

A meeting of the Building Committee was held on Thursday, November 19, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the LMC of Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Committee Chair John Chapman, committee members Gary Michell, Don Fital, Janet Morgan, Andie Greene, Alan Rubacha, Kurt Lavaway, Robert Piazza, Brian Peterson, Tom Hecht, and Matt Cleary.

Unavailable to attend: JP Fernandes and Robert Halgreen

Also present, Wayne McAllister, Ken Biega from O&G Industries, Alice Jones, Charles Cogriff, 3 additional community members, and Board clerk Deb Carlton

Mr. Chapman called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

The first part of the meeting consisted of committee members introducing themselves, summarizing their experience and professional qualifications for serving on the committee, and describing their motivation for wanting to serve.

Mr. Chapman then gave a brief history of the project which began in 2007 and has been stalled a number of times. The revised project to renovate NHS to new went to referendum in 2013 and passed; subsequent to that, it has been on hold for 2 years while questions about the vote were argued in court. This has given the board time to pause, and the opportunity to restart the project; after planning for 5 years, now we can begin to execute it.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard, Alice Jones, and Wayne McAllister will participate in the work of the committee, as well, and they will bring staff in as needed to participate in the project.

He will develop a calendar of regular meetings, and asked the committee to indicate any days of the week they would never be available so these days can be avoided.

As to the project schedule, the clock is ticking on state approvals and we will need to request deadlines be extended. The committee will look at enrollment as it relates to state funding and possible implications thereof. The committee will look at academic needs, and credit requirements, when considering educational spaces to be renovated. The final design is not set, but the maximum amount that can be spent is specified in the BoE resolution. There will be benefit to re-examining the design in that light in order to achieve what is needed with the renovation project. Changes in building codes, safety requirements, etc., that have transpired since the referendum passed will also be considered.

At the next meeting, a plan will be discussed relative to the question regarding a new RFP for architectural and construction management services. At this stage, while not finalized, it is likely that the project will be executed in a single bid with a likely phased construction process.

During privilege of the floor, Shannon Lavertue questioned why there are no contractors on the committee (as her husband had expressed interest in serving but was not chosen). Mr. Chapman responded that a pool of nearly 30 candidates responded and that to formulate a committee size that is manageable, it was a difficult but necessary process to determine which applicants would be selected. Mr. Chapman also considers that membership on the committee may change over time as some members may need to resign and having a qualified pool to draw from in the future is beneficial. Mr. Piazza added that while committee members are not contractors, per se, most have either significant construction experience or are effectively working as contractors in their area of expertise. Alice Jones expressed she is looking forward to offering assistance to the committee. She described the project as not just a building, but a vision for the future.

Steve Mulhall said he hopes there is room for modification of the original plan, and that the Region12 Agriscience program is factored in, as he presumes we will lose students to that program.

Ms. Lavertue asked if enrollment projections are holding steady. She was encouraged by the uptick in numbers at MES this year. She also wondered if the committee looked at New Milford High School, as it was a very successful project that could be viewed as a reference. She noted that we need better fields, and lights to qualify to be in better divisions.

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Charles Cosgriff noted he is in his 12th year on the Board of Education. He is impressed with what he has heard tonight, the qualifications of the committee, and assured them that the Board, the Superintendent and the leadership team is wholeheartedly behind them in their work. He then urged them to get going!
The meeting concluded at 7:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,

John Chapman, Chair
Building Committee