



PLANNING & BUILDING COMMITTEE

Merrimack School District
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Minutes
July 14, 2003

Present: S. Heinrich, C. Morrison, W. Morrison, T. Koenig, F. Rothhaus, and School Board liaison P. McGrath

Excused: K. Powell

Guests: School Board Chair K. Coleman, Superintendent M. Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent D. Wolflein, Business Administrator M. Shevenell, and MMS Principal T. Levesque

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by W. Morrison.

Capital Improvement Program

M. Chiafery gave an overview of suggested changes to the CIP. This included the removal of a new middle school and the addition of sprinklers to the entire Mastricola complex. She noted that the tentative budget for renovations at the current middle school is \$4.3 million and includes sprinklers for the entire complex. She told the committee the CIP had been presented to the School Board, but had not been voted on yet.

S. Heinrich asked if paving was included as part of middle school renovation, would it be eligible for 30% state aid. M. Shevenell told him it would.

C. Morrison asked if the Central Offices were combined with the SpEd offices, how many parking spaces would be needed. The general consensus of all present was there would be a need for 40 - 50 parking spaces.

C. Morrison asked if purchasing land should be moved up in the CIP and if more land is actually needed to meet school needs at "build-out." She wondered if a Capital Reserve Fund should be set up for Land Acquisition. K. Coleman noted that the land item in the CIP is a placeholder and that the district does have other land besides the back portion of the Buker site: the Timmons property and land at TFS on the other side of Continental Boulevard. F. Rothhaus commented that it may not be in the best interest of the taxpayers for the district to purchase a large piece of commercial/industrial property which would then be removed from the tax rolls. He would rather see the district purchase properties around the high school as they become available. P. McGrath noted that while the district cannot purchase land without the permission of School District Meeting, if the district had a CRF for land acquisition with the School Board as agents to expend, then the School Board would have money to use as a deposit on any property they might be interested in purchasing.

There was general discussion about the costs to add an athletic field and/or playground at TFS after the sewer line is put in and the leaching field is eliminated.

S. Heinrich made a motion, seconded by C. Morrison, that the committee recommend the CIP as presented. T. Koenig noted he would prefer not to see \$5 million in renovations the year after a new school passed. S. Heinrich stated \$5 million is reality and that with a Capital Reserve Fund for paving and State Aid, the actual cost to the taxpayer when a school is built would be less. M. Shevenell noted that there is about \$200,000 in the Paving Capital Reserve Fund and that he felt paving should not be part of the renovation warrant article. F. Rothhaus noted that by leaving land

acquisition in the CIP, the issue of the district still needing additional space to meet school needs at build-out is not hidden. The motion passed 5-0-0.

New Middle School

T. Levesque told the committee that the plan for the new middle school was for each grade to have three 5 teacher clusters and one 3 teacher cluster. In order to have the 35 classrooms needed for this, one of the rooms originally planned for World Language would be built as a science lab. This would result in three World Language classrooms. He also told the committee that the architect would be adding more bathrooms on the first floor in response to committee concerns. The architect had placed the gymnasium near the building entrance rather than along an outside wall as he had wanted all classrooms to have windows.

C. Morrison noted her concern that core facilities be built to service 1,200 students rather than 875 or even 1,000 students.

T. Levesque also told the committee that there will be at least 125 parking spaces with a possibility of as many as 150 parking spaces at the new school.

Current Middle School Renovations

M. Chiafery told the committee that the administration has not decided how the new upper elementary school will be organized due to the “No Child Left Behind/High Quality Teachers” legislation. She also indicated that the administration has not finalized bussing and school start/dismissal time questions. She noted that the committee could not finish the work on the School Board charge without this information and that she would have it put together as soon as possible.

W. Morrison noted that the committee still had not received the official charge yet. M. Chiafery told the committee she would send it immediately. She further noted that due date of the charge was fluid, but that she wanted cost figures in time for the Budget Committee process.

S. Heinrich suggested that there were two types of renovations involved: bringing the building up to code and renovations driven by instructional needs. He felt that the committee could work on the code renovations while waiting for further information on instructional issues. The committee decided to do a walk-through at MMS with T. Levesque and Shirley Lemay on July 28th at 2 PM.

Next Meeting

The next formal meeting is scheduled for August 11th at 7:30 PM. M. Chiafery offered to have a member of the Administrative Team available to provide the committee with a meeting space at the high school without the need of overtime custodial services.

Members received copies of prior minutes which need to be approved as well as other documents relating to prior committee work on proposed renovations at MMS, and a copy of proposed Goals and Objectives for 2003-04 which need to be approved.

On a motion from T. Koenig, seconded by S. Heinrich, the committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,