



# Town of Groton - Public Works

134 Groton Long Point Rd  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Public Works  
Administration  
(860) 448-4083

## Meeting Minutes

### Permanent School Building Committee

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

---

Thursday, February 2, 2006

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

---

#### Regular Meeting

---

#### 1. ROLL CALL

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

Staff: Rick Norris, Project Manager-School Construction, Wes Greenleaf, Director of School Buildings & Grounds, Colleen Quattromani, Recorder.

Also present: David Miner, RTM Representative, Michael Hewitt, Board of Education Liaison, and Catherine Kolnaski, Town Councilor.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Mr. Webster arrived at 7:02 PM.

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

None.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### a) Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2006

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Lange and seconded by Mr. Monteiro to approve the PSBC meeting minutes of January 19th with two corrections.

#### 4. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS (other than Subcommittee reports)

##### (a) PSBC Members

None.

##### (b) Department of Public Works Staff

Mr. Norris gave the PSBC a quick review of the public approval process for the School Building Project. Mr. Manning provided a detailed look at the project schedule and tasks later in the meeting. The PSBC was told that the public hearing on the Kolnaski scheduled for February 8th may be continued depending on the comments received that night. The City Conservation Commission were provided site plans for their February 7th meeting.

Mr. Norris expects to get wetlands approval for Northeast Academy Elementary on the 8th. Site plans and all the applications for the schools are in with Fitch High School plans submitted February 2nd. There is a staff review of Northeast Academy on the 14th and Mr. Norris is working toward a staff review date of February 21st for Kolnaski. Staff will try to get one or both elementary schools scheduled for Planning Commission presentation on February 28th and Fitch High School shortly thereafter.

Mr. Norris met with Dr. Patel about possibly using a portion of an existing service road on Dr. Patel's land for temporary construction access to the Kolanski site. The Town will draw up a construction easement for use of Dr. Patel's land.

Mr. Norris also talked with Mr. Hartung, an abutter of the Northeast Academy School. JCJ will be sending surveyors to flag the property line so that Mr. Norris, Mr. Smolley of JCJ Architecture and Mr. Hartung can discuss what needs to be done to buffer the home from the school.

Mr. Norris attended the first of the PCT's. The State reports that it's construction drawing review cycle is now taking 60-90 days. The Town's schedule doesn't allow that much time so an independent review will be set up. An independent review could take as little as two weeks.

In an update on preparations for the Fitch High School renovation and addition project, Mr. Norris reported that URS was working on plans for the inspection of Fitch High School for any remedial requirements and JCJ Architecture is working on wetlands issues for construction of the temporary parking on the Merritt property. At Northeast Academy staff continues to work on addressing the water issues for the site.

On Friday, February 3rd, Mr. Norris and Mr. Greenleaf are taping a segment of Welcome to Groton! to air on Channel 2. It will be the first of many as part of the public relations plan for the School Building Project.

**(c) Board of Education Staff**

Mr. Greenleaf told the PSBC that the Board of Education is still answering the questions on why the School Building Project is not using geothermal technology now. Mr. Greenleaf is working with JCJ Architecture and talking to the Waterford School Department about their experience with the technology. The Board of Education has been told that there is not enough money in the existing budget to acquire this technology and there is not enough time to ask for more. The technology is making more advances in cost efficiency and will be considered again for future projects.

The first reimbursement of 2.3 million dollars for the school building project has been received and the second application has been submitted.

Reporting on ongoing developments in the School Building Project the Committee was told that Mr. Greenleaf has a meeting with JCJ's technology consultants the week of February 10th. Mr. Greenleaf is working with the Construction Manager on a screening process and rules for workers on the Fitch High school site.

Finally, Mr. Hewitt, Board of Education Liaison, spoke with the Committee about concerns some residents have regarding shifting of school populations among the various school facilities and the timing of the closing of schools. In the discussion which followed various Committee members remarked that the PSBC is involved in building the new schools, while it is the Superintendent who will decide which school students will attend. Mr. Greenleaf told the Committee that the Board of Education has requested money in CIP funds to get a demographic study done to initiate Phase II of the School Building Project. The study will help determine which schools will close.

**(d) JCJ Architecture**

Mr. Smolley, Principal, JCJ Architecture introduced the PSBC to Mr. Beatrice, JCJ's construction administrator for the School Building Project.

In updates on the State and local reviews of the project plans, the Committee was told that Fitch High School had received Wetlands approval. The Committee heard the details of the State's comments of the Kolnaski Elementary School PCT review. Mr. Norris and Mr. Greenleaf had remarked in their presentations on how well the plans had been received and Mr. Smolley agreed that the State's comments were minor concerns and can be easily addressed so that the project can move ahead as scheduled.

Mr. Smolley pointed out a realignment of the entry road to the Kolnaski School to avoid going

*under the overhead Groton Utility powerlines. Next week a biologist/botanist specialist for JCJ Architecture will be looking into reports of a historical plant that maybe on the Kolnaski site. A geothermal engineer will also be at Kolnaski next week. There was discussion on the blasting that will take place during construction and the notification process for neighbors who might be affected by the work.*

*In discussions on Northeast Academy the Committee was told that Mr. Smolley, Chief Richards and the Mystic Fire Marshall will meet to discuss water needs at Northeast Academy and review a report from Aquarion Water Company that Mr. Smolley expects to receive on February 10th. Mr. Smolley discussed a redesign of a retention basin in the northeast corner of the site in response to wetlands staff review comments. JCJ is working on its preparations for the Northeast Academy PCT on February 21st. The Fitch High School PCT planned for February 28th is more complex due to the renovation plans.*

**(e) Gilbane Building Company**

*Mr. Manning, Project Executive, Gilbane Building Company, distributed an information package detailing Gilbane's activities since the last PSBC meeting. Gilbane has a fully functional trailer at Fitch High School with another to house Gilbane staff, Mr. Norris and JCJ's construction administrator, Mr. Beatrice scheduled for March 1st delivery. Gilbane has estimators from several different offices ready to review the construction documents being submitted to the State PCT. They will start on the Kolnaski School next week and on Northeast and Fitch as they become available.*

*The meeting package included a list of Gilbane's proposed staffing for the School Building Project and the construction schedule updates. At Mr. Norris's request the schedule highlights the Site Plan Approval process to show how this approval is a schedule critical path. Mr. Norris and the Director of Public Works will work with Town staff to ensure these approvals are received to meet the schedule.*

*Mr. Manning also included a draft list of bid packages for the project which was prepared to assist Town staff determine insurance requirements and will help Gilbane decide how to package the bids. Over the past nine months Gilbane pushed to get qualified contractors in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and locally to obtain the DAS certification required by the State for State funded jobs over \$500,000. Currently Gilbane has over a hundred certified contractors on their list of potential bidders. Mr. Manning discussed the outlook for prospective bidders on the different packages with detail on the electrical package. Although the two elementary schools must be bid as two separate state jobs, Gilbane has developed a strategy to find savings on combined bids. Mr. Manning thinks that the bigger volume can insure a better quality bidder. When the projects are bid Mr. Manning will provide the Committee with an award schedule.*

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

*The next meeting of the PSBC is Thursday, February 16th.*

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

*None.*

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

*None.*

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.*