

FACILITIES ADVISORY TEAM COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, November 20, 2008 – 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Kent Phillips Elementary School

MINUTES

PRESENT: M. Ginalski, J. Delorme, A. Danquah, B. Cameron, J. Reilly, S. Romans, P. Webster, T. Tunney, J. Tobia, M. Whittenhall, M. Roe, B. Pierce, M. Franklin, R. Gillespie, K Wilson-Houck, A. Knowles-Skowvron, K. Monastra, J. Meteer, S. Bathrick, J. Castiglione, K. Keeney

ARCHITECTS: C. Woodcock, J. Robins, R. Gosden

ABSENT: V. Zingler, N. Jakobson, K. Murdock, T. Decker, R. Kimble

RECORDER: K. Dutcher

VISITORS: There were five visitors in attendance at the meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Facilitator, Anthony Gyetua-Danquah. Mr. Danquah welcomed the group and reviewed the Agenda for the evening.

The November 6th meeting minutes were reviewed and approved by consensus as written.

Mr. Ginalski informed the Committee that the four scheduled Town Hall meetings (Beaver Dams, City of Corning, South Corning, Gang Mills) have all been completed. He noted that initially most of the meetings started off a little rough but by the end of the meeting he felt that people appreciated his candor and honesty and the meetings ended up on a positive note with lots of good feedback.

Mr. Ginalski also reviewed the feedback relative to the question Mr. Danquah asked: “As a team member, what one thing about a facilities plan will you **absolutely** not support? It was obvious from the feedback received that no individual person is biased on any one plan in particular.

The group also discussed the fact that if we did have a successful vote in December 2009, we would not even break ground until the summer of 2013 because we would still have to go through the State Education Department process, etc. Therefore, any impact on taxpayers would not be until that time.

Mr. Woodcock from Hunt Engineers reviewed his notes, which were provided to the group, relative to a meeting he had with Siobhan Alexander, Principal, and the staff at Kent Phillips Elementary School. Some highlights included current enrollment numbers, current educational programs, future curriculum, classroom, special education, library, and counseling and social worker needs and so forth. He also discussed general building issues and site issues, as well as additional needs.

The Committee separated into two groups to tour Kent Phillips Elementary School. The Committee reconvened and discussed the condition of the building. It was noted that many people in the community may not be aware of the actual condition of our buildings and that communication is key to getting the necessary information to the community.

Following the tour of the building, the group came back together to discuss the positive and negatives of the building:

Positives

Good condition
Adequate library
Acreage
Large space for Music/Art

Negatives

Parking lot
Small classrooms for specialties
Instructional space does not meet state standards
Safety issues
Storage
Technology upgrades difficult
Security-main entrance location
Lack of walls and doors

Mr. Woodcock and Jeff Robbins from Hunt Engineers, reviewed with the Committee, building floor plans of Lindley-Presho and Kent Phillips Elementary Schools, which showed the current building floor plan, what a building plan would look like in order to just meet the state standards, and what was needed for current educational needs and beyond. The Committee felt this was a good visual activity see what the buildings will really require to meet the educational needs of the District. They agreed that they would like to see this activity for each building along with handouts.

Mr. Danquah initiated a team activity, "What's in a house?" The group looked at pictures of several different houses and floor plans and outlined, what are the essential components of a house? For example, bathroom, kitchen, furnace, etc. The activity relates to what essential components should all schools have to make them effective in meeting the needs of all students?

The second team activity required the group to break into four sub-groups each assigned to review the components of a past facilities plan; what are the positives; what are the concerns; what will work and what will not work. The sub-groups reported out to the Committee.

• **Group 1 - 1996 Plan**, whose recommendation was to consolidate elementary schools into five buildings by adding on to Kent Phillips and Erwin Valley, Building a new high school for all students and moving the middle schools into the existing high school buildings. It was also recommended that the District Administrative Offices would be moved into the current West High building.

What are the positives?

- Reasonable number of buildings
- Similar plan passed
- District Administration into West High building
- Population even among Elementary – equity
- Lower cost of maintaining
- Closing of 2 worse buildings

Consensus was this is a Viable Option

What are the concerns?

- One High School
- Closing L-P, FP, CFA and NBMS
- If we vote to have it happen, will it really move forward

What will work?

- Data shows it will work

- **Group II – 1999 Plan**, whose recommendation was to renovate an existing middle school building in Corning and build a new “scaled-down” middle school in Erwin. The new middle school campus would include grades 5-8

What are the positives?

- Reduces the number of buildings
- Centralized location of buildings
- Middle School needs are addressed
- One High School*
- Creating space in Elementary Schools
- Addresses redistricting
- Equity among buildings
- Attaches Administration Building to a school building (aidable)

What are the concerns?

- One High School*
- Closing many buildings (HG, FP, LP, Admin, CFA, NBMS)

- **Group III – Option II**, whose recommendation was to renovate and expand all existing elementary and middle school facilities, except NBMS, reallocate existing facility space, construct a new state-of-the-art high school and provide housing for senior citizens through the conversion of NBMS to a retirement facility.

What are the positives?

- 50% of community thought it was a good plan
- Instructive Program envisioned was wonderful
- Provided an alternate use for NBMS
- Middle School Staff’s excited about moving to current high schools
- Complete plan-districtwide
- Swing space during construction not an issue

What are the concerns?

- This choice was extremely divisive; bringing it back will rekindle the emotion
- Unaffordable without Corning Inc. support
- Too big for a high school
- East-West community rivalry would end
- Location somewhat remote, transportation issues
- Negative media coverage

What will work?

- Complete plan-districtwide
- Some consolidation of facilities necessary
- Today it seems likely that alternate uses for buildings not needed exist
- Addressed middle school issue
- Addressed equity in elementary schools

What will not work?

- Corning Inc. out of picture (?)
- Combining the high schools

- **Group IV – Committee of 200 Plan**, whose recommendation was to build two new high schools, one in Corning and one in Erwin/Gang Mills,; renovate current high schools to house middle schools; reconfigure the elementary schools into buildings and holding grades K-2 and grades 3-5; move Early Childhood services back into buildings; build or renovate a single building for offices and space to accommodate transportation, buildings and grounds and food service.

What are the positives?

- All encompassing opportunity for community involvement

What are the concerns?

- Charge were different for the different subcommittee groups involved
- Cost prohibitive
- Empty buildings
- Most needed work was at the end of the list
- Inability to “sell” to public
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Consensus is that the plan was stopped abruptly, it was underdeveloped, cost prohibitive, and state aid not even across the board.

What will work?

- Elementary reconfiguration
- Reduction of buildings
- Level of enrollments
- Elementary was almost completely aidable

Mr. Ginalski noted that the Demographer will present his findings at the December 4th F.A.T. Committee and that this will be an important meeting for all to be in attendance.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 pm, Thursday, December 4, 2008 at Winfield Elementary School.