

**Facilities Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 21, 2014
Ray Bjork Learning Center**

Present: Terry Beaver, Aidan Myhre, Libbi Lovshin, Kent Kultgen, John Carter, Brian Cummings, and Katy Fields

Guests: Alexander Deedy, Jan Lombardi, Eric Carlson, Deanna Carlson, Mike Carlson, John P. Hardman, Lucas Trefzger, Zachary White, Mark Robertson, Chuck Butler, Marika Adamek, Vanessa Nasset, Rachel Carroll Rivas

Mr. Beaver called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

City Planners called Dr. Kultgen at 10:00pm the night before to inform him they would not attend the meeting today. Dr. Kultgen indicated that they didn't want to discuss Central School which was confusing for him because he had met with them the day before and said we needed to talk about zoning and have an expert explain the maps to us.

Ms. Lovshin asked if there was a different time we could meet with them and Dr. Kultgen said they ask that we come to a pre-application meeting if we want questions answered.

Ms. Myhre expressed her severe disappointment and said that was a huge lack of leadership on the city's part. Ms. Lovshin seconded that sentiment.

Dr. Kultgen let us know that he called Eric at the county to let him know that the city had pulled out and Eric said he would like to wait to come because his planner was not available for this meeting.

Ms. Myhre stated that she would like to include the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee to have an open dialogue.

Dr. Kultgen said there was no prior indication that there was a problem with the city as far as this meeting was concerned until they called to cancel. He brought the zoning maps with him to discuss the infrastructure of our community but we need their help because we don't have the knowledge of the maps they have made.

Ms. Myhre said the city has full time staff and we need their expertise to make informed decisions. We need to send them a message that we need their help and that it's not all about Central School.

Mr. Beaver said this is very difficult for us because we are not in the pre-application process. Are our questions going to be answered? We are in the pre-planning phase. We need an understanding of city planning to go forward. We need to meet on their grounds.

Kent brought up a scenario that would leave our elementary schools as is but build our valley schools up to the 4:3 model to use as prototypes. Then the community could see how well it works and would change the city schools to the smaller numbers that they actually have. This would change Jim Darcy, Warren, and Rossiter.

Ms. Myhre said she is in agreement with expanding Jim Darcy but she is concerned with expanding Warren because they don't have their current numbers don't warrant expansion. So does Warren belong in Phase 1 or Phase 2?

Mr. Beaver gave the current enrollment numbers at Warren school and Smith school and made the case for Warren being a 4:3 school now.

The Facility planning committee group agreed that Warren and Jim Darcy should become 4:3 schools now.

Dr. Kultgen said Four Georgians, Broadwater and Jefferson also need attention.

Ms. Myhre asked about purchasing land for a new CRA building.

Mr. Beaver said we need to ask the city and county what areas of town would be applicable for educational institutions. We could always apply for a variance, however we shouldn't put the cart before the horse as we haven't even purchased property yet.

Mr. Carter said that Rossiter School is a prime place to expand. The current layout is not the way schools are built today. There are many issues with the open classroom concept that is the current construction.

Mr. Beaver asked if it would be feasible for us to function as a 4:3 school if we added a cafeteria, reconfigure the library, add a tech center, and incorporate a new front desk area and entryway.

Ms. Lovshin added that the challenges with the changes at Rossiter are displaced students when we already have a decaying building.

Mr. Beaver said we have to make Rossiter ready for the Jim Darcy.

Dr. Kultgen asked if we are saying that there will be more than one phase.

Ms. Lovshin said yes.

Ms. Myhre said she would like to see one large bond that might include one elementary and one high school.

Mr. Beaver said the timeline is too long with one large bond.

Ms. Myhre said if we built a new high school we need to look at campus space and think about acquiring more property. We need to explore more ideas. It might include housing the Helena Middle school and Helena High school on one property.

Mr. Beaver is not in favor of mixing middle school and high school kids. How we have an open campus for high school and a closed campus for middle school. There are huge safety risks for the middle school kids with all the high school kids driving. The traffic would include neighborhood, Helena College, high school and middle school.

Ms. Myhre said it doesn't have to be an open campus.

Dr. Kultgen said we need to handle our K-5 issues.

Mr. Beaver is concerned about the timeline.

Ms. Lovshin said that once we have the entire picture and timeline it could happen in less time.

Dr. Kultgen said that in order to add the high schools into the mix it could easily take another year of conversation before any plans are made.

Ms. Myhre said we can't isolate K-8 from high school. We need to take the time to think it all through and come up with a better solution. Is it reasonable to make HMS a 450 to 500 student building and include administration?

Mr. Carter said Vigilante Stadium is an icon in this town as is the Auditorium at HMS and we would meet as much if not more resistance from the community if we tried to change them. Street space is good, there are insufficient lavatories, gym, and locker rooms. They are steam heated which poses more problems, is more expensive, there will be delays which makes the construction costs go up.

Ms. Myhre asked which is more feasible Central or HMS.

Mr. Carter responded that HMS is better than Central because it is not on the Historic registry.

Mrs. Lovshin also stated that HMS could accommodate Bryant and Central students.

Ms. Myhre asked if it would be better to expand Smith or Jefferson.

Ms. Lovshin said there is not enough capacity to accommodate that many students.

Ms. Myhre proposed that we consider turning HMS into an elementary school and move HMS somewhere else and leave HHS.

Mr. Beaver is not convinced that it solves the problem. With HMS being fully occupied and HHS being fully occupied it doesn't solve the immediate problem.

Ms. Myhre asked how we solve the Central school problem.

Mr. Beaver said we leave it at the Lincoln site or we spend 8 million dollars which is not fiscally responsible and we won't get the community backing to do this either. However, if we leave Central

school kids at the Lincoln site and make the necessary upgrades, it would be fiscally responsible and we can most likely gain the community backing to support the bond.

Dr. Kultgen said he would like to get the elementary bond going and he proposed making construction on Warren and Smith to become 4:3 buildings and increase size of Jefferson and on the west side of town, purchase land, newly constructed Jim Darcy, increase 4-G's and Rossiter. We would also add the tech parts onto Bryant, Hawthorne and Broadwater.

Ms. Myhre said we could sell Front Street Learning Center and return PAL to Lincoln campus.

Public Comment:

Mark Robertson
1320 Angus Rd

What is the lowest number of students per building before it is closed? What is the highest before we overflow?

We don't have a bottom number or necessarily a top number but we should make that an agenda item for a future meeting.

He agrees that two smaller bonds make more sense and wants to know our contingency plan if the bond fails.

Rachel Carrell Rivas
921 10th Ave

She believes we have a politically active group of voter in favor of the in town schools. She would like to address the displaced students at Central School. Aren't they the same as the displaced students that are overflowed to other schools?

Darryl James
715 Power St.

We have other resources in the county such as planners, realtors etc. We need to talk to contractors/builders to use less time to construct new school facilities.

Next meeting will be with the city and county planners. Tuesday, November 4th.

Meeting adjourned