

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Date: May 4, 2022 6:30PM

Regular Meeting Minutes

Public Online Video Conference (Zoom): Recording

*Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting

| Member | Position | Present in Person | Present via Zoom | Absent |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------|
| Katherine Viveiros | Construction Industry Experience | | | X |
| Phil Stevens | Superintendent of Schools | X | | |
| Erika Wiecenski | Board of Selectmen Representative | X | | |
| Mike Makuch | Board of Finance Chairman | | | X |
| Erica Bushior | Board of Education Staff | | X | |
| Ann Grosjean | Board of Education Member | | X | |
| Gary Anderson | Member at large | | X | |
| Ralph Tulis | Member at large | | X | |
| Peter Latincsics | Member at large | | X @ 6:41pm | |
| Justin Niderno | Member at large | | X | |
| Briana Ross | Member at large | | X | |

Also present: Scott Pellman, Owner's Project Manager from Colliers and residents

1. CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

2. PRESENT TO SPEAK

Matt Clark, 42 Burt Latham wanted to know if the Board of Education had given the SBC the ed specs yet. And if not why not? He also expressed his concern in what was being discussed in the committee's executive discussions, such as properties that are being evaluated and are any being purchased? He also wanted clarification regarding the committee's plan with this project. Are they planning to rebuild or renovate? He also discussed the committee's plan when going to the state.

Arthur Christensen, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, wanted to address comments that were made at the communication subcommittee meeting on April 20, 2022. He wanted to express why the townspeople do not always communicate their concerns. The process in which present to speak occurs then the committee talks back to the town does not really work. Nothing changes and he felt they were not heard. He expressed his frustration with the rebuilding/renovation process for a new school.

Michelle Christensen, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, wanted to echo what Arthur had mentioned above. She explained that she felt for the most part the committee does not show any interest in

the public's opinions. She has tried to communicate with the committee regarding different issues and never receives communication back. She expressed her concern with how long this school remodel/renovation process is taking but reassured the committee she understands this is a detailed project that needs a lot of attention. She is just very concerned for the students and staff health and safety in the current buildings.

3. CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Superintendent Stevens reminded the committee to please let Chairperson Viveiros know in an email if they had any vacations or plans coming up that would interfere with the scheduled meetings. They also needed to discuss if a meeting on May 18th could happen with many committee members absent.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. SBC Land Assessment Committee meeting March 14, 2022

Tabled.

B. SBC meeting April 20, 2022

Motion by Ann Grosjean to APPROVE the minutes from the SBC meeting April 20, 2022 meeting. Justin Niderno SECONDED the motion.

Vote: 8 YES 0 NO

All in favor, motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Communications Subcommittee:

Superintendent Stevens stated the committee met and it will be discussed later in this meeting.

b. Land Assessment Subcommittee:

G. Anderson explained they had a meeting but the only item on that agenda was executive session.

c. Finance Subcommittee:

P. Latinsics explained they met before this current meeting. They discussed per pupil cost and capital projects.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Owner's Project Manager- Colliers update

S. Pellman explained to date they looked at 129 different sites and walked a number of them with the site committee. Many are privately owned and that is why they have been discussed in executive sessions. There is one site in particular that he further developed high level sketches for and it will be discussed with the property owners. He discussed the renovation of Hall School and what would need to be done to make it adequate for the schools to merge. He explained that they want to discuss with the school construction program their different options and possible plans. After that they will be able to begin working with numbers but at this point it is still too

early to share. He also stated that they will have a plan to share with the town regarding a renovation project with or without the state's funding. Then the taxpayers can decide. They also have a meeting with a land owner, Thursday, May 5th. The first public information session will be scheduled after they meet with the state. He also explained that they need the ed specs before furthering their plan and sharing with the public.

Superintendent Stevens explained that the board of education meeting regarding the ed specs had to be canceled due to a few committee members not being able to attend. It will be rescheduled. The ed specs are continually being worked on and teachers and staff are giving their input too. S. Pellman explained that if a new piece of land was purchased on a new site there would need to be a successful referendum, which would be done after discussions and negotiations with the property owners and town building committee. There is also background research that needs to take place on the land before the purchase takes place.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski reassured everyone that she understood it seemed like this process was moving slowly but they did look into 129 different sites. There is a lot of work being done and this process is lengthy. They are all working diligently on this project.

P. Latinsics inquired on the timeline of this project. When would the ed specs be available to the committee and how will it be applied to both possible projects? Also will the committee be able to see and fully understand the plans before they go to the state?

S. Pellman stated the completion of the ed specs is outside of his control. But he did explain what they will take to the state is a concept plan and the positives and negatives to this plan. He also explained the committee would see the plans before they go to the state. If a private property owner is not comfortable sharing their information the ed specs would be discussed hypothetically not directly stating the actual site.

G. Anderson wanted to clarify that this committee can discuss in executive sessions more detailed information regarding privately owned property and that piece of land specific ed specs.

A. Grosjean wanted to understand the order in which the process takes place.

S. Pellman explained that to be able to bring a grant application forward to the state they will have a parcel of land identified. This way they know the costs for that project. The project will also be chosen before the referendum. This helps the community understand the details and cost. Once the referendum passes, they are put on a priority list and it goes through many steps through the state. After receiving funding, hiring an architect and making sure all of the checklists are completed, they can begin construction. As of now that looks like summer 2024.

R. Tulis inquired when they have to get approval from the phase one environmental and the planning and zoning commission? He explained that the process that could take place if their project was voted down can become lengthy. He wanted to be sure everyone understood that. S. Pellman explained that phase one environmental is basically looking at the land for any past historical use or any environmental concerns. This comes with permission from the landowner and it will be done prior to moving forward with the project. Also they will have to receive

approval from planning and zoning, basically reassuring the project makes sense. This takes place before a referendum.

J. Niderno asked if the date of meeting with the state had changed?

Superintendent Stevens stated the state did not respond to his additional email or phone call.

P. Latincsics asked if the committee could see both concept plans while they waited to hear back from the state?

S. Pellman explained there had been minor revisions to the plan since the last meeting. But the committee had seen what had been done thus far.

B. Potential executive session: Per CGS:1-200 (6) (D) Discussion of the selection of a site

None.

C. Update from Hall Foundation

Chairperson Viveiros and M. Makuch met with Alice Casells from the Hall foundation.. The questions and responses discussed at that meeting were shared.

P. Latincsics wanted to understand the answer regarding demolition and the 1922 part of the building.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski explained they would have to look at the letter/paperwork for further review of exact parts of the building that are or are not considered historical.

Superintendent Steven explained no matter what the letter says they are saying here they would not support demolition of the 1922 part of the building.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the committee had all agreed on this already.

P. Latincsics wanted to follow up on this and the possibility of needing and using the entire property for a new school. So demolish the entire building and while that occurs use Center School for the students

S. Pellman explained the key issue is there is not a place to put 200+ kids on the property while it's being demolished. If you do partial renovation you can move the kids around as needed. Center School does not support that many children as well and traffic for drop off and pick up and so on.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski expressed the cost for portable schools too.

S. Pellman also explained that it is of course easier and quicker to build a new school rather than renovate a school. But there are so many factors that they need to account for. It's not just evaluating the cost but the impact to the students too.

D. Update *Frequently Asked Questions* document

Superintendent Stevens discussed the three questions that the committee discussed previously.

He then explained the process of publishing these updated questions and answers. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated she had full faith in the subcommittee. Chairperson Viveiros had already approved them as did she. She asked for any feedback as there was no need for approval more of a discussion.

Discussion was held and Superintendent Stevens suggested adding a question or part 2 regarding what happens after the ed specs are approved from the board of education. What does the committee do? How do they work together?

E. Update on Hybrid meetings

First Selectwoman Wiecenski explained the state did pass a bill late last week to continue allowing public meetings to be held in-person, hybrid or fully remote. She reminded everyone the committee decided last meeting to adopt the hybrid model.

F. Potential use of Center and Hall Schools

G. Anderson discussed his conversation with a developer. He shared the piece of property on google. It is an out of state developer so he was unsure if they would be interested in traveling to Connecticut. The developer did think the school could be used for housing. But it was a very broad discussion as he cannot say the property is for sale or ready for another use.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. SBC promotion at Willington Day

Superintendent Stevens discussed Willington Day is May 28, 2022 (which is Memorial Day weekend) and it came up at the communications subcommittee meeting having a booth, flyers or committee members there to discuss the school project. He asked if anyone was interested. Very few committee members will be available. They decided they would have a poster with information and a frequently asked questions pamphlet available.

B. Proposal to execute appraisal of property

Superintendent Stevens explained this is not through Colliers this is having discussions with appraisers. This is not approving it to start the process for site 1.

R. Tulis wanted to clarify they were giving their approval to solicit proposals not actually doing the appraisals. He expressed how he did not like the way this was worded.

Motion by Superintendent Stevens that the school building committee solicit proposals for appraisal of the site property #1. Justin Niderno SECONDED the motion.

Discussion was held on the process of appraisal of the new site or the Hall School Property.

Roll Call Vote: 7 YES 0 NO 1 Abstain

Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-----------------|------|
| Erika Wiecenski | A |
| Justin Niderno | Y |
| Ann Grosjean | Y |
| Erica Bushior | Y |
| Gary Anderson | Y |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Ralph Tulis | Y |
| Peter Latincsics | Y |
| Briana Ross | Y |

C. Proposal for Colliers to solicit phase 1 environmental site assessment of property
Motion by Ralph Tulis to authorize Colliers to solicit proposals for a phase 1 environmental site assessment of property #1. Ann Grosjean SECONDED the motion.

Discussion was held on the process and the need for phase 1 environmental study of Hall School as well. S. Pellman clarified this is to authorize Colliers to solicit three proposals on behalf of the town. This would allow them to send the information out to environmental engineers.

Amendment motion by Ralph Tulis to authorize Colliers to solicit proposals for a phase 1 environmental site assessment of site #1 and Hall School. Peter Latincsics SECONDED the motion.

Superintendent Stevens asked to have the proposals broken down separately.

All agreed.

Roll Call Vote: 7 YES 0 NO 1 Abstain

Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|------------------|------|
| Erika Wieceński | A |
| Justin Niderno | Y |
| Ann Grosjean | Y |
| Erica Bushior | Y |
| Gary Anderson | Y |
| Ralph Tulis | Y |
| Peter Latincsics | Y |
| Briana Ross | Y |

9. FUTURE BUSINESS- ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Discussion was held regarding the May 18, 2022, regular SBC meeting and if there would be enough committee members to have it held. The committee determined that sub committees would still meet if necessary but that the regular meeting would be canceled. First Selectwoman Wieceński stated she would report this information back to Chairperson Viveiros and anyone that has other agenda items to add please email Chairperson Viveiros.

10. PRESENT TO SPEAK

Matt Clark, 42 Burt Latham asked about what would be presented to OSCGR. He would like better clarification. Secondly, he was confused about the order in which the ed specs, the meeting with the state and the information that will be discussed at the meeting will occur. He also discussed how the town is split 50/50 after a sampling of their thoughts and views regarding this school project was collected. He believed the townspeople should decide when regarding this school project.

First Selectwoman Wieceński stated that S. Pellman had answered the questions Mr. Clark had. She further explained S. Pellman's explanation.

S. Pellman explained the only plans that are being developed right now is square footage analysis

and funding. These are not fully developed plans or concepts.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Peter Latincsics to ADJOURN the meeting. Justin Niderno SECONDED the motion.

Vote: 8 YES 0 NO

All in favor, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Next regular meeting: June 1, 2022

Nicole Fusco

School Building Committee Recording Secretary

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TOWN CLERK