

Notes from GA Building Committee Meeting, November 19, 2014

Present were Scott Silberfein (BOE and parent), Linda Purvis (District), Sharon Hill (Principal), Russ Davidson (Architect), Amy Nadasdi (parent), Karen Guardino (teacher), John Trenholm (Director of Facilities), Debbie Leitner (teacher), Liz Marrinan (Village) and Barry Meiselman (GNA Pres and parent).

The committee reviewed current room usage and size averages in the existing facility (by type/use of rooms), as compared to model program classroom sizes proposed by the architects, in order to reach consensus for planning purposes. Following are comments and decisions made:

- Russ noted that the current average classroom size is smaller than the model program
- the size of the gym is “small-to-OK” for the school’s enrollment
- we have 3 small group instruction rooms and need at least 7 according to the model
- the Post Road school in White Plains has an average size of 850 square feet/classroom.
- John remarked that all the articles Russ distributed seem to indicate that more room in a classroom is better
- Sharon commented that there are odd configurations in a number of classrooms
- Karen noted that there is never enough storage or wall space in the classrooms
- we will use 950 square feet as an average room size for upper grade classes and 850 square feet/classroom for kindergarten classes, with additional space factored in for storage. Russ will determine the additional square footage that should be added for storage needs. These factors will dictate the number of required classrooms.
- to decrease the number of sections to 12 or 14 would require re-districting students
- per Linda, we should assume that total school enrollment will be maintained at the current level of approximately 400 students in the future
- technology takes up a portion of the footprint
- per Sharon, space for testing is an issue now. Sometimes crowding in a space where testing occurs may be to the detriment of those students taking a test.
- Sharon predicts a ratio of 60/40 regular/special ed students for 1 out of the 3 sections per grade level, which will result in a room size exceeding the 950 square feet/room that was decided for the model program for these particular rooms
- Russ suggested a room size of 700-800 square feet for Maker Space room, which would accommodate full classes and small groups
- per Russ, libraries are becoming more places for people to come together and less as a repository for books
- Russ also noted that if we right-size rooms and put sinks in them, we shouldn’t need separate science rooms
- Sharon requested that classrooms designated for Foreign Languages be maintained in the model
- restore the 2000 square foot Multipurpose Room as a multipurpose room (currently also used as a Choral Music Room)
- an OT/PT room will be added back into the model

According to Russ, the cost of fixing the issues with the current facility would be approximately \$27 million, a figure that does not reflect model program considerations.

The footprint would stay the same and new HVAC systems would be implemented. Costs for central A/C would have to be added. According to Russ, there is no guarantee that waterproofing the building would solve all the water issues due to the high water table under the school. More exploratory work would have to be done to understand the nature of the water table, perhaps in March when the water table is considered to be at its highest level.

If the model program were applied, the school would need a 2-story addition of 40 feet X 70 feet at an estimated cost of \$10 million. Additions and alterations to the existing facility would probably equal the cost of a new facility, per Russ.

Linda noted that before considering closure of Huntington Avenue, all other options should be considered. She is strategizing with the BOE as to how Village Trustees should be approached about a potential closure of Huntington Avenue, if a decision is ultimately made to broach this sensitive topic. Liz said that an act of State legislature would be needed to close Huntington.

Next steps: Russ will develop alternate design options, as follows:

- fixing current facility without model program considerations
- fixing current facility with an addition to achieve model program, without the Huntington closure option
- fixing facility with an addition to achieve model program, with the Huntington closure option
- construct new building

Once design options are considered by the committee, then a BOE meeting will be scheduled, probably at the beginning of March 2015.

Linda asked Barry when would be the appropriate time to bring the community into the discussions. Barry responded that it probably should be once the BOE takes a position on the design options.

The facility's water problem is "past critical," per Russ.

Amy noted major issues with the smell in the bathrooms, and John responded that he would look at steps to improve ventilation in the bathrooms.

There are AV issues in the gym.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for January 7, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Meiselman