

## **Request for Funding to Repair and Remediate Modular Facility**

### **Background**

The Board of Education is obligated to provide a safe and secure environment for its students and staff while delivering the approved programs and services in a fiscally responsible manner. The physical condition of two of our schools (Hamilton Avenue and Glenville Schools) required significant renovation projects, which the Town has funded in previously approved capital budgets. The Hamilton Avenue School project is nearing completion with expectations that the school will be ready for the 2008-09 school year, one year later than expected. The Board of Education developed swing space for the temporary relocation of that school in the form of the modular facility. The Glenville School project has been delayed one year, waiting for the availability of the swing space. It is ready to begin on July 1 assuming there is assurance that the Hamilton Avenue School will move into its new school and there is swing space available for the Glenville School. The Glenville School project is scheduled to be completed in 12 months, assuming a July 1 start; however, the Board of Education considers it prudent to plan for a relocation period for Glenville students of up to two years.

On March 1, 2008, a mold condition was discovered in the exterior portion of the modular facility while investigating a water spot on the ceiling tile near an exterior wall. Significant analysis and testing was done that weekend which determined the following:

- The interior air quality was not contaminated.
- Extensive moisture and mold was found in the majority of the soffits (the roof overhang that sits on the exterior walls of the building).
- Initially it was thought that there was moisture and mold inside the wall assembly; however, later analysis proved that there was some moisture but no mold, with the exception of some mold in the exterior wall in one classroom.
- It was determined that although there was no contamination of the internal air quality, it would not be appropriate to return students and staff to the building given the extent of the mold in the exterior portions of the building.
- In the following weeks, additional environmental testing was done on surfaces and materials in the building. The final assessment was that there was no contamination of these items or the air quality resulting from the mold condition. [Detailed information on this environmental testing can be found on the Greenwich public schools website, [www.greenwichschools.org](http://www.greenwichschools.org), under the Hamilton Avenue School Facility and Relocation Plan Updates. You will find the 3-25-08 comprehensive report from Environmental Assessments and Solutions and a 3-25-08 letter from Hygenix.]

### **School Relocation Efforts**

This was the start of an eight week effort to relocate the Hamilton Avenue School community to other buildings (6 other schools in the district, which has been very disruptive to the families and staff) and to determine school relocation plans for a school community for the start of the 2008-09 school year (either Glenville or Hamilton Avenue). The Board took the following steps:

- Authorized an ad hoc Advisory Committee on Facilities to work closely with the Administration on three initiatives – 1) develop school relocation options; 2) determine the causes and contributing factors for the problems in the modular facility to be able to assess accountability on the part of outside contractors, internal procedures and/or staff;

3) review and develop recommendations for improvements to the BOE approach to maintenance and capital planning procedures.

- Membership on the Advisory Committee has three BOE members, one parent representative from each of the Hamilton Avenue and Glenville School communities and three ex officio members including one representative from the BET, the Superintendent and the BOE Chair.
- The Advisory Committee prioritized its initial efforts on the school relocation options and the causes and contributing factors for the problems, as follows:
  - Developed a list of all possible options for the relocation of the school communities. The initial list includes 19 options which were grouped into several categories: use of Western Greenwich Civic Center in some form; use of a modular facility, both new and existing; lease of independent school or commercial buildings; split sessions; and dispersal of grades among other schools in town. The list also identified the different variations if the new Hamilton Avenue School is completed versus if it is not yet ready for use at the beginning of the school year. [This Option List is attached for your reference.]
  - Responsibilities for further analysis into each of the options were assigned.

The Advisory Committee and/or the full BOE held 12 meetings over the past 8 weeks to evaluate these alternatives and discuss information with parents. The results of the investigative work were:

- Dispersing the grade levels among the other schools in town had the least appeal due to the impact on space availability in all schools for the two year need, lack of administrative control over a school's students and staff, transportation time and loss of community spirit for Hamilton Avenue or Glenville Schools.
- Split sessions would adversely affect program delivery, hours of operation (requiring contract re-openers), transportation time, space utilization at another school community, and operating costs.
- No appropriate independent school or commercial facility was able to provide the correct educational environment at the right time and cost.
- The cost and lead time to acquire or lease a new modular facility were high. It could take at least 6 months to secure land use approvals and the trailers. Costs would exceed \$3.5 million.
- The BOE concluded there were two remaining options to pursue in more detail: the use of Western Greenwich Civic Center in some way and the repair and remediation of the modular facility. A significant amount of work was done to explore these two options. Attached is a summary document indicated the pros and cons of these two options.

#### Western Greenwich Civic Center

This building has the history of being the prior Glenville School and is located geographically close to the impacted schools. The BOE engaged the services of the Geddis Partners, Turner Construction and Pecora Bros to identify the opportunities and issues with this site. They were provided full cooperation by the First Selectman and the Town departments in their exploration efforts, which was extremely valuable for the BOE to be able to make its decision. The experts discussed with the Board that while this building is newly renovated and has many of the facilities of a school (with a gym and cafeteria), it is no longer laid out for use as a school – in

the number and location of classrooms, having room for all the special needs of our programs, like our pullout programs and a nurse's space. In addition, it would need changes to meet more stringent code requirements to function as a school. It would also require significant site work, paving half the field for parking and a bus loop, which has an impact on the whole Greenwich community. This building could house 3 grades, which means that half of Glenville School would be located in two other school buildings and more than half of Hamilton Avenue School would be located in 5 other school buildings making administrative oversight difficult. This option also has a high price tag, approaching \$2 million, with significant hurdles in terms of time and land use approvals. The BOE determined that this would not be the appropriate solution for the community.

#### Repair and Remediation of Modular Facility

The Advisory Committee, with the assistance of Town departments, engaged the services of three firms to assist with the analysis of this option:

- In collaboration with the Town's building department, engaged Hoffman Architects, a firm expert in building envelope design, to identify the causes, propose solutions which will result in a clean, dry and safe school and provide their level of confidence that the solutions will be effective going forward. [The Executive Summary from the Hoffman Architect report is attached.]
- Engaged Hygenix, Inc, an environmental testing firm, to evaluate the building to determine its condition, propose solutions which will result in a clean, dry and safe school, and provide their level of confidence that the solutions will be effective going forward.
- Engaged Navigant Consulting, a large firm with experience in identifying causality for use in claims, to identify the causes and contributing factors to the problems with the building and to identify evidence and strategies for claims against the responsible parties. Their expertise was also utilized to provide a second assessment of the solutions to obtain a clean, dry and safe school and their level of confidence that the solutions will be effective going forward. [The presentation slides from Navigant Consulting's analysis are attached.]

The experts presented the causes and possible repair and remediation plan. They indicated that the problems are primarily resulting from design and construction flaws in the soffits, roof and skirt of the building. They also definitively stated that the building could be repaired to eliminate these flaws and have a safe, water-tight building. The report indicated that 95% of the mold is in the exterior soffits which should be taken off of the building during the repairs. Gutters would be added to the building, allowing water to easily drain away. The experts also propose improving the roof by having wider and more flexible flashing, again reducing the chance of water infiltrating the building. Other repairs and improvements include the elimination of the existing skirt, site improvements and better protection on the exterior surface of the building. The environmental expert confirmed that these changes would eliminate the existing opportunities for moisture conditions inside the building. Further, he recommended a repair and monitoring protocol which would protect the interior of the building from being contaminated during the construction and a cleaning protocol for after the completion of the repair work. The building would also be thoroughly tested prior to occupation. On an ongoing

basis, the building would have a regular environmental testing and structural review protocol. This option has a reasonable probability of being completed prior to the beginning of school in August and would cost \$972,000.

The authorization request includes estimates for construction management oversight, complete repairs as outlined by Hoffman Associates (elimination of soffits, addition of gutters, roof repairs, replacement of skirt with PVC lattice, exterior vinyl siding, vapor barrier on ground) and Hygenix (minor mold remediation in a limited portion of the interior of the building, environmental safeguards and monitoring during construction, post construction testing and cleaning). The estimates include a contingency and were developed to be able to meet a shortened construction window for completion by mid-August. Attached you will find the cost estimate developed with the assistance of Turner Construction.

Navigant Consulting is continuing its work and will be working with the Town Attorney and the BOE to determine its ability to make a claim for damages. Any recovered funds would be returned to the Town's general fund.

The BOE held several parent meetings during this process, including a presentation by the experts, so that the community heard the same information the Board used to make its decision. The Board is committed to working with the parent community to provide information about the progress of the remediation and repair project and to commit to a regular environmental testing and structural review schedule. The Board is also developing a plan to offer an option for those families that do not want to send their children to the modular facility, subject to capacity constraints in other school buildings.

The Board of Education feels confident that the repair and remediation of the modular facility provides the best solution for the relocation of our school community. As such, the BOE is requesting the authorization of \$972,000 for this project.

#### List of Attachments

Cost estimate for repair and remediation of modular facility (Turner Construction)  
Hoffman Architects report – Building Envelope Investigation - Executive Summary  
(Full report is posted to the Greenwich public schools website.)  
Navigant Consulting – Presentation to BOE entitled Temporary Classroom at WMS  
List of Options  
Relocation Options - Pros/Cons of WGCC and Remediated Modulares