

Reporting on the HMS Round-Table Session Engagement Events

May 24 at Prospect School, 6:30pm

May 26 at the Administration Center, 9:30am

Notes below are paraphrased and designed to provide a helpful summary of concerns, comments, ideas, and questions that were shared by attendees. (As shown, some comments are in contrast to one another as community members did not always come to consensus.) Please refer to the District's LiveStream site for meeting audio access.

Cost and Process

- The price changes (\$50M turned into \$73M turned into \$65M) complicated the issue and need to be explained again.
- Were components like the auditorium in the initial low-cost number (\$47M)?
- There is a perception that the "teacher wish list" made the cost increase.
- The design competition process was not appealing to architecture firms - too much up-front investment was required.
- There is an interest in understanding the process that will be used to bring down the cost. Do we determine a cost first and then design to meet the cost? Is it about the final number, or the things that make up the final number?
- There is a concern about hidden costs (i.e. things buried in the bowl).
- Differences between CHMS and HMS mean there are different needs, so there will be different costs.
- The cost was too high, especially compared to CHMS. Even after 17 years, costs should still be more comparable.
- How does the cost compare to national data on cost per square foot (noting the difference between all-in and construction only)? (Reference to Argonne National Laboratory construction)
- Tax impact was not a specific concern. ("We need to invest in the community.")
- Be aware of the true cost with interest.
- Be careful about bond structure ("transients who vote no and move away").
- How does the new construction cost compare to renovation?
- What is the cost to maintain the current building?

Components / Size

- What is the financial impact of removing auditorium, running track, etc.?
- Do we really need everything on the list? Need to explain better why auditorium and track were "needs."
- Is it best to take components off the table, or find other ways to get the cost lowered?
- The "extras" might have a place if the cost is brought down.
- Have to be careful about options offered so as not to dilute the consensus.
- Design could be proposed with or without an auditorium.
- Get an arts group (i.e. Second City) to support the auditorium.
- The auditorium would be a community venue and could generate revenue.
- A cafetorium presents challenges.
- Hinsdale Central auditorium will not be available - high use already.
- Would CHMS actually use the auditorium at HMS?
- Explain size and square footage needs for students. How has that changed since CHMS was built?

Equity / Parity

- There is a difference between fair and equal.
- In the name of being equitable, don't repeat the mistakes of CHMS.
- Elementary schools being upgraded has been an "arms race" - issue may repeat with new middle school.
- It's okay if the schools have different features if they will share them (i.e. auditorium).

- CHMS families and residents will be supportive - just don't make it extravagant and be more in line with CHMS features and cost.

Timing of Election

- Concern about Presidential Election timing ("referendums historically fail").
- Emphasis on getting the process and the plan right (not about which election).
- The District needs time to get ready; there needs to be time for a highly organized citizens committee.
- Desire for unanimous Board support, whenever it happens.
- There is a perception that it is D86's turn.
- There is danger in waiting for any amount of time is costs going up. Interest rates are low.
- We want a better facility sooner than later. Don't drag this on. HMS has been kicked down the road.
- Paralysis by analysis.
- Approve a Facilities Master Plan as a first step.

Communication / Engagement

- D86 mailer was well received.
- Provide tours of CHMS and HMS.
- Talk more about the parking features with the Village and how they will pay for it.
- Identify block captains or neighborhood captains.
- Neighborhoods and PTOs are the best indicator of "where you stand before the election."
- Need more "foot soldiers."
- Need to "arm people with the facts."
- Communicate that the District is being respectful of what voters said.
- Quantify problems (not just "inefficient"). Use more objective, not subjective, terms.
- Provide better, clearer information on cost per square foot comparisons and true costs.
- Use more pictures and tell more stories.
- Explain the positive impact of new schools on home values.
- Go door-to-door.
- Float communications by a focus group to test impact and understanding.
- "KISS - Keep it Simple Stupid"
- Message should be "kids first."
- Explain the needs assessment that was done.

Other

- Comparisons made in discussions to D86 process and project, and prior D181 projects.
- Idea was suggested to build a third middle school, each of equal size.
- In regard to location, cons shared regarding Veeck Park.
- Build for the long-term, keeping career teachers in mind.
- Concern about architecture firm and trusting their work (cost changes). Suggestion to change firms.
- Comment about process that public schools have to go through to build (hoops to jump through in Illinois) and broader trust issues around Illinois and DuPage County.
- Division within community is not good.
- Disappointed renovation was not recommended.
- Consider an improvement to CHMS at the same time.
- Need more information on Plan B - what if it fails?
- Is there a clean bill of health in HMS?