

TOWN OF GROTON  
PHASE II SCHOOL DESIGN COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2008 – 3:30 P.M.

1) ROLL CALL

Present: Kolnaski, Lange, Ritter, Webster, Koehler, Scott  
Staff: Oefinger, Norris  
Other: Jim Hoagland, JCJ Architects; Michael Lovetere, Principal of Clark Lane Middle School

Chairman Scott called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

2) ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Tour of Clark Lane Middle School

Principal Lovetere welcomed the Committee to the Clark Lane Middle School. Mr. Lovetere gave an overview of the renovation/addition project that took approximately three years to complete. Clark Lane Middle School was originally built in 1952 and there have been a number of additions and renovations over the years. Mr. Lovetere indicated that he has been the principal at Clark Lane for the last three years, and previously worked at the high school. He indicated that the renovation/expansion plan was done in multiple phases and took approximately three years to complete. The school originally had 820 students; the current enrollment is approximately 730. The school is approximately 160,000 square feet in size and the project included a 20,000 square foot addition and extensive remodeling of the existing space. After a tabletop presentation, Mr. Lovetere led the group on a tour of the school and provided a copy of the renovation phasing plan for Clark Lane Middle School, dated December 5, 2005. Principal Lovetere indicated that because they chose to renovate an existing school that was built in the 1950s, a number of unavoidable consequences resulted including a number of areas where ceilings are very low; a spread-out one story building with long travel distances; long corridors/connections to get from part of the school to another; and lots of change orders to deal with unanticipated conditions. The group then returned to the principal's conference room and continued their meeting.

B. Impressions of Schools Toured to Date

There was general consensus that committee members who were able to participate in the previous tours of a Glastonbury and Farmington School generally liked the Farmington school better. While the two schools were built approximately two years apart, the Farmington school was generally felt to be more student-friendly and provided for unique spaces for students and teachers. It was noted that given the limited amount of time that Committee members had to participate in the tours, that members need to keep in mind that while one school may appear to be more conducive to student/learning activities that more extensive review of these common spaces would need to take place. While the two schools were built within approximately two years of each other, they did in all likelihood incorporate the latest thinking and philosophy of school design at the time they were designed and built.

Jim Hoagland distributed an e-mail that he had received from Donna Schilke who is the principal of the Smith Middle School in Glastonbury.

C. Receipt of E-Mail Dated March 14, 2008 from Mayor Harry Watson

Chairman Scott and staff distributed copies of an e-mail memorandum from Mayor Watson along with a number of attachments concerning his opinion that the Committee should investigate the possibility of a single middle school concept for the Town of Groton. A number of the Committee members expressed their concern with this approach and felt that a two middle school concept should be pursued. Staff indicated that no matter what the preferred alternative is, all options should be looked at and documented so that when this item goes to referendum, the various alternatives can be fully vetted and reviewed.

3) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.