



MEETING MINUTES

PROJECT: Mercer Island School District
Long-Range Facility Plan Update

PROJECT NO: 2023902.00

DATE: 12 June 2023

FILE NAME: MM004_FPC4_230605

SUBJECT: **Facility Planning Committee Meeting 3: Plan Development**

MEETING DATE: 05 June 2023

TIME: 5:00 – 8:00 pm

LOCATION: Library, Mercer Island High School

ATTENDEES:

Facility Planning Committee

✓ Colin Brandt	– Linhui Hao	– Sandra Levin
✓ Debbie Burke	✓ Jenny Harrington	✓ Deborah Lurie
✓ Sophie Cartwright	– Ian Henry	✓ Brian Mock
✓ Julie Ogata Ciobanu	✓ Janelle Honeycutt	– Rich Nakatsu
✓ Jessica Clawson	– Andrew Howison	– Jamie Page
– Vickie Cleator	– Robyn Kimura Hsu	✓ Carrie Beckner Savage
– Susan Conrad-Wang	– Wen Hu	✓ Becky Shaddle
✓ Jennifer Crespi	✓ Ralph Jorgenson	✓ Toby Suhm
– Dave Cutright	– Jason Kitner	✓ Kim Thomas
– Marcus Engelman-Ost	✓ Kate Wise Knecht	– Lee Tortorelli
– Dan Glowitz	✓ Diana Lein	✓ Asha Woerner
✓ Matt Hall		

MISD Support Team

✓ Fred Rundle
✓ Matt Sullivan
✓ Tony Kuhn
✓ Andreeves Rosner
✓ Brandy Fox

Mahlum Architects

✓ LeRoy Landers
✓ David Mount
– Rebecca Hutchinson

The following represents the architect's understanding of discussions held and decisions reached in the meeting. Anyone with amendments to these minutes should notify the author within five (5) days of the minutes date in order to amend as appropriate.

ITEM	DISCUSSION
1.1	Welcome and agenda presented by LeRoy Landers. Goals for the evening include: > Refine and finalize a long-range facility plan scenario to take out to the broader community (understanding that this is not a final plan) > Garner additional feedback on elementary school consolidation
1.2	LeRoy reviewed the results from the Bond 1 planning exercise completed at the FPC Meeting 3. The bond amounts of the four scenarios that were developed ranged from \$144 million to \$275 million. 75% of the scenarios included: two major projects, Lakeridge Elementary School, Islander Middle School, and approximately 40% of the total MIHS program-related need. Committee member questions and comments: > Are there construction cost savings that can be achieved by working on the middle school and elementary school projects at the same time, or two elementary schools at the same time? <i>No, they would be considered entirely separate projects and would likely have to be done sequentially rather than concurrently. This is in part due to the significant manpower needed. Two elementary schools would have to be sequential.</i> > Community buy-in for replacement of stadium seating and wall will be difficult, especially when compared to the need for ADA improvements. It would be helpful to have more back-up information (engineering report) about the need and scenarios. <i>That is good feedback, and the District is planning to do this.</i> > It was noted that adding a new gym to West Mercer was included in one group's scenario because that school is having significant issues with their shared facility, and they would not be getting a rebuild for 10-12 years in that scenario. <i>Adding a new facility onto the existing building will significantly limit the options for school replacement in the future.</i> > There is a concern about vacating Island Park and then not being able to use it again when needed, based on the situation with vacated space at Islander Middle School. <i>Brandy noted that the decommissioned space at the middle school is not prohibited from being brought back online by OSPI, however the 100/200 Building will need to be removed to provide space for the new addition. There should not be an issue bringing Island Park back online if it is needed.</i> > Could we potentially move Crest and Administration into Island Park? <i>Island Park is in worse condition than the Administration Building and Crest has a strong relationship with the high school and should be located nearby.</i> It was also noted by a Committee member that moving the Administration Building would increase space for a new high school in the future. > Would like to have a universal acknowledgement that the District will not sell any land, even if a facility is vacated. And, if renting the hibernated space, the District should not plan to do it for more than 5-7 years, because it engenders a sense of ownership with tenants. > With the expected decrease in enrollment, what percentage of the students could be housed in the newer building at the middle school? <i>All students use the new building because it includes the core functions of gym, cafeteria, music, and administration. There are also some science and general purpose classrooms there.</i>

- 1.3 LeRoy shared how four plan scenarios were developed from the Committee's planning exercise results, including two scenarios with two projects each and two scenarios with one project each. Schedule and tax rate impact information were also provided for each bond scenario. In response to a committee-member question from the previous meeting, LeRoy also provided a review of information regarding assessed property values from the King County Assessor's website.

Committee member questions and comments:

- > Are we going to discuss how we are going to bring the future bonds scenarios to the community? Which is more palatable to the community: two larger bonds with shorter overall duration or three smaller bonds with a longer overall duration? *Fred noted that we will be updating the Board in August and will brainstorm about different perspectives. LeRoy also noted that we are asking the Committee to come back for one more meeting in the fall to preview the community presentation.*
- > Is it accurate that all scenarios assume Island Park is the school to be vacated? *Yes, that is correct and reflects the scenarios that were developed by the Committee at the last meeting.*
- > It should be noted that future planning (past Bond 1) is hypothetical and not binding. The community is not committed to doing additional work after Bond 1.
- > In Bond Scenarios A and B, is the project order fixed? *No, either project could go first.*
- > Bond charts show the Cap Tech and EP&O levies staying the same over time. Will they really stay the same? *Not necessarily, but it is shown this way to make the modeling more straightforward.*
- > What has the community response been to bonds in the past? *In 2012, a bond proposal to rebuild three elementary schools and IMS failed. There was a lot of community outreach, but in hindsight it was not enough. There were a lot of lessons learned from that process. In 2014, a smaller bond to build Northwood and part of IMS passed. Note: This bond also included work at MIHS.*
- > Provide more transparency to the public what is a "need to have" versus what is a "good to have." Give people more than one option.

- 1.4 Committee members completed an individual exercise related to the four Bond 1 planning scenarios that were presented, responding to the following questions on cards:

- > Which scenario do you most support and why?
- > Which scenario do you think the broader community would support and why?

Overall, the exercise results were that the majority of individual perspective cards (votes) were placed on the two larger bond scenarios and the majority of community perspective cards (votes) were placed on the two smaller bond scenarios. The following themes have been summarized from the exercise cards, with the number of mentions on individual cards/number of mentions on community cards noted in parentheses:

Scenario A: Address All Levels

- > Finish the middle school / finish what we started (4/2)
- > Improve schools at all three levels (4/0)
- > Do as much as possible at once (addresses a larger chunk of need) (4/1)
- > Address elementary needs (3/1)
- > Reasonable cost / best value (2/1)
- > Start with an elementary school (1/1)
- > Start with the middle school: students have one round of construction (0/1)

- > Allows consolidation to three elementary schools (1/0)
- > Current low enrollment allows a swing school (least disruption) (1/0)
- > Mercer Island has fallen behind neighboring district in facility quality (1/0)
- > Island Park site is available for other purposes and future use (1/0)
- > Seismic risk to students (1/0)
- > Hard for community to understand closing an elementary school (0/1)
- > Need for significant education, communication, transparency (0/1)

Scenario B: Focus on Elementaries

- > Elementary schools are the highest priority (safety, learning, condition) (3/1)
- > Cost is not much more than Scenario A (2/0)
- > New state-of-the-art facilities will retain quality teachers and staff (1/0)
- > Impacts the greatest number of students compared to completing the middle school (1/0)
- > It is more equitable to replace both elementary schools (1/0)
- > IMS can be right sized as enrollment trends continue to evolve (1/0)
- > Two elementaries is cleaner to present to the public (1/0)
- > With the right education and PR/marketing, the community will support replacing 70-year-old elementary schools (0/1)

Scenario C: Finish What We Started

- > Cost range is more likely to be supported by the community (1/8)
 - Mercer Island is a fiscally conservative community
 - This option equates to ~1,000 per annum of increased taxes
 - Past performance suggests future performance: big bonds fail
 - Uncertainties about the economy and enrollment is down
- > Community wants and expects to see completion of the middle school (0/4)
- > Work at the middle school will benefit all students (1/3)
- > Addresses need at two levels (0/1)
- > The need at the middle school is apparent and the need at the elementary schools is not (0/1)
- > We already have more elementary schools than we need (0/1)

Scenario D: Start with an Elementary

- > Cost range is more likely to be supported by the community (0/2)
- > Elementary schools need to be replaced (0/2)
- > Building one elementary school at a time has proven to be acceptable to the community (0/1)
- > The community may have a hard time pouring more money into the middle school (0/1)

Additional Committee discussion:

- > Scenario A is very south-end specific. What do people think about that? It's better than only doing elementary schools. It is more about the middle school addressing the most community support. Also, north end work happened in the last bond.

- > Is it potentially a deal-breaker to close Island Park? The reaction from many other community members spoken to (about 30 people) has been that closing Island Park makes sense, because it leaves one elementary on the north end and one on the south end. Going from four schools to three schools makes sense from a pragmatic, budgetary standpoint and people on the Island understand that. Island Park alumni and families that have been talked to also understand the need to close the school. The safety issues and traffic impact should also be considered and will benefit the whole community.
- > It may be better to propose a scenario that includes consolidation, since so many people are clearly in favor of it.
- > There are a lot of people that don't go to the schools in the bond but remember that the majority of voters don't have students in any school, so the plan has to make sense for those people too.
- > The stark difference of white cards (what is individually supported) versus yellow cards (what would likely be supported by the community) shows us that communication with the community is necessary to build support.
- > Worried about some of the vocal groups in the community that will be against the bond. Majority of kids on the Island that are in private schools are in faith-based schools. Property value increases have been significant on the Island; improving our schools and it benefits property values.
- > With regard to Scenario A, it would impact some kids twice and don't know that it is worth it.
- > We don't want to end up having children disrupted twice, so it is better to do IMS first, rather than an elementary school.
- > Parents are seeing the negative impacts of low enrollment right now, such as fewer sections with more students in each class.
- > LeRoy asked the group: Is it the consensus of the Committee that consolidation would not be a negative issue for the community?
 - Yes, if a commitment not to sell the vacant property is also included.
 - There is some fear that it could be an issue but have not seen any evidence of this.
 - The message should include that it is the fiscally-responsibly and educationally preferable thing to do.
 - Must have community engagement so that people are part of the decision-making.
- > Does the age of our buildings play a role in attracting staff to the district? *Fred noted that it is not a huge contributor to attraction and retention for teachers.*
- > Is it possible to get donations for capital projects in public schools? *Fred and Brandy have not seen a lot of this, though there have been some discrete small donations for specific things. LeRoy noted that if you can forge partnerships with private groups, that is great, but don't count on it until it is realized, and the amounts are usually smaller than needed for larger capital projects.*
- > LeRoy asked people to consider what are the compelling reasons for each scenario.
 - Scenario A – It solves a demographic issue with low enrollment through consolidation. It will impact the entire island because every elementary school will be impacted. It puts all of the middle schoolers under the same roof. For elementary school, it solves some of the critical safety issues at Island Park. An elementary really needs to be embedded in the plan to address low enrollment and fiscal responsibility. Voters agreed to the middle school in the last bond when they supported building the first part only.
- > Do we have enough space to consolidate without replacing a school with a larger facility?

- > Do we have enough room for Lakeridge students at Island Park during construction? *There would be a reboundary effort and redistribution among multiple schools if needed.*
- > Some concern about consolidation and is it a permanent commitment? Don't want to have to go above 600 at Lakeridge.
- > The IMS Phase 2 plan was designed as a two-story addition. Is it possible to put the construction staging away from the new track? *Brandy noted that the track is nearly 20 years old now and will need to be redone when construction happens.*
- > Like A more than B because it gives time to adjust to enrollment changes and some wiggle room.
- > Why IMS before Lakeridge in Scenario A? *Not specific when scenarios were developed, but a compelling reason was mentioned this evening, because elementary students could be impacted twice if an elementary school is first and then again when the middle school is constructed.*
- > It is a big hassle, as a student, to switch between buildings at the middle school. Students are not going to be excited if the bond doesn't address the middle school.

1.5 The intention of this process is to make the planning as transparent and inclusive as possible. There may be a need for a follow-up meeting to further discuss consolidation. The potential date is June 26th. How many could potentially attend on that date? Approximately two-thirds of the group would be able to participate. It is great for people to have information conversations. This is a decision for the community to make.

1.6 Next steps in the planning process include:

- > August: Board update on long-range facilities planning work
- > Early September: Reconvene FPC to preview materials prior to community outreach, to make sure information represents the Committee's perspective
- > Late September/October: Community outreach meetings (FPC members are encouraged to attend if possible)
- > November/December: Long-Range Facility Plan Update report complete

1.7 A copy of the meeting presentation can be found on the District website, for additional information.