



Town of Groton - Public Works

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Meeting Minutes

Permanent School Building Committee

Chairman Rick DeMatto, Vice-Chairman W. Gordon Lange, Robert J. Austin-LaFrance, Richard Monteiro, Robert Morrison, and John Webster.

Thursday, April 7, 2005

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 2

Regular Meeting

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairman Rick DeMatto, Robert J. Austin-LaFrance, Richard Monteiro, Robert Morrison and John Webster

Members Absent: Gordon Lange

Staff: Rick Norris, Project Manager - School Construction and Colleen Quattromani, Recorder.

Also present: David Miner, RTM Representative.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

2. RECEIPT OF CITIZEN'S PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Before voting on the motion to approve the minutes of the PBSC for March 31, 2005, Mr. LaFrance asked for the term Construction Manager as Advisor to be defined. Mr. Ceella of Jeter, Cook & Jepson explained that the Construction Manager as Advisor is a form of contract that the Town will be using for the Groton School Building Project where the Town will hold the contracts for the work to be done as opposed to Construction Manager at Risk who would contract for the construction contractors.

P-2005-0001 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Monteiro, seconded by Morrison, to approve the meeting minutes of March 31, 2005 as written..

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 5 - DeMatto, Austin-LaFrance, Monteiro, Morrison and Webster

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS (other than Subcommittee reports)

(a) PSBC Members

None.

(b) Department of Public Works Staff

Rick Norris, Project Manager- School Construction updated the PSBC on the status of the Environmental Engineering Service and the Construction Manger as Advisor contracts. The contract with URS still needs a few signatures but two work orders are already being prepared so work can begin. The contract with Gilbane is still with the Attorney's office. Chairman DeMatto expressed disappointment that the Gilbane contract was not yet in hand. Mr. Norris said the Department hopes to see the contract completed soon.

Mr. Norris also told the Committee that the Town Attorney will be present at the May 5th meeting of the PSBC to explain Project Labor Agreements and who in the Town has the authority to make decisions in this regard.

Three copies of a school design book were handed out for the PSBC to share. Mr. Greenleaf, Director of School Buildings and Grounds, thought the PSBC would enjoy the book which contained designs from architects across the country.

Mr. Webster asked Mr. Norris how his search for a temporary office was progressing and was told that Mr. Greenleaf was looking into the availability of a trailer for the High School. Mr. Webster informed Mr. Norris and the Committee that the EB R&D Annex on Poquonnock Rd. next to the "King" property was currently underutilized and that he could look into arranging a space there for the Town.

(c) Board of Education

None.

(d) Jeter, Cook & Jepson

Mr. Cerella, principal, Jeter, Cook & Jepson introduced the topics for JCJ's presentation, Landscape Design, Site Systems including Daylighting and finally Schematic Design Presentations. The agenda mailed earlier in the week to the Committee had listed the topics as Building Envelopes and LEED but those topics were already covered on March 31st. Before beginning the presentations Mr. Cerella updated the PSBC on the retention of the archaeological consultant telling the Committee that Requests for Proposals (RFPs) would be coming in the week of April 11th.

Mr. Ferrero, of Ferrero Hixon Associates, LLC, was then introduced to talk about landscape design for the School Building Project. Mr. Ferrero went over the educational site design standards including circulation and parking, athletics and play areas and landscaping. The designers will put these components together in a way which compliments the internal design of the school. Important in the landscape design is the consideration of site access which must deal with bus traffic, parent drop-offs, service deliveries and maintenance. Mr. Ferrero spoke of separate systems for each type of traffic experienced by the schools. The Committee was told that site traffic would differ from the High School to the elementary schools. Chairman DeMatto spoke about Special Education considerations and was told that those needs will be considered in the design probably with their own separate system. Mr. Webster asked if the Board of Education could provide the architect with the number of parent drop-offs anticipated at each school. Other circulation issues addressed in the talk were security and lighting.

Elements of athletic fields and recess areas, which are included in educational landscaping designs, were explained to the Committee. High Schools have organized sports needs verse elementary schools which have recess and playscapes. There are many cost and liability issues to consider in the design of the playscapes for the elementary schools. The architect spoke of the materials to consider in the design and their costs and maintenance concerns. The landscape architects will also address community use of the facilities by recreation leagues, etc..

Mr. Ferrero went on to discuss aesthetics, environmental concerns and maintenance. Aesthetics involves things such as retaining existing stonewalls and planting visual and sound barriers for the school's neighbors. Mr. Ferrero said they will be trying to use existing trees in the designs. Stormwater is an issue the different components of the design team will work together to address. In maintenance Mr. Ferrero discussed the pros and cons of various materials such as mulch or rubber available for playscapes.

Next the Committee heard from Mr. Lindgren of PARE Engineering who talked a little more about stormwater. Mr. Lindgren first gave a brief outline of the mostly "behind the scene" areas in which the firm will work in the school project. Their area of involvement include utilities, roadway planning, and site design standards like circulation, parking, etc. In working with the stormwater and water quality issues PARE tries to create a design which fits the land rather than

simply designing catch basins. Each of the building sites will have specific considerations that will be better understood as the designs are developed. Mr. Webster asked if the runoff water collected will be reused. Mr. Lindgren said it would only be considered for irrigation and only if costs allow. Mr. Cali said their approach will follow Leed guidelines in considering the sustainability of such a project. Mr. Monteiro asked about retaining water on the "King" property and was told the topography was a consideration there. Mr. LaFrance asked about the impact of change at the highly developed site at the High School. PARE Engineering said major changes would be costly but mitigation and discharge areas must be investigated for the school to be compliant with State stormwater control requirements.

Mr. Cali, lead designer for Fitch High School, then spoke about the use of daylighting in the school building projects. Daylighting has been shown to reduce energy consumption while creating a healthier learning environment. Buildings constructed to use daylighting are built on an east/west orientation to maximize southern exposure. Roof monitors and lightshelves control the light entering the classroom and indirectly control the room climate. The Committee was provided with diagrams explaining how the lightshelves work.

Mr. Cali then moved on to a discussion on the schematic design for the Fitch High School renovation. There have been two meetings between JCJ and the principal and school staff to discuss the program priorities for the project. Staff needed to decide what items they absolutely want in case there is no Phase II to the project and decided general classrooms were their top priority. The Committee was shown the four options presented to the school staff. Each option was shown with several different geographical orientations while Mr. Cali explained the pros and cons of each design and its placement. Currently the preferred design is three stories which would require a zoning variance. School staff would like to see minimal disruption to existing programs during construction. Mr. Cali told the Committee that building to the east, just one option, might make it possible to avoid demolition in Phase I of the project.

Mr. Hoagland presented the schematic design for the elementary schools. School staff was shown L shaped classrooms, a new trend in education, during their meetings with JCJ. JCJ also provided the educators with a thirteen page article on the L shape concept whose benefits include breakout space for conducting activities for a few students at a time. The meeting with the school staff also addressed the space requirements for Special Education. Staff will decide if Special Education needs its own space or if the program can be incorporated back into general classrooms.

Mr. Hoagland also spoke specifically about Freeman Hathaway site issues. The site has wetlands, building buffers (RU20 zone) and a hill of ledge to consider in developing the new school site. There was a discussion about possibly using Ann Avenue as the main access for the school with Oslo Street being used mostly for emergency access. There were several options in locating the school with one consideration being building on the hill to maximize the site space. The idea of building into a hill would create many interesting design options.

5. RECEIPT OF SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Discussion continued on the choice of schools that may be visited by the PSBC. The Committee would like to see some of the design and educational concepts being considered in practice. Westwoods School in Farmington seems a good choice and Mr. Cali of JCJ mentioned a three story school in Madison that JCJ designed as an example which would be similar to one of the ideas being presented for Fitch High School.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The Committee cancelled the April 15th meeting of the PSBC. The next scheduled meeting will be the regular meeting of May 5th.

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.