

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL



December 7, 2023 | Design Meeting Questions & Answers

Q: Will there be additional lighting around the school perimeter in the new design?

A: There will be wall-mounted light fixtures to illuminate each entrance in the new building.

Q: Will there be security cameras around the building?

A: Yes, there will be security cameras around the building.

Q: Has any thought been given to accommodating parking within the new design? How many parking spots are you planning for?

A: We have 33 spots as of right now, but we are working with the DOT to redesignate and reassign parking in the Butcher Hill neighborhood.

Q: Does the state give any consideration to a tighter, urban space like ours? when giving funding and resources?

A: Funding is reflective of enrollment and square footage rather than the school site itself.

Q: What can the play area accommodate? The assumption is that it is less than our current school site.

A: It is not a regulation field for soccer or sports; it is defined for early childhood students. Meanwhile, the older elementary play area is facing E. Fayette St., and the middle school students have the open play area facing N. Chester. The play area accommodates about 375 kids.

Q: Will there be a fixed physical shade under the play area?

A: No, shade for the play area is not included in our educational specifications for the design.

Q: Is there someone overseeing the early childhood state regulations to properly incorporate them into the design?

A: Yes, our academic director, Dawn Shirey, reviews the design with all of those ramifications in mind.

Q: What is the rationale behind having the faculty planning space on the third floor?

A: This level of the building offered the best availability to create the opportunity to combine this space with an adjacent classroom when larger professional development events are needed. The first and second floors could not afford this availability while meeting classroom needs.

Q: How is sound with a partition to separate rooms?

A: The moveable partitions will be designed to function as effective acoustic separation when in the closed position and will meet noise reduction standards.

Q: How many bathrooms are there on the first floor?

A: There will be a bathroom in every classroom on the first floor.

Q: Are the music room risers built in, or can they be moved?

A: The risers are able to be folded up and moved.

Q: Is there space for a food pantry?

A: Yes, the food pantry is on the first floor.

Q: Why are we taking away from certain areas like the music room and adding more classrooms? Can we take away some of that expansion and use it to accommodate programming like music?

A: The number of classrooms was determined based on the projected enrollment of the school.

Q: Where is the auditorium space?

A: The auditorium is part of the cafetorium: a cafeteria and auditorium. The old CJR auditorium stage is 2144 square feet when adding the stage and thrust. The new platform is 1093 sq ft, which is 900 sq ft above ed spec allocation.

The new cafetorium seating for dining is 343 people per seating. Performance seating capacity is 523 people per performance. The old auditorium seated 500 people when combining the fixed seating as well as the dining space when the operable wall was opened.

Q: Can we exclude showers from the design?

A: Showers are an educational specification for middle schoolers, so we are unable to change that as part of the design.

Q: Where would PK3 classrooms go in the new building?

A: PK3 would take over the current Head Start spaces on the first floor design.

Q: Are there other finished schools in 21st Century where the ratio to students and square footage are like ours? We would like to ask for that.

A: Highlandtown EMS has a similar population to that of Commodore John Rodgers.

Q: We see feedback in light of the limitations, but we wonder what we can do and who we can talk to so we can make the necessary changes to accommodate our community. We would like to ask for that.

A: Although we are nearing the final phases of design, the design team is investigating specific modifications such as a moveable partition between the music rooms (although the column layout will not be able to change) and a moveable partition to allow use of the stage as instructional space. Separately, we are evaluating the design and cost implications of rooftop play areas to convey accurate information to the school.

Q: This design feels like a building being built for a different school.

A: The primary determinant of the design was the educational specifications based on the projected enrollment. The size of the site is an existing limitation and existing condition, and the design team had to balance educational programming, outdoor play and learning, service, and parking.

Q: When is the next meeting regarding the Commodore John Rodgers project?

A: The next meeting would be to provide information on the completed design, finish selections, and future steps in construction and could be scheduled soon after project design completion in February.

Q: How wide will that ramp be if it is the main way to exit? Is it designed to accommodate the number of people who will use it?

A: The ramp that runs between the main play area and the apartment building property is 10' feet wide. The ramp is designed to be ADA Compliant and Code Compliant to meet Egress Requirements.

Q: Can a parking agreement be arranged with the private parking lot located across the street from the school?

A: City Schools can assist with investigating options and reviewing any agreement Commodore John Rodgers might pursue and fund.

Q: Should there be an enrollment cap?

A: At this point, Commodore John Rodgers and adjacent schools face projected enrollment pressures that need to be addressed on site.

Q: How was the Waverly parking garage funded?

A: The Waverly project took advantage of site topography to provide fewer than ten parking spaces below a portion of the building. This was part of the project budget. A parking garage in the sense of a parking structure was not provided.

Q: It does not appear that the band/music room will accommodate the number of students who participate in these activities. Can we run through scenarios to work through space use?

A: The design team is investigating a moveable partition between the music rooms, although the column layout will remain and the opening will not be completely clear.

Q: What are the MSDE requirements for outdoor preschool areas? How are the requirements being monitored for changes?

A: Age and grade appropriate outdoor play areas are being provided in line with the Interagency Commission on School Construction School Facilities Planning Guide. The MSDE Office of Child Care licensing requirements are separate.

Q: How does the square footage of the proposed outdoor play spaces compare with the outdoor play spaces that the school is currently using (including spaces that may not have been designed or designated as official play spaces)?

A: The chart below is a quick study of the play areas.

SQUARE FOOTAGE	BEFORE	AFTER
EXISTING HEAD START	3619	3619
EXISTING BB COURTS	11919	11919
AMPHITHEATRE & GRASS TREE AREA	0	14945
PLAY AREA BETWEEN GYM & ACADEMIC BUILDING	7172	7172
FITNESS AREA BY FAIRMOUNT AVE & END OF BUILDING & PARKING	0	8947
TOTAL PLAY AREA	22710	46602
NEW HEAD START		3798
NEW PLAY AREA		32672
OUTDOOR AREA BY GYM		3887
TOTAL PLAY AREA		40357

ADDENDUM

View the next two pages for an in depth view of the play spaces.

For more information or to view the meeting presentation please visit:
baltimore21stcenturyschools.org

