

**November 2023 TPNA Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, November 1 at 7:00 – 9:00 pm**  
**Grace Lutheran Church**

**Attendees:** Missy Crawford-Smith, Karalyn Colopy, Annie Ambrose, Scott Doron, Natalie Beyer, Jacqueline Morgan, Richard Morgan, John Hodges-Copple, Steve Unrhe, Bill Brown, Sarah Hill, Jill Wright, Joe Colopy, Grant Ruhlmen, Amber Greune, Audrey Patterson, Laura Benedict, Leigh Bordley, Tim McNulty, Julia Borbely-Brown, Tina Moon

**Review of October minutes** - Karalyn Colopy

- Approved

**Discussion about proposed move of Durham School of the Arts** - Karalyn Colopy and guests.

Guest presenters Natalie Beyer, Durham Board of Education; Fredrick Davis, Senior Executive Director of DPS School Planning, Design and Construction

- Natalie: Durham School of Arts is an old school. Tons of taxpayer money has been poured into it. Lots of little buildings have been built. Two buildings likely need to be torn down completely. They had a consultant from Raleigh (NEMA) to see if it can be rehabilitated or if it needs to be torn down. The consultant said it would be about the same amount to rehab versus build a new state of the art campus. Board voted in late 2021 to build a new building. They want the site to remain an educational location. The new site is on Duke Homestead Road, 52–53-acre parcel. They are finalizing the designs for the school with a theater and a concert hall.
- Fred: They have a 10-year capital improvement plan. Funding: Local funds (6 million), Lottery (2 million), Local bonds (423 million). DSA is a part of the priority list for the 10-year capital improvement plans.
- Questions and answers:
  - What is the current cost estimate of the DSA? It is 365 thousand sq ft space. Hoping to be \$240 million, but there is inflation of about 1% per month.
  - How many students? 1800 current. New facility will likely be capped at 2000 students
  - Is this a definite decision? The board has voted to close the current location and the design will be voted on next month.
  - How long will the students be in the neighborhood? They will be there until the new site is completed. Anticipating the opening in 2026 of the new school.
  - There are rules about the carpool lanes in the schools. If Duke and Gregson were changed to two-way and it became a city road would that change? Yes if the roads changed from state to city the rules would change.
  - How many times has the board voted on this? 3-4 board votes.
  - How many public meetings? One with Duke Homestead area residents and one with staff.
  - How are you choosing what to build knowing you will run out of money? There is a hierarchy list.
  - What's going to go into the DSA space? People know it is there. People want to do good things with it. The school board wants to keep it an educational facility. This is Durham's asset and they are not sure what will go in there.
  - Since it's doubled in cost, can we repair the current site and do all the other sites on the bond too? I hope that the school board will take this into consideration. It will take 7 years to renovate the school if we do phased renovations. They do not think it is safe to

- have the students in the school while doing renovations. There is no place to put the students while doing renovations.
- We want you to focus on maintenance of the buildings. Can we figure out a way to incorporate maintenance in the budget? They are doing the most with what they have. The needs are more than double what the city gives them.
  - There was a meeting in August for parents that was canceled, can you speak to the parents of current students? Yes we will get it rescheduled.
  - What could DSA be turned into? Durham technology, current has 400 students; Ignite online academy has 250 kids; office space for staff
  - What happened to the plan of moving DSA temporarily to the old Northern High School site while current DSA gets renovated? Natalie: I don't think parents want their students way up north and in a school that is in bad shape.
- Comments from John Hodges-Copple: (not all comments were made with school board present due to time constraints)
    - The use of the previous Northern High campus as a 1- to 2-year "swing space" was one of 4 options originally presented; it was the lowest cost and should not be off the table if in-place, staged-rehabilitation is judged to be not the preferred option, since it would be only temporary (for example, the middle school portion of DSA might be able to remain on site since the Carr Building has already been rehabbed and is separated from where construction would take place).
    - No other public project of this size has been undertaken in Durham without significant community engagement.
    - Spending \$240+ million on DSA means several of the other elementary school projects can't get done with the financing available. Increasing the financing, if that is even supported, will simply then mean having to defer all the other projects on DPS's list even farther into the future: any middle school projects, a new Jordan High School, the other elementary schools, etc. And nowhere in the list is financing that would be needed to turn the current DSA campus into any of the possibilities that have been mentioned, whether administrative or Ignite on-line Academy or the School of Technology that is currently housed at Hillside.
    - There are significant problems at the current site and there are ways to address the most substantial ones for much less than the new DSA campus. A tremendous amount could be done for about \$140 - \$150 million so that DSA, the highest performing school in the district even in its current state, can maintain that level of excellence without foregoing the elementary school improvements that are both beneficial and needed to respond to lower class size requirements by the state. That won't include a fancy new theater but the Carolina Theater (city owned) is just blocks away and could be used for major performances, as it has been used for school system performances in the past.
  - Thoughts from attendees after guests left:
    - Taking the temperature of the community
    - When is the December school board meeting?
    - There is a frustration about no community engagement.
    - The school board seems unwilling to consider alternate or creative solutions
    - We should focus as a neighborhood on what comes next and to get ahead of that. We need to form a public body to shape what happens to the space. School board will need support from neighbors if they are to keep the property and what happens there.

- Income: Membership: \$192.53, Newsletter sponsor: \$500
- Expenses: \$0

**GoTriangle and public transit** - Karalyn Colopy and guest

Guest presenter Nikola Milenkovic, Public Engagement Specialist with GoTriangle

- GoTriangle focuses on providing access in the triangle to connect the triangle.
- Transit 101- a monthly event where they go across the triangle to different communities to learn how to ride the bus and how to plan their trips with interactive iPad training. 10-15 people per event.
- Durham Connect- Program that operates in North and East Durham due to the lack of sidewalks and bus stops. Partnered with Lyft to provide 60 free rides a month and if it is over the limit (\$25) there is a discount code.
- App for GoTriangle when the bus will arrive is not working. The contract has ended. They can use their app and find the routes and can put in arrival times. But there is no real time tracking of the GoTriangle buses currently. They are working on the new contract.
- GoDurham app works great for tracking real-time bus locations.
- The buses are currently Fare Free- County Government will decide in June or July 2024 whether to move forward with a fare free system.
- There is a driver shortage. What is the context of the issue? It's difficult to compete with the other delivery services' salaries. They used to pay for the CDL license for new hires, but they had a retention issue. They have downgraded some routes from buses to shuttles. They are much better this year than last year.

**Membership** - Jill Wright

- n/a

**Traffic** - John Hodges-Copple

- n/a

**Nominations** - Karalyn Colopy

- There is a committee for recruiting new board members: [Karalyn](#), [Mollie](#), [Eva Naumann](#), [Kristin Heery](#), and [Jane Brown](#)

**Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership** - Karalyn Colopy, Susan Jakes, Tim McNulty, James Dobbins

- There will be a zoom meeting to collaborate on grants.
- Private neighbor will be donating the new railing for steps at the park.

**Trinity Park Foundation** - Karalyn Colopy

- New bench will be put in at park by a neighbor's donation.
- Private neighbor will be donating the new railing.

**INC** – Mimi Kessler

- n/a

**Communications** - Karalyn Colopy, Mimi Kessler

- Send Karalyn thoughts on the newsletter.
- Tree Keepers article - Annie/Mollie will write

**Community building/events** - Karalyn Colopy

- Clean up day on October 7 - Julia Borbely-Brown- Success!
  - Workday went great and having so many volunteers allowed us to get a lot done to pull weeds and clean out the sediment.
- Halloween on October 31 - Steven Falzarano, Missy Crawford-Smith
  - Amazing as always! Thanks Steve!
- Tree Workshop – when
  - Maybe in conjunction with the Garden Tour
- Food Drive for MLK Day? and/or creek clean up
- Garden Tour - May or June

**South Ellerbe Creek Wetlands** - Scott Doron

- No new news

**Safety** - Mimi Kessler, Ron Gallagher

- n/a

**New Business**

- December meeting on zoom

**Adjourn**