

Aug 10, 2014

FINAL

Minutes of Meeting

Feasibility Committee Team Meeting #3

Project: New Lebanon Elementary School Feasibility Study

Meeting Location: BOE Business Office  
290 Greenwich Avenue

Meeting Date: July 29<sup>h</sup>, 2014

Present:

Peter Von Braun, BOE  
William McKersie, Superintendent  
Ben Branyan, Managing Director of Operations  
Ronald Matten, Director of Facilities  
Barbara Riccio, NL Principal  
William Drake, BET  
Jeff Ramer, BET  
Robert Tuthill, RTM  
Clare Kilgallen, NL-PTA  
Mike Bocchino, NL-PTA  
Carolyn Spence, NL Teacher  
Erin John, NL Teacher  
Peter Gisolfi, Peter Gisolfi Associates (PGA)  
Michael Tribe, Peter Gisolfi Associates (PGA)  
Diane Abate, Peter Gisolfi Associates (PGA)

Not Present: Barbara O'Neil, BOE Chairman

The following items were discussed at today's meeting:

**1. Previous Meeting Minutes**

- a) Draft minutes were emailed earlier in the week and hard copies were distributed at today's meeting.
- b) There was a general acceptance of July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes with no further comments.

**2. Objectives**

- a.) A 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of Objectives was distributed for review. The following represents comments.
  - 1. Concern raised over use of transparency. Design challenge is to find balance between the use of transparency and safety.
  - 2. Add objective that school stay open while in construction.

**3. Draft Space Program**

- a.) A revised - *Draft Program of Space Requirements* based on an eight year projected enrollment of 421 was distributed.
  - 1. The enrollment includes 45 Pre-K and 75 new magnet seats.

2. There was a discussion regarding the proposed gross building size of 60,000 sf. Some are concerned the project may be oversized, too costly and will lose community support.
  3. It was suggested one way to manage the cost would be to reduce program square footage. The question was asked, would a 54,000 sf school serve as well as a 60,000 sf school?
  4. This was countered by some, who felt given the current crowded conditions and future needs, reducing the scope to save upfront costs would work against short term and long term goals.
  5. Another practical way to control project cost that would not impact program size would be to manage the cost to build per square foot.
  6. PG suggested that once the application is submitted to the state and there is a cost factor to work with, the program and school size can be adjusted to fit the budget as needed.
  7. If the Pre-K and increased magnet seats are not included in the expansion of the school, New Lebanon would miss out on diversity state grant funding that could potentially cover 80% or more of construction costs.
- b.) CT State Standard & Specification Diversity Guidelines
1. A revised chart illustrating potential gross area eligible for funding under the CT State School Construction Grant Diversity School Grant was distributed. (see attachment)
  2. With a population of 421 and taking into account revised program needs the school could expect to have a gross building area in the range of 60,647 sf.
  3. Using the state specification guidelines formula the maximum Gross Area eligible for 80% grant funding would be 52,444 sf.
  4. This would leave 8,203 sf not eligible for CT state reimbursement.
- c.) Benchmark Analysis (attached)
1. A chart that compares Glenville, the district benchmark, to the revised model was distributed.
  2. The areas evaluated included; sf per student, (relative to Gross Building area), instructional spaces, number of classrooms, average class size and sf per student relative to classroom & core common areas.
  3. Glenville, has an 8 year projected student population of 433 with a Gross Building Area of 65,000 sf for an average 150 sf per student.
  4. The revised program has an 8 year projected population of 421 and a proposed Gross Building Area of 60,647 for an average of 144 sf per student.

4. **Diagrammatic Schemes:** A series of building diagrams were presented by PG.

- a.) **A Schemes, (A1, A2 & A3)** proposes building adjacent to the existing school, extending two stories down the slope and connecting back to the existing building.
1. One major advantage is it would allow minimal interruption to the school.

2. Of the three A schemes presented, A1 had the most appeal.
  3. How the lobby/corridor, connector (indoor vs outdoor) visitor parking and access to outdoor play space works in scheme A1, needs further study.
  4. Schemes A2 & A3 were not as engaging. There was caution over the long connectors which seemed disconnected.
- b.) **B Schemes (B1 & B2)** proposes building a new school on the town's ball field opposite the Library. Both are 'U' shaped buildings. Each generates an outdoor green space that either opens to the Library (creating a civic space) or faces south, towards new playing fields that would be constructed in the ravine.
1. There was some concern that outdoor noise from children playing in the open courtyard could be a classroom distraction. This would be addressed by the use of a single loaded corridor between the classroom and the outdoors that would act as a buffer.
  2. The corridor would overlook the courtyard and serve as a place for social interaction and visual connection between indoor and outdoor activities.
  3. Pros: New building. No interruption to school during construction. Creates a town presence and close connection to the Library. The town and school benefit from new and larger playing fields.
  4. Cons: May meet with town resistance over road changes, traffic flow.
  5. Wetlands in the ravine has not been ruled out. This should be determined as soon as possible. Soil samples should also be taken. RM will contact Langan Engineers.
  6. Greenwich Parks and Recreation requires any new playing fields to be artificial turf. The turf is good for storm water management and field drainage which means less down time of fields.
  7. It was suggested that a B scheme could leave all or a portion of the existing elementary school as a town asset.
  8. In any scheme, ease of access from the school to the fields is very important.

### Next Steps

PGA will follow up on the following:

- Title to the Library
- Boundary for I-95
- Advance Schemes A1 and B - Provide more details on drop off and pick up, parking and field access.

**Next meeting** – August 14, 1:00 - 3:00

Prepared by: DA/da

Attachments: Schemes A1, A2, A3, B1 & B2.