

PALO ALTO HIGH SCHOOL MASTER PLAN  
Palo Alto Unified School District

**MASTER PLAN MEETING NO.1**

DATE: 6 November 2008, 3:30–5:30 pm

SUBJECT: Master Plan Meeting with Palo Alto HS Facilities Steering Committee

ATTENDEES: See attached sign-in sheet

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The following are the highlights of the meeting:

1. As an introduction to the master plan presentation, architect Erwin Lee explained what the physical master planning goals might be. They are:
  - Give organization and structure to the campus
  - Create a hierarchy of open spaces
  - Utilize in between spaces and avoid sprawling of the campus in order to preserve open space
  - Create edges to open spaces and buildings
  - Define and articulate entries to building
  - Growth strategies and consolidation or reconfiguration of program spaces

During the discussion of goals, the following were suggested by the steering committee as additional goals:

- It was noted that during the last bond, that Paly HS did not receive many improvements
  - Improve traffic flow and circulation for both pedestrian and vehicles
  - Consolidate department and functions
  - New buildings to accommodate growth
  - Environmental goals – reduce or eliminate AC, quiet ventilations systems
  - Provide campus-wide storage
2. The architect reviewed the current project list noting that during the MP process, the project list may evolve. The project list included:
    - Classroom building/s to replace existing relocatable classrooms and accommodate future growth
    - Renovate or replace Tower Building
    - Second gymnasium or addition to existing gymnasium and associated support spaces
    - Build new theater and renovate existing Haymarket Theater (possibly different use)
    - Modernize existing building that did not get attention during the previous bond

During the discussion of projects, the following were suggested by the steering committee as possible additional projects:

- Create small outdoor performance spaces as well as useful outdoor spaces for academic use
  - Provide lecture rooms that could be flexible
  - Provide meeting spaces. The architect noted that it might be possible to convert the existing, interior classroom spaces into meeting spaces and create new classroom spaces (within the new buildings) with exterior window for natural light and ventilation.
  - Create a testing center
  - Create a media arts center to house the currently programs that are spread throughout the campus and/or expand current dedicated spaces
  - Renovate the library to take advantage of the high interior volume. Create conference and “break-out” spaces within the library.
  - Provide space for the career tech and future tech programs. The space should be flexible to allow for evolution of the program/s in the future.
  - Space to accommodate adult school uses. Consider location since access occurs during the evening as well as during the day. Path of travel, lighting and parking is important.
  - Location of bike cages. Need to accommodate approximately 750 bikes. Cages to be located near major points of campus access to discourage bike traffic through the campus.
  - Location of special education program—centralize or distributive.
  - Review HVAC systems which do not perform adequately
3. Based on initial thoughts and impressions about the campus, the architect presented a site plan diagram for discussion. The plan incorporated projects from the aforementioned list as well as others.

The major elements proposed in the site plan were:

- Create a large central quad to organize the campus. The quad would incorporate a variety of spaces for both large and small groups.
- Renovate the Tower Building
- Possible to add an atrium to the back of the Tower Building to use as circulation between the existing building and the building addition.
- Replace the existing student center with a new building that could be connected/bridged to the Tower Building. The proposed building is two-stories and would house other student service needs and meeting spaces. A raised plaza would provide eating and gathering spaces overlooking the main quad. The raised plaza would also serve as a stage for the quad and a focus point for large events.
- The position of the new Student Center would create a small courtyard with views focused to the library. Create new entry to the library that has a presence on the edge of the quad.
- Create a new theater adjacent to the Haymarket Theater with a glass lobby that could be shared by both theaters. A forecourt is developed as an approach to the new lobby.
- Create new gateways to the campus from the Embarcadero side of campus.

- A new classroom building is located where the existing relocatable classroom buildings are.
  - Adjoining the new classroom building is a new building to house the adult education program, shops and other classrooms.
  - A new gymnasium is positioned at the end of the long axis of the quad. This building will provide a façade to this end of the quad creating the fourth side. The new gym and accessory spaces will join the existing two gyms together. Alternatively, the smaller gym can be demolished allowing the new building to increase in size.
  - Pavilions are placed opposite each other to form the entry to the gym complex and the football field.
  - The vehicular access from Churchill is terminated at an articulated turn-around with passage beyond for emergency and service vehicles only.
  - Reconfigure parking between the athletic fields.
4. The following were the comments and discussion item from the facilities steering committee based on the new plan:
    - The plan generally addressed the concerns of the master plan.
    - Locating the new theater next to the existing theater to create a larger, performing arts complex was well received.
    - The size of the theater should be increased to 500 seats. The architect noted that space in the art building could be used for accessory theater spaces and that the art functions could be moved to a new building.
    - The existing parking area is large enough in capacity that the loss of spaces for the theater footprint would not be critical. Additional parking could be recaptured after the relocatable classrooms east of the art buildings are removed.
    - The guidance functions, currently located in the Tower Building, could move to a more centralized location.  
Existing space does not provide adequate spaces for confidentiality.
    - Create a hierarchy of paths for pedestrians and bikes. Provide site lighting for these paths of travel.
  5. The architect noted that the master planning process is not linear and that it will evolve as more information is introduced into the process. There will be much iteration until a final master plan is finalized.
  6. It was noted that the projected student population of the campus would grow to 2,200.
  7. A concern was raised that the special education programs receive adequate facilities and should not be forgotten in the process.
  8. A brief discussion was held regarding temporary housing and what may need to happen during construction. The architect mentioned that although it is easiest to build in a location that is currently open, this strategy might lead to campus sprawl and result in a disorganized arrangement. He reminded us that the new buildings will be there for a long time and should be placed where it makes the most sense. The easiest solution may not be the best long-term solution.

9. It was noted that the intersection at the Embarcadero entrance would be reconfigured as a signalized intersection. The pedestrian crosswalk further east will also be reconfigured.

The next meeting is scheduled for 25 November 2008 at 3:30 pm. at the Library

Note: This meeting notes format will replace the notes/graphics format that was previously used.

Prepared by Erwin Lee of Deems Lewis McKinley. Please advise if you feel that any of the above items are inaccurate or need further clarification or detail.