

**Community Information Meeting Questions**  
**Catoctin Elementary School**  
**November 14, 2019**  
**TLSE 2019-0009, LCPS Catoctin Elementary School Expansion**

**Attendance:** Sara Howard-O'Brien and Donna Torraca, LCPS Planning Division  
Christopher Murphy, Town of Leesburg, Senior Planning Project Manager  
Beth Barts, School Board Member Elect, Leesburg District  
Approximately 9 community members.

**Questions raised, and a brief summary of the responses, are provided below:**

**1. What developments were taken into consideration when this addition was designed?**

The School Board's decision to seek funding for the three-classroom addition at Catoctin Elementary School resulted from review of the school's enrollment, configuration, and utilization. The addition will allow for a more effective and efficient instruction with the current student body.

Funding for a three-classroom addition at Catoctin Elementary School was approved as part of the FY 2020 capital budget process. The project was identified in the [School Board Adopted FY 2020 - FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program](#) (page 80), dated December 11, 2018, as well as included in the Board of Supervisors' April 2, 2019 [FY 2020 Adopted Budget](#) (page 12-29). Residential development approved, but not yet completed, in the Central Loudoun planning district (in which Catoctin Elementary School is located) was considered in the preparation of the FY 2020 capital budget; please reference page 167 of the *School Board Adopted FY 2020 – FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program* (CIP) document.

**2. How do you plan for more students and schools?**

LCPS monitors all new residential development in the County. This includes rezonings, subdivisions, and building permits. Student generation factors are updated annually and applied to new housing development (i.e., how many students are anticipated from each type of housing unit – detached, attached and multi-family). LCPS also reviews the annual enrollment data, historical enrollment patterns, and monitors local, regional and national demographic trends. The data is analyzed utilizing various methodologies to provide projections district wide, by planning area and for each school. Existing capacity is reviewed in comparison to the projected enrollments over a six-year period to determine if and where new school facilities are needed. This analysis is taken into account as a part of the CIP process for determination on where new schools and/or additions may be needed.

**3. Why does the CIP state that there are only 36 students planned for Crescent Parke? The development will certainly have more students.**

Future students from Crescent Parke (108 single family attached and 166 multifamily units), as reported in the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2021 – FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program (page 153), indicate 56 elementary school-age students, 31 middle school-age students, and 41 high school-age students. As explained in the response to the previous question. Student generation factors are calculated annually, and these ratios are then applied to unconstructed housing to determine the future potential impact at build out.

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Last year's capital budget (School Board Adopted FY 2020 – FY 2025 CIP, page 167) had noted 178 single family attached units and 166 multifamily units; the unit mix published in the current FY 2021 – FY 2026 CIP document indicates 70 units less. The 70 single family attached units have been identified as age-restricted thus will not have resident school-age children.

**4. What office space is being moved for the vestibule changes?**

The office to be relocated is not known at this time.

**5. When does the actual construction start?**

Before construction may begin, the Special Exception, design, Site Plan, and building permit must be approved. After permit approvals, bids will be solicited for the project and the contract awarded by the School Board. Each of these processes require time. The construction start date is contingent on the approval process; based on current information construction could begin in early 2021.

**6. Will both the vestibule and addition be constructed at the same time? Is it possible for the vestibule be done prior to the addition?**

The improvements will be constructed as one project. The actual construction for each component, the rear addition and the vestibule, may vary to minimize disruption to the school operations. For example, it would be preferable to construct inside the building (the vestibule) when school is not in session.

**7. Will there be additional parking on the site?**

No additional parking is proposed. While the classroom addition will increase the capacity by 46 seats, the projections indicate that the enrollment will not significantly change in the six-year planning period. September 30, 2019 enrollment was 658 and the 2025-2026 enrollment is projected to be 664.

**8. Are you asking residents what they want planted for landscaping near their property around the perimeter?**

The proposed special exception landscaping plan proposes the planting of additional evergreen trees to provide year-round screening. The purpose of the community information meeting is to share the plans with the surrounding community and receive input. Should residents wish to have different landscaping from what is proposed, LCPS encourages the community to reach out to us. The Town of Leesburg will also review the proposed plan and provide comment. Ultimately, both the Planning Commission and Town Council will hold public hearings on the application to receive input.

**9. How will the construction vehicles enter the site?**

The site has access from Catoctin Circle. The exact access drive has not been determined and will be decided prior to construction.

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- 10. What will happen to the fence at the back of the property? Is that on LCPS land or the adjacent property? Will LCPS be putting any additional fencing around the school or replacing any existing fencing?**

The existing wire fence is located on the property boundary of the school and the planned White Oak property. LCPS will work with the adjacent property owner to determine if a new fence is needed and to allow for pedestrian access by the future residents. At a minimum, a gate will be needed to allow access between the neighborhood and the school. There are no current plans by the White Oak development to replace the fence.

- 11. How realistic is the 2021 opening timeline with the legislative process?**

Construction is estimated to require approximately six months; the application review process and design is projected to require 12+/- months, for a total of 18 months. From the date of special exception submission to opening is 21 months. There should be sufficient time to obtain approvals and construct the improvements for a fall 2021 opening.

- 12. By adding the 46 seats does that take Catoctin ES to capacity? When will Catoctin be at capacity?**

Catoctin ES is not expected to reach capacity within the six-year planning period. The addition has been planned in part to address existing programing needs.

- 13. Why don't you survey parents as other jurisdictions, so you know where the students reside?**

Enrollment data provides the information needed for school projections.

- 14. There is asbestos in the school. How will you control that if construction takes place while school is in session?**

Any work involving or disturbing asbestos containing materials (ACM) in a public school facility is highly regulated by the state and federal government. LCPS closely monitors all known and suspected ACM in our schools on a regular basis and all of the ACM records for the school will be provided to the Architect and Engineer (A&E) firm selected to design the new classroom addition at Catoctin ES. The construction work during the project will be closely monitored by LCPS and the A&E to ensure any ACM is handled correctly.

If the construction project requires the disturbance or removal of any ACM, a licensed asbestos abatement contractor will perform the work and a licensed environmental contractor will be used to provide third party verification of the asbestos containment system to include air sampling both inside and outside of the sealed containment work area. The work area must be certified clear of asbestos before the air containment system can be removed after the removal of the asbestos. LCPS has managed other school

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renovations involving asbestos with experienced contractors that are familiar with both asbestos regulations and LCPS protocol. The safety of LCPS students and staff is paramount and all required measures will be implemented.

**15. What is the layout of the vestibule and the addition?**

The project is still in design. The details of the building design are typically determined by building permit stage. The purpose of a Special Exception is to review the land use (i.e., a school). Even though the school has been at this location since 1966, the zoning district requirements have changed since it's construction. Thus, the addition is required to obtain special exception approval.

**16. Did they switch from an addition to a renovation at the front of the school for a reason?**

Analysis of options found that the front vestibule changes can be accommodated within the existing footprint. The functionality does not necessitate additional square footage.

**17. Is there anything the Town is going to do, or can do, to move the process along for this application?**

Chris Murphy, Town of Leesburg planner, explained the special exception process which includes review by referral agencies, the opportunity for LCPS to address comments, a potential second review and public hearings at both the Planning Commission and Town Council. While there is a fast track option, it is typically utilized for economic development projects. Mr. Murphy noted that based on the information available, the application should be reviewed and acted upon within the projected timelines to allow opening by the fall 2021.

**18. What is the timing of the playground construction? Will it be done at the same time?**

The school expansion project, providing the three-classroom addition and security vestibule improvements, is not tied to the playground project. The School Board Adopted FY 2020 – FY 2025 CAPP (page 43) noted funding for a playground at Catoctin Elementary School in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022.

**19. When were other additions done at the school?**

Catoctin Elementary School opened in 1966. There was a classroom addition in 1974, library addition in 1983, and the gymnasium addition in 1999.

**20. Water problems began after construction of the gymnasium for residents along Valley View Avenue that is to the east of the school. What are you going to do to fix and prevent additional problems with this construction?**

Stormwater management will be reviewed as a part of the Special Exception and Site Plan process. Both the State and the Town have stormwater regulations with which development must comply.

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**21. What type of security will be in place during construction if students are here.**

LCPS has managed various renovations while school is in session. The specific security measures will be determined in conjunction with LCPS Safety and Security.

**22. Do you provide porta potties during construction.**

Yes. Separate bathroom facilities are provided by the contractor for the construction workers. The workers will not be using the school bathroom facilities.

**23. Where will the check-in be during the vestibule construction?**

This will be determined prior to construction. Depending on if and when approvals are secured, the ideal scenario is to construct the vestibule when school is not in session.

**24. Is there another elementary school planned in Leesburg in the next five years?**

No. The Superintendent's Recommended FY 2021 – FY 2026 Capital Improvement Program (page 150) indicates available capacity for the Central Loudoun elementary schools for the six-year CIP timeframe. There is a proffered 15+ acre site in Tuscarora Crossing which has been identified for a future Central Loudoun elementary school (ES-24); the CIP indicates ES-24 would open in fall 2029 (2029-2030 school year).

**25. Why is avoiding boundary changes a priority?**

Attendance zone changes are undertaken by the School Board when needed. Historically, the school community finds boundary changes to be disruptive and prefers to stay in their current schools. When Loudoun County was rapidly growing, more frequent boundary changes were necessary to adjust the student population to incorporate the new schools and to keep pace with growth. School attendance zone changes are not avoided but are minimized to limit disruption to the extent practical.