

**SHELTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION CONFERENCE ROOM #120
February 8, 2006**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Timothy Walsh at 7:05 PM.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Anthony Smeraglino

Roll Call: (in alpha order)

Paula Ellis
Arlene Liscinsky
Thomas Minotti
Raymond O'Leary
Win Oppel
James Oraziatti
Anthony Smeraglino
Carla Sullivan
Chairman Timothy Walsh

A quorum of 9 present and 0 absent

Board of Education Administration present:

Superintendent of Schools, Robin Willink
Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Lorraine Rossner
Director of Finance, Allan Cameron
Director of Human Resources, Susan Attard-Kollet
Director of Instruction, Patricia Curran, absent
Director of Special Education, Dr. Tina Parchin

Mr. Walsh began the meeting by reminding the audience there is no public portion to the special meeting. The meeting is an informational meeting on the 5/6 school. Mr. Walsh noted that Dan Casinelli and Jeff Sells of Fletcher-Thompson are present and will answer questions from the Board.

Mr. Walsh announced a committee appointment naming Raymond O'Leary as overall Chairman of the Negotiations Committee with sub committees created as negotiations begin, i.e. paraprofessionals and nurses.

Mr. Walsh turned the meeting over to Dan Casinelli who discussed the "second gymnasium" in the new 5/6 configuration school. He said the firm revisited the plans and have been able to maintain the second gym and relocate the Media Center to another location in the building where one of the old cafeterias is

currently located. Mr. Casinelli began the new plan presentation and will also have a Master Control Budget for review to give to the Board after the presentation.

Mr. Casinelli began by stating he has had conversations with the state (Dave Wedge) regarding reimbursement rate and the response was that as long as the city can prove that a new school would be more costly than the "like new" renovation, there would be no problem waiving the space standards. Mr. Walsh requested a review of state standard square footage. A new school building under state statutes allows for 148 square feet per student times 900 students equaling 133,000 square feet total. Existing school is approximately 161,000 square feet; there is a delta between the 161,000 and the 133,000 allowed which equates to penalties for space over state allotment. The state is amenable to waiving that standard as long as the city can prove that the "like new" is a cost savings. The state also inquired if additions would be included. Mr. Casinelli did reply that there would be some small additions to address handicap accessibility along with the 1960's addition. As long as the city can prove that the additions address issues that cannot be answered in another part of the building, the state would look favorably on the additional square footage.

Jeff Sells of Fletcher-Thompson presented the minor modifications beginning with a historical house currently on the property near Perry Hill Road. Mr. Sells suggested that the currently proposed roadway may have to be reworked in order to preserve the house. This proposal will be reviewed and as long as the functionality of the site remains they will try to keep the house. The most significant change came as a result of the discussion regarding the need for two gymnasiums. In order to preserve two gyms, the firm looked at one of the current cafeterias deciding instead of cutting the space to provide classrooms they would be able to keep the open space of the cafeteria (dining, kitchen and support space) which would lend itself to a Media Center. Although a few classrooms would be displaced, they were able to relocate them to other spaces in the building.

Questions & Answers:

The following questions and answers are abbreviated with extensive discussions following each question by the Board and answers given by the architects.

Q: Win Oppel – in order to maintain the second gym, the Media Center would need relocation, classrooms will be displaced, are they scattered around the building or lost?

A: There is excess space in the building and those classrooms will be relocated to those areas.

Q: Win Oppel – will the set of stairs currently in the front remain?

A: Yes, they will remain.

Q: Carla Sullivan – where is public access to gym for recreational league use?

A: Enter through front, lobby area.

Q: Arlene Liscinsky – Ball fields, both are used, enough area to keep both fields?

A: There is enough space for a full softball field as well as an all purpose field.

Q: James Oraziotti – regarding site work in back of school, grading, wall?

A: A discussion of the site work possible and needed as well as where ledge can be found on the site followed.

Q: Win Oppel – followed up with concern regarding site work related to bus parking area. Any thoughts of relocating buses as opposed to spending dollars on site work? Mr. Oppel commented that he felt this money may be better spent on educational opportunities.

A: Revised numbers include money for rock removal and grading. It seemed important to separate parent traffic and bus traffic. The current grouping of buses is better for monitoring.

Q: Win Oppel – possible to relocate buses to the front area of the building and leave the back parking lot at 12 feet as opposed to creating a 60 foot section? Parent parking in the back, buses in the front?

A: Possible, but it was suggested that parent parking in the front offers convenience and easy access.

Q: Arlene Liscinsky – expressed concern with “like new” renovation costs based on the new master control budget have gone down. What can this decrease be attributed to?

A: Architects went back to review all light, moderate, and heavy renovation costs with the revised scheme looking more closely at different parts of the building, i.e., gyms would require moderate renovations with the need for paint and lighting. They were able to take a closer look at the Media Center and art rooms to better define the classification of renovations.

Q: Arlene Liscinsky – wants assurance that the “like new” renovation will address all issues that need it, boiler, windows, roof, etc, not to take the “inexpensive” way out.

A: Heavy renovation meaning boiler and roof will be replaced. All will be taken into consideration and addressed accordingly.

Mr. Smeraglino noted that the Board has not officially voted that the 5/6 school will be located on the current old intermediate school site. Money allocated for demolition and removing old building amounting to approximately \$7 million

currently. Mr. Casinelli responded that there is some cost benefit to using existing building as opposed to approaching a new site, new building, not knowing where utilities come in and what the sitework for the new site might be. Mr. Smeraglino repeated that the Board has not yet voted on whether this will be the site for the 5/6 school, secondly new vs. like new. He feels it might make more sense to explore different avenues and other options. He realizes the urgency for timing but feels the Board needs a comparison using a virgin site. Mr. Smeraglino felt that would be a better alternative now. Mr. Casinelli stated that his firm could put together a Master Control Budget for a virgin site and that would be easily done since building costs would be similar.

Mr. Oppel questioned the time line they must work with and Mr. Walsh responded that there definitely is a time frame they should work with.

Mrs. Sullivan stated that any new building would be for 900 students which means by state statutes we would be looking at a smaller structure and that too should be taken into consideration. There is an advantage to renovating an existing building and getting more square footage which will be needed based on the growth in the city. Mrs. Liscinsky stated the reason for turning the building back to the city was because the building at that time was not conducive to education, however the site was never abandoned and a caveat was added that the Board may wish to take the building/site back at some point in the future.

Mr. Smeraglino added that they would not have had the swing space available to build the new intermediate school had we not had the old intermediate school to house the students. Tim Walsh also added that the "like new" renovation program is new in the state and that the state realized there were viable buildings that could serve well with a renovation program. He also added that Board members and administration met to discuss bus circulation and that the administration of the Board gave the architects their input as to how they see the requirements for bus flow. Mr. Casinelli added that the fact that the building is empty helps expedite the project.

Q: Win Oppel – wanted to know when the dollar amount becomes a fixed number?

A: The current number is the number you would want to go to referendum with. The number is not fixed until you go out for competitive bid.

Mr. Smeraglino commented that once the number is set, we must meet the number and cut to maintain the bottom line, taking into consideration inflation costs, etc knowing that the number that goes to referendum is one that must be adhered to. There are obvious costs that cannot be anticipated which is why the contingency is an important safety valve.

Q: Carla Sullivan - How is the 7% contingency arrived at, new vs. like new is the same.

A: Historical data has allowed the architects to come to this number. Like new includes a certain amount of risk, not knowing what is behind a wall, etc.

Q: Carla Sullivan - Does it make sense to build in more contingency?

A: Historical data allows them to plan more for the unknown in a like new renovation project.

Contingency and escalation currently stands at 22%.

Tim Walsh asked if a review of dates could be discussed at this time. The last date is June 30th when a grant application must be filed in order to build this building in the foreseeable future. Current project is set at 42.5% reimbursement rate – best case scenario. If plans are tabled until next year the reimbursement rate is 38.5% The difference being 4% if the Board waits until after June 30, 2006.

Mrs. Willink stated that the referendum date is scheduled for May 2, 2006. She is waiting for a written response from corporation counsel to verify all dates. Mrs. Willink stated that the following things must take place:

1. Board must make a motion to approve this in concept to move forward with this plan design and to move forward with the referendum.
2. Simultaneously, the Board would direct the Superintendent to write a letter assuming that we would be able to use the intermediate school, intermediate site, and Hurd property in anticipation of the referendum passing.
3. Also, local building inspectors must state that when renovated “like new” that the building will be suitable for use as a school.

Mr. Banfe stated that once the referendum has been passed, the Board of Alderman has 14 days to call a meeting and process the three things that Mrs. Willink just stated. Mr. Banfe said they are staying on top of things and planning in advance in order to meet the timeline as stated. Mrs. Willink added that at Long Hill School during a recent PTA meeting she heard concerns from parents that the upper grades are reaching large numbers, missing art and music rooms, and there is a sense of urgency with numbers and spaces in our elementary schools.

Carla Sullivan added that the school system cannot afford to wait another school year to address the needs just stated. She feels the plan placed before them is the best solution to the problem and is positive in moving forward.

Q: Arlene Liscinsky – questioned air quality, will there be air conditioning?

A: Yes, plans are for air conditioning.

Carla Sullivan added that the numbers quoted show the cost of the school vs. what the bottom line cost to the city will be due to the “like new” renovation and reimbursement rate from the state. She referred to the Master Control Budget which lists the building cost at an estimated \$38 million and after reimbursement the actual city cost would be approximately \$22 million.

Arlene Liscinsky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Paula Ellis, meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Lilling
Recording Secretary – Board of Education