

## **Greenwich Board of Education Minutes of the GHS Front Entry Committee Meeting**

DATE: June 2, 2021

LOCATION: Virtual via Google Meet

TIME: 8:00 am

### Committee Members Present:

Stephen Walko - Chairman

Jake Allen- Vice Chairman

Maureen Bonanno-Secretary

Ashley Cole

Louis Contadino

Stephanie Cowie

Christina Downey (BOE)

Megan Galleta - Committee Member

Michael Mason (BET)

### Ex-Officio Members Present:

Dennis Yeskey (P&Z)

Steven Swidler (BOE Staff)

Craig Amundson (RTM)

Will Schwartz (DPW)

### Others Present:

Ralph Mayo (GHS Principal)

Tom Bobkowski (BOE - Central Office)

Dan Watson (BOE- Central Office)

David Stein (Silver Petrucelli)

Dean Petrucelli (Silver Petrucelli)

### Not Present:

Lauren Rabin (Board of Selectmen)

1. Meeting was called to order by Mr. Walko at 8:00 a.m
2. Mr. Walko reminded the committee that the purpose of the meeting was to begin a discussion with the selected architects, Silver Petrucelli, on the general direction of the project and that there would not be votes today
3. Mr. Walko then opened the meeting up to comments from all present.
4. Comments/Questions:
  - o Ms. Cole noted that she had an issue with the design presented during the RFP process. She also noted that although the security of the vestibule is the most

important aspect, the design should reflect the historic importance of the residential neighborhood surrounding it. The high school currently has many design flaws and she believes that the new entryway is an opportunity to improve them.

- Ms. Downey noted that she likes the idea of the overhang in the original proposed design. She would like the design to include some greenscaping and sustainability aspects. She also noted that moving the security desk in the corner by the administrative offices would open up the center.
- Ms. Galetta agreed with Ms. Cole and Ms Downey on the design and would like to see an inviting open space for students and visitors and to not make it feel like a police station with a check in point.
- Mr. Mason suggested that the building should be a centerpoint or a hub for security. He also stated that the new entryway should be designed to hold up to the elements given its location.
- Mr. Walko had a concern over the cost to open up into the administrative offices and suggested speaking with all stakeholders to ensure the design is the most efficient user entry.
- Mr. Yeskey would like to see multiple options presented. Options would not need to be elaborate, but just some other ideas.
- Mr. Petrucelli assured the group that there will be more than one option presented.
- Mr. Stein noted that given the size of the vestibule in comparison to the overall size of the school, the vestibule project will unlikely solve all of the design flaws of the school with the current budget.
- Mr. Stein also noted that the placement of the security desk will definitely be part of the design discussions.
- Mr. Bobkowski noted that from a security side, there are district standards for door hardware and access control. The location of the security desk is vital, depending on what doors are used for visitors vs. students and we will need a second set of controls in the office to control access when guards are not present. Under the state guidelines, there are standards for the main office. He also noted that shot detection technology has improved significantly.
- Mr. Swidler asked to confirm the Ed Specs.
- Mr. Stein noted that there is a six page narrative detailing the Ed Specs. that supports the one page summary
- Ms Downey or Ms. Bonanno will send out the approved detailed Ed Specs to the committee.
- Mr. Petrucelli suggested that the committee decide on what information should be available to the public given the sensitivity of security information.
- Mr. Amundsen noted his concern that most school shootings occur from within the school and feels as though a shotspotter is too late. He stated that the committee needs to discuss how to keep guns out of the school.
- Mr. Bobkowski responded that there are no metal detectors now and many entrances are open in the morning to let students in.

- Mr. Contadino agreed with the comments made by Mr. Amundsen and Mr. Bobkowski, but does not want the high school to feel like it is high security. He stated that the committee needs to identify what will make the entranceway a GHS entranceway.
  - Mr. Bobkowski noted that many of the security measures won't make the school look like a prison and are largely unseen.
  - Ms. Bonanno agreed with Mr. Contadino and stressed the need to maintain the culture of Greenwich High School of "Freedom with Responsibility" for the students and that there should be a balance between maintaining the culture while keeping the students as safe as possible.
5. Discussion on plan going forward
- Mr. Walko stated that to adhere to the timeline, the project should not incorporate any special or custom items that would cause a delay.
  - Mr. Stein shared the timeline from the RFP and stated that they will work on the schematics and should have a final schematic to present by the end of June. He emphasized the importance of spending time on the schematics. The ultimate goal is to have project completed by September 2022.
  - Mr. Stein noted that missing from the timeline was the meeting to work with the BOE on the state reimbursement.
  - Ms. Downey stated that BOE approval is needed after the final design is chosen by the committee and if necessary, BOE may need to schedule a special meeting.
  - Ms. Downey inquired whether the start date should be in January.
  - Mr. Stein noted that starting construction in January is weather dependent however a January start is realistic and something that should be considered. He also noted that the current supply market for sourcing materials should be considered.
  - Mr. Walko will speak with Silver Petrucelli to schedule the next meeting. The date of the meeting will be determined. The next meeting may be in person.
  - Mr. Walko will reach out to town council to see if there can be a balance between the security of the project and information available to the public.
  - Mr. Petrucelli stated that other districts have made the security votes as part of executive sessions and the more generic votes in public sessions.
- Approval of Minutes - Motion was made by Christina Downey and seconded by Maureen Bonanno to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2021 meeting. The motion was approved.
  - Adjourn
    - The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Walko at 8:58 am.

Submitted by Maureen Bonanno June 17, 2021