

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
September 26, 2006

Present:

Mrs. Cindy Couture, School Board Chair
Mr. Jack Algeo, Building Committee Member
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. Dan Cecil, Architect at Harriman Associates
Ms. Catherine Hamblett, Superintendent
Mrs. Patricia Jewett, Selectwoman, School Board Member
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, School Board Secretary

1) Call to Order -

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes – Minutes of September 12, 2006

The minutes were deferred to the October 10, 2006 meeting.

3) Update from School Board meeting of Sept 20 –

Mrs. Couture explained that the Board met on September 20th in a special meeting to review all the information related to the scope of renovation work for GMS as well as the Kindergarten warrant of Deliberative Session 2005, which the District's attorney is reviewing to determine options relating to Kindergarten Construction Aid. She noted that the Board also received a proposal for the scope of renovation work for GMS from Mr. Cecil and a contractor that he is recommending, *to cost the renovations scope*.

Mr. Algeo interjected in relation to the GMS scope of renovation work, he did some research over the summer and took it upon himself to get a proposal from Hutter on the construction of a smaller 15 classroom school and handed this proposal out to the committee. He felt that the District pays Mr. Cecil to lead the Building Committee to the most expensive source for construction.

Ms. Hamblett pointed out that the School District Architect performs the tasks the *Board requests*.

Mr. Algeo referred back to the previous meeting's discussion on water problems at GMS stating that Mr. Cecil led the Committee to believe the flood in 2004 was larger than that of May 2006. Mr. Cecil responded that he was delivering information on the floods from the State Climatologist. Mr. Algeo commented that the information was "padded".

Mrs. Couture pointed out that the purpose of this Committee is to develop elementary space alternatives, complete with costs and academic options and bring it to the Board. Mr. Algeo commented that this was his last meeting and that, in his opinion, the Board has already made its decision. Mrs. Couture expressed her regret at his withdrawal from the Committee and thanked him for his time and input.

Ms. Hamblett *asked* the remaining members of the Committee *to share their thoughts on the role of the Committee* before moving on with the meeting. Mrs. Couture stated that she is facilitating the meetings because no other members stepped forward to express their interest and that she is hoping that, once the Members are exposed to all the work of the previous committees, someone steps up as the chairperson. She polled the remaining Committee members seeking their input.

Mr. Egan commented that he could not make a decision one way or the other until he reviews all the information. Ms. Caprioglio agreed, commenting that it will take time to review the information.

Mr. Pike asked if the Board was planning to put an option on the March 2007 ballot. Mrs. Couture responded that the Board looked at the timeline for the March vote, but did not have enough information to make a decision.

Mr. Pike indicated that the Committee does not have enough time to put together an option for the ballot. He feels the Committee needs a solid year to formulate a plan. He expressed concern at putting a competing warrant on the same ballot with a fire station warrant. Mrs. Couture indicated that the Board *made no decision on a timeline for a proposed warrant article to be put on the March 2007 ballot*. Ms. Hamblett suggested that the Committee needs to understand what options have been presented previously and what has been done so far.

Mr. Boschi commented that there is a large amount of information to review and that when coming to a conclusion it isn't something we should rush into. He added that we haven't even discussed what the future options are and we haven't looked at costs. We are not near a point where someone should be walking out. There is no commitment or agenda as yet.

Mr. Cecil told the Committee that his instructions from the Board were to spend as many meetings as the Building Committee needed to get up to speed, then discuss the sort of options *Committee* members want. Tonight's presentation is a summary of the technical studies that have been done. In the next meeting we will look at graphic design work that has been done.

Mr. Pike commented that people in the community are already talking about what will be proposed and suggested that the Committee hold off on a decision for a year. Mr. Boschi agreed with Mr. Pike commenting that the feeling around town is that the same ideas are being churned out. He felt that we will buy some good will by taking a year off without presenting a proposal to the voters. Mrs. Couture commented that waiting a year or not waiting a year to present an option was a long discussion at the *previous* Board meeting.

Ms. Caprioglio expressed that it is appreciated that Mr. Algeo investigated Hutter, but the proposal included no information of how the project is broken down. There isn't enough information to review. She suggested inviting Hutter to a meeting to discuss their proposal so that they can provide the gaps of information.

Mr. Cecil expressed his regret at Mr. Algeo's withdrawal from the Committee and suggested that Team Design be invited to a meeting as well and that perhaps Mr. Algeo would be willing to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion.

Members of the Committee briefly discussed Hutter's proposal pricing. Mr. Cecil cautioned the Committee that numbers without a scope of work is *risky* to propose. Mr. Boschi commented that a previous cost for renovations to GMS was approximately \$7 million and the Hutter proposal is \$8.5 million. He added that we are already at \$15 million and still do not know anything about the scope of renovations, so it is all guess work. Mr. Cecil suggested that Mr. Algeo come back to the Committee and explain what he had in mind as it takes a lot more *detail* to plan a school building project. Ms. Hamblett indicated that the Hutter proposal is just budget pricing. She suggested that a Committee member call Mr. Algeo and ask him to come to the next meeting.

Mrs. Couture distributed copies of Mr. Cecil's Proposal for Services for Budget Estimates for GMS in association with JCN Construction of Manchester, NH. He encouraged Committee members to participate in the estimate process *when JCN begins to work with a sub-committee*.

Mr. Cecil reviewed the Scope of Renovation RFP with the Committee. The proposal lists the long term scope should require solving the water and moisture problem with the site and building; renovate GMS to be "like new"; complete upgrade of all systems – electrical distribution, energy conservation, lighting, mechanical, plumbing, structural, life safety systems, educational technology updates; complete dehumidification; removal of all asbestos; meet all fire, safety, building and ADA requirements including the addition of a sprinkler system; meet NH DOE educational requirements, including minimum space requirements. Mr. Cecil explained that the process would require a sub-committee of this committee, the architect, contractor, and owner to meet, tour the building and inventory the existing conditions of GMS. Members of the Committee would be involved in making decisions on costing/budget and should attend every meeting *and participate in* all discussions.

Mr. Cecil went on to explain the process saying that he would meet with administrators to discuss educational programming space (taking into consideration Special Education, if all rooms meet needs, which two grades will

utilize building) and return with a plan, design and cost. The contractor and architect compile budget estimates; review current pricing trends in the market; compare estimates to others in the market; prepare options for scope and pricing for the Building Committee to review; prepare a floor plan and outline specifications in writing; and present a report to the Building Committee. At the second meeting, the owner, architect, contractor and full Building Committee will review the budget estimates, what they are based on, how the estimate was assembled and current market trends in Southern New Hampshire. The Building Committee will then discuss and decide upon the scope and budget for recommendation. *By reviewing this and considering possible alternate options, the Building Committee will make a recommendation to the School Board.*

Mr. Cecil concluded with the fee proposal for the RFP noting that it is \$32,500 for up to three meetings and the scope preparation. Mr. Pike was concerned that the fees not exceed \$32,500. Mr. Cecil affirmed that it would not.

Mrs. Couture reported that the Board requested Vollmer Associates to attend the meetings *as required*. Mr. Cecil commented that Vollmer has already looked at the septic system and the leach fields and found no evidence that the leach field is about to fail. He distributed JCN's resume and list of projects. He commented that JCN is a family owned company with much experience, a long history of good work and relations, and the advantage of working with the company is that they keep all their contractors under one roof. If any problems were to arise during the process they have all of the necessary resources in-house.

Mrs. Couture mentioned that in the past this process has been time consuming and expensive. We have worked with Mr. Cecil and used industry standards for costing out systems. The public concern was that *an estimate* wasn't accurate *enough*, which is where this scope came from because we need real numbers and not a ball park figure. Mr. Pike commented that we need to show the voters this is a definite cost of what it would take to renovate GMS or build new. Mrs. Couture agreed stating that she felt it was important to bring this Committee up to speed because this scope involves the Committee.

Mrs. Couture distributed the draft timeline to the March 2007 vote. She commented that the Committee should review it before deciding if it is feasible. Mr. Cecil commented that the schedule was drafted for the Committee to have enough time to make a decision. Mr. Pike raised concerns about the timeline noting that there was still a lot of information to review and understand. He commented further that since the Fire Department is planning on putting a warrant article on the ballot asking for a new station, we should not put a competing article on the ballot. *He asked if a member could make a such a motion. Mrs. Couture acknowledged and Mr. Pike make a motion not to go forward with a warrant article this year.*

Mr. Pike made a motion to recommend the School Board not go forward with a warrant article until March 2008. Mr. Boschi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

a. Status of RFP for GMS renovation

Mr. Cecil distributed the Recommended Scope of Work for Budget Pricing for Renovations to GMS. He recommended that Committee members read the Team Design report in totality, noting that it is important to bring things into perspective. He reviewed the Recommended Scope with the Committee, which lists:

Item A is the recommended long-term scope with a list of what is required. [This was also mentioned on page 2 of these minutes when Mr. Cecil presented the Proposal of Services for the Scope of Work RFP.]

Item B is a summary of studies that have been done over the past three years with Team Design, R.W. Gillespie Geotechnical, Traffic Reports, Air Quality Reports, Harriman Reports on Site Drainage and Dewatering/Moisture.

Item C is a list of Construction Notes.

Mr. Pike asked if this has all been done by Team Design. He also wanted to know why we are going through this if we will be doing it again. He raised a concern about the time in relation to the remaining items on the agenda.

Mr. Cecil briefly reviewed the building's deficiencies. Although the building is structurally solid, there is some minor cracking. There are many problems with the mechanical systems; lacking ventilation; electrical gives off excessive heat and is outdated, although the capacity is ample; the septic field is beyond its expected life, but the condition of the field will be verified; the oldest roof is about 10 years old and in fairly good shape; the exterior is concrete construction/steel frame with no insulation and the 1930's building construction is a wood frame with no

insulation; the windows are not insulated and in poor condition; and there is excessive moisture. Mr. Cecil continued, reviewing air quality reports. According to the December 2004 test, air quality in fourteen rooms exceeded CO2 levels due to inadequate ventilation, the lower area had the worst air quality, but the area around administration offices tested better. The site proximity to Route 3A is a traffic hazard. There is a shortage of parking and traffic issues. A traffic study was done during a September 2004 Open House and at peak times there were 276 vehicles with 74 spaces in the lot and 23 along Route 3A. We need to increase the amount of spaces on the site.

Mr. Boschi commented that if it is a recommendation to have only two grade levels at GMS, half the flow would be decreased and will make a large impact. Mr. Cecil mentioned that in prior studies we gathered operating costs and we can do that again. The educational needs talk about the shortages of space in the building now. In earlier studies two grades and Special Education can be accommodated, but depending on the extent of the renovations and phasing temporary classrooms may be necessary. He stated that he would discuss the requirements with Mr. Schlichter.

The Committee discussed concerns with costs and options related to building a new school or renovating GMS. Mr. Boschi commented that it would be cheaper to house all grades in a new school and renovate GMS when it is empty. Mr. Pike mentioned that there are safety concerns when working in phases while pieces of building are being renovated. Mr. Cecil indicated that he would need something in hand to quantify an estimate and recommendation. If little or no work is done to GMS, the SAU should assess the level of risk you are willing to absorb. The NH DOE stated the moisture problem needs to be solved to qualify for State funding aid and the ADA is a civil legislation that requires that 20% of the construction budget be spent on compliance.

Mrs. Couture suggested that the Committee review the Team Design "What If" plan. She mentioned that it was not done with any degree of input from the Committee at that time or from the staff at the school. It is just a hypothetical study and is being presented for the Committee's information.

Mrs. Couture distributed the November 2004 GMS Minimal Renovations Project Budget and explained the rationale behind it. The report shows a list of the renovation breakdown and scope of work description at that time, not including dewatering the site.

4) Facility and site - Technical Studies

- a. Excerpts from the July 2003 Team Design Report
- b. "What- if" renovation estimates for GMS from Team Design, summer 2003
- c. Minimal renovation estimates to Griffin Memorial, Sept 2004
- d. Traffic study meetings of Dec 2003 and Sept 2004

Mr. Cecil distributed traffic studies from the Steve Pernaw Company briefly reviewing the peak parking at GMS and traffic rerouting at Pinecrest Road and Route 3A. He noted that the Department of Transportation has already completed improvements at Pinecrest and Route 3A. Mrs. Couture mentioned that when CHS was built a traffic study was done at three intersections: Talent Road and Route 3A, Talent Road and Albuquerque, and Albuquerque and Page. Impact Fees were used for this study.

In the interest of time, Mr. Cecil suggested a trailing agenda item pertinent to the information presented tonight and the information that was not able to be covered in entirety to allow Members' questions at future meetings.

5) Informational handouts

- a. State of Maine - An Analysis of Construction of Small Schools Vs. larger School

Mrs. Couture distributed An Analysis of Construction of Small Schools vs. Larger Schools prepared by an Ad Hoc Committee for the Maine DOE. Mr. Cecil included Litchfield in this study to show what districts should be looking at when considering this type of construction. Mr. Cecil mentioned that in the analysis there is rationale as to why it is less expensive to operate one school with same number of students as two, a breakdown of square footage, and a rationale for savings on operating costs where square footage is concerned. The Maine DOE is encouraging districts to consolidate schools when considering construction.

b. Elementary Space Needs Cost History

Mrs. Couture distributed the summary of what the District has spent to date on studies and architectural fees. She mentioned that the total is \$210,397.96, including the appraisal of GMS and includes all the work done on space needs since 2002.

6) Next Meeting – October 10, 2006

Mrs. Couture informed the Committee that the next meeting would be held on October 10, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the CHS Media Room. She informed members that they will be reviewing previous design studies for GMS (floor plans, options, renovation options), a comparison of recently built schools with costs, and an inventory of the schools.

Mr. Pike asked if it is less expensive to build a two story school vs a one story building. Mr. Cecil responded that it is because a two story building requires less area for the roof, is cost effective and there is an energy savings advantage.

Mr. Boschi asked about the space needs of the SAU offices. Mr. Cecil commented that analysis is three years old and needs to be updated. Mrs. Couture commented that it would be available at the next meeting. Ms. Hamblett commented that the original objectives of the Committee were to look at the long range view of all aspects of the District.

Mr. Boschi asked about the space needs at CHS and how the SAU Offices are affecting the building. Mr. Pike wanted to know how much space the SAU is taking up. Ms. Hamblett responded that the SAU utilizes two former classrooms and *office* space. Mrs. Couture noted that the square footage is currently 3,080 sq. ft., but 5,300 sq. ft. would be more adequate based on a previous study.

Ms. Caprioglio asked for an update on the SAU space needs. Ms. Hamblett commented that some problems have been alleviated and that there are mostly storage needs. *Space and storage needs are a concern at CHS.*

Ms. Caprioglio wanted to know when JCN and Harriman will begin the work on the RFP. Ms. Hamblett informed members that the Board has requested an approval from the Selectmen for Impact Fees, but it is currently on hold. She was hopeful to have an answer by October 10th. She added that even former School Boards in Litchfield felt that *determining long-range space needs is* a good use of Impact Fees and decided it would be wise to use Impact Fees for this purpose in the future.

7) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.