

Policy FEE Site Acquisition

Issued 2/14

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for the acquisition of sites for school construction.

The board believes it is appropriate and necessary to identify and acquire land in a formalized manner to assure the most advantageous pieces of real estate are obtained for School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties.

The board will charge the district administration to begin the selection process. The district administration will do the following.

- Establish parameters for selection.
 - Analyze attendance zones and forecasted enrollment to determine general location boundaries.
 - Determine range of acreage requirements (typically based on state guidelines).

The board believes that properly located schools lie within reasonable travel distance of the neighborhoods they serve. The district administration will do the following.

- Identify and evaluate potential sites.
 - Collect preliminary data on each potential site that includes the following items (these items should be readily available and at little or no cost).
 - location (address, city, zip code, county)
 - tax map, block and lot number
 - current ownership
 - size and shape (get recorded plat from county)
 - percentage wooded
 - accessibility
 - road frontage
 - topography variation estimate
 - any improvements (size, age and condition)
 - photographs at street level and aerial photos (to include a copy of the US Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map of the site)
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soils survey map
 - water and sewer provider and proximity to site
 - asking price for whole tract
 - asking price for subdivision of parts of tract
 - most recent traffic count of cars per day on each road that the property fronts
 - flood zone determination (obtain from the district insurance agent)
 - copy of the current zoning map and applicable zoning text
 - historical environmental reports from seller, if available
 - Retain a Realtor approved by the board to represent the district as a buyer, if necessary.
 - Eliminate unsuitable sites leaving three to four final sites.
 - Perform technical evaluation and comparative analysis (two to four sites). Consider the following.
 - development cost (on and off site costs), including sewer and water

— ~~political implications~~

-- campus safety

-- environmentally ~~sensitive~~ conditions (if any)

-- letter from the applicable zoning authority that the intended use is permitted, out right, without special exception and, if not, procedure necessary for obtaining approval

-- highway department immediate and future plans for changes/ improvements near the prospective site

- Zoning and all county and municipality laws and restrictions, including but not limited to required set-backs and road access

Difficulties of site acquisition, problems arising from land use, residential development and the configuration of city boundaries

make the precise spacing of school facilities difficult if not impossible. However, the board will make the most appropriate site selection based on general location, usability and price. District administration will do the following.

• Perform final site selection.

- Provide site recommendation to board, including the preliminary technical evaluation above and any and all concerns known to the district, Realtor and seller.

- Obtain "contingent" board approval for a -

~~-Have~~ "Letter of Intent to Purchase" sent to the seller. This is to be followed by a "Purchase and Sale Agreement" (consider requesting a "First Right of Refusal" on contiguous land owned by the seller. Also, request that cost of plat and topographic survey be credited towards the purchase price at closing). All such agreements must include a clause allowing the district to cancel the sale, with full refund of all monies paid to the seller and Realtor, if at any point prior to construction, all necessary permits to construct a school, including but not limited to zoning, water and sewer or road access are not received by the district.

- Perform "contingent" technical evaluation.

- With board approval, contract with a board approved licensed engineer or architect Professional, covered by the Professional's Errors and Omissions insurance, that will ensure the final technical evaluation is complete and who will provide a final recommendation regarding the site evaluation, including any and all issues which may arise with the proposed site.

-- Obtain plat and all available topographic survey information. Request copy from seller of previous plat if available.

-- Obtain title search (request copies of seller's policy and provide to the attorney performing title work).

-- Perform wetlands assessment.

-- Perform geotechnical testing to determine soil suitability and for soil management purposes.

-- Phase I Environmental Study

--- Request copy(s) of any environmental surveys that may have been previously performed for the site.

--- *If a suitable site assessment is not available, select an environmental firm for the district and perform a Phase I environmental study.*

--- *In the event the Phase I report indicates any areas of concern that require sub-surface investigation (Phase II and/or Phase III), get written authorization from the seller with the proposed scope of work from the environmental engineer attached before work is done.*

--- After receiving a clean environmental report, hire a South Carolina State Certified General Real Estate Appraiser to represent the district. Request the selected appraiser provide a full, self-contained narrative appraisal report (be sure to specify the number of original reports needed in the final engagement letter). Provide the appraiser with all previously collected data on the selected site and other third party reports and plat.

--- Obtain department of education approval.

--- Obtain "final" board approval.

Just prior to acquisition of the land, add the proposed site to the district's commercial general liability policy.

Because of population and enrollment forecasts change over time, sewer and water permits are not indefinite and zoning, transportation and other applicable requirements can change, the district will not purchase land unless a specific need for replacement or expansion in a particular enrollment zone has been approved by the board as part of the Five Year Master Facilities Plan per policy FB.

The district administration will purchase the approved site.

~~Whenever possible, the board will acquire school sites long before they are needed. Such a policy will permit a better choice of site at acreage rather than lot prices and will reduce the need for costly demolition of residential or other structures.~~

Adopted 5/19/03; Revised 2/10/14

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties