

WELLINGTON SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

January 26, 2006
Wellington School Library – 7:00 PM

Meeting # 21

Committee members attending: John Bowe, Pat Brusch, Phil Curtis, Mark Haley, Mary McHugh, Joel Mooney, Karen Pressey, Lucy Pullen, and Rob Wollner.

Absent: Greg Poulos, Laurie Graham, Disability Access Commission.

School Department: Amy Wagner, Elizabeth Gibson, School Committee Chairman

Also attending: Jonathan Levi, Diane Ozellius, Matt LaRue, Dick Amster, Gary Stirgwolt and Bob Ho (Turner).

Guests: Seven Neighbors

The following Minutes were approved unanimously as amended on a motion offered by John Bowe and seconded by Phil Curtis:

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Pat Brusch called the meeting to order since Mark Haley was delayed. Pat briefed the committee on the latest information on the MSBA which made a presentation at the MMA Conference. She encouraged all members to try and attend a hearing on February 15th regarding the new regulations. The place and time are yet to be determined. They will probably be discussing only one section of the regulations and have not disclosed which one. They did describe a process that they will be requiring. All communities with projects will be asked to get a Letter of Intent approved by their Town Meeting. A place holder has been established for the Annual Town Meeting in April. This Letter of Intent describes the reason for the renovation or new building. Once they receive the Letter of Intent they will schedule individual meetings with representatives from each City or Town to discuss their project. They indicated that the Project Manager for any school building construction will need to be approved by the Authority by name not by firm. They will not approve the Project Manager until they approve the project. Town's cannot hire an architect until they hire a Project Manager. They will not approve any project until July, 2007. At that time they do not want to see a design.

A Mega Meeting has been scheduled for March 6, 2006. They will be hearing presentations on the Wellington School and the Highway Feasibility Study. The presentation to the Mega meeting will include an introduction by the School Committee regarding program and enrollment, followed by a presentation by Jonathan about the design and the site and ending with a presentation by Dick of the cost estimate.

Amy commented that the meeting with the teacher's went well and they were pleased to hear about the project and to have a chance to have some input.

Mark resumed chairing the meeting and Jonathan then turned to a summary of design issues summarized as follows:

Jonathan started with a review of the site changes:

The bus drop-off was moved to the St. Joseph's side of the site with a one-way street leading from Orchard to School. Parking spaces increased from 65 to 67. Mark asked if there was room for a berm to separate the parking from the buses. Jonathan said that there was not.

There will be two play areas. One area 48 x 60 feet will be for the younger children and is on the School Street side. The other larger area is on the St. Joseph side of the site and has a 80 x 65 feet hard play surface and a 80 x 65 feet grassy area.

He has designed canopies at the gym and cafeteria entrances and there are covered areas at both entrances to the Lobby.

Jonathan mentioned that Gerry Missal had asked for cost estimate to reorient some of the classrooms to eliminate many of the exterior jogs. He felt that this would be a cost savings in construction because corners cost money and it would slightly decrease the foot print. Jonathan said that they would be getting the cost information and said that the changes would only save about 12 feet. Elizabeth asked if that might be enough space to accommodate the berm in the parking area and Jonathan said that it might.

He also mentioned Gerry's concern about difficulties of maintaining the plantings on the roof terrace and asked about costs. Jonathan said that the proportion of hard space to soft space on the terrace won't make much difference.

Gerry's concern about minimizing long lengths of duct work will be taken up in Design Development.

One of the issues raised by the teachers was the location of bathrooms at the end of long corridors. They would prefer bathrooms located in the middle so that the time for students out of the classroom could be reduced. They noted that this is currently a big problem and hoped that it could be remedied in a new building. Jonathan noted that the gang bathrooms were located on the end of the hall to be available for community uses and would allow for the rest of the wing to be closed off. He also said it would have a financial impact. Amy mentioned that even two single bathrooms would be helpful. Jonathan said he would take a look at it. Expense will be an issue.

Another issue that came out in the working meeting with administrators was a suggestion to move the Library to the second floor and move the Teacher's Room and the Community Room to the first floor. Amy mentioned her concern about security regarding people coming to the building to use the Multipurpose Room. She would like to keep it on the first floor where there is more visibility and people around to monitor the area as opposed to allowing visitors on second floor where there would be nobody to monitor. Several administrators noted that it would be very nice to have a least one of the large spaces used by all of the children on the second floor and would provide a nice shared transition space on the second floor. Amy also noted that it would eliminate her concern about noise transfer between the Gym and the Library.

Amy mentioned that she did have some concerns about safety issues for students on the roof garden but felt less concerned with two smaller areas that could be more easily monitored. One of the visiting parents also voiced her concern about children on the roof area saying that children sometimes do the unexpected even when you tell them not to.

Jonathan was open to making the change said that a Library in that location could be a lovely jewel box. He did feel, however that the Library located on the first floor at the entry announced that this was a place of learning and activity and that a community room would be an empty space for most of the day. Amy indicated that she felt that it would be used for any number of activities during the day and teachers would use it often.

Dick suggested that perhaps a final resolution of this change could wait until design development. Pat asked if the change had large cost implications. Dick thought that it would not but they would study it a bit.

Another issue carried over from the last meeting was what type of lockers were going to be costed out. The answer was that for planning purposes they would cost the more expensive option.

Jonathan then reviewed the renderings and elevations for the exterior of the building. Several visitors voice concerns. One felt that the footprint should be reduced by taking advantage of the change in elevation and putting a three story section on the Orchard Street side and a two story structure on the School Street side. Jonathan explained the school within a school concept that is achieved by the current layout. Mark mentioned that we looked at a similar option and changes of elevation still occurred which required ramps and stairs.

Some neighbors were concerned about large expanses of brick without fenestration on the cafeteria and gym sections. A concern was also raised about the drop off area on the School Street side because they felt that children walking to school should not have to cross through traffic. Jonathan indicated that he could put a path up the side of the drive so that they could walk around.

Jonathan was asked to produce a rendering of the Orchard Street side of the building. He said that he would do so even though renderings are not a usual part of Schematic Design. They are so excited about this project that he is happy to do it.

Rob Wollner was concerned about the ability of fire apparatus to reach the area of the building between the upper school play area and the building. Jonathan said that they will look at reinforcement solutions to that approach area.

Neighborhood meetings are scheduled for Thursday, February 2, 2006 at 9:00 AM and 7:30 PM. Lucy is reviewing and revising the FAQ Sheet and asked for input from committee members.

On a motion by Phil Curtis, seconded by Mary McHugh the committee voted unanimously to cost out the building and elevations as presented.

Jonathan will also take into account comments that may arise at the Neighborhood Meeting.

Dick Amster presented the committee with a copy of his contract and reviewed the format and categories that will appear in the soft cost document. There will be another meeting with Mark, Dick and Jonathan to refine the cost estimate being prepared by Daedalus.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM on a motion by Phil Curtis seconded by Mary McHugh.

The next meetings:

Neighborhood Meetings: Thursday, February 2, 2006 at 9:00 AM and 7:30 PM

Committee Meeting: Thursday, February 9, 2006 at 7:00 PM at Chenery Middle School

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Pressey

Karen Pressey, Secretary