

Approved Meeting Minutes

Middle School Building Committee Meeting

March 31, 2014 – 8:15 am

BOE Conference Room, 3rd Floor Annex Building

5 Linsley Street, North Haven, CT

Committee Members in Attendance:

Goldie Adele, Miriam Brody , Michael Brandt, Lou Coppola, Sr., Gary Johns (committee chairman), David Mikos, Bruce Morris , Walter Nester, Jr., Joseph Porto, Michelle Spader (committee secretary), Dyann Vissicchio (committee vice-chair)

Absent: None

Others in Attendance:

Shay Atluru of DTC, Kristine Carling, Dr. Robert Cronin, Phil Diana, First Selectman Michael Freda, Mark McCarthy of Perkins Eastman, Letty McPhedran from North Haven Clean Energy Task Force, Fritz Morris of Perkins Eastman, Todd Petronio (Athletic Director), Phil Piazza, and Sydney Smith of DTC.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Johns at 8:15 am.

Motion to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2014 was made by Bruce Morris and seconded by Joe Porto. The motion unanimously passed.

Old Business –

Clean Energy Task Force presentation by Leddy McPhedran to encourage the committee to follow the LEED standard with the middle school project in order to achieve energy efficiency and to utilize clean energy. The committee has already committed to design with LEED standards in mind, however actual LEED certification was eliminated to save the project \$1 million.

At the last meeting Dave Mikos requested North Haven voter demographics. Michelle Spader submitted an FOI request to the North Haven Registrars of Voters for the current voter list and voter demographic turnout data since 2009. 12 elections were analyzed to come up with the percentages of voters per age range and gender per election. The data showed that 53% of North Haven voters are women. 23.5% are under age 40, yet only 11.8% of them vote in general elections and only 8.86% vote in referenda. 38.4% are 40-60 and 38.1% are over 60.

Spader asked Mr. Freda if he was willing to mention the launch of the middle school project's website during his Selectman's Overview at the Board of Selectman meeting on Thursday, April 3, 2014. The site was "going live" on April 3. Freda agreed to include the web address in his presentation.

Chairman Johns asked for a motion to add an item to the agenda. The addition to the agenda was to appoint a current committee member to the Safety & Security sub-committee. Motion to add the item to the agenda was made by Bruce Morris and seconded by Michelle Spader. Once added, Johns called for a motion to add Lou Coppola to the Safety & Security sub-committee. The motion was made by Bruce Morris and seconded by Walter Nester, Jr. The motion unanimously passed.

The Safety & Security sub-committee will be meeting for the first time on Tuesday, April 1, 2014 at 5 pm in the Board of Education Conference Room on the 3rd floor of the Annex building. This will be a training session for sub-committee members that is being held by Attorney Jeff Donofrio to review state regulations regarding the Safety & Security requirements for construction of new school facilities.

The Safety & Security sub-committee is comprised of 4 building committee members: Goldie Adele, Mike Brandt, Lou Coppola, and Michelle Spader. Additional members include: Phil Diana (Building & Grounds Supervisor for the Board of Education), Phil Piazza (principal of NHMS), David Marcarelli (Deputy Fire Chief), and Tom McLoughlin (Chief of Police).

Firms interested in submitting RFQ/FRP's for the environmental testing presented various questions and Johns compiled answers to those questions in order to follow up with those interested parties. The mandatory, pre-bid on site (middle school) meeting will be held at 2:30 pm on Wednesday, April 2, 2014.

New Business:

Dyann Vissicchio was able to obtain a brochure from Radha Prasad, the chairman of the North Haven High School building committee so that the committee could get an idea of what was included when information was disseminated to the public that pertained to the project. The committee will develop a similar brochure that can be emailed, posted to the various town websites, and perhaps mailed if there is funding in order to do so. Disseminating the information through the PTA's might be an option, as well as handing out materials at sporting events.

Vissicchio learned that during the high school project the architects, over a period of 5 weeks, visited each of the elementary schools and the middle school to provide information sessions to the parents/public regarding their proposed plan. The current committee hoped to align similar sessions with the April PTA meetings, but Spader checked the district calendar and noted that Ridge Road's next PTA meeting was the following day, April 1. Therefore, it was not going to be possible to get to that one on such short notice and alternate arrangements would have to be made. There was also discussion about finding separate April dates at each of the schools and not necessarily coinciding with existing PTA meetings, as attendance at PTA meetings is typically not very large. Mr. Piazza offered to contact the principals at the elementary schools in order to come up with dates that these presentations could be held at each of the schools. Joe Porto suggested that a session also be held at the high school to offer another date and location option for residents to attend.

Dave Mikos discussed the meeting he, along with fellow committee members Joe Porto, Mike Brandt and Lou Coppola attended on Tuesday, March 25, 2014. The meeting included several high school sport coaches, middle school coaches, and various representatives from town youth sports programs as well as Todd Petronio and Mike Freda to discuss some of their desires in terms of fields and sporting facilities. It was suggested that two, side by side turf fields be constructed. There were also requests for cosmetic updates to existing spaces. The large numbers of students participating in basketball in recent years, without adequate space to hold all the games, brought about a request to enlarge the auxiliary gymnasium. Shay Atluru added that the lacrosse program is also burgeoning and felt there was a sense of a need for more fields in general, whether they be turf or natural. Joe Porto added that he felt the meeting was both positive and informative and was glad to hear that future meetings of this kind would be held.

Mikos stressed that he wanted the townspeople to be proud of our fields, rather than just settling for what we currently have. Spader interjected that she also wants the kids in North Haven to have the best of everything, but thinks about the fact that the more we add, the higher the costs and she is not willing to jeopardize the middle school build because of inflating the cost of the project to add things like 2 turf fields. Spader feels that until we have numbers that show us what these additions will cost, we cannot make any determinations as to what will be constructed in terms of fields. Mikos presented an idea regarding laying the basic framework for proposed fields and then completing such projects, over time, and perhaps with the assistance of fundraising by the various town youth sports programs that will benefit from their utilization. Several committee members liked this idea.

Vissicchio stressed that we have the challenge of the finances. We have to be cost conscious throughout our entire design, not just when it comes to fields. Spader emphasized that the task of this committee is to build a middle school and anything beyond that is a bonus. She is afraid that if we inflate the costs of the project the demographic that comes out to vote will vote against it. Spader suggested having a second question on the referenda, which would separate out the cost of the school and the cost of the fields in such a manner that if the taxpayers vote yes to the school, then they have the option of voting yes or no to the additional outlay for the fields.

Mikos disagrees with separating it into 2 questions, calling a separation “the death of the fields”. Spader said not separating it out could be “the death of the school” and said she is not willing to jeopardize the school. It was decided that the committee would like to seek a recommendation for what they would like to see occur with the fields and then the committee can find out what the cost of it would be.

Mark McCarthy and Fritz Morris from Perkins Eastman then presented the schematic design of the building to the committee. He also showed the proposed student drop off area, the location of the visitor’s entry and where the bus loop would be located. There are still a couple options being circulated with regards to the bus loop.

This was the first time that the committee saw a glimpse into what the exterior might look like. The architects are utilizing pitched roofs wherever possible, noting that flat roofs are necessary for areas with rooftop equipment. There was discussion regarding glazing of windows and the fine balance

between transparency and safety. State standards now require window sills to be higher for ground floor windows. Parking was also discussed and current plans maintain the existing parking levels with the opportunity for some additional parking.

Spader wanted to ensure that consideration was being given to the fact that while natural light is certainly essential, we must be cognizant of the fact that sometimes large windows are conducive to extreme heat and glare. East and West orientation is when you have to deal with the slanting sun and it is bad for glare. The architects stressed that the ideal configuration is rooms facing north or south. Northside windows are not a problem. We will want to analyze shading the windows on the south side and reducing the size of the windows. Southern facing windows are great for bringing in light, but also known for bringing in the solar gain. We will want the solar heat coefficient value of the window to be really low so that it reflects the solar heat back out as opposed to bringing it into the building.

Sydney Smith showed the current iteration of the proposed website. The committee asked that the front page photo be changed to reflect one of the new photos shown to the committee and the photo which showed the existing common spaces be labeled with what they represent.

Next meeting of the building committee will be Monday, April 7, 2014 at 8:15 am.

Motion to adjourn at 10:20 am by Mike Brandt, seconded by Lou Coppola and unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Spader
Committee Secretary