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Norton High School Building Committee

Meeting of February 15, 2011

Minutes

This was a joint meeting of the Building Committee, the Select Board, the Finance Committee, and the School Committee to review the progress of the building project's feasibility study prior to presentation to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The meeting would include a vote by the Building Committee to approve the feasibility study package.

Present from the Building Committee were: Brad Bramwell, Chairman Kevin O'Neil, Ray Dewar, Paul Helmreich, Tom Golota, Mark Powers, Superintendent Patricia Ansay. *mike K. O'Neil*

Present from Pinck and Company were: Margaret Woods and Jennifer Pinck.

Present from JCJ Architecture was Greg Smolley.

Others included members of the Norton Select Board, Norton School Committee, Norton Finance Committee, Representative Jay Barrows, and various community members.

Kevin O'Neil (KO) called the meeting to order at 6:42 in the Norton High School Auditorium.

KO welcomed the audience and opened the joint meeting. He also introduced the representatives from Pinck and JCJ Architecture to the audience.

KO gave background about the project to date and where the project has gone since the last joint meeting in January.

KO explained the purpose and process of the feasibility study and told of how stakeholders have been involved in the process.

KO also told the audience that the website for the project is constantly being updated. He gave the site's address: www.nhsbuildingproject.org

KO also told the audience about when and how often the Building Committee meets.

KO Introduced Greg Smolley (GS), the architect from JCJ.

GS introduced himself further and gave some of his curriculum vitae to the audience. He spoke of how the project has proceeded in the roughly 4 weeks of hard work that has been done to put together the options that he would review.

GS began his slide show

- Information about the site
- Building issues related to handicap accessibility, gender equity, safety, code deficiencies, operational problems
- Interior classrooms an issue
- On a slide pertaining to area comparisons, GS showed on a chart how the school falls short in many areas for size (PE, SPED, Bathrooms, Science rooms, classrooms)
- GS points out that if classroom space is 9% deficient, that means 63 students do not have a seat
- KO pointed out that excess in cafeteria's size come mainly from size of kitchen rather than eating area
- GS went over the 4 options
- MSBA requires 3 options: renovation, renovation and addition, new school
- JCJ looked at 7 options and narrowed down to 4
- On renovation slides GS went over what would be addressed and what would not: stairways, elevator, restrooms, systems, some loss of space
- On Option 2.1, 1 story addition with fixes for: science, locker rooms, elevators, stairways, PE, teacher collaboration area, some loss of space.
- On Option 2.2: 2 story addition, fixes for above plus new cafeteria, music space, art space, additional hallways, parking, administrative space, new entry, better flow of student traffic, and no loss of space in existing building
- On Option 3: New School all needs would be addressed.
- GS did a benefit comparison between the projects on a chart: only options 2.2 and 3 addressed all issues pertaining to project's needs. Option 1 did not address many of the program needs that the MSBA would require of a fully funded project.
- MSBA requires estimates of all costs
- Option 1 would merit an estimated 28% reimbursement and cost town \$13 million.
- Option 2.1 would merit an estimated 58-60% reimbursement and cost the town \$12 million.
- Option 2.2 would merit an estimated 58-60% reimbursement and cost the town \$13.4 million.
- Option 3 would merit an estimated 45% reimbursement and cost the town \$27 million.
- GS went over hard and soft costs and explained each
- Chart also reviewed cost per taxpayer
- Option 1 (\$135), Option 2.1 (\$121), Option 2.2 (\$135), Option 3 (\$247) all per year.
- KO pointed out that these costs were based on 58% reimbursement. Numbers would change for the better if project rose to 60% reimbursement.
- GS pointed out MA model is very good compared to other states.

- When Scope and Budget agreement was complete the money would be set aside for Norton. It would be a binding contract.
- Timetable for project was shown with a final completion date projected to be Christmas of 2013.
- GS then went over the next steps after the feasibility study for the project and for the town.
- Slide show finished at 7:20 p.m.

Tom Golota asked GS to define "swing space". GS did. He also stressed the costs of modular classrooms if that needed to happen.

Question about the 50 year life of the building. Does this project make the life start over?

GS stated that the building's systems were the main concern as the building's core did seem sound.

This would be a 20 year bond? Yes.

Would all the numbers be set on 5/25/2011? Margaret Woods answers, Yes. But we would be pretty certain by 4/15/2011 as MSBA does not like surprises when they meet about approving projects.

This is all the total cost? GS Yes. State actually also pays 60% of furniture and equipment. Good deal. This is especially true due to the fact that teachers have complained about loss of teaching time due to moving furniture and equipment.

Paul Helmreich asked about sewerage and track. Would there be an addendum regarding these project?

GS and Margaret Wood (MW) both addressed this and how the state would want the sewerage project to be concurrent and would be considered necessary for building project.

GS also noted that the septic was well-maintained and could be used to address needs for water run off.

Would mechanical systems include heat? Yes. Also electrical.

KO schematic design phase is next. It would be more specific and more cost oriented. It would examine details and cost efficiencies.

MW of the four options, Pinck would recommend 2.2 as the best value.

Jay Barrows asked about community presentations. KO noted that these were scheduled, starting with a formal presentation to Select Board.

KO noted first floor of addition, especially cafeteria could be used as community space. This brought more discussion of cafeteria issues and the need to address them via this project.

Jay Barrows asked how many students this project was intended for. KO responded that the MSBA had established that the school needed to be able to meet a long term student population of 700.

Paul Helmreich noted that in 1973 the building was certified for 800. Now we need to add on for 700. Times change. We want to be able to meet the needs for later, not just now.

KO Much of the flex space labeled in the plan is to reflect change.

Bill Gouveia asked if this project was about growth concerns or needs? KO Needs, codes, systems.

GS when you plan a high school classroom use should be for 85% of the time. The planning for this project can address possible growth.

KO science labs are driving the addition as well as need for natural light in classrooms.

MW project is addressing funding opportunity, systems needs and program needs

GS Project does include plans to allow expansion in the future without tearing down work we do.

Question regarding cost for renovation being so low on presentation. GS That was a typo.

Bob Kimball: project must go hand-in-hand with sewerage project. All agree.

KO Sewer needs to be on ballot.

Track a separate issue on ballot. Project cannot pass or fail based on the need for a track.

Bob Kimball Keep all three separate.

Bill Gouveia suggested having ballot question for funding approval prior to Town Meeting. Town Meeting should not be the forum to discuss merits of the project. Discussion.

Bob Kimball: 6th of June is locked in for Town Meeting. Cannot put ballot question around Memorial Day.

KO How about Saturday June 4?

Worst case scenario, MSBA says no to project or projected costs.

Jennifer Pinck: MSBA does not want surprises. They want meeting to go smoothly. If there are issues, we would know well before May 25 meeting.

KO wraps up discussion.

Vote by Building Committee to approve 2.2 as preferred option to MSBA. Approved unanimously.

Vote to approve minutes from 2/8/2011 Building Committee meeting. Approved unanimously.

8:06 p.m. Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,
Raymond Dewar
Norton High School Building Committee






