

JFK PRE-REFERENDUM COMMITTEE

January 18th, 2017

JFK Middle School Library

Called to order: at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Trish Neild-Barry, Mark Gahr, Mary Keller, Carmen Nuccio, Steve Sargalski, Chris Rutledge, Jason Walsh, Vinnie Weseliza, Tom Arnone, Scott Kaupin, Tina LeBlanc and Raymond Peabody (Joseph Muller was absent).

Mr. Jason Walsh was introduced as a new member of the committee (replacing Scott Ellis). Mr. Walsh grew up in Enfield and works to find housing for homeless veterans. He went to Enfield High then joined the military and eventually moving back to Enfield.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes for the meeting on October 12th, 2016 was made by Mr. Weseliza and seconded by Mrs. Keller. The minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0-0.

A motion to approve the minutes for the meeting on January 4th, 2017 was made by Mrs. Keller and seconded by Mr. Gahr.

Changes to 1/4/2017 minutes as indicated by Mrs. Keller include:

The month in the header should read “January” as opposed to “December”

Mrs. Keller’s name should be spelled “Mary” as opposed to “Marry”.

With changes, the minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0-0.

Presentation from Committee Guests: Mr. Dean Petrucelli and Mr. Chris Nardi (Silver, Petrucelli & Associates):

Following approval of minutes, the committee welcomes representatives from Silver, Petrucelli & Associates.

Mr. Petrucelli discussed the process being followed and the data being reviewed. They are currently examining facility conditions with an eye for improvements. When considering improvements, they consider a 20-year lifecycle.

Mr. Petrucelli announced they have been diligently working to review the building and are attempting to have a draft report ready for the 2/1/2017 meeting. The items in the draft will be presented in a hierarchy and will include costs.

They will also be looking at the (JFK) facility from a programmatic standpoint. This phase will involve working with the superintendent, teachers and other relevant parties.

Mr. Peabody asked if this will include design options to which Mr. Petrucelli replied that it would.

Mr. Petrucelli brought up the topic of state reimbursement rates. As reimbursement rates are set for the State budget year, they are operating under the assumption that the reimbursement rates are still in the 70.71 for renovate as new. This drops to 60.71 for new construction and to 54.94 for adult education.

Mr. Sargalski asked for clarification on the reimbursement options. Mr. Petrucelli mentioned that is part of the decision calculus to determine what is the best option. The state may require information, if going new, why new is needed over renovate as new. The reimbursement rate also varies by town, going as low as 20% in towns like New Canaan and Greenwich. Rates can go to 80% for urban centers.

Mr. Sargalski followed-up asking if the rates could change. Mr. Petrucelli clarified that the reimbursement rates are reset in June. Therefore, there is a risk of changing after June 30th, 2017. Mr. Petrucelli further mentioned that while the rates do fluctuate by a point or two from year to year, he also said we can count on a 70% rate if we submit by June. Therefore, there is an advantage to file this state fiscal year.

Mr. Peabody expressed a concern that the state is going after money and may reduce reimbursement. He brought up the ECS grant reduction recently announced.

Mr. Arnone questioned whether the state would be going after bonds at the municipal level.

Mr. Petrucelli replied that recent projects have been challenged at the design and cost level to reduce the project scope to decrease liabilities. As an example, Dean brought up a project in Hamden that is being challenged at the design level. According to Dean, this is new for Connecticut as projects in the past have not come under as much scrutiny.

Mr. Peabody stated that by changing scope, the state is reducing project cost and his statement was confirmed by Mr. Petrucelli.

Mr. Peabody asked if we may be able to mitigate the State's likelihood to challenge the design. Mr. Petrucelli replied that the best way to mitigate is to give the state enough time to review the documents. With a project of this size, the state will have multiple opportunities to review. He

states they are increasing scrutiny due to financial concerns. And the first time we will get feedback is after documents are submitted. But we need to follow the process.

Mr. Nardi then spoke about the engineering aspect, first mentioning that numerous engineers have come out (civil, fire protection, etc...) to review the building and the space to assess factors including materials, structure and space.

Mr. Nardi also mentioned that they are also looking for code and ADA deficiencies. These items will be in the report presented at the next meeting. The report will rank items on a 4-point scale based on urgency of replacement.

Mr. Nardi spoke more about updates, mentioning that the library is new, but not many other code upgrades have been completed. Sprinklers and fire doors have been added. Some bathroom facilities have been upgraded for accessibility (including grab bars) but codes keep changing. However, major systems have not been upgraded (pipes, lights, windows, etc...).

Mr. Nardi also mentioned the roof which is about 30 years old and also stated there would be further review of the building.

Mr. Nardi also mentioned concerns about windows made from hazardous materials (PCB's). This material was used into the 1970's and is found in caulking and can leach into other materials.

Mrs. Barry and Mr. Weseliza asked about asbestos. Mr. Petrucelli mentioned they are presently not under contract for asbestos or for environmental evaluations.

Mrs. LeBlanc expressed concern that this item was removed from the RFP.

Mr. Petrucelli mentioned that for a previous project an outside company was contracted to review the abatement. Findings and analysis will determine cost, which is the purpose of retaining an environmental consultant.

Mr. Walsh mentioned hearing that some asbestos was taken out.

Mr. Petrucelli stated that any reports on the matter would be welcome and would be reviewed and followed-up upon if necessary. Further, if demolition is necessary, then environmental testing will be done.

Mrs. Barry asked Mr. Kaupin about the removal of environmental testing from the RFP. Mr. Kaupin said he would follow-up with the Town Manager (Mr. Chodkowski).

Mr. Arnone and Mrs. LeBlanc said there is a company on call for this (environmental testing) that does a very good job and is on the preferred list. This would be a concern given how

prevalent the use of asbestos and PCB's were when JFK was built. Mr. Petrucelli said they would expect to find some and also mentioned that the state requires brick and soil to be replaced if found there.

Mr. Kaupin mentioned he received a message from Mr. Chodkowski on the matter of environmental testing in the RFP. The message stated that the RFP was only for a phase 1 and that environmental was part of phase 2 which was not part of RFP.

Mr. Arnone asked for an approximate figure for the cost of an environmental study. Mr. Petrucelli said between \$10,000 and \$20,000. He also mentioned that if the project is approved that it will need to be done.

Mr. Peabody said the total cost of the abatement would not be known until the significance of hazardous materials is known.

Mr. Petrucelli said the ultimate goal is to have a proposal that will be accepted for referendum. And to make that complete, the environmental info is necessary.

Mrs. Barry asked if that information is needed before the June deadline (to submit for reimbursement). Mr. Petrucelli said yes that it would be best.

Mr. Nuccio asked if the deadline is the beginning or end of June. Mr. Petrucelli said the deadline would be June 30th.

Mr. Kaupin asked if the environmental study was internal and / or external. Mr. Petrucelli said both.

Mr. Arnone asked if restrictions have been eased on pesticide qualifications. Dean is not sure since it is not their primary area.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked if the draft presentation would be electronic and, if so, would a screen a projector be necessary. Mr. Petrucelli replied that they try to be as paperless as possible but would accommodate the Committee.

It was agreed that the Committee will get a paper copy for the first draft and then electronic drafts after.

Mrs. LeBlanc suggested everyone get a D-ring binder.

Mr. Kaupin said he would check to see if supplies (binders and tabs) could be provided by the town.

This concluded Mr. Petrucelli's presentation. The committee thanked Mr. Petrucelli and Mr. Nardi for their time and said the next meeting would be on 2/1/2017.

Public Communications:

The Chair opened the floor to public comments. No public comments were offered.

Committee Communications:

The Chair then opened the floor to committee comments.

Mrs. LeBlanc welcomed Mr. Walsh.

Mr. Kaupin announced a reply from the Town Manager's office on the supply issue and stated that binders and tabs would be provided.

New Business: Committee Composition and Open Forum

Mrs. Barry opened discussion on committee composition as it pertained to political party representation.

Mr. Kaupin explained the committee appointment process. He stated the Town Council is limited by the applicants. There were no Democrats in the initial slate of applicants leading Mr. Arnone to recruit Mrs. Mattoon (former Chair). Mr. Kaupin continued that the Town Council does look to have the committees as balanced as possible in terms of minority and majority party representation in concert with other diversity concerns. He mentioned that most applicants were Republican. So the Town Council thought it was more important to have motivated committee members.

Mr. Arnone continued that the Committee was formed with discussions in the (Town Council) Leadership Committee.

Mrs. LeBlanc mentioned no one reached out to the Board of Education. She said that everyone here wants the project to succeed though some in the public may nitpick. However, that should not impact the Committee's work.

Mr. Sargalski thanked Mrs. LeBlanc for her comments and said he definitely wants to see this work.

Mrs. LeBlanc said that she is on the committee and wants the referendum to pass.

Mr. Walsh spoke on his recent appointment. He stated that he is not into politicking and, rather, is at a point where he wants to take on civic responsibility. His interest is to come here and do a good job. He has no preconceived notions and is open to all points of view and opinions.

Mr. Weseliza mentioned his opinions are known but he is committed to making sure that JFK becomes a true middle school and a great stepping stone to the high school.

Mr. Peabody commented that the curriculum at JFK is great. Further, now is the time for us to continue, in the most fiscally responsible fashion, to look for improvements and facilitate growth.

Mrs. Barry wants to make sure we are all here for the right reasons and to get things done in the best way possible.

Mr. Nuccio inquired about the timeline and whether we should be able to meet the June deadline.

Mr. Kaupin, Mrs. LeBlanc and Mr. Sargalski confirmed that we are. Mrs. LeBlanc further mentioned that Silver, Petrucelli & Associates will keep the process moving along.

Mr. Kaupin also mentioned that they (Silver, Petrucelli & Associates) should be going to the professional staff and that said staff should feel free to reach out to them if needed.

Mr. Arnone and Mrs. Leblanc stated if people need to provide feedback to Silver, Petrucelli & Associates that it should come through the Chair.

Mr. Walsh asked if all the building records had been provided to which Mr. Kaupin confirmed they had.

Mr. Sargalski suggested to the Chair that we get a solid project timeline with dates. Mr. Rutledge stated he would ask for this information.

Mr. Rutledge also stated he appreciates feedback and asked for any comments and suggestions to flow freely.

Mr. Walsh asked for a copy of the RFP. Mr. Rutledge stated he would bring a copy to the next meeting.

Executive Session:

Mrs. Keller made a motion to go into Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Weseliza. The Committee went into Executive Session on unanimous consent following a brief recess.

Executive Session was called to order at 7:57 PM.

The Committee left Executive Session at 8:08 PM with no votes being taken.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Nuccio, seconded by Mr. Walsh. By unanimous consent, the Committee Adjourned at 8:09 PM.

■ EMR