

**APFO Committee  
City of Rockville  
June 29 Meeting Notes**

Committee Members present: Jason Anthony, Dennis Cain, Tom Gibney, Sean Hart, Charles Littlefield, Julie Palakovich-Carr, Soo Lee-Cho.

Committee Members absent: Eric Siegel, Roald Schrack

City Staff present: Jim Wasilak

Meeting convened at 7:05pm.

Purpose of meeting was to continue ongoing discussions on committee members views of material presented/obtained to date, as well as what process and framework the Committee will use to arrive at its final recommendations for the Planning Commission.

The first point of discussion was a review of the student generation rates provided by Bruce Crispell for the 15 specific properties requested by the Committee. In addition to reviewing the numbers as is, the Committee reviewed a handwritten numerical analysis done by Dennis Cain that compared the actual number of students generated for each property, per grade level, with the expected generation rates for new housing. The Committee analyzed Dennis' analysis in detail, including potential trends related to housing type (single family, multi family, mid-rise, garden apartments, etc) and the possibility that demographic changes in old and new residential neighborhoods might be cyclical with respect to student generation rates. It was noted that the analysis could be more robust if the Committee had more data, e.g. # of rooms per housing unit, year built, % of MPDU units, etc; also, the data would be easier to analyze if it were provided in an Excel spreadsheet. Anecdotal examples were provided by various Committee members of notable school enrollment increases at the end of the school year (e.g. College Gardens). The Committee ended discussion on this topic by agreeing to further review the numbers in Excel, with additional parameters if possible (year built, etc), and by noting that--with respect to the accuracy of generation rates--students, parents and teachers don't experience averages; if a school is over-capacity, the impact is felt on a school-by-school, and grade-by-grade basis.

The committee then discussed, and brainstormed a bit, on how new technology could be used to improve forecasting of student generation rates. One example of this was programming a "heat map" of relevant data to identify and visualize areas of concern, e.g. areas with high or unpredictable student generation rates, school overcrowding, student generation attributed to certain neighborhoods, apartment complexes, etc. Another example given was possibly recommending that data related to school capacity, actual vs. forecasted student generation, etc. be placed online as part of a transparency, or open government, initiative; citizens interested in this topic could then independently analyze the online data to provide citizen input, incentivize improved forecasting algorithms and hold the process more accountable to public concerns regarding school overcrowding. The political, economic and technical pros/cons and feasibility of such technology-related ideas, and how they could lead to a specific recommendation to the Planning Commission, was discussed in detail (major topics included: potential political ramifications of Rockville using different generation rates than Montgomery County; data collection cost and feasibility; role of zoning enforcement; potential for improved accuracy, etc.).

Throughout the remainder of the meeting, these technology-related ideas were revisited several times in various contexts. Additional discussions that arose during the meeting were: i) if better accuracy of expected student generation rates in the APFS and better tracking of actual student generation rates could improve some Committee members confidence with respect to how the APFS are applied; ii) if cost of improved data collection and forecasting outweighed the cost of overcrowded schools (e.g. portables); and iii) whether or not the data received from Montgomery County contained any "smoking gun" evidence of gross inaccuracy.

The Committee then discussed the possibility of making its final presentation to the Planning Commission on August 3, 2011. Also, in terms of upcoming agenda, the Committee discussed what criteria to apply when deciding which representatives of the development community to invite to upcoming Committee meetings.

An effort was made to obtain a general consensus among various committee members regarding student generation rates. The Committee also started discussion of 8 other topics (110% vs. 120% threshold; 2-year test window;

grandfathered projects; impact fee and facility payment fees; Silverwood annexation; borrowing/averaging within school clusters and use of “placeholders” to avoid moratorium; supermajority vote requirement for exceptions to the APFO). In the time remaining, the Committee members in attendance were able to generally agree on the following:

- Borrowing and averaging within school clusters is not a good practice because it doesn't correlate with an individual student's quality of life; students only attend one school/classroom; no student attends an “average.”
- The School Facilities Payment is of greater relevance than the School Impact Tax because this could potentially be applied toward solving a specific overcrowding situation in Rockville.

Finally, as a result of specific ideas and suggestions being proposed during the meeting, the Committee generally agreed that the final report could consist of both Final Key Recommendations, and Side Recommendations, in accord with the levity of the same. Some possible side recommendations discussed were:

- Drafting a statement about the working relationship between Montgomery County and the City of Rockville on issues pertinent to the APFO.
- Investigation on whether or not lack of zoning enforcement is contributing to the school overcrowding problem (in response to 2010 Rockville Citizens survey results on this issue).

Meeting adjourned at 9:55pm.

#### ACTION POINTS:

- City staff to provide Committee with Bruce Crispell's housing numbers as an Excel file.
- Committee to further analyze student generation rates in Excel; calculate margin of error, etc.
- Committee to further analyze feasibility of technology/transparency as means to improve student generation forecasting and analysis.
- Committee requested City of Rockville School Test data for all fiscal years since APFO passed (i.e. FY2005 through FY2011).
- City staff to inquire why Bruce Crispell did not provide the student generation numbers requested for Twinbrook and Maryvale elementary school districts.