

*Planning for Our Future*

## **Subcommittee 1**

### **Parking/Traffic/Aesthetics**

October 14, 2023

## **PARKING**

### **Strengths**

- What would you list as strengths regarding student, staff, and visitor parking on the Methacton High School campus?
  - Senior parking has spots numbered
  - Having designated areas for students and staff
  - Nice to have parking close to the facilities (gym, etc.)
  - Well maintained and clean. No debris or trash in the parking lots
  - During inclement weather, roads are cleared very well and kept safe.
  - Buses are moved to the senior parking when bad weather is pending.
  - Parking spots are clearly defined in the senior lot.
- What sets Methacton High School Campus parking apart from other high school campus parking that you are familiar with?
  - Nice to have parking close to the facilities (gym, etc.)
  - Easy to access from the road
- What advantages do students, parents, staff, and the community have with parking on the Methacton High School Campus?
  - Close, stakeholders don't have to walk far.
- What other positive aspects can you list regarding parking on the Methacton High School Campus?
  - Most parking spots are generously sized

### **Challenges**

- What do you not like about parking on the Methacton High School Campus?
  - Not enough parking spots for daily operations or extra-curricular activities
  - Signage doesn't make sense for the flow of the traffic. Wording is not specific related to the area you are seeking.
  - Color of the signs makes it blend into the landscape. Easy to miss.
  - People avoid coming to the high school because of a bad experience trying to get around.
  - The lighting is not good. Too dark even when the lights are on at night.
  - Safety issues depending on the lot you are in. Pedestrians aren't always visible to motorists in the lot near the aux field.

- Because of limited parking for guests, people make their own spots near the bus depot, which makes it dangerous for other motorists and pedestrians.
- Illegal street parking along Kriebel Mill and Mill for baseball games.
- Angled parking spots in junior lot and transportation lot creates traffic issues.
- What factors or limitations with parking on the Methacton High School Campus do you believe detract from the ability to have an exceptional experience?
  - Parking doesn't allow us to have a championship games (depending on sport)/big events (graduation/mini-thon/etc) in the facilities.
- What disadvantages do students, parents, staff, and the community have with parking on the Methacton High School Campus?
  - Parking is not accessible for all (elderly, disabled, etc).
  - No clear pedestrian path after parking and traveling to the facilities.
  - No EV charging stations on campus.
  - Creates tension in the community because of the lack of parking on campus and students/visitors park in the neighborhood instead.
- What other challenging matters can you list regarding parking on the Methacton High School Campus?

### **Opportunities**

- What advantages do students, parents, staff, and the community from other high schools, you are familiar, with have regarding parking on their campus that Methacton should consider implementing on the High School Campus?
  - EV chargers
  - Clarity in their signage and visibility
  - Adequate handicap accessible parking
  - Volume! More spaces.
  - Wider spots in all lots
- What should the district consider with respects to parking for students, staff, guests, and bus drivers when planning future investments into the Methacton High School Campus?
  - Accommodate, at maximum, enough parking spots for juniors and seniors.
  - Enough parking for staff to have a spot close to their assigned classroom/area.
  - Have designated spaces for all bus drivers.
  - In the parking lot near the main office, there needs to be sufficient parking for visitors.
  - Improvement in parking could positively affect the flow of traffic on and off campus.
- Are there emerging practices, campus designs, safety or programs or services that should be considered with respects to parking on the High School campus in the future?
  - EV charging stations
  - Adding more spots
  - One-way flow into and out of a parking lot.
  - Technology that displays number of spots available in each lot.
    - Track data over time.
  - Naming lots for specific activities (football lot, field hockey lot, baseball lot, etc.)
  - Consider other ideas including building a parking garage.

- Spending the money to move the bus depot to increase number of parking spots on campus.
- “Grass Mats” can be used on grass to allow for additional parking on campus

## Threats

- What future challenges will impact the Methacton School District if investments into the high school campus parking are not made?
  - We’ll continue to have the issues that affect us now
  - We won’t be providing an exceptional Methacton experience for everyone
- What are some of the external forces preventing us from making improvements to parking on our campus?
  - Costs
  - Space
  - Sustainability
  - Township restrictions
  - Community buy in/ community relations
- What factors, beyond the district’s control, could place our District at risk if we do not make future investments in parking on the campus?
  - It will be more costly if we continue to wait
  - Safety challenges (risk of accidents)
  - Decline in opportunities for the community facilities use
- Are there innovative parking practices, that if not implemented, can undermine the perceived value of our institution?
  - EV charging stations
  - One-way flow into and out of a parking lot.
  - Technology that displays number of spots available in each lot.

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## TRAFFIC

### STRENGTHS

- What would you list as strengths of traffic flow/directional/design of the Methacton High School campus?
  - Personnel to help with directing traffic and pedestrians
  - We have separate drop off points for carline, buses, student parking and staff parking.
- What would you list as strengths of traffic experience when driving to and from school and taking the bus to and from the Methacton High School Campus?
  - Bus riders have easier and safer access to the building.

### CHALLENGES

- What would you list as challenges regarding traffic on the Methacton High School campus?
  - Congestion
  - Safety for non-bus riders/pedestrians – having to walk in the street
- What would you list as challenges regarding traffic to/from home to/from the Methacton High School campus?
  - Congestion

- Impact on the community
- Drivers using private property to drop off/pick up/park/turn around
- Blocking the box
- Safety for non-bus riders/pedestrians – having to walk in the street

## OPPORTUNITIES

- When I think of traffic on the high school campus in the future, I envision the following...
  - Creating a flow that minimizes the congestion and increases safety for all (motorists and pedestrians)
  - Developing a system that aligns to community needs (related to car line)
  - Well-staffed traffic enforcers
  - Improve partnership with state police and Worcester Township to engage fire/police for traffic control
- Are there safety/security trends with traffic that we should further investigate as a district?
  - Have an expert come in to conduct a full traffic analysis with another company
- Are there opportunities to design a better campus layout that would include safety and flow improvements with respects to traffic?
  - What might that design look like? Provide sketch with directional markings.
  - What are the major elements of the design? Provide listing of elements.
    - Relocating bus depot
    - More space for access points to accommodate the various pick up and drop off areas
    - Adding additional entrances to the campus from Mill Rd and Germantown Pike, separately.
  - Why are these elements important?
    - To enhance the overall experience and safety on campus
  - Can the design be completed with the existing structures in place or would it require a change in the placement of the structures or to the structures themselves to accomplish?
    - The design would require a change in the placement of some structures (bus depot, baseball fields, delivery area) and the elimination of others (Farina building).

## THREATS

- What future challenges will impact the Methacton School District if traffic challenges/opportunity investments on the high school campus are not made?
  - Decrease in attendance
  - Less favorability in the community
  - Continued safety concerns
- What are some of the external forces preventing us from making traffic improvements to our campus?
  - Costs
  - Space/Acreage
  - Sustainability
  - Township restrictions (impervious space requirements)
  - Community buy in/ community relations
  - Enforcement of traffic expectation
- Are there traffic improvements that, if not implemented, could undermine the perceived value of our institution?
  - It will be more costly if we continue to wait
  - Safety challenges (risk of accidents)

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## Aesthetics

### STRENGTHS

- What would you list as aesthetic strengths of the Methacton High School campus?
  - New Football Stadium is impressive
  - Baseball field
  - The view of the rolling hills
- What would you list as aesthetic strengths of the Methacton High School EXTERNAL building?
  - The improved main entrance
  - Signage for senior salute of graduates
  - Mature trees and green spaces
  - Grounds are clean
  - Hydroponic Farm
- What would you list as aesthetic strengths of the Methacton High School INTERNAL building?
  - New main gym floor
  - Windy Hill Café (coffee bar)
  - Student art/ murals all across building
  - Commons that overlooks the football field
  - The fact that we have a courtyard (but it needs to be improved)
- What evidence would you list for the campus/building as having: (see definitions above)
  - Visual Appeal
    - geographic location of the school
  - Informational Appeal
    - Marquee at corner of Kriebel Mill and Germantown
    - Sign at entrance
  - Navigational Appeal
    - At Germantown Pike only
  - Identity/Brand Appeal
    - Warrior/school colors/"M" on Marquee and fields.
  - Pride/Reputational Appeal
    - Stadium
    - Award cases on gymnasium side and in band classroom
  - Allure Appeal
    - Natural setting
- What are you most proud of in terms of visual appeal of the High School campus/building?
  - The natural setting and Stadium, Aux and Baseball Field
  - The size of the library and nice windows, natural lighting and open concept

- Commons area
- What visually sets Methacton High School campus/building apart from other high school campuses/buildings that you are familiar with?
  - Natural setting is appealing
  - Scale of building is appropriate for the environment (rural setting)
  - Have a pool
  - Population of students
- What other visually appealing aspects can you list regarding the Methacton High School campus/building?

## **CHALLENGES**

- What would you list as NOT being an aesthetic strength of the Methacton High School campus?
  - Not enough branding
  - colorful landscaping
  - Lighting
  - Lack of cohesion due to additions made to hs building over time
- What would you list as NOT being an aesthetic strength of the Methacton High School EXTERNAL building?
  - Placement of walkways
  - Trailers for storage at hs in poor condition
  - Trailers at Farina in poor condition
- What would you list as NOT being an aesthetic strength of the Methacton High School INTERNAL building?
  - Hallways (size)
  - Lighting
  - Flooring
  - Branding
  - Lockers too small and underutilized
  - No department organization
  - Lack of collaboration spaces
  - Lack of directional signage
  - Classroom numbers do not flow logically
  - Too small main entrance for student arrival and vestibule for visitors
- What would you list for the following campus/building as NOT having: (see definitions above)
  - Visual Appeal
    - “jail”-like external appearance
    - Piece-meal components of the building over time
  - Informational Appeal
    - Lack of signage on campus and in buildings
  - Navigational Appeal
    - At Germantown Pike only
  - Identity/Brand Appeal

- Insufficient branding and signage at all campus building
- Pride/Reputational Appeal
  - Insufficient interior design and finishes that link to identity and brand
- Allure Appeal
  - Township restrictions
- What other challenging matters with respects to aesthetics can you list regarding the Methacton High School campus/building?
  - n/a

## OPPORTUNITIES

- The campus design can be more visually appealing to me by doing...
  - Everything mentioned above
- The exterior of the building can be more visually appealing to me by doing...
  - Updating the windows
  - Adding natural light
  - Hang banners to improve branding and school pride
  - paint
- The interior of the building can be more visually appealing to me by doing...
  - Paint
  - Bigger hallways
  - More natural light
  - Unity in the branding
- What other visually appealing improvements would make students/staff/community feel better about attending school, improve student performance, and/or improve building climate?
  - Lights that are adjustable (dimnable)
  - Flexible learning and collaboration areas
- When I think of a visually appealing campus, I think of...
  - Upper Merion HS
  - Branding/experience/color
  - Wow-factor
- When I think of a visually appealing exterior building, I think of...
  - 21<sup>st</sup> century building/modernization
- When I think of a visually appealing interior of a building, I think of...
  - 21<sup>st</sup> century building
  - Nice, modern bathrooms
- What other opportunities should we consider with respects to aesthetics can you list regarding the Methacton High School Campus/Building?

## THREATS

- What future challenges will impact the Methacton School District if aesthetic investments into the high school campus/building are not made?
  - Things will continue to fall apart
  - Damage our ability to retain students/staff
  - Not providing students the best environment which will improve learning opportunities
- What are some of the external forces preventing us from making aesthetic improvements to our campus/building?
  - Any improvement comes at a cost
  - Community
  - Schedule
- Are there aesthetic improvements that, if not implemented, could undermine the perceived value of our institution?
  - Assumption that quality of building is related to quality of the education.