

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

DATE: September 15, 2021

LOCATION: Virtual via Google Meet

TIME: 8:00 am

Committee Members Present:

Stephen Walko - Chairman

Jake Allen- Vice Chairman

Ashley Cole

Louis Contadino

Stephanie Cowie

Christina Downey (BOE)

Megan Galleta

Leslie Moriarty (BET)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Steven Swidler (BOE Staff)

Craig Amundson (RTM)

Dennis Yeskey (P&Z)

Tom Bobkowski (BOE - Central Office)

Dan Watson (BOE- Central Office)

Lauren Rabin (Board of Selectmen)

Ralph Mayo (GHS Principal)

Others Present:

David Stein (Silver Petrucelli)

Not Present:

Will Schwartz (DPW)

Maureen Bonanno-Secretary

1. Meeting was called to order by Mr. Walko at 8:00 a.m
2. Mr. Walko opened the meeting by thanking everyone who attended the September BOE meeting. At the September meeting, the BOE unanimously adopted the design plan presented by the Committee. Mr. Walko noted that the BOE confirmed that the glass enclosure around the security guard desk can be added at a later date if needed. We can now proceed with the approved design without glass at the security desk.
3. Three topics for today's meeting; Timing, P&Z Process and Design Process.
 - Mr. Stein discussed timing for the project. He noted that the schedule should work back from the anticipated completion date.
 - Mr. Stein met with the town use department to outline dates and noted that the project is estimated to take 8 months.

- Mr Stein noted that the pre-application was in process. A zoning variance will be required based on building coverage. Also, approval for the MI is required. The application for state reimbursement requires approvals from the Building Committee, the BOE and the RTM.
- Ms. Downey confirmed that the RTM does need to pass resolutions for state funding and this resolution is on the agenda for the September 27th RTM meeting. On the MI approval, she recommends that we should be aware of the timing for their call, regardless of whether the paperwork is completed.
- Ms. Moriarty noted that the MI only needs to go through the Board of Selectmen's office and P&Z unless there is an objection to the project.
- Mr. Walko clarified that the reason for the RTM resolution is a requirement from CSG, the BOE consultant, to obtain additional approval by the RTM in order to seek state reimbursement. A bonding request was previously approved by the RTM.
- Mr. Stein stated that the paperwork for the MI will be submitted by October 4th for the October 14th Board of Selectmen meeting and the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting at the end of October. Final site plans, special permits will be submitted during October. Full land use approvals will be in before the project goes out to bid.
- Mr. Amundson noted that the RTM members have questions regarding the bonding request on the agenda for the Sept. meeting. He stated that In order to move the planning process along, the MI must be in place and that the item on the RTM's agenda for the Sept. 27 meeting requires a design schematic.
- Mr. Walko clarified that the only reason that this project is going back to RTM is for the state funding application. RTM already approved the amount for this project in the current budget.
- Ms. Downey confirmed that the RTM resolution on the September 27th agenda, is the 3rd prong of the state grant application. It is a requirement to seek state funding.
- Mr. Amundson stated again that he has received questions from RTM members, based on newspaper reports, that the \$1.2MM pledgeholder at state level for this project needs to be clarified at the RTM level. And the 3rd prong requires schematics and some people at RTM question whether this committee has the authority, prior to MI status, to request those kinds of drawings.
- Walko reminded the committee that the newspaper report, which was discussed at a previous meeting, was inaccurate and the state mistakenly reported this and it was carried forward by the Greenwich Time. He encouraged the committee to clarify this to anyone questioning it. And, as to schematic design, we just received approval from BOE for the design, and this additional approval process has not been historically done and is being done for the process of the state funding.
- Mr. Stein David reported that they are moving forward with designs. Working on the survey and that piece of the application. The 1st step is the pre-application to P&Z, starting with a letter summarizing the scope of the work, for the Oct. 14th

meeting agenda. The next step will be the Zoning Board of Appeals for the variance. On October 29th, the MI application will be submitted and on November 9th we will meet with the Board of Selectmen for MI approval.

- Mr. Walko requested a calendar with all of the dates and times and noted that this committee would need to approve any changes to the design, so that should be built into the timeline.
- Mr. Walko also discussed the process. He noted that although it is helpful to have RTM approve the request for state funding, this process is separate from the building process. It is his understanding that the MI is approved by the Board of Selectman and P&Z and only if it is appealed, then the RTM weighs in.
- Ms. Moriarty confirmed that P&Z acts only when they approve the final site plan and that any member of the community could appeal within 30 days, which would then require RTM approval.
- Mr. Stein confirmed that the State does need to review the design plan before it goes out to bid.
- Ms. Moriarty asked about the timing for the state reimbursement process.
- Mr. Stein agrees that the process for State funding should be considered, however, given the size of the project, this should not be a long process.
- Mr. Stein stated that they should have a schematic design site plan and site development plan to the committee by the next few weeks, in time for the Oct. 6th meeting. Mr. Stein will put together an action plan. He will also have the Aug. and Sept. invoices for the committee to approve.
- Mr. Stein reported that there were questions from the P&Z meeting about whether the project will affect the drop-off area and whether the design will incorporate any green/solar initiatives. P&Z also noted that the state is doing work on the Post Road near Hillside which could impact the project.
- Mr. Bobkowski asked about the front circle access for buses during the construction phase. Mr. Stein agreed that the circle would be impacted and a logistic plan should be part of the bidding process. Mr. Bobkowski noted that the bus staging may be a concern with 30 buses arriving for pick up and drop off.
- Ms. Cole offered to speak at the variance meeting. She also asked if this committee could push along the BOE egress project.
- Ms. Cowie asked if the heavy construction was at the beginning of the project, would it be better to start in summer vs. January? And, should the school start time be changed during construction? Additionally should the PTA be sending information to the neighborhood on the project?
- Mr. Walko responded that since the timing of the project is not yet set, we can't communicate that yet to neighbors, however, it is ok to share the design with them. Mr. Walko noted that the school start time would be a BOE issue to take up.
- Mr. Allen asked for clarification on whether we are prohibited to go out and bid before we get state approval. Mr. Walko and Mr. Stein confirmed that is the case if we are seeking state reimbursement. Mr. Allen then asked if we are able to hire a consultant to assist with site logistics prior to approval from the state and

Mr. Stein confirmed that we are able to hire pre design services, but they are not the constructor. Currently the BOE employs CSG, who are construction advisors and they are currently working on the state reimbursement.

- Mr. Walko pointed out that we need to be aware of the budget considerations when discussing the hiring of consultants. Mr. Walko will look into whether CSG could assist with the site.
- Mr. Yeskey agrees, on behalf of P&Z, that the traffic before and during construction is a concern. He suggested that details regarding the safety and security importance of this project should be included in the pre-application.
- Mr. Amundson expressed his concern about losing access to the front circle during the school term and asked if the buses could be re-routed to the rear of the school. Mr. Bobkowski responded that the back of the school can not be used for buses. Currently the rear of the school is for parent drop-off and staff parking.
- Mr. Walko noted that given this will be an active building site, and student safety is a major concern, we will likely need to spend more time on logistics.
- Ms. Moriarty asked if the logistic planning, including safety, transportation and drop-off, was part of the final site plan approval and Mr. Yeskey confirmed that the logistics planning was part of the final site plan.
- Ms. Rabin suggested that the 2 mile busing limit should be reevaluated in an effort to alleviate traffic. Reducing that limit would put more kids on buses. Mr. Walko noted that this would also be a BOE issue.
- Ms. Cole noted that the conclusions from the last traffic study have not been implemented to date which is concerning to the neighbors. We also should design this project in a holistic manner.
- Mr. Mayo agreed with the points made by committee members that we should consider all of the other projects happening simultaneously, in particular, the Post Road construction with this project and timing is very important.
- Mr. Walko noted that if there is a decision internally to move timelines, this committee will have an opportunity to opine on timing and give approval.

4. Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Jake Allen and seconded by Leslie Moriarty to approve the minutes of the August 18th, 2021 meeting. The motion was approved.

The Motion Passed 8-0

5. Moving Forward:

- The next scheduled committee meeting is on October 6th, 2021.

6. Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Walko at 9:10 am.

Submitted by Maureen Bonanno September 27th, 2021