

Middle School Building Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

5:30 P.M.

Elm Street School

Members Present: Tony Bennett, Nick Konstantoulakis, Jack Wiseman, Lisa Cesare, Steve Bolduc, John Hawley, Mary Martin, Bill Eldridge, Rick Jones, Norm Davis

Members Absent: Cari Medd, Shawn Vincent, Tina Meserve, Stan Tetenman

Others Present: Alan Kuniholm, Architect

Item 1 – Review and Approval of January 31st meeting notes. John asked if there were any comments on the previous month's minutes. There were none.

Item 2 – Public Forum - John reported that there were 50 or more people at the Public Forum on February 27th. There was a lot of information shared about the project and plenty of input from those in attendance. Some of the reoccurring concerns were the overall cost of the project, the necessity to renovate space in the high school and the possibility of an alternative plan.

Item 3 – Discuss Plan “B” Option – The RSU School Board Operations Committee met on March 27th and after a discussion about the public forum, made the suggestion that the Building Committee consider an alternative plan that might get the project down below \$5 million.

Alan stated that he and John had had a conversation about a scaled down project and had sent along a few more concept designs. Alan said that we could certainly get down below \$5 million but the committee would need to decide what was going to be given up. He presented some scenarios:

- Option 1- No renovations and no changes in entrances (no combined entrance) but just the proposed classrooms would be estimated at \$6,696,718.
- Option 2 – No renovations, remove the three classrooms that were above the six that were needed. Estimated cost at \$5,792,318.
- Option 3 – Change the planned footprint and create a straight shot addition with only six classrooms but design in a way for ease of future addition. This plan was developed at the last hour and estimates were not ready for the meeting.

Lisa expressed concern about the 20 year pay off and maybe we could consider paying the project off quicker.

Nick dislikes submitting a second proposal that people will support because of a smaller price tag.

Bill stated that safety and security need to be a priority and he didn't like proposing an alternative plan either.

Shawn Vincent was not able to attend the meeting but sent a message via John that his priority is to get all the classrooms into one secure building that has additional bathrooms.

Bill said he could not support a Plan B. The original plan is the best plan and it fully supports the needs. He stated that he had served on the committee when the high school and middle school was built and that they were restricted to what they could do because it was funded with State money.

He doesn't like higher taxes any more than anyone else but felt we needed to make the building right for our kids.

Jack said that there is a lot of misinformation out there and that the perception is that the project started at \$4 million and is now up to \$8.5.

Steve felt that if we put more than one plan on a ballot we would need to make very clear the difference between the plans and what we are actually giving up with the alternative plan.

There was some other discussion about other thoughts and alternative plans. The group considered what the public seems to be concern about such as:

- Can we make minimal changes to the administrative space in the high school and still keep a central, secure entrance?
- Why are the "administrative" costs for the project so high?
- Can a combined entry be included with a basic addition and just replace the modular classrooms?

John said that he Alan and Tina Meserve will work on some additional concept designs that will include either a central entrance location or minimizing the renovations at the high school entrance to increase visibility and security and does away with the modulares. The new concepts will be available for the next meeting and John will get them to the committee before the meeting to look at.

John asked what the committee felt about that plan and it was a consensus of the group to scale down a plan but to stick with only one plan and make sure all the priorities are covered.

Item 4 – Solar/Revision Energy – A preliminary report provided to Alan from Revision Energy outlines a proposed solar array project. Due to the proposed changes to the building project Alan said a solar project could still be considered but should be held off until the concept has been designed. He asked if the group wanted Revision to make a presentation at a future meeting and the group agreed to hold off for now. Alan also asked if the groups was considering a project on just the addition or an array for the entire building. Future discussion about solar will occur at a later date.

Item 5 – Next Meeting. The next meeting will be on April 25th at 5:30 PM at Elm Street School.

Alan will have some updated options for the committee to review.

Another public forum should be scheduled once the new plan is formalized.

The group felt that we need to find ways to publicize the project in a positive way (newspaper articles, websites, community outreach at meetings, public access television)

It was recommended that talking points be created to help those on the committee when they are discussing this project in public.

The next committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 28th at 5:30 P.M. at Elm Street School

Item 6 – Public Comment – There was no one in attendance from the public.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM