

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

DATE: October 27, 2021

LOCATION: Virtual via Google Meet

TIME: 8:03 am

Committee Members Present:

Stephen Walko - Chairman

Jake Allen- Vice Chairman

Maureen Bonanno-Secretary

Ashley Cole

Louis Contadino

Stephanie Cowie

Christina Downey (BOE)

Leslie Moriarty (BET)

Megan Galleta

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Tom Bobkowski (BOE - Central Office)

Craig Amundson (RTM)

Dennis Yeskey (P&Z)

Ralph Mayo (GHS Principal)

Will Schwartz (DPW)

Others Present:

David Stein (Silver Petrucelli)

Bob Banning (Silver Petrucelli)

Jill Oberlander

Not Present:

Lauren Rabin (Board of Selectmen)

Dan Watson (BOE- Central Office)

Steven Swidler (BOE Staff)

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Mr. Walko at 8:03 a.m
2. **Update on P&Z Meeting:**
 - Mr. Walko gave an update on the October 26th P&Z Meeting.
 - Mr. Walko noted the questions from the commission side revolved around the height of the vestibule, how the vestibule fits in with the Master Facilities Plan, and visitor parking spots. The public, mostly Hillside Road residents, commented on lighting, landscape, traffic, noise, visitor parking, the need for the 2nd egress road out to Post Road, and if we were considering a social impact study.

- Mr. Walko asked the committee if anyone was aware of a specific GHS Master Facilities Plan and Mr. Mayo responded that there is a District Master Facilities Plan, and the GHS vestibule was part of that with the library space behind it. Mr. Walko stated that he will get a copy of the plan specific to GHS. Ms. Downey agreed that there is only a Master Facilities Plan that looks at every building in the district, however, we are very far behind on that plan. Ms. Moriarty agreed that the plan involved interior work including moving the Media Center to behind the glass corridor to make room for extra classrooms to accommodate the enrollment surge. However, that surge will be passed by the time that happens. Additionally, the Master Plan did not include the renovation to Cardinal Stadium, the new road and the field remediations. Ms. Moriarty noted that the GHS plans are a subset of the Master Facilities Plan that was done in 2018.

3. Discussion on P&Z Meeting:

- Mr. Walko stated that the public made comments regarding landscaping and lighting. He noted that the committee will be addressing both of these areas as part of the project.
- Mr. Walko noted that the neighborhood is looking for a structure with sustainable lighting. It was noted by the Chairman of P&Z that the high school leaves the lights on all night and uses 43% of the energy of all municipal buildings
- Regarding the public comments on the additional road/2nd egress out to the Post Road, Mr. Walko stated that it is not included in our Ed Specs nor are the traffic problems. This security vestibule addresses the number one security issue at the high school. Any other safety and security issues are not under our purview.
- Ms. Bonanno noted that tying in any other project would delay our project significantly. Mr. Walko agreed and Mr. Stein noted that if the main entranceway is flipped to the back of the building this would be problematic. He noted that there is not a direct connection to the Main Office and it would be a much more complex project and a huge step backward. Mr. Stein stated that If we miss the opportunity to begin the project in the summer of 2022 we are on a different academic year for the project
- Ms. Cole supports looking at flipping the entrance to the back of the school and reiterated that we need to take a holistic approach and the real safety issues are from the traffic. Ms. Galetta also agreed that we should consider that, but is aware that it would have an impact on timing and budget.
- Mr. Amundson stated that there is nothing in this committee's purview to address the other areas of security and felt that this should be addressed, however, agrees that we are not responsible for that. Additionally, Mr. Amundson mentioned that a recent Greenwich Time article brought up security concerns at GHS and expressed his concern.
- Ms. Cowie stated that we need to move forward, however, she believes that the neighbors will continue to bring up the 2nd egress/road so it is important to ask Dr. Jones of the status of that project and whether it will be included in the 2022-2023 budget. She noted that the vestibule is also for ADA compliance.

- Mr. Stein addressed Mr. Amundson's concern regarding the Greenwich Time article. He stated that S&P did not provide an interview and believes that the information for the article was from a memorandum that they were required to provide as part of the P&Z application along with the initial report to the BOE. Ms. Downey followed up that some of the quotes may have been from a BOE public meeting.
- Ms. Downey stated that the Superintendent will be presenting the first draft of the Budget to the Board on November 4th. She noted that this will be a proposed budget and we will not know for sure what will be in the final budget until May when the RTM votes. She suggests that the committee should be considering plans in either direction. Mr. Walko added that no matter what the BOE does with their budget, the timing affects us. He noted that whether the 2nd road is in the budget or not, if we put our project on hold until we know for sure that the 2nd access road should be considered, this would push our project off. If it is not in the budget, we would proceed as if it is not being built. If it is in the budget, we would need clarification on whether the 2nd egress should be taken into consideration. Mr. Walko stated that we will continue with our charge, unless we are told otherwise.
- Ms. Bonanno asked for clarification on whether the 2nd egress road would be used as the main entrance/exit to the high school. Ms. Moriarty noted that the P&Z discussions revolved around using the road as a limited, secondary access road and that the road would be a very complicated project given the rock ledges, soil contamination issues and parking issues. She added that as long as the remediation project is going on, probably for a few more years, it's hard to believe that they would start the construction of a new road. It would be a multi-year discussion, negotiating with the state and many unanswered questions.
- Ms. Cole noted that she was on the Hillside Road Traffic Study and they determined there should be a 2nd egress road. Having only one way out of GHS is a safety issue and a huge concern of the neighbors.
- Ms. Cowie clarified that the egress was intended for just a right turn in and right turn out and only for safety purposes, not a full time road. However, there was discussion on whether it could be used to reduce the stress on Hillside Road.

4. Silver Petrucelli Update on Lighting and Landscaping:

- Mr. Stein stated that they have not had a follow up conversation with Mr. Watson on the mechanicals and so they will not be giving an update at this time on HVAC.
- Mr. Stein reiterated that building a road in the back of the school would be very complicated. He noted that it would be a challenge to find a meaningful entryway in the back of the building with a connection to the Main Office.
- Mr. Stein screen shared renderings of a birds eye view of the campus as well as street views. The Committee needs to determine the extent of improvement to the lighting and landscaping is necessary and how far do you take it. The initial concept does not extend to the island, but immediately outside the vestibule.

- Mr. Stein noted that the mechanical units cannot be seen from the street when they are placed on the corridor. If they are adding supplemental air conditioning to the corridors, they need to figure out where to place them where they cannot be seen from the street. He also noted that typically the main entry point would be in the center of the building, which is where the proposed vestibule is located. Entering the high school on Hillside, the proposed vestibule can be seen well above the buses, confirming the need for the height of 35 feet.
- Mr. Stein stated that at dusk or dark, there is minimal site lighting. Will work with administration to understand operating needs of the school. Lighting will be programmable to be dimmed or turned off.
- Mr. Banning stated that they are looking at 2 components of exterior lighting. Linear lighting could be attached to the exterior canopy. These are downward lighting and all LED & controllable mounted along the sides of the wood beams. He noted that they also looked at a few options for lighting the plaza. Currently there are 2 pole lights along with exterior mounted lights. The pole lighting could either remain or be replaced. For the plaza lighting, the assumption would be to keep it clear of poles or bollards to eliminate obstacles for groups of people coming and going and easier for snow removal. The other component to the exterior lighting would be 42 inch high lighted bollards which keep lighting downward. The presentation showed that the numbers range from 20 foot candles right next to the entryway to down to .1 or .2 at the points furthest which is typical parking lot lighting. The proposed lighting solution would be an expansion of what is there now, utilizing or replacing the 2 pole lights and adding short pedestrian height lights.
- Mr. Stein explained that the 20 foot candles equivalency is lower than what it would be in an office. This is typical for right outside a main entry way. Mr. Banning stated that code mandate for minimum egress lighting avg. is a min of 1 foot candle along the pathway which is similar to a brighter parking lot lighting or a bright full moon.
- Mr. Stein added that the topography of the neighbors is higher, so pole lighting is more visible. The bollards will bring the lighting downward, the most sensitive solution for the neighbors. He added that this solution also helps from an ADA perspective. Once past the canopy, the candle numbers drop off significantly. But there is still enough lighting for safety without creating a parking lot scenario, populated by light bulbs.

5. Discussion

- Mr. Walko asked if the renderings show the bollards and Mr. Stein responded that the bollards are not yet reflected in the renderings.
- Mr. Walko asked for clarification as to what S&P is looking for at this point and if there is something for a comparison. Mr. Stein noted that they wanted to present the intent for lighting to begin the conversation.
- Ms. Moriarty pointed out that when she was on the Building Committee for the MISA Project, there was a lot of discussion from P&Z regarding the glow from the entrance of the building. This was a concern from the neighbors as well. Mr.

Banning noted that they need to understand the needs for lighting throughout the night.

- Ms. Cole noted that there should be some lighting at night for security.
- Mr. Contadino asked if S&P had selected the type of bollards yet and if they complimented any existing bollards. Mr. Banning responded that he is not aware of existing bollards on the campus. They are proposing just a simple style of bollards. Mr. Contadino agrees that the idea of a bollard solution is appropriate.
- Mr. Walko stated that he did not see in the renderings any security bollards as it relates to the traffic circle. He noted that is a component of our work and that bollards should be reflected in the renderings.

6. Moving Forward:

- Mr. Walko stated that MI with the Board of Selectman is on Thursday Oct. 29th.
- The next committee meeting was scheduled for November 3rd. Mr. Stein noted that there may not be enough new information to present at that point. Mr. Walko then proposed the next meeting should be November 10th.
- Ms Downey asked when the next meeting with P&Z is and Mr. Walko responded that we will be submitting the appeal application to P&Z on October 29th and the ARC application by November 1st for meetings on the 17th.
- Ms. Cowie asked about whether we would have an update on the budget and Mr. Stein responded that it will be included in the presentation on November 10th. Ms. Cowie also noted that the landscaping is very important.
- Ms. Moriarty pointed out that the original Master Facilities Plan included a relocation of the Media Center to behind the glass corridor and the corridor would have a second level to assist with crowds at passing time. She noted that our current design has the mechanicals located above the glass corridor and noted that this could interfere with the future project. This has not been raised before by anyone, but she did want to make the committee aware. Mr. Stein noted that there is room to work around the mechanicals and a second level on the corridor could .
- Prior to the November 10th meeting, Mr. Stein will prepare an updated schedule and budget and Mr. Walko will obtain the traffic plan from the Hillside Road area and the GHS Master Plan.

7. Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Jake Allen and seconded by Christina Downey to approve the minutes of the October 20th, 2021 meeting. The motion was approved.

The Motion Passed 9-0-0

8. Adjourn:

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

Submitted by Maureen Bonanno on Nov 8th, 2021