

*The Mission of the Litchfield Schools, in partnership with parents and the Litchfield community, is to provide and develop a complete education program of the highest quality that enables students to develop intellectually, socially, physically, emotionally and be capable of adapting to a changing world and its technology. The School Board recognizes this mission statement as its guiding principle. (1994)*

## **LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD - BUILDING SUBCOMMITTEE**

### **APPROVED MINUTES**

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

**October 24, 2006**

**(approved as written 11-7-06)**

Present:

Mrs. Cindy Couture, School Board Chair (arrived late)  
Mr. Mike Boschi, Building Committee Member  
Ms. Tracy Caprioglio, Building Committee Member  
Mr. Jeff Pike, Building Committee Member  
Mr. Shawn Eagan, Building Committee Member  
Mr. Jack Scheiner, Building Committee Member  
Mr. Dan Cecil, Architect at Harriman Associates  
Mr. Bo Schlichter, Principal, GMS  
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, School Board Secretary

#### **1) Call to Order** - 7:00pm

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ms. Caprioglio.

#### **2) Approval of Minutes** –

Minutes of Sept 12, 2006

***Mr. Pike made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Boschi seconded. The motion passed.***

Minutes of Sept 26, 2006

***Mr. Pike made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Egan seconded. The motion passed.***

Minutes of October 10, 2006

***Mr. Pike made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Boschi seconded. The motion passed.***

#### **3) Committee Questions or comments** –

##### a. Comment boxes and communication

Ms. Caprioglio asked if permission has been given to allow the placement of comment boxes at various locations as the Building Committee discussed at their previous meeting. Mr. Scheiner wrote a letter to the Selectmen about placing a comment box at the Town Hall, but has not received a response as yet. Mr. Schlichter reported that the Principals of all three schools agreed to allow the placement of a comment box in the schools' lobbies. Ms. Caprioglio will bring the boxes at the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting for Building Committee approval.

##### b. Emailed questions and answers

Ms. Caprioglio asked about the Building Committee website in relation to an interactive questions and answers link. Mrs. Flynn explained that the old Building Committee website will be put back into use; however there will not be an interactive link until sometime in January 2007 as she will be taking classes in a website development course in November and December of 2006. She also offered for information to be available on request to community members who may have questions about Building Committee issues, studies, etc.

c. Selection of Leadership

Ms. Caprioglio informed the Committee that Mrs. Couture placed Selection of Leadership on the agenda for Members to begin selection of a Chair. Ms. Caprioglio commented that the Committee has gone through much information to date and that Mrs. Couture has been an excellent resource for historical data. She noted that once the Committee has finished reviewing that data, selection of a Committee Chair should begin. Mr. Pike commented that it would be in the best interest of the Committee if one of the members was selected as Chair since there has been much controversy in the media. He added that this Committee should remain neutral and not set ourselves up for failure.

Ms. Caprioglio mentioned that since Mrs. Couture was not present to Chair the meeting, the selection of leadership should be deferred until the next meeting.

Mrs. Flynn suggested that the Committee clarify that Mrs. Couture is simply facilitating meetings until such selection takes place. Committee members acknowledged the clarification that Mrs. Couture has been facilitating the meetings and not acting as Chair. Ms. Caprioglio added that once the Committee has completed the task of reviewing all the historical data, the next phase will be selecting a Chair.

Mr. Pike added that we should make it clear that this Committee is not steering toward any specific route and is considering all options. No decisions have been made regarding additions to school buildings or proposing a new school as the Committee has recommended that no warrant article be placed on the March 2007 ballot to that effect. He emphasized that the Committee's purpose is to come to the best alternative(s) for Litchfield. Mr. Boschi agreed noting that at the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting the Committee discussed a timeline of facilitation and added that Mrs. Couture's facilitation has been very helpful to the Committee.

The Committee agreed to revisit the Selection of Leadership at the next meeting.

**4) Update from School Board –**

a. Status of RFP for GMS renovation

Mr. Schlichter reported that he spoke with Mr. Martin and was informed that the Selectmen conditionally approved the Board's request for the use of Impact Fees for the Scope of Renovations Study pending review by the Town's Counsel. Ms. Caprioglio asked when the Committee would know when the study would commence. Mr. Scheiner indicated that in his opinion the SAU should know within a week.

Ms. Caprioglio raised a question regarding how the Committee would proceed once the final approval is granted. Mr. Cecil noted that it is up to the Committee. The first step is to set up a "kickoff" meeting as outlined in the proposal. He added that JCN will do an excellent job for the District. The kickoff meeting will be held on site and the Committee will review inventory, renovation needs and discuss technical solutions to the problems at GMS. He suggested that members of the Committee attend the meetings. Mr. Cecil added that he and the contractor will accommodate Committee members' schedules and hold meetings as those schedules allow.

Mr. Scheiner observed that the Building Committee [not the School Board] needs to attend the meetings. He added that after the review of inventory, renovation needs and technical solutions people will want a list of what needs to be done to GMS.

Ms. Caprioglio asked if any Committee members had any objections to JCN as the contractor for the study. Mr. Pike indicated that a decision be reached by the next meeting to confirm JCN as the contractor for the study. Ms. Caprioglio suggested that if any members have an objection to JCN, alternatives can be discussed at the next meeting. We need to decide on the contractor and a date for the kickoff meeting.

## **5) Review of Cost Information –**

Ms. Caprioglio brought information discussed via email to the Committee's attention. She informed the Committee that there were questions regarding building aid funding and State requirements for the percentage of renovations that would qualify for State building aid. Mrs. Couture provided information from Ed Murdough from the NH DOE regarding School Building Aid.

The explanation for requirements for School Building Aid state that in order for a project to qualify for School Building Aid as "substantial renovation" it must cost at least 25% of the cost to replace the building [the cost to build a school of the same size as the existing school building]. If the renovation project costs more than 60% of the cost to replace the building, the district must have considered new construction and must explain why they chose renovation. Additionally, if the cost exceeds 60% of the replacement cost, the renovated building must meet all codes and standards without any waivers or grandfathering.

In her email, Ms. Caprioglio wanted to know if the renovations are below 25%, are there any State requirements for code. Mrs. Couture informed her that although the State may not have any input at that point, the Town Code Enforcement Officer does. He makes the determination of the codes the District must meet. She also explained that any renovation cost under 25% would be absorbed through the voters as we would not qualify for reimbursement.

Committee members briefly discussed the information with questions pertaining to the percentage of renovations to qualify for building aid and to get to code. Mr. Cecil clarified if renovations cost more than 60% of the cost to replace the building, you have considered new construction and chosen the renovations, the building must meet all codes. Ms. Carprioglio noted that it is not just our decision, but the Code Enforcement Officer's decision as well. Mr. Cecil added that the Fire Department is also involved in the decision and any construction [renovations or new] should be in compliance with ADA. He explained that if there are any significant renovations they should be up to ADA code or the District should have a plan to be in complete compliance over a number of years. The issue is if you are not in compliance and have a complaint you may be subject to violations and liabilities, which puts you at risk.

Mr. Pike indicated that there is a good summary in the Team Design Report. Mr. Cecil also sited other resources for Committee members to research, for example a website at the Federal government for ADA codes, the Team Design report, and other information on the internet.

Mr. Cecil distributed Educational Specifications for the proposed new elementary school that was on last year's ballot. He explained that the NH DOE requires a preliminary application, which summarizes the proposed costs of the project, to be submitted prior to the annual district meeting. While Mr. Cecil had a draft copy in his possession, he felt that Mr. Martin could provide a more accurate, final draft for Committee members to review.

Mr. Cecil reviewed the educational specifications with the Committee. He gave a general project overview and detailed explanations of the following sections included in the report:

- Section I – Need/Rational/Process, which asks what situation the project will address while providing options, alternatives and methodology;
- Section II – The People and Program to be Housed, which includes the mission statement and goals, planned usage and instructional spaces provided for;
- Section III – General Building Considerations, which includes providing for future needs and program changes, planning for community use of the facilities, energy efficiency of the building, the maintenance plan, accessibility, and health and safety requirements;
- Section IV – Site Considerations, which includes site design concepts.

- a. Finish review of previous options – Page 74
- b. Comparison of project recent projects
- c. State aid reimbursement maximums

Mr. Cecil reviewed the March 2006 option for a proposed new elementary school, beginning where the Committee left off at the previous meeting. When reviewing the project costs, he explained that the increase in cost was due to the inflation of construction costs per square foot. Mr. Pike wanted to know if the State covers any cost over the capped cost per square foot. Mr. Cecil pointed out that the District would have to cover that cost. He explained that there was a question about inflation of costs with prior Committees. As a result, they focused on Manchester to see the percentage of increases in costs per year. They also spoke with other contractors in the area, Ed Murdough from the NH DOE School Building Aid Department, and RS Means to determine that the cost per square foot would be \$135. Mr. Cecil added that the Committee visited schools in surrounding areas and in Maine comparing school project costs, core design, total square footage, square footage per student, when the project was bid, and the total project costs. The comparison revealed that most of the costs were within our range.

Mrs. Couture indicated that some costs were not included, for example, Highlander Court meeting Albuquerque, all computers were bought after the completion of the building, and library books were bought with Impact Fees. Anything that was done after the completion of the building was not included in the cost. Mr. Cecil noted that the 2005 elementary school comparison summarizes what is in each school compared with the Litchfield proposal and includes the range of students per classroom and the size of core spaces for future growth.

Ms. Caprioglio asked if the combination gymnasium/cafeteria is a common design. Mr. Cecil indicated that most schools will separate the gym and café and that combining them is a result of financing. Mr. Schlichter commented that combining the gym/café restricts programming. Mr. Cecil continued his review of the data and the final proposal that went to voters in March 2006, walking the Committee through the final project budget. He suggested that Mr. Martin review bonding with the Committee at the next meeting. As Mr. Cecil wrapped up his review of the project budget, he explained that the Clerk of the Works is the most important hire because he works for the district [architect] and is the minute to minute on-site advocate. He concluded his review of data with site drawings, floor plans and the Building Committee newsletter that residents received prior to the March 2006 vote. Mr. Cecil also suggested that Committee members be provided with the financial package from Deliberative Session 2006.

- d. Criteria of cash flow worksheets

Mrs. Couture commented that the cash flow worksheets take all options and compare utility costs, operating costs, staffing costs over 5, 10, and 20 years, and includes the criteria used to compare all the data.

#### **6) Next Agenda items**

- a. Enrollment projections
- b. Build-out projections
- c. Any agenda items carried from previous meeting
- d. Additional Information required

Ms. Caprioglio reviewed the potential agenda items for the next meeting. She mentioned that there were questions on actual enrollments and what the projections will be. She noted that the total enrollment at GMS is 540, which includes PreK and Kindergarten. She asked Mr. Schlichter if the Pre-K and Kindergarten programs are half or full day. Mr. Schlichter indicated that the majority of the children

come for three half-days per week and, depending on their IEP some attend for a full day. There are also tuitioned students and a PDD program.

Ms. Caprioglio asked if we offer services to any students other than the 540 enrolled in GMS currently. Mr. Schlichter indicated that we do not offer services to students other than those enrolled, but the enrollment does vary. Ms. Caprioglio noted that the Pre-K and Kindergarten student total was the difference in the numbers printed in the HLN. Mr. Schlichter pointed out that enrollment projections are typically for students in grades 1-4. Mrs. Couture commented that Pre-K and Kindergarten enrollment numbers are always separated from regular enrollment.

Mrs. Couture informed the Committee that Mr. Dean Michener from the NHSBA will attend the next meeting to address enrollment projections and the NRPC will attend the next meeting to address build out projections. She added that she will ask Mr. Martin to attend and explain bonding. He will provide copies of bond schedules and copies of the NH DOE Application for School Building Aid.

**7) Next Meeting**

The Committee agreed to meet on November 7, 2006.

**8) Adjourn** – 9:00pm

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
School Board Secretary