



MEETING MINUTES

PROJECT: Mercer Island School District Long-Range Facility Plan Update **PROJECT NO:** 2023902.00
DATE: 27 November 2023 **FILE NAME:** MM007_FPC7_231113
SUBJECT: **Facility Planning Committee Meeting 7**

MEETING DATE: 13 November 2023 **TIME:** 5:00 – 7:00 pm
LOCATION: Mercer Island High School Library

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- ATTENDEES:** **Facility Planning Committee**
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|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ Colin Brandt | ✓ Matt Hall | ✓ Sandra Levin |
| – Debbie Burke | ✓ Linhui Hao | ✓ Deborah Lurie |
| – Sophie Cartwright | – Jenny Harrington | – 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 |
- MISD Support Team**
- ✓ Fred Rundle
 - ✓ Matt Sullivan
 - ✓ Tony Kuhn
 - ✓ Andreeves Rosner
Ian Henry
 - ✓ Brandy Fox
- Mahlum Architects**
- LeRoy Landers
 - David Mount

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	<p>Welcome and agenda presented by Fred Rundle:</p> <p>We are coming back together to talk about what we learned from the process and thank everyone for their time and helping with the process. It is never a linear process but we always get to a better place in the end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review survey results and reflections on community feedback. > Review the Board's decision on consolidation. > Straw proposal feedback. > Next steps for the committee moving forward.
1.2	<p>Josh from the survey firm Qualtrics, presented a review and analysis of the LRFP community survey results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 568 respondents to the survey; almost all were residents and the vast majority had children in the District. > The community does support pursuing a bond (78%). > People who did not attend the presentation are more likely to support the bond; but it may be that those attending the presentations hadn't made up their mind. > Finishing the Middle School was the favored bond scenario (64%), across all demographic groups. > When looking at what do you think the community would favor' (the "wisdom of the crowds"): 63% continue to support the middle school options. > Respondents are overwhelmingly against consolidation, except for those affiliated with Northwood. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A committee member noted that some community members were against consolidation because it was so closely tied to enrollment and there is a desire to see how the enrollment predictions play out. - A committee member noted support for the Middle and High School bond options rather than elementary school options is also due in part to wanting to delay until it can be seen how enrollment is going to change. > Consolidation hurt bond support regardless of child status. > Results were also discussed based on respondent age. <p>Please refer to meeting recording for additional survey result information and analysis.</p>

- 1.3 Fred provided an overview of District reflection on the survey results.
- > Potential consolidation of an elementary overshadowed the discussion about a potential bond.
 - > Elementary parents are in support of a bond, but not consolidation at this point.
 - > Parents are in support of a (yet to be defined) bond and lean toward Plan C.
 - > Residents without students in the schools are less in favor of a bond but there is a significant portion (35%) that are undecided.
 - > Plan C (finish the middle school) is the most supported option.
 - > A committee member wondered how many people supported Plan C because it was the least amount of money.
- 1.4 Committee members were asked to break into groups and describe their reflections on the survey results and their discussion with community members. Responses included:
- > Missing information during the presentations.
 - > Families not having trust in the District, often due to issues from the past.
 - > Lack of understanding of District funding.
 - > Why build a new school when there is declining enrollment?
 - > Educate the community on building conditions.
 - > Where is my money going?
 - > Why close the school in the middle (why not West Mercer)?
 - > Emotions played a role in conversations.
 - > There is a "Covid shadow" – 2020-21 school year.
 - > Families did not want to respond if they were not from Island Park, so not full representation in responses.
 - > No meaningful discussion of renovating the elementary schools.
 - > Cap/Tech vs operations vs the bond: more education is needed for the community.
 - > Distrust of the numbers (enrollment numbers, construction cost numbers).
 - > Loud and clear: no consolidation.
 - > Large school versus a small school and what that does to class size (misconceptions).
 - > Bond breakdown – what percentage goes to each building project?
 - > A lot of strong feelings from the community.
 - > Misinformation around number of moves for students.
- 1.5 Debra and Dan reviewed the position of the Board that took consolidation off the table.
- > From a Board perspective, after hearing from the community, it was clear that consolidation was not supported at this time and such a disruptive decision was not justified.
 - > The resolution acknowledges the position of the community but doesn't bind future Boards. It puts the issue to rest for now and removes it from consideration from the current Board.
 - > Lists general factors such as overall enrollment and other metrics to consider.
 - > The Board didn't do an official resolution because didn't want to bind future Boards, which is typical for school boards.

- > The Board will get a report on enrollment and capacity in the schools each year to monitor the enrollment situation and continue the conversation going forward. There will be a lot of transparency and people will have the opportunity to provide input.
 - > The Board is thankful to the committee for participating in this difficult process. This process set up for success in the next route that is chosen, adds credibility, and opens the door for good conversations with the community.
- 1.6 Fred noted that MISD is one of only a few districts in the region who grew fund balance last year and will grow fund balance again this year.
- > This will help restore confidence with the community. There is a plan to get out and talk with people over the coming months.
 - > The current budget situation means the estimated operational savings of \$800,000 per year for closing a school is not as big of a deal as it was a year ago.
 - > A committee member noted that the value of \$800,000 changes depending on the context of the discussion. It seemed low to the community in the context of losing an elementary school but would be seen as huge if the District were misplacing that amount of money.
- 1.7 Fred presented a straw plan for discussion, which included:
- > Move forward with "Plan C": Finish the Middle School and a portion of the High School need.
 - > Study the elementary sites to determine if a swing school is needed or if a new (or modernized) building can be built on the site while occupied.
 - > IPE, LRE, and WME to receive carpet, paint, roofs, and boilers now through Cap/Tech funding.
 - > Potential bond on ballot in February or April of 2025.
 - > Schedule future bonds to complete all identified projects.
 - > A committee member noted that they were torn over how to include elementary schools or not. The chance may be lost to replace any elementary school right now; people may vote against a bond that includes any elementary school work for the foreseeable future. But it's also important to start soon with elementary school replacement, in order to replace them all over the long term. Maybe going back to the community without the option of closing a school, and emphasizing the other issues, including condition and replacement over time, could be successful.
- 1.8 Fred, Brandy, and Matt reviewed a potential bond schedule that identified an 11-year plan with four bonds: Bond 1 includes the work in Plan C, and Bonds 2-4 address the remaining need in the District in future years.
- > Bond dollars are escalated (5%) to the midpoint of construction for each bond.
 - > The nine-month concept design phase prior to each bond allows development of a solid understanding of what the project is before going out for a bond.
 - > Bonds are scheduled to run in February. November bonds are less likely to pass (1 out of 7 districts in the region this November passed) and there are often levies on the ballot in November. It is also best to try not to run a bond during a presidential year because it can get drowned out.
 - > A committee member noted that the schedule includes multiple stacked bonds (one bond every two years) and a lot of money in a relatively short amount of time. There is concern about whether that is politically feasible.

- > Fred noted that the schedule reflects the most aggressive timeline, and the schedule could go at a slower pace. The schedule also looks at the bigger picture of what is going on. The timing avoids the EP&O and Cap/Tech levies. Watching what King County and the City are doing is also a consideration.
- > The LRFP will include consideration of all four bonds, but the District will only go out to the community for one bond at a time.

- 1.9 Brandy reviewed preliminary, draft information of what may be included in the Cap/Tech levy over the next three years. This is funding from a levy that has already been passed.
- > The way we approach the three elementary schools should be the same (paint all three at the same time, carpet all three at the same time, etc.).
 - > The three-year investment for IPE and WME is about \$1.8M each and Lakeridge is less (about \$1.0M) because it has already been reroofed.
 - > The District has been 'kicking the can down the road,' waiting for the LRFP to determine which elementary school to replace, but now needs to address repairs in all three elementary schools. Depending on when bonds are run, it could be 2040 before all three are replaced.
- 1.10 Matt reviewed property tax information:
- > The 2023 Mercer Island tax rate includes a total of \$6.12 per \$1,000 of assessed value. 37% is for state school fund and 21% is for MISD school district (includes EP&O levy, and Cap/Tech levy, and payment on the bond).
 - > Piper Sandler estimates an additional \$0.49 per \$1,000 AV for the estimated cost of Bond 1 (\$119.3M). Additional bonds would add additional tax. In 2028-29, the 2014 bond comes off.
- 1.11 The Committee was asked to show their level of support for the Straw Plan with a vote from 1-5, with 5 being the highest level of support. All committee members present voted 4 or 5.
- > A committee member asked about connecting the gym and the main building at Island Park. This problem was talked about a lot and is not going away. Something should be done to avoid having such an open connection between the buildings. Fred noted that elementary school principals are looking at their priorities and talking with their PTAs.
 - > A committee member asked about the seismic issues at the elementary schools. Brandy noted that a full seismic study has been done and all schools are safe for children to exit.
- 1.12 Next steps in the planning process include:
- > Start the process now to circle back to the community and let them know that they have been heard.
 - > Draft Long-Range Facility Plan Update report taken to the Board in January.
 - > If the Plan is supported by the Board, begin looking at cost estimates and more detailed information in a concept development phase.
- 1.13 Fred reiterated appreciation for all committee members being a part of this process. A copy of the presentation can be found on the District website, for additional information.