

Middle School Building Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, October 25, 2016

6:00 P.M.

Whittier Street School

Members Present: Rick Jones, Jack Wiseman, Tony Bennett, Mary Martin, John Hawley, Lisa Cesare, Nick Konstantaloukis, Steve Bolduc, Bill Eldridge, Stan Tetenman, Tina Meserve, Cari Medd (ex officio), Shawn Vincent (ex officio)

Members Absent: Norm Davis

Others Present: Chelsea Lipham, Architect, Lyndon Keck, Architect

The meeting opened with a brief tour of the middle school addition proposed location as well as the interior and area proposed for renovations for the shared entry.

Item 1: Approve September 27 meeting notes.

Jack Wiseman stated that it was noted in the attendance that he was present and absent. He was actually absent.

There were no other comments regarding the notes.

Item 2: Review and discuss design – Combined Entry, Preliminary Massing, Elevations, Preliminary Estimates

Chelsea showed the latest updates to plan 5a and 5b. She pointed out the changes that had been made as a result of the proposed shared entrance. Both have all students coming into the building from the same entrance. HS and MS administration will be on both sides of the entry way. This included making modifications to the high school administration and guidance area, moving the conference room to the high school entry, moving the middle school administration offices, and the modifications to the science labs and special education classroom. In plan 5a one of the current science rooms will become a common area. The other science area will become a special education room. Plan 5a has the hallway to the new addition passing through the common area, the alternate plan (5b) gives up the common area in the middle school and allows for a straight hallway to the new middle school section.

Alan said there was only about 1,000 square feet of difference between the two plans. 5a is the larger of the two additions.

Stan asked if fire and police had been consulted about the plans and John noted that both had been invited to this meeting. Alan said that Gorrill Palmer has had a discussion with the Fire Chief of Poland. Stan wanted to make sure the architects had a plan to meet with both parties to present the plan one on one.

Stan asked about the second floor option and the costs associated with pouring the slab for future expansion. He also asked about a standard construction cost per square foot. Alan said we would be looking at roughly \$250 per square foot and recent projects they have done confirm that number. Chelsea reminded Alan that this project would be a couple years out and the per square foot cost may increase.

Alan present concept drawing of what the exterior of the building might look like with both a single and second floor, the new proposed shared entry and the new walkway canopy.

Rick asked if geotech estimations had been done as he had concerns with the fact that fill had been placed on the site when the original building was constructed. Alan confirmed the geo testing would be done in the very near future.

Using the basis of the \$250/sq ft Alan's rough estimate for 5a, at 17,190 square feet and including renovation to existing spaces and a second floor slab would be around \$6 to \$7 million not including site work.

For 5b at 16,300 sq ft and a second floor slab would be around \$5.5 to \$6.6 million with no site work. Lisa asked what the cost was for just the slab and Alan stated the steel and slab adds about \$10 per square foot to the cost and estimated it would be a savings of about \$130,000 to not add those.

Cari stated that although prepping for a second floor makes logical sense, adding the number of students and staff that would occupy that space would present larger issues with the currently shared spaces such as the cafeteria, gymnasiums, library and auditorium. John mentioned that it would also impact the septic capacity as well as parking.

Stan asked about passive solar and if energy efficiency would be considered. Alan said it is now required as part of new energy codes and a solar project could be considered. This would include more insulation in the walls and roof and more efficient windows.

Alan stated that there was enough electrical capacity to take on the addition. They will run an energy model so we would have a good idea what it would cost to run the school.

Rick brought up heating in the new addition and Alan stated that when their engineering team met with Tony and John the week before, Tony expressed concern about the cold spots in the existing middle school and that a system for boosting/recirculating would be necessary. Rick said he thinks the biomass boiler heat exchange may be undersized. There may be an opportunity to upsize that unit to make it run more efficiently. Alan would like to have Evan Jones come and meet with his staff to discuss this. Alan also said that a very small, compact boiler could be used.

John asked if the group was ready to settle on one plan so that the architects could focus on the costs for the project. The overwhelming majority selected 5a.

Stan suggested that not doing the work for a future second floor now would be much more expensive if we decided to add later. Cari thought it would be important to know if the site could even accommodate the additional impacts a second floor addition would bring to the property.

Mary stated that the enrollment study is showing our student population as being steady for the next 20 years. Cari said the high school population has dropped quite a bit and that it is not the same high school it was when it was built.

Bill asked Cari to clarify her statement. She said that when the school originally opened we had many students from Raymond tuition to our school and we had about 550 students at that time. Raymond no longer sends students to our school and we are now down to an average of 460. Shawn said that when you look at the younger grades currently enrolled, there are no significant increases in the classroom sizes with the exception of a large sixth grade class making its way up through. Class sizes are not averaging about 125.

Bill asked if we really needed an addition then. Both Cari and Shawn said absolutely just to restore space in the high school that has been taken by the middle school over flow, to remove the

modulars and provide safer building access without students moving from building to building outside. The new addition is needed to deal with current spatial needs.

Lisa thought it was important not to just consider the number of projected students but to allow for programming changes.

Shawn said that folks have asked why we can't build up on the existing school and it was because the infrastructure was not put in when the building was constructed.

Lisa thought that at just a \$130,000 savings, it wasn't enough for her to not consider the prep for that second floor now.

Tina felt that sometimes the difference of \$1 million dollars up or down can make the difference between a successful vote.

Stan asked if a public hearing would happen and thought both plans should be on display for people to choose which they liked. Tina said that there would be meeting for public questions and a hearing prior to the referendum vote.

Lisa thought that presenting two ideas to the public was not a good idea. John said that the plans had been vetted by the teaching and administration staff and having the public decide what is good for our students is not necessarily the best way to go.

Lisa said that she felt it was this committees job to review this process and present what we felt would be the best option. If the plan gets voted down, we come back and rework it.

John said that the public information piece of this plan will be ramping up very shortly as we will be preparing an informational hand out for people to pick up at the polls on election day. Several school board members have offered to hand them out and answer questions. We will get some information out to the community during parent teacher conferences and Tina will work with Ben Poulin for a place to post building project materials and the ability for people to provide feedback of the building project. Bill said to use the schematic and not the floor plan in the public information. People would get too hung up on the details of the floor plan.

Stan asked if there was an estimate for the site work. Alan said he would have the professional estimates ready for the next meeting.

Stan thought that we should not be putting out any project cost estimates until we know what the closer numbers will be. He thought that if we throw a number out now, people are going to stick to that number and become upset if we have to increase it. He thought we should be very close to being right before telling taxpayers what to expect.

Stan also wondered how the proposed sewer extension project would influence Poland and Mechanic Falls decision makers. That could also be a potential costly project to the towns.

Nick thought that if student populations are going down, we wouldn't get public support for the project. Tina reiterated that the enrollment study isn't showing the population going down but staying steady and this project is dealing with current day issues.

Shawn said that there was discussion when consolidation occurred surround the modulars. It was the intent at that time that the modulars would only be temporary until a solution was presented and since then we have now added another modular.

Cari suggested sharing John's recent middle school project article that went out in the Superintendent's newsletter. She thought it would be important to remind people of the pressures that existed at the time of the consolidation, the loss of programs and staff to save money and the only affordable option was the installation of the modular.

Alan asked what we would like to have for our public information component. Cari suggested that because teacher conferences were the same week as the election, we should have poster boards on display at each school so parent will be informed. John will work with Alan and Chelsea to get those items ready.

Lisa asked about the construction time frame. Alan said that it would take about a year for construction. The goal would be, if passed at referendum, to be open for September 2019.

Item 3: Next Steps

Alan and Chelsea will continue to refine plan 5a and work on the estimates. They will also schedule a meeting with the fire and police departments.

Election Day and Teacher Conference information materials to be prepped and distributed.

Item 4: Next Meeting Date

Next meeting will be Tuesday, November 29th, 6 P.M. at Elm Street School.

Item 5: Public Comment

There was no one from the public in attendance.