

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

DATE: January 14th, 2022

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

Leslie Moriarty (BET)

### Ex-Officio Members Present:

Craig Amundson (RTM)

Ralph Mayo (GHS Principal)

Will Schwartz (DPW)

Dennis Yeskey (P&Z)

Lauren Rabin (Board of Selectmen)

Steven Swidler (BOE Staff)

Tom Bobkowski (BOE - Central Office)

Dan Watson (BOE- Central Office)

### Others Present:

David Stein (Silver Petrucelli)

- **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Mr. Walko at 8:01 a.m.
  - Mr. Walko stated that today's meeting is a continuation of the January 12th meeting which was cut-off due to technical issues and we will continue the discussion on the landscaping. Mr. Walko noted that although we are leaving the landscaping status quo, improving some of the bushes. But there may be an opportunity to add height, which would be helpful to the neighborhood and the overall feel of the school. There will not be a vote on landscaping at the meeting today.
- **Presentation on Landscaping by Silver Petrucelli:**
  - Mr. Stein stated that the landscaping design includes working with the current pavers in place, the grid pattern that aligns with the existing building, which corresponds with the new structure. He also stated that they can work with the existing landscaping and also add more trees to provide better screening for the neighbors.

- Mr. Stein noted that they will also discuss security bollards to prevent vehicles from entering. He added that emergency services will still need access so they would use removable bollards along with more permanent bollards.
- **Discussion on Landscaping:**
  - Mr. Watson stated that we need to loop in parks and recs since they maintain the landscaping.
  - Ms. Cole asked if there is a landscape architect in the firm. Mr. Stein responded that there is not a landscape architect on commission for this project. There is one available but the services would need to be expanded if we are looking to do more than originally planned.
  - Ms. Cowie stated that since Parks and Rec is responsible for maintenance, they should be the ones planning the design.
  - Mr. Walko reiterated that although ARC and P&Z have indicated that we need to address the front plaza, that is not included in the scope of this project, approved by the RTM. He added that we are trying to balance what we are limited in doing, with addressing the concerns of the neighborhood.
  - Mr. Walko will be meeting with the Superintendent next week to discuss light pollution at GHS. He stated that the goal is to help the town with a better, overall holistic approach.
  - Ms. Moriarty agreed that Mr. Walko has been very clear with P&Z on the scope of the project. She added that since P&Z and ARC both want improvements to the landscaping, they may put conditions on the approval. Ms. Moriarty added that we should have enough flexibility to absorb the costs of additional landscaping.
  - Mr. Mayo stated that Parks and Rec has the resources to maintain the landscaping. He noted that the landscaping at Town Hall is maintained by Parks and Rec. and looks good.
  - Ms. Cole agrees with Ms. Moriarty and the neighborhood appreciates the effort to improve the landscaping. She added that maintenance is an ongoing problem.
  - Mr. Contadino disagrees with taking money out of the project budget for landscaping. He proposed we request a Phase 2 for landscaping. He noted the project will be set back if we need to go through the process of getting additional funding for landscaping.
  - Ms. Downey agrees that we need to focus on the scope of our charge. She agreed with putting the landscaping in as an add alternate, so the town entities can see some efficiencies as doing it as part of the project.
  - Mr. Walko stated that the main focus is the building. He noted that if there is a condition by P&Z to improve the landscaping, it is no longer an alternate and we would need to include it in our project. He added that the goal should be to improve modestly, as opposed to status quo or worsening the landscaping. He added that a Phase 2 project may be low priority.
  - Ms. Bonanno added that private funding should be considered for landscaping. Mr. Walko agreed that there are town entities that would be interested in donating time and money which is something the committee can work toward securing.
- **Presentation on Lighting:**

- Mr. Stein continued the lighting presentation which illustrates the use of light bollards, in place of the existing light poles, which ARC requested be lowered to 30 inches from 36. The bollards will provide light shining downward with a minimal amount of light, providing enough for safety.
- Mr. Stein presented a combination of 4 different lighting solutions for outside the vestibule:
  - Option 1: through each bay a continuous LED light strip built into the soffit. This solution limits the amount of glow at the top.
  - Option 2: Recessed down cans in the structure above. Light shines directly down.
  - Option 3: Similar to the inside building, sandwiched between 2 beams an LED light strip fixture. Glow would be on each beam.
  - Option 4: Light pendant which shines beam of light straight down.
  - Option 5: Flood light or directional lights.
  - Option 6: Recessed into pavers, some lights for security that would act as emergency lights, proportionately placed in between the columns.
- Mr. Stein continued the presentation showing the “pick-up stick” lighting inside the vestibule, which was approved by the committee. Mr. Stein noted that there were comments from an ARC member who preferred a more linear design for lighting. Mr. Walko added that this ARC member, felt like the pick up sticks design added to the hodge podge of GHS.
- Mr. Stein ended the presentation by asking the committee if the current solution inside should have any connection to what we do outside.
- **Lighting discussion:**
  - Mr. Contadino stated that we should not be illuminating the building, which is what Options 5 & 6 could do. Mr. Contadino noted that he would prefer a glow at the top. He stated that Option 3 is an easy choice. He added that ARC, a rule, has no jurisdiction inside the building.
  - Ms. Downey agrees that Option 5&6 would provide uplighting, which is contrary to what we are trying to accomplish. She added that she is concerned that the pendants in Option 4 may take away from the architecture. She agreed that Option 3 is a good choice. Option 1 is interesting, but may be difficult to maintain. She added that if we think the interior is better served with pick up sticks we should stick with that choice.
  - Mr. Walko asked the committee if the committee is still in agreement with continuation of the pick up sticks for the interior lighting, which was previously approved and there was no objection from the committee.
  - Mr. Stein stated that with the new lower height of the building and the elimination of beams, there is room now to tuck the pick up sticks up more, which would appeal to ARC, and we may not be able to do that with the pendants.
  - Mr. Walko then directed the discussion to the exterior lighting.
  - Ms. Moriarty requested the presentations be sent ahead of time and also asked if the lighting being proposed is for safety or aesthetics. Mr. Stein responded that

the number one reason is for safety. Ms. Stein stated that she prefers the recessed cans.

- Mr. Stein stated that there is no difference between Options 1 and 3 from a maintenance perspective. He added that Option 1 is more a subtle choice than Option 3, but both would all be tucked into a soffit.
- Mr. Contadino stated that the recessed cans are his least favorite and his preference is either Option 1 or Option 3. He noted that Option 3 could enhance the architecture. He added that there may be a way of cutting a groove within the beam to make it more integral. He would prefer not to have holes in the ceiling. He also stated that the pendant becomes almost as important as the architecture and the school currently does not have pendants.
- Mr. Walko asked if there was a way to show the committee how the light impacts the design of the building. Mr. Stein responded that they can provide examples. Mr. Walko then suggested that we narrow down the options by taking a vote today.
- Ms. Cowie asked if there will be enough lighting to walk up to the vestibule and Mr. Stein responded that there are also the bollards and the illumination from the inside.
- Mr. Walko asked if we should go to ARC with a couple of options, both similar and linear. Mr. Yeskey agreed that we could go with a couple of options however, Mr. Contadino suggested that we go to ARC with what we really want but have another option available.

- **Approval of Outdoor Lighting Options:**

**Motion was made by Christina Downey and seconded by Jake Allen to eliminate outdoor lighting Options 2, 4, 5 and 6.**

**The motion was approved.** *The Motion Passed 7-1-1*

- **Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion was made by Jake Allen and seconded by Stephanie Cowie to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2021 meeting. The motion was approved.**

*The Motion Passed 9-0-0*

**Motion was made by Jake Allen and seconded by Christina Downey to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022 meeting. The motion was approved.**

*The Motion Passed 9-0-0*

- **Approval of Invoice:**

**Motion was made by Jake Allen and seconded by Stephanie Cowie to approve the Silver Petrucelli invoice #21-2401 Dated 11/01/21 in the amount of \$12,284.74. The motion was approved.**

*The Motion Passed 9-0-0*

- **Going Forward:**

- Mr. Walko stated that the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 19th to vote on outdoor lighting.
- Mr. Yeskey noted that, as a P&Z member, he helped write the POCD and there is an upfront promise to buffer large institutions from their neighbors. There have been other schools that have been heavily criticized for lack of landscaping. He added that there is a huge demand to improve landscaping. Detailed legislation will be forthcoming, but we should definitely work towards improving the landscaping.
- **Adjourn:**
  - The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Walko at 9:04 am.

Submitted by Maureen Bonanno on January 18th, 2022