

Notes from BOE Study Session on Facilities Plan - Tuesday, July 15, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Mary Beth Gose at 8:20 am. All BOE members were present, except for Lewis Leone. Ms. Gose noted that although official action cannot be taken by the BOE at this meeting, she hoped that general consensus could be reached on projects under consideration. Ms. Gose began by welcoming everyone in attendance, including Board Members, and Superintendent, Dr. Thomas Hagerman.

Russ Davidson of KG&D then reviewed six projects under consideration (not including two other projects being considered for inclusion in the bond - the proposed technology infrastructure upgrade and the Quaker Ridge roof replacement). Linda Purvis reviewed the timing of the bond, and noted several projects that were tabled earlier in the facilities discussion, including playing field upgrades and renovation of the Little Theater at the High School. She also reported that the BOE has asked the Scarsdale Foundation to consider funding the Fitness Center and Design/Maker lab, and that a very generous \$300,000 donation has been pledged by the Madoff family that would cover the cost of equipment for the Fitness Center.

Following the review, Ms. Gose initiated a project-by-project discussion, with questions coming from both the BOE and community members in attendance.

First, BOE members indicated consensus to support the technology infrastructure upgrade and Quaker Ridge roof replacement, after noting that roof replacements are considered too costly to be budgeted into annual maintenance. Attention then turned to the six projects:

Edgewood - library expansion/renovation and relocation of school office to front of building

This project has two parts: a renovation/reconstruction of the library and a relocation of the school office. Early discussion focused on whether the two projects should be considered separately, and it was explained that combining the projects would be less expensive. Discussion on merits of office relocation also occurred, noting that this would significantly improve safety and security in the building.

Discussion on cost estimates for this and for all the projects arose, specifically, concerns from community members about under-budgeting. It was noted that current pricing estimates are for budget development, and are not true, detailed cost estimates. These are developed later in the planning process. Ultimately there will be two cost estimates by two different firms. KG&D will provide one, and an independent construction management firm will provide the second. KG&D affirmed that they were comfortable with the budget projections as they now stand.

BOE indicated consensus on supporting this project.

Heathcote - new multipurpose room, PT/OT room, canopy at back entrance

There was general acknowledgment that a multipurpose room was needed to alleviate overcrowding and lack of adequate lunch space. Discussion then centered on the outdoor canopy that would connect back exterior exits and provide shelter from the weather. It was noted that after-school pick up was particularly difficult because students are crowded in a single hallway, waiting to exit "one by one." Moreover, it was stated several times that a canopy has been requested by the school PTA for many years.

BOE indicated consensus on supporting this project, provided that the canopy be bid separately so the Board could determine later whether to proceed with that component.

High School - Designer/Maker Lab (in old auto shop space)

Discussion focused on whether curriculum would be developed to justify this project - BOE heard assurances from High School Principal Ken Bonamo, High School teacher Tom Maguire, and Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Lynne Shain, that curriculum was already being developed, with more to follow. It was noted that there were several classes with activities that would make immediate use of the space, and the Board asked for the list of these activities. Additionally, there were several comments about additional staffing needs relative to the addition of new spaces. Ms. Gose indicated that discussions were continuing with the Scarsdale Education Foundation about the possibility of their funding this project.

BOE indicated consensus on supporting this project.

High School - Fitness Center

BOE indicated that they were pleased with the evolution of this proposal, noting that the physical education curriculum had already been revamped to emphasize fitness (50% of classes are fitness-based, rather than skills-based), original cost projections decreased, and that the Foundation has expressed interest in helping to fund this project. Further discussion focused on ceiling height, and it was clarified that the ceiling will be up to 9'6" in some spaces, with much of the space at 9 feet. Along some passageways the ceilings would be at 8', but activities would not be taking place there. The architect assured the audience that, according to research, this is more than adequate for the activities assigned to the room, primarily cardio, weight training, and stretching. It was also noted that there are seven other areas in the building that can accommodate activities that might require clearance above 9'6".

BOE indicated consensus on supporting this project.

High School - Learning Commons

BOE noted the clear need for this project to alleviate over-crowding at lunch, provide additional study space, have a central gathering space at the school, reclaim the library as a dedicated place for study, and expand the kitchen food preparation area. There was a question from a community member about whether the commons would change the High School culture, promoting divisiveness, cliques, etc. Principal Bonamo explained that self-segregation already takes place, and that dining choices of students will more likely

be based on location (proximity to their last class) and food selections. Discussion also included community satisfaction with design solutions, impact on staffing (more aides and cleaners may be needed), and the rationale for the corridor (the "bridge") from Commons to library.

BOE indicated consensus on supporting this project, but that it may revisit the corridor issue. It was proposed that this be bid as an alternate.

Middle School - Orchestra/Multipurpose Room

BOE discussion centered on favoring the "Option A" project (a room on the side of the existing building where the Band room and Auditorium are clustered) over the proposed "Option B," which is a room built into the courtyard at the front of the building, combined with converting the current breezeway into an enclosed corridor. Additional storage space for instruments was also recognized as a need, particularly if this was to be used as a multipurpose room, as opposed to just a music room.

It was reiterated several times that "Option A" addresses the critical need for orchestra space at reduced cost. Safety and security issues were also raised regarding leaving the courtyard open and exposed. Moreover, it was explained that a corridor would also improve mobility within the school, although it would be unlikely that any new corridor would provide a new community entrance unless additional security personnel were stationed there. BOE members indicated the need for a Middle School master plan to make a more informed decision on long term planning.

BOE indicated consensus on supporting "Option A" but will also invite further comments from the MS administration.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am