

**BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE
FINAL MEETING MINUTES
May 4, 2017
Beech Street Center
6:00 PM**

2017 JUN 20 PM 2:03

Meeting #19

Committee Members Attending:

Chair Lovallo; Members: Adam Dash, John Phelan, Tom Caputo, Pat Bruschi, Phyllis Marshall, Bob McLaughlin, Joel Mooney, Diane Miller, Chris Messer, and Jamie Shea

Members Absent: Gerry Boyle, Dan Richards, Phil Ruggiero, Joe DeStefano

School Committee (SC) Members in Attendance: Chair Fiore, Members Caputo, Bicer, Burgess-Cox, Bowen

Mr. Frank Locker and Assistant Superintendent Janice Darius

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m. by Chair Lovallo. (The SC called their meeting to order, as well.)

II. Discussion: The Education Plan as it Relates to the High School Project – Superintendent Phelan and Mr. Frank Locker

Superintendent Phelan introduced Mr. Frank Locker, Education Facilitator. He informed the BHSBC that he and Mr. Locker have met together with teachers (for two-full days) as well as recently with community members (parents, students, teachers). Mr. Phelan stated that the dialogue concerning the Education Plan for the new building will continue throughout the fall.

Mr. Locker began with the framework he called “Visioning Concepts”. He briefly explained the process by which the community conversations occurred.

Chair Lovallo noted that an Education Plan will need to be submitted to the MSBA. He asked for more detailed information on what exactly is in an Education Plan. Mr. Locker stated that the process involves defining broad educational concepts and transforming them into more concrete action items. The MSBA wants to see buildings that improve teaching and learning – as opposed to simply creating buildings. The Ed Plan is an application of broad ideas and a plan for how these ideas will be carried out. The Ed Plan will establish the “appropriateness” of the building.

Mr. Locker then touched on the findings from the community meeting. Those present began by exploring various developmental groupings as they pertain to the social and emotion growth of children. Ninth graders, he said, are often viewed as distinct from grades 10 – 12. Larger buildings were viewed more favorably, he said, although concerns were expressed about kids becoming overwhelmed.

Mr. Locker then discussed the standard assumptions for a grade 7 – 12 building. The assumption, he

said, is often that the middle school will be separated from the high school. Mr. Phelan touched on the need for flexibility and for shared spaces. This will require a commitment to think creatively. Mr. Locker agreed that there are many unique opportunities for establishing “creative learning spaces”. He described several possible scenarios for creating the building around the 7 – 12 configuration options and what to call the options, e.g., upper elementary, lower high, intermediate, middle, high, etc. The terminology, Chair Lovallo offered, at some point will need to be made consistent. He added that the MSBA has labeled this “the high school building project” and, as such, it is intended to be one building.

Mr. Phelan added that many other concepts were explored at the community meeting, including: how can teachers better facilitate learning? what leads to students’ success? what makes for a supportive school? how can schools prepare students for a successful life? Ms. Shea stated that there was a lot of consensus – in the room – that these are the appropriate questions to be asking. Mr. Phelan noted that the 7 – 12 grade configuration could still mean three separate groupings: 7-8, 9-10 and 11-12, or, alternatively, grades 7-9 grouped together and 10-12 grouped together.

Ms. Miller asked how the community sessions could be broadened-out to include those who could not attend these sessions. Mr. Locker said that this plan will need to be shared with the larger community. The timeline for sharing this with the community was then discussed. Chair Lovallo explained that the three different configuration plans (7-12, 8-12, 9-12) will each need to be submitted to the MSBA. The Education Plan plays a role in which configuration is optimal; it can’t just be an economic decision. The site, Chair Lovallo added, may not be appropriate for a 7 – 12 configuration.

The BHSBC and SC explored several issues that impact the configuration conversation, the school organization options, and additional “Visioning Concepts”. Mr. Locker broached some new thinking modalities, e.g., Project Based Learning, Theme Based Learning, incorporating art into learning, 21st Century Learning, etc. Collaboration, communication, creative thinking, and critical thinking are the major building blocks of 21st Century Learning.

Mr. Locker then reviewed the School Transformation and Developmental Map; he applied this paradigm to the elementary, middle, and high schools. He then explored potential internal organization options for the high school. The more traditional departmental model, “business as usual”, was less popular with both the educators and the community members. Key words for the new space included collaborative, flexible, innovative, fluid, etc.

Mr. Phelan said that this fall the wider community will get to contribute to the conversation. The timeline was reviewed again. Ms. Bruschi suggested that the summer months be utilized, as there are residents for whom the summer months will work well. Chair Lovallo added that the BHSBC will not be taking the summer off.

Mr. Phelan then recited his newly composed “elevator speech” to encapsulate many of the concepts explored tonight.

Mr. Phelan thanked Mr. Locker and Ms. Darius for all their work.

III. Other

Next BHSBC Meeting: June 15, 7:30 a.m.

IV. Related Meeting Documents

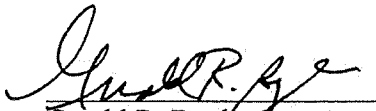
1. xxx
2. xxx

V. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 7:47 p.m. by Mr. McLaughlin.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lisa Gibalerio

Approved: 
Gerald R. Boyle, Secretary

6/16/17
Date