

SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2014 – 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX, COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Ackerman, Cabral, Greenleaf, Watson, Zod
Staff: Oefinger, Graner, Kilpatrick, Bresnayan
Ex-officio: Volkmann
Consultant: Mike Zuba, Ali Church, Kemp Morhardt

There was no quorum so no formal action was taken. Those present discussed the items on the agenda.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 30, 2014

No action.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

None.

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

a. Additional Concept Plan for Merritt Property

Mr. Zuba referred to a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed middle school co-location “Option D,” which would place the middle school as close to the high school as possible. Mr. Morhardt noted this would be a three story building. Discussion followed on potential access points.

b. Middle School Space Program

Mr. Morhardt reviewed middle school space standards and benchmarking data. All spaces are within the range except for music, athletics, and classrooms. Mr. Morhardt noted a graphic program for middle school spaces, as well as graphic programs and layouts for performing arts and physical education.

Volkmann suggested that the new classrooms at the high school are too small and the gymnasiums at the new elementary schools are too small.

Mr. Morhardt noted potential deductions of 5,720 to 9,270 square feet to increase the grant eligibility factor and reimbursement rate.

Discussion followed on the intent for the science classroom spaces.

With respect to a pool, Mr. Morhardt stated that a pool is not reimbursable and it is not in the Board of Education's educational specifications. Pools are costly to build, operate, and maintain, and insurance is very costly.

Next steps are to review the educational specifications in detail. The Town Manager also stated the need to build consensus. There is a lot of work that needs to be done before focusing on a referendum date. Mr. Graner noted the need to settle the Merritt property issue and the Town Manager noted there are a lot of hurdles to get through to use the Merritt property for a school.

It was decided that all parties interested in the Merritt property and the school facilities initiative would be invited to the December 11th meeting of the Task Force.

c. Elementary School Educational Specifications

Mr. Graner stated that the Board of Education approved the elementary school educational specifications on October 27th. The conversion of the two middle schools to elementary schools has a number of advantages and provides for long term racial balance. Mr. Zuba reviewed enrollment data and discussion followed on magnet school designation and reimbursement rates.

Mr. Graner noted this is a "big idea" that involves restructuring of the district to make it more efficient and effective. Building a new middle school creates opportunities for the elementary schools. Closed schools would be available for alternative uses. This proposal is not being driven by the reimbursement rate, but by education and the needs of the Town.

Mr. Zuba reviewed summaries of space needs for Cutler and West Side middle schools to make the elementary school fits work.

Discussion followed on the constraints associated with making Kolnaski and West Side sister schools as suggested by Volkmann.

d. Adoption of 2015 Regular Meeting Schedule

This item will be considered at the December 11th meeting.

e. Other

Town Manager Oefinger took the opportunity to suggest that the next meeting will be an opportunity to bring everyone up to speed on the school facilities initiative and the meeting should include a discussion about working together. The public is looking for leadership on this issue.

The Merritt fields plan is not competing with the middle school plan because they are not mutually exclusive. Mr. Zuba reviewed discussions that took place with DEEP about conversion

of the Merritt open space to a middle school and the land exchange that will be required by the state.

It was decided that the Permanent School Building Committee, Town Council, and RTM would be invited to the next meeting, as well as parties interested in building fields on the Merritt property.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.