

MEETING MINUTES

PROJECT NAME: William Schmidt S. Outdoor Educational Center
 CLIENT: Prince Georges County Public Schools (PGCPS)
 QEA PROJECT NO.: 41802570
 MEETING NO.: Design Charrette/ Brainstorming 01, Pre-design Meeting #04
 MEETING DATE: 02.05.2019



100 N. CHARLES STREET
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ATTENDEES:

Attendance	NAME	ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
✓	James Roberson	PGCPS	james.roberson@pgcps.org
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DISCUSSION NOTES:

NO	ITEM
4.1	<p>Big Idea / Why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QEA described a process of design thinking that searches for a “big idea” through an iterative evaluation of the project program, specific site, and craft of building. A creative spark that synthesizes these three elements into a framework for making holistic and quality design decisions. - How do we get to the “Why”? QEA asked an elemental question for stakeholders to consider and reflect on. What should be the timeless takeaway from an outdoor environmental education experience at Schmidt? -One answer that was discussed, is that a participant would leave their experience at Schmidt with an understanding that they are part of a larger natural system, and that they have some responsibility to the stewardship of that system. It was also discussed how natural systems are comprised of interdependent cycles such as the carbon, water, oxygen processes as well as seasonal, lunar and solar movements and rhythms. When human activity disrupts these natural cycles, overall health and well-being are compromised and the natural environment declines. -James Roberson mentioned that the takeaway from Schmidt should be to create a learning experience that makes students comfortable in nature and having fun, so that

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	<p>they would enjoy seeking out other outdoor adventures. Schmidt should plant the seed for environmental sensitivity and awareness so that youth make better decisions through their lives.</p>
4.2	<p>Schmidt Program Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Schmidt staff clarified different programs + staff requirements at campus: -5th grade program (Range: 12-150 students at a time; average: 50-60 students coming from one school) broken down into groups of 10-15 students. -1st grade program (Ranges from 60-120 students) <p>By design, program delivery relies on visiting schools' teachers, chaperones and Schmidt staff:</p> <p>Teachers: Schmidt specialists will assign activities for visiting teachers of each school. Typically, each teacher only instructs one single activity to the students. Because teachers are not part of Schmidt staff, they have to undergo training before their school's visit. Training includes watching an instructional video and providing an instructional binder. Ideally, teachers remain at their assigned activity station for the duration of the day while the student groups rotate these stations with chaperones. Teachers do not walk students to their activities.</p> <p>Chaperones: Their main role is to accompany and monitor a student group throughout activities. They also spend the night at Schmidt. They do not instruct the activities. Chaperones can be parents or school staff.</p> <p>Schmidt Staff: Two Schmidt Staff members accompany each fifth grade group. One will stay overnight with the group in the camp center. They oversee, manage and coordinate the programs. The only activity that is instructed by Schmidt staff is the Stream Ecology lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Other programs include: First Grade Day Program, Middle + High School Team Building, environmental science and professional development for teachers, and special events like Envirothon.
3.3	<p>Site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Overview and discussion about existing conditions on site, opportunities and constraints from natural elements to man-made interventions currently on the campus. These include, but not limited to: topography, streams, wetlands, forest stands, fields, trails, bridges, roads, and buildings.
3.4	<p>Site – Existing Activities locations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Design Team and Schmidt staff talked about location of existing buildings and activities. These include drop-off and pick-up areas. QEA showed a site plan for analytic purposes that color-codes the different program activities occurring on the site. <p>Orme Building: Major concern with proximity to public road; doesn't really disconnect from developed infrastructure, noise pollution permeates site. Orme does not have a particularly strong connection to the rest of property.</p> <p>Neville Building: Primarily an administrative building for staff. The Fifth Grade Program mainly uses the exhibit space and discovery room for cueing up students for the wagon ride in the evening.</p> <p>Existing Villages: "Labs" in village structures used for storage. Shared classroom without furniture and mostly used to drop students' duffle bags at start and end of program.</p> <p>Original Cabins: Used as classrooms primarily by the First Grade program when there's inclement weather.</p>



	<p>Existing Outdoor Dining and Restroom Pavilion: Used as an open meeting pavilion for the orientation of first grade program, activity program restrooms, and for storage. Restrooms are in a useful location to serve first, and fifth grade programs as well as middle and high school confidence and challenge courses.</p>
3.5	<p>Site – Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limiting permeability of buses and other vehicles deep into the site for both safety and to experience the natural world more directly. - Orchestrating the arrival sequence could help visitors mentally transition into the outdoor program. Buses might drop off students further from the villages. Wagons could then take students and their luggage to the villages to allow for a smoother transition into the program. Schmidt expressed concerns about the timing and staffing of this activity. - Taking advantage of the topography to have an accessible circuit or path. Keeping path on ground and ideas of letting the path extend and being in between/above tree canopy height. Accessible path for confidence course is required. Schmidt hires outside expertise to run high ropes confidence course for special needs groups. - Accessible circuit should be well integrated into the program and might act as a spine to the pathways. - Significant landscape and architectural changes at the Orme Building site to integrate into the program. - Accessibility in all buildings, including villages, for students and adults. - Trails to provide some accessible areas for use by ambulances and fire department. - Connecting buildings with nature – remoteness of location, openings, light, views, materials. Interior wood finishes in villages/sleeping units is discouraged to avoid any potential bed bug problems. - Designing as much as possible with passive systems: operability of windows, doors, light intake. Design team to take into consideration potential weather unpreparedness from students. - Operability of active MEP system: Room temperature, thresholds, light, etc.
3.6	<p>Program</p> <p>-QEA continues to share ongoing program analysis for all buildings. Square foot analysis, life safety code, ideal groupings and adjacencies of program elements, are being evaluated and continue to shape our understanding of the program.</p>
3.7	<p>Precedents</p> <p>-The design team shared programmatic, typological, character, and inspirational precedents from different projects that may have relevance to the Schmidt project for discussion with the group. Representative projects were designed by various designers and architects, some included were designed by QEA, R&H and Biohabitats. These precedents exemplify program and building typologies, spatial configuration/design, materiality, environmental design, systems and other considerations that may be useful in thinking about as we embark on the design of the project together.</p>

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18 January 2019

Page 4 of 4

END OF MINUTES

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