopment. Below is a summary of these elements as they relate to the subject use permit amendment application:

1. *Heights Plan Elements:* The Plan provides for building heights compatible with the surrounding context with the tallest buildings situated along the eastern portion of the WRAP area and lower heights planned within the school development area. The maximum building height for the school site is 175 feet.
 - Require the design of buildings, especially at lower levels to foster pedestrian comfort, while adding visual interest and architectural variety.
 - Encourage building heights and massing that allow for the achievement of the study's open space, recreational, public facility, and affordable housing goals.
2. *Land Use Plan Element:* In addition to the new school, the Plan calls for associated outdoor field, recreation amenities and interior spaces. It is important to design all street frontages of the school to achieve street activation consistent with the County's urban design principles and create visually and physically accessible access into and through the site.
 - Provide for a new secondary school and its associated facilities that are well-integrated into the neighborhood.
3. *Transportation Element:* The Plan guides that there would be coordination of parking, loading, and pick-up and drop-off between the new school and private development to minimize conflicts and to promote transportation demand management tools.
 - Increase pedestrian and bicycle access to and through the site.
 - Minimize curb cuts and thus vehicle and pedestrian/bicycle conflicts.

- Expand the street grid within the study area to ensure adequate circulation for fire/emergency response and school-related transportation needs.
 - Design vehicular circulation to minimize conflicts between neighborhood traffic, emergency responders, school bus and private vehicle drop-off and pick-up, parking/loading functions, and pedestrians.
 - Encourage shared, underground parking for all uses and coordinate ingress/ egress with other adjacent uses in the WRAPS Study Area.
 - Locate vehicle parking access, loading, and service areas on secondary streets and/or alleys.
4. *Open Space Element:* The Plan anticipates the new field associated with the new secondary school and recommends amenities for ground level and rooftop locations. It was expected that all recreation facilities in the study area would be open for public use including regular unstructured public use of school facilities outside of school programming.
- Strategically locate and design beautiful open spaces to maximize the size of contiguous areas and ensure the flexibility of uses and activities and the visibility, safety, and comfort of all users.
 - Maximize the amount and flexibility of natural areas and active and passive open spaces given the need to balance competing demands for space.
 - Seek to ensure that park and school facilities provide for organized active recreation as well as un-programmed time for community usage, particularly for any open field space.
5. *Urban Design Element:* This area of the Plan recommends guidelines on buildable areas, architecture, grade transitions, service, parking and streetscape, and open space and recreation in addition to the Concept Plan. The guidelines are intended to be used in the review of development proposals as a means to promote quality design and a public realm that is safe and attractive.
- Design public buildings to be architecturally notable.
 - Design buildings to be inspiring; construct buildings with high-quality materials that complement the surrounding mix of buildings.
 - Locate parks, plazas, and other green spaces for visibility, easy access and maximum use.
 - Design 18th Street to support neighborhood circulation with enhanced sidewalks and landscaping.
 - Locate public facilities strategically and prominently to create a civic presence in the study area that promotes community confidence and encourages community use.
 - Design the study area to facilitate safety and security including the safety and security of students.
 - Link public areas and main building entrances with a network of safe, connected, tree-lined and well-lit streetscapes that facilitate easy pedestrian circulation.

6. *Environment Element:* The Plan recommends that negative impacts of new development would be minimized with the inclusion of best practices for building and site design, reducing energy consumption, and creating sustainable urban places.
 - Maximize tree canopy and pervious surfaces to minimize the adverse impacts of development, including the “heat island effect” and stormwater runoff.
7. *Implementation Element:* The Plan promotes publicly accessible areas to be designed and operated to be shared in order to maximize flexibility and use.
 - Seek strategies to maximize transit usage by residents, workers, visitors, students and staff.
 - Ensure that underground facilities do not inhibit the viability of above ground tree canopy and vegetation.
 - Analyze the internal and neighborhood effects of site lighting and emphasize design solutions that mitigate against unnecessary light pollution.

Master Transportation Plan (MTP): The MTP contains three major policies: 1) integrate transportation with land use; 2) support design and operation of complete streets; and 3) manage travel demand and transportation systems. In reviewing the use permit for The Heights Building, the following policies identified in the modal elements for the MTP were considered:

- Master Transportation Plan: Demand and System Management Element: Policy 2. Incorporate TDM measures with respect to all existing public buildings and facilities, irrespective of redevelopment status. Explore strategies and incentives to achieve TDM measures in existing private buildings.
- Master Transportation Plan: Parking and Curb Spaces Management Element: Policy 6: Ensure that minimum parking needs are met and excessive parking is not built. Divert resources saved by reducing excess off-street parking to other community benefits.
- Master Transportation Plan: Parking and Curb Spaces Management Element: Policy 13: Provide travel options for persons with disabilities through reserved access to curb space and dedicated off-street parking, with enforcement

The proposed new school complies with the policies of the MTP set forth above. Specifically, the proposal includes TDM measures to reduce the demand for on-site parking, and APS has requested a modification to reduce the amount of required parking spaces and parking needs are met through the use of parking spaces provided in the immediate area.

Modification of Parking Regulations: Section 14.3.7 of the Zoning Ordinance required a total of 409 on-site parking spaces for employees, visitors, and public assembly users. Section 14.3.7.C.1 of the Zoning Ordinance permits parking for schools to be modified where the County Board finds that such modifications will preserve or create recreational facilities located either

within the school development project or at approved off-site locations, and a TDM plan submitted by the applicant demonstrates that the potential adverse impacts of parking demand and any potential disruption of parking patterns within affected neighborhoods that could result from the modification will be mitigated by utilizing available on-street parking abutting the site, and through the implementation of measures such as, but not limited to:

- (1) Utilizing, by written agreement with another party in terms acceptable to the County, off-street parking spaces at a site owned or controlled by that same party; and/or
- (2) Utilizing a managed or shared parking program at times when parking demand is highest; and/or
- (3) Implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies for the use, and/or demonstrating that transit or other transportation options exist that may offset parking demand.

In February 2017 with approval of Phase 1, the County Board approved a modification for zero (0) on-site parking spaces to serve the school. With Phase 2, APS is requesting a modification to allow up to 61 additional parking spaces on-site within the proposed parking garage. Staff analysis of the data presented in the MMTA indicates that there is sufficient underutilized parking in the Aubrey garage to meet APS goal of providing up to 61 additional parking spaces with Phase 2. However, utilization of additional parking spaces within the Aubrey building or other nearby parking structures with capacity would require additional leasing costs for off-site parking contracts. Whether additional parking is provided on-site or off-site, the requested modification is mitigated by the existing 100 permanent off-site spaces in the Aubrey garage (161 spaces total), robust TDM program, and available multi-modal opportunities including increased bike parking within the proposed garage.

Construction of On-Site Structured Parking: APS is proposing a total of 161 parking spaces on and off site to support the school and its programs. The Master Transportation Plan identifies:

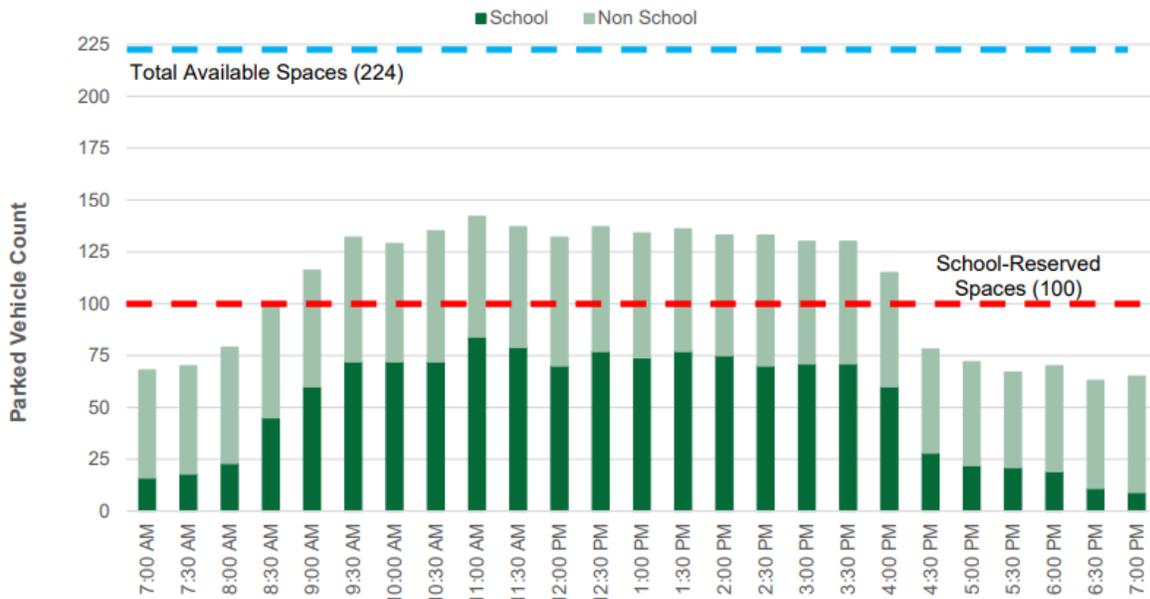
- [Master Transportation Plan: Parking and Curb Spaces Management Element](#): Policy 6: Ensure that minimum parking needs are met and excessive parking is not built. Divert resources saved by reducing excess off-street parking to other community benefits.

When Phase 2 was initially deferred by the County Board in February 2017, the County Board directed APS to study parking utilization and parking demand in detail and provide that information as part of the Phase 2 review. With the goal that the requested data could be used to ensure excessive parking would not be built. In support of that request APS documented its findings and concerns in the *Multimodal Transportation Assessment – The Heights – Phase 2* (MMTA) dated March 31, 2022 drafted by Gorove Slade Transportation Planners and Engineers. In addition to parking utilization, the MMTA reviewed the transportation and operational needs of all the site’s users in support of developing the Phase 2 project.

As it specifically relates to parking demand, the MMTA studied the utilization of the 100 spaces in the Aubrey garage. The MMTA also studied the utilization of non-APS parking within the first level of the Aubrey garage. Parking utilization for the 30 spaces leased in the 1776 Wilson

Boulevard garage could not be studied because APS parkers did not have any assigned parking. Vehicles parked in the garage by APS users could not be distinguished from vehicles parked in the garage for other uses. Parking occupancy data and other observations were collected on December 16, 2021.

The table below shows parking occupancy in the APS and other spaces at the Aubrey garage throughout the day.



The MMTA data indicates in the Aubrey garage peak utilization occurred around 11:00 AM with 84% of APS spaces occupied. Overall, the data shows the Aubrey garage, during peak occupancy, had more than 75 unoccupied spaces. Assuming all 30 spaces in the 1776 Wilson Boulevard are fully utilized the data in the MMTA would suggest the parking demand for teachers/staff peaks at around 115 spaces.

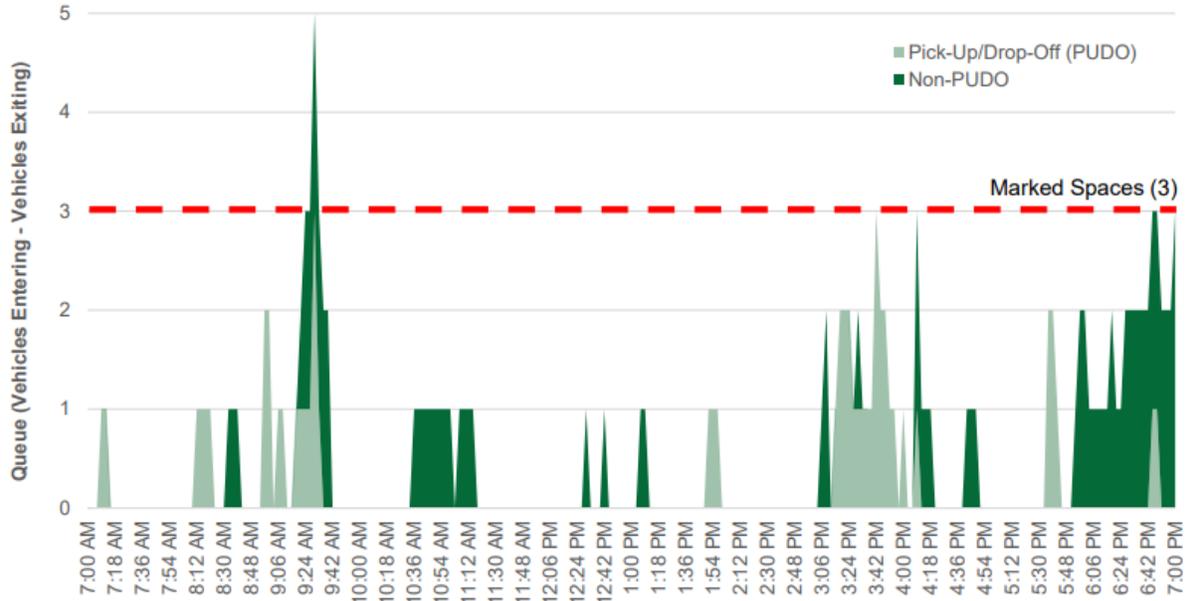
The MMTA submits that there are users other than teachers/staff that are not fully accommodated in the Aubrey garage that would be supported with the addition of the 61 spaces provided below the field with Phase 2. These users include:

- ADA staff and visitors.
- Vehicles arriving for ADA pick up and drop off (ADA PUDO).
- APS service vehicles.

Some handicap parking is provided as part of the 100 spaces APS uses in the Aubrey garage. The MMTA did not specifically highlight utilization of those handicap spaces. However, the MMTA did study the utilization of the three (3) ADA parking spaces that are provided on-street along North Quinn Street. These spaces are adjacent to the Shriver entrance, and they were implemented on-street specifically to support the uses at the site.

The MMTA found, as shown in the graph below, that the on-street ADA spaces were utilized throughout the day, sometimes at or above capacity. Around the morning bell time the data

showed that a mix of ADA users arrived concurrently requiring at least 2 additional ADA spaces. The demand for the ADA on-street spaces dissipated by 9:45. The MMTA also indicated that a significant number of non-ADA users blocked or occupied the spaces creating a conflict for ADA users. The conflicts included delivery vehicles, rideshare vehicles idling, users from the 7-11 parking in the spaces and even APS service vehicles that could not park in the loading dock.



APS has indicated that neither the ADA parking in the Aubrey garage or the ADA on-street parking provides the level of service that ADA spaces in the proposed garage below the field would provide to their users. Providing covered short- and long-term parking at the Shriver entrance is identified as a critical element in providing equitable support for students of the Shriver program by APS.

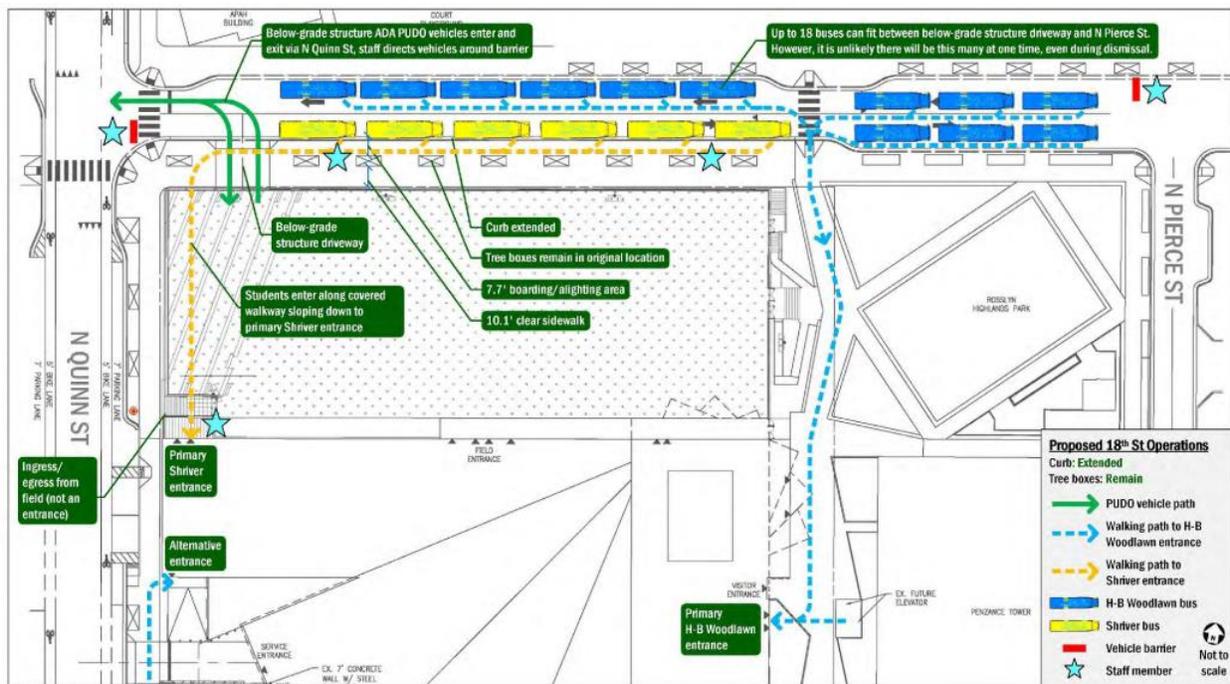
The MMTA demonstrates that the proposed garage likely will provide more parking than the H-B or the Shriver programs demand and it shows that APS parking demands can likely be met in the Aubrey garage by utilizing otherwise under-utilized spaces. The MMTA also shows that ADA users of the Shriver program would be provided a higher level of service by parking in the garage below field when compared to parking in the Aubrey garage or on-street.

This demonstrates that two MTP policy goals may be in conflict when reviewing the Phase 2 proposal: Specifically, Policy 6 and Policy 13 may need to be prioritized when looking at how best to provide parking economically and equitably at the site.

- [Master Transportation Plan: Parking and Curb Spaces Management Element](#): Policy 6: Ensure that minimum parking needs are met and excessive parking is not built. Divert resources saved by reducing excess off-street parking to other community benefits.
- [Master Transportation Plan: Parking and Curb Spaces Management Element](#): Policy 13: Provide travel options for persons with disabilities through reserved access to curb space and dedicated off-street parking, with enforcement.

Staff recommend that both of these MTP Elements be evaluated when considering Phase 2 of the Heights.

18th Street North Width and Parking Lane: To support the daily arrival and departure of students by school bus, APS requests to close 18th Street North to school traffic only. Based on the observations from the MMTA, the closure would last approximately an hour in the morning (8:30 AM to 9:30 AM) and an hour in the afternoon (3:30 AM to 4:30 PM). The street would be closed between North Quinn Street and North Pierce Street. With the street closed, APS proposes to double stack buses supporting approximately 11 buses along APS frontage with up to another six (6) buses stacking along North Highlands Park. A diagram from the MMTA showing APS proposed closure of 18th Street North (provided below) shows school bus stacking, student’s routes on and off buses, proposed staffing locations and proposed locations for temporary barriers to close the street.



Staff’s review of APS’s 18th Street operations and design plan has identified two areas of concern along with recommendations to mitigate the concerns.

1. Removal of the parking lane along the school frontage will require removal of all vehicles along the northern parking lane for bus operations to work.
2. The proposed garage entrance increases operational challenges closing 18th Street during arrival and departure while also permitting limited access into the garage.

By removing the parking lane along the south side of the street APS’s proposed bus operations would require parking to be removed from the north side of 18th Street during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal periods. APS’s diagrams suggest that a minimum of 29-feet of street width is required to double stack APS buses and provide a safe passage for student between

buses. If vehicles remained in the parking lanes during prohibited periods those parked cars would have a significant impact on APS operations. Since the parking would need to be cleared twice daily, the opportunity for APS's operations to be impacted could occur regularly. Additionally, to regularly ticket and tow vehicles multiple times a day could require a significant amount of policing resources that may not be regularly available.

Ultimately staff believes it would be unsustainable to allow public parking along the north side of street during school days if the street is narrowed from 38-feet wide to 30.5-feet wide as proposed by APS. This is not consistent with the WRAP recommendations for the 18th Street North Streetscape and Transportation Element, which include a parking lane along the south side of the street. Staff finds it critical to APS's proposed operations that the parking lane on the south side of the street be provided. With the retention of the southern parking lane along the APS frontage, DES would support APS using and controlling the southern parking lane weekdays during school operations. With APS exclusively using the southern parking lane it is less likely that vehicles remain parked in the lane during arrival and departure periods. This would keep the northern parking lane available to the public at all times.

18th Street North Streetscape: APS proposes removal of the parking lane along south side of 18th Street North adjacent to the school property. The area formerly a parking lane would be incorporated into a revised streetscape proposed to be 22 feet 8 inches wide including a 7-foot 8-inch boarding/alighting zone, 5-foot tree zone, and 10-foot clear sidewalk.

As stated above, removing the parking lane is not consistent with the WRAP recommendations and raises operational concerns. If the parking lane along the south side of 18th Street North is to remain, the resulting streetscape width from the curb to the face of the parking structure would be 15 feet 3 inches which could include a 13-foot 3-inch combined boarding/alighting zone and clear sidewalk with a 2-foot-wide planter strip and seating along the parking structure wall. Street trees would not be able to be accommodated due to the space needed for bus operations including boarding, alighting, queueing, and circulation. This streetscape along APS frontage would support APS operational needs without narrowing 18th Street North.

18th Street North Operations: By locating the proposed garage entrance along 18th Street, APS has created a conflict between bus operations and vehicles entering and exiting the garage making closure of 18th Street during arrival and departure more complicated. During periods when the street is closed to non-APS traffic, school staff will be responsible for safely directing and managing traffic. Neither Arlington County Police nor Arlington's Department of Environmental Services currently have surplus staffing resources available to support the closure of the street twice daily by APS.

Staff recommends that APS be required to develop a comprehensive operations and safety plan for the closing of 18th Street. The plan should not only demonstrate what type of traffic control will be used (signs, barriers, staffing etc.) but also the staffing and training that will be provided by APS to ensure the safety of students, staff, and the general public. Staff recommends that the County Manager review and approve APS's plan prior to APS being permitted to close the street for exclusive use during arrival and dismissal periods. The operations of the street closure and the associated management and direction of traffic represents a significant safety obligation

being assumed by APS with this proposal. APS will need to develop a culture of safety around the operation of 18th Street among their staff. Should APS demonstrate they can't safely control traffic during arrival and departure periods APS may be required to significantly change their programmatic or operational plans for the school to ensure the safety of students and the general public. APS and staff should continue to work on a condition detailing the requirement for an 18th Street Safety and Operations Plan.

Field Elevation: APS proposes the field at an elevation of 180 feet, at grade with The Heights Building level 1 and Rosslyn Highlands Park at the southeast corner of the field. In 2017, APS proposed the field at an elevation of 175 feet. Lowering the field elevation to 175 feet, could provide many benefits to the site including at-grade field access and visibility from the midpoint of the east field entrance to Rosslyn Highlands Park, an opportunity for an accessible entrance to the field from Quinn Street providing improved access for students and the public, a less imposing wall along 18th Street, improved conditions for street trees along 18th Street, better visibility of the architecture of the school, and better lighting for Shriver Program classrooms at the ground level.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Level of Engagement:

Communicate and Consult

This level of engagement is appropriate because the community, various county committees and commissions, and the County Board expressed concerns about the proposal in 2017. The County Board also deferred the proposal for the garage and field during the initial public hearing in February 2017. To address these concerns and to further engage the community, the applicant collected data on traffic and parking demand up until the relocation of the temporary fire station, revised the project to make improvements, and was reviewed by certain County committees and commissions (discussed further below).

Outreach Methods:

- Public notice was given in accordance with the Code of Virginia §15.2-2204. Notices of the County Board hearing on the use permit were placed in the April 19, 2022, and April 26, 2022, issues of the Washington Times for the May 14, 2022, County Board Meeting.
- Placards were placed in various locations surrounding the subject property within seven (7) days of the public hearing.

In addition to the above legal requirements:

- Civic associations and condominiums were informed of the application via email communication. The subject property is located within the within the North Rosslyn Civic Association and is adjacent to the Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Association

and Colonial Village III Homeowners Association. The Queens Court Apartments, Atrium Condominiums, and Aubrey Apartments are also adjacent to the school site.

Community Feedback:

North Rossllyn Civic Association (NRCA): Staff contacted the president of NRCA, and no response has been received as of the date of this report.

Radnor/Fort Myer Heights Civic Association (RAFOM): Staff contacted the president of RAFOM, and no response has been received as of the date of this report.

Colonial Village III Homeowners Association (CVIII): Staff contacted the president of CVIII, and no response has been received as of the date of this report.

Rossllyn Business Improvement District (BID): Staff contacted the president of the Rossllyn BID and no response has been received as of the date of this report.

Public Facilities Review Committee: On April 14, 2022, representatives from APS provided a presentation and update on The Heights Phase 2 Building use permit amendment to the PFRC. The PFRC Chair used the Guiding Principles for Wilson School (April 8, 2015) to guide the discussion. At this meeting, PFRC members discussed parking, EV charging, streetscape, emergency vehicle access, accessibility for Shriver students, tilted entrance, and materials for the garage facade and Shriver entrance. The PFRC plans to provide a letter to the County Board detailing their thoughts on the proposed design.

Park and Recreation Commission (PRC): On April 19, 2022, representatives from APS provided a presentation and update on The Heights Phase 2 Building use permit amendment to the PRC. The PRC acknowledged that the project has come a long way since the February 2017 proposal.

CONCLUSION: The subject use permit amendment to add a below-grade parking structure with a lighted synthetic turf field above is consistent with the “S-3A” zoning designation and “Public” General Land Use Plan (GLUP) designation. The applicant’s proposal would add 61 on-site parking spaces in the below-grade parking garage and address the expressed needs for additional ADA parking spaces, as well as parking for staff, visitors, maintenance and deliveries, secure and covered bike parking, and outdoor equipment storage. The design also provides a covered entrance to the Shriver Program and a lighted synthetic turf field above the garage. However, the proposed design narrows the width of 18th Street North and removes the southern parking lane, relies on the removal of the parking lane for sufficient streetscape width for APS operations and street trees, creates operational concerns with the garage entrance/exit on 18th Street North, and raises the field elevation 5 feet from the proposal in 2017. Staff has identified several inconsistencies with the WRAP Principles and MTP Policies. No recommendation is provided at this stage, as staff is continuing their evaluation and considers the input from the commissions a valuable step in this process for a project that has difficult issues to address.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

August 8, 2016

Approved a License Agreement between the Arlington County School Board and the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia.

February 25, 2017

Approved a use permit for a 180,000 square foot new school (Wilson School) and associated structures, subject to the conditions of the staff report.

Deferred consideration of the proposed 93 space parking garage until removal of the temporary fire station from the site.

March 20, 2021

Approve 33 school use permit amendments which shall incorporate updated and standardized Transportation Demand Management and bicycle parking requirements, and delegate authority to the County Manager or designee to allow future modification of these requirements administratively going forward, if in concurrence with the Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools or designee.