

NOTES FROM THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESEARCH PLANNING MEETING

November 10, 2014

Meeting

The Community Engagement and Research Planning meeting of Community Consolidated School District 181, DuPage and Cook Counties, took place on Monday, November 10, 2014, at the Burr Ridge Police Department, 7660 S. County Line Road, Burr Ridge, Illinois.

Present

A variety of District stakeholders were invited to participate in the Planning Meeting facilitated by Patron Insight, including Board members, administrators, leaders from both staff associations, PTO Presidents (current and former) and members of three District committees (Facilities, Finances, Learning). Attendees included: Dr. Don White, Bridget McGuiggan, Heather Scott, Sarah Hoffman, Andrew Dzija, Jan Martin, Bill Merchantz, Mridu Garg, Gary Clarin, Kelly Sledz, Ann Mueller, Julie Bryant, Deb Kloubec, Mary Henneman, Karen Czerwiec, Denise Kavuliak, Kim Anderson, Suzanne Wychocki, Audrey Galvin, Jean Duggan, Ken Surma, Gary Frisch, Michael Vilendrer, Griffin Sonntag, Ruben Peña, Craig Larson, and Ken DeSieghardt. (It is important to note that there will be opportunities to hear from all stakeholders through the engagement process; this was a meeting for the purposes of planning and initial discussion.)

Welcome

Superintendent Dr. Don White welcomed the attendees and thanked them for participating in the District's community research and engagement planning meeting.

Introductions, Ideas and Norms

Director of Communications Bridget McGuiggan thanked the group for attending the meeting and shared basic meeting norms. She highlighted that this will be a public process and that the focus needs to ultimately be on students. Mrs. McGuiggan then introduced Mr. Craig Larson and Mr. Ken DeSieghardt from Patron Insight. Messrs. Larson and DeSieghardt asked everyone to introduce themselves and asked that they share what they hoped to accomplish through this process.

The group shared the following thoughts:

- Hope for direction
- Interested in the future of the District
- Interested in the revolution of the facilities
- Interested in the facilities assessment
- Interested in the outcome of Hinsdale Middle School
- Interested in understanding how technology aligns with the facilities
- To support Ruben Peña and HMS
- Long-range planning
- Better understanding of the process
- Vision for Hinsdale Middle School
- Voice for teachers – process and plans
- Long-term plan for Hinsdale Middle School
- Facilities maintenance and updating of facilities
- Facilities that take us into the future and the process to get there

Major Themes

- Where we are going?
- Ensuring a good outcome for Hinsdale Middle School
- Technology
- Long-term needs for facilities
- Teachers

Mr. Larson shared that the above-mentioned themes were a good place for the group to begin the discussion regarding the District facilities.

Bridget McGuiggan noted that the District has a new webpage dedicated to the Facilities Master Plan Development. She then gave a brief description of each facility within the District, highlighting the age, size, square footage, enrollment and number of staff members, as well as any additions or renovations that were made. Attendees shared additional information on the facilities and commented on some of the challenges that face the District, such as lack of space, lack of shared planning space, lack of specialized instructional space, parking, playground equipment, bathrooms, science labs, storage, ECE playground equipment, technology, and portable classrooms. These challenges were highlighted in the results of the staff facilities survey, which was administered in the spring of 2014 and then analyzed by the Facilities Committee.

Referendum History

Mrs. McGuiggan shared the importance of recognizing the role referendums have played in the District 181 facilities history, and provided a chart outlining the passed and failed referendums since 1991.

Facilities Committee

Assistant Superintendent of Information Services and Operations Ken Surma shared that the Facilities Committee meets on a regular basis for the purpose of guidance on strategic facilities initiatives. The committee is comprised of members of the administration, Board of Education, staff, parents, and community.

Facilities Master Plan

Mr. Surma went on to share that the Board of Education approved a proposal from Wight and Company for the completion of a Facility Condition Assessment Report (FCAR). The FCAR is a comprehensive audit on the condition of all District facilities for the purpose of determining annual capital renewal needs. The Board of Education also approved a proposal from Healy Bender architects to complete an Educational Adequacy Analysis at the seven elementary schools. The analysis will help determine if building spaces and designs meet the needs of current and future educational programs. The District has also gathered information on the facilities from annual life safety surveys from the Regional Office of Education and a ten-year life safety completed by the architects. The data from these sources will be combined with the results of the staff facilities survey to create a multi-year Facilities Master Plan.

Committee members discussed the following:

- Importance of developing criteria for current and future needs of the District
- Need for the Superintendent's Advisory Learning Committee to be involved in the discussion and planning of the facilities
- A question as to how technology will fit into the discussion and planning of the future facilities needs
- Need to consider the options available for Hinsdale Middle School
- Long-term solution for the Administration Center
- Parking issues in downtown Hinsdale

- Optimum middle school standards and whether or not they can be achieved at the current HMS site
- Partnering with the Village of Hinsdale (e.g. fieldhouse for the community)

Hinsdale Middle School Options for Discussion

The group broke into separate groups to discuss four options for Hinsdale Middle School: Maintain, Addition, Renovation, and New-Same / New-New. They were asked to share their likes and dislikes relating to the four options. The option of "New-New" was not included in this group activity following a report from Dr. White that the District has not identified a feasible property in the District on which to build a new school other than on the same site (next to the current HMS building).

It is important to highlight that the notes below capture the brainstormed ideas of those in attendance and are not meant to serve as a comprehensive listing. Ideas represent individual opinions and are not official District comments.

* = Top items from the group discussion

- Option One – Maintain
(Make repairs and patch as needed. Replace the roof. Make minimal improvements. Ensure a safe learning environment.)
 - Likes:
 - Cheapest (short-term)*
 - Minimal disruption of students and staff*
 - No Village involvement
 - Maintenance could be done in the summer
 - Small scale repairs could be done without a referendum
 - Dislikes:
 - Could cost more (long-term)*
 - Maintenance cost are high*
 - PR Issue (Have we addressed the problems at HMS?)*
 - Health issues (Have health issues been solved?)*
 - Litigation? (Uncertain costs going forward)*
 - Doesn't address parking issues*
 - Current building problems persist
 - Long-term cost inefficiency (No LEED Certified building)
 - Doesn't address evolving teacher and learning needs
 - Doesn't address educational functionality of the building
 - HVAC issues continue (roof is not the only issue)
 - Small repairs have been addressed multiple times

Note: The whole group agreed that Option Two and Option Three should really be viewed as one combined approach involving an addition and renovation of existing space to ensure equity of educational spaces.

- Option Two – Addition
(Create new classroom spaces. Create new offices and small/large meeting spaces. Eliminate portables. Possibly address parking. Replace roof. May also repair and renovate.)
 - Likes:
 - More space and eliminates the portable classrooms*

- More parking (if included in the project)*
 - Could maintain structure – gut and renovate inside
 - Could provide needed administrative center
 - Could address teaching and learning needs
 - Does start to address educational needs
- Dislikes:
 - Could create a New Building vs. Old Building “competition”*
 - Will reduce green space at the site*
 - Creates potential for parking concerns*
 - Increases Village involvement*
 - Requires student displacement
 - Split schedule during construction?
 - Cost of transportation and relocating students extends through construction
 - Might continue health concerns because the building is not entirely replaced
 - Could have long-term cost impact because of problems with existing building that remain
 - Still need to address major mechanical and plumbing issues
 - Need to “open” the building (The existing architecture is not likely to fit with the new design)
 - Might require the Village to approve a more vertical building and less green space
 - May continue with long-term costs because of building not being energy efficient
 - Doesn’t save much money vs. a full rebuild
 - Doesn’t resolve parking problems
- Option Three – Renovation
 (Improve spaces to address current challenges. Replace roof. May also repair/make additions.)
 - Likes:
 - Design space based on our educational vision and needs*
 - Allows the acquisition of new and flexible furniture*
 - Renovated and new mechanical, electrical and HVAC systems*
 - Ensures entire building is ADA Compatible*
 - Could maintain structure – gut and renovate inside
 - Could include parking
 - Could include an administration center
 - Starts to address educational issues
 - Dislikes:
 - What to do with the students during construction, which might take two years?*
 - Requires considerable Village involvement*
 - Could make parking worse in the short and long term*
 - Health issues (Have health issues been solved?)*
 - Litigation? (Uncertain costs going forward)*
 - Student displacement
 - Split schedule during construction?
 - Disruption during construction
 - Doesn’t address nature light problems inside existing building
 - Doesn’t really save that much money compared to a rebuild

- Option Four – New Building Same Location
(Construct a new building in the same location. Old building repurposed, destroyed for land sale or sold.) Note: The original Option 4B – New building in a new location – was eliminated because a search for an available parcel of land has proved fruitless after a thorough search.
 - Likes:
 - Healthy building is safe for students and staff*
 - Ensures adequate and equitable space*
 - Building will be designed based on our educational vision and needs*
 - Gains community involvement*
 - Not that much more in cost than full renovation and addition
 - Could include needed parking
 - Could include administration center
 - Long-term cost efficiency – design a “LEED Certified Structure”
 - Removes unattractive building from the community
 - Improves technology and supports innovation throughout the building
 - Address current and future enrollment needs
 - Improves educational functionality
 - Could include a pool for swim teams
 - Dislikes:
 - Costs*
 - Requires a longer time frame*
 - Will lose green space—for the district and the community*
 - Will require greater Village involvement*
 - Community involvement raises complexity of the project*
 - Disruption of learning environment
 - Building will likely be closer to neighboring homes
 - Split schedule during construction?

Committee members also discussed the following:

- Need to educate community
- Requires community approval//support/buy-in (votes, cost)
- If this is a \$65 million project, it will be hard to explain to the community
- What is best for students
- What are the real costs for the options?
- Village involvement will be needed, in particular about building height
- There may be differing opinions among Clarendon Hills residents about improvements to HMS
- Why costs for building CHMS at the time would likely be so much less than the cost now
- What the cost of HMS maintenance / upkeep is if little or nothing is done
- A Facilities Committee member recalled the District’s architect stating that “if the cost of renovation is 60% of the cost to build new, it is better to build new than renovate”
- More detail was requested about the previous referendums
- Would Clarendon Hills residents see a benefit (i.e. smaller class sizes) if HMS was renovated / additions were made

Next Steps

The goal is to have a high percentage of the community involved in this process to ensure that the next steps follow their interest, but it will be important to also educate the community. Mrs. McGuiggan shared a list of terms related to the components of the process to provide clarity in discussion. She explained the timelines presented to the Board and noted that the Board supported a timeline that finishes this work in September 2015. If the Board wishes to include a ballot question for the community in March 2016, they will have time prepare for that work if they finish the engagement and research (and make a recommendation) by September.

Mrs. McGuiggan and Patron Insight explained the strategies they are considering to engage the community and conduct research, including focus groups, information nights and workshops, an online survey, a phone survey, and one-on-one interviews.

They commented on the importance of working with both external and internal groups, such as staff and committees. Mrs. McGuiggan reminded the group that the planning meeting was to get the work started, and there will be many opportunities for the community to be involved.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.