

**State College Area School District
Office of Physical Plant
Ed Poprik, Director**

To: Board of School Directors

From: Ed Poprik

RE: **CAC for Facilities, Architect Recommendation**

Date: May 4, 2009

The CAC for Facilities recommends that the Board of School Directors authorize the release of an RFP for architectural services to the following firms:

ATS&R
Burt Hill
Crabtree Rohrbaugh
Gilbert
Hayes Large
The Ray Group
Schradergroup

Background:

Based on previous Board direction, an Ad Hoc committee was assembled to evaluate an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for design services, this committee included the full CAC for Facilities and 1 representative each from the CAC's for Finance, Athletics and Private Fundraising. The intent of this endeavor was to recommend a "short-list" of architectural firms for the Board of School Directors to interview for the Phase 1 District Wide Facilities Master Plan project(s). The Ad Hoc committee has reached consensus on a "short-list."

Short-List Process and Outcome:

The District received a total of 28 responses to this request. The committee reviewed these responses and evaluated them against the following six criteria:

- Interest in working for the SCASD (3 points)
- Interest in specific projects (3 points)
- LEED process and experience (5 points)
- Act 1 and referendum experience (2 points)
- Personnel and Consultants (4 points)
- References (3 points)

Based on this evaluation, the committee narrowed the list of respondents to 7 firms. All members of the committee were confident that this list reflected the firms that best addressed the established criteria. Specific comments from committee members, as well as interest letters from each of these firms, are attached.

Specific comments from committee members:

ATS&R:

-I felt that each of them had good experience with designing educational facilities, can meet our schedules, had good references and good designs.

-Could complete construction docs 3-5mos

-Specialize in K-12, 98% of workload is in schools: \$2 billion in last 10 years

- Highlights their public involvement in obtaining public support

- Good LEED experience-highlights of numerous completed sustainable design projects

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-Was impressive with their nationwide experience, their full service practice as a single source of contact, their community consciousness and recognition that good design is a key element of the overall educational process and responsibility of school architecture. Paul Erickson seems to successfully practice what he preaches in his publications.

-I like that they are 98% schools; designed 30 elementary and 25 high schools in the last 10 years; Paul Erickson's article on Green Design in the October 2008 "American School & University" was impressive; I liked that they did Central Bucks HS (w/ 2000 students) in 2004 and Neshaminy Langhorne HS (w/ 2800 students) in 2009 so they have experience with big high schools; I like their use of courtyards.

-Experience and capability in elementary and high school design including LEED certification. They listed the school needs by defining student learning outcomes as the objectives in building schools. They have done several schools in Pennsylvania that we could visit to better assess their work.

Schraedergroup:

-My thoughts on short listing Schraeder and Ray Group stemmed from the fact that they made very strong presentations during the Master Planning interviews and we seemed to agree that they were better candidates for the architectural phase of the work. After reviewing their response to the RFQ, I feel that this point of view was strengthened and they both continue to offer strong characteristics for becoming the district's design professionals.

-Interesting and varied designs, seem interested in sustainable design (using 7Group)

-The Schradergroup has shown both innovation and practicality in their previous projects. Their internal staffing and selected consultants represent a quality team that should serve the district well.

- I like their link with 7 Group – Sustainability consultant that has done many LEED projects; I like their local consultants – Sweetland for civil and Barton for M-E-P.

Gilbert:

-Use BIM (Building Information Modeling) for drafting, should reduce conflicts and errors

-Lots of K-12 experience, using 7Group

-They have extensive building projects, both new and renovations at all educational levels. They have been successful with LEED certification as well as good references, many in Pennsylvania.

-I felt that each of them had good experience with designing educational facilities, can meet our schedules, had good references and good designs.

- I like that they are exclusively educational; they designed the first Green educational building in PA and got the 1st Act 1 Referendum passed; designed 69 elementary (20 new and 49 renovated) schools and 63 secondary (13 new and 50 renovations and additions) schools in the past 20 years; also good experience with ancillary school buildings – 28 athletic, 16 administrative, 5 maintenance buildings; I like that they would work with several local firms – ELA for site and civil (and they have worked on 39 school projects with them before) and Barton for M-E-P.

-75% of business is from repeat customers

-Good LEED experience

-Helped on referendum in Upper Dublin referendum (only one to have passed - I am led to believe)

Hayes Large:

-Hayes Large is more appealing in my eyes with Randy Hudson as Partner in Charge.

-The reputation and proven track record of this firm, coupled with the local knowledge and presence of their State College office, are a strong combination of forces.

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-Local presence

-They had by FAR the best cover letter! I am impressed with their 3700 PA school projects over 77 years; I was impressed with Randy Hudson's experience; I liked that they were working with Dr. Kyle Peck for Educational Facilities consulting; I like that they have a local office.

The Ray Group:

-They specifically mention the SCASD LEED initiative, which shows me that they did their homework on the process we have undertaken. -

-Green design and LEED certification. Vast experience and building projects in Pennsylvania.

-My thoughts on short listing Schraeder and Ray Group stemmed from the fact that they made very strong presentations during the Master Planning interviews and we seemed to agree that they were better candidates for the architectural phase of the work. After reviewing their response to the RFQ, I feel that this point of view was strengthened and they both continue to offer strong characteristics for becoming the district's design professionals.

-Lots of K-12 experience, using GreenShape

-I like them especially for elementary schools – 13 new and 24 renovated; I like that they would work with local firms – Sweetland Engineering (civil), Barton for M-E-P; I like their strength in planning and historical preservation/renovation – this may be very helpful for some of our elementary projects.

Burt Hill:

-Local firm, did Park Forest, Gray's Woods and Easterly Parkway - so they already know the SCASD "quirks" (and we know theirs)

-Has solid LEED experience

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-Provides support with developing and implementing an information program for Public Relations (although they say that their only experience with ACT 1 is from seminars, conferences, etc)

-I like that they did PFE and Grays Woods, so they know our district; designed 28 elementary schools and 15 high schools since 2000; I was really impressed with Richard Karcher's experience with regard to school design; I liked that they would bring on so many specialists to work with them on design, especially Martin Vinik(?) for performing arts spaces; I like that they will work w/ some local firms including Sweetland Engineering (civil) and Stephen Parks (stadiums).

-They included a list of their LEED projects that I felt was quite a reputable list. They are also local and have a feel for what folks in the SCASD may want or need in a construction project. They also have many similar projects nearby that we could look at and get references for should we need that.

-Has worked with our district in several other projects and is State College based.

-I felt that each of them had good experience with designing educational facilities, can meet our schedules, had good references and good designs.

-Burt Hill has a significant local presence and will benefit the school district by using the same personnel (with more experience) that participated in previous work here, particularly if Grays Woods addition is one of the immediate priorities.

-Previous SCASD experience, worked with DeJong

Crabtree Rohrbaugh:

-I felt that each of them had good experience with designing educational facilities, can meet our schedules, had good references and good designs.

-Guaranteed design to budget

-One of the largest firms in PA

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-Designed lowest cost school projects in Pa over last few years

-Good LEED experience-has 6 qualified professionals on staff

-Has "significant" experience working with school districts to navigate the referendum process

-Crabtree's budget guarantee and strong client orientation make them contenders. My one concern here is the limited range of their regional work (predominantly restricted to southern Pennsylvania).

- I am impressed with their huge school experience – 160 Elementary schools and 230 secondary schools; I liked their concise 1-page resumes that were loaded with experience (instead of stringing out minimal experience over multiple pages); I liked that they would work with local contractor – Sweetland Engineering (civil); with their location in Mechanicsburg they are not too far away from us.

-Have completed many schools and several in Pennsylvania. They have a large staff with broad experience including LEED Certification. They have completed schools for elementary and high school design as well as supporting facilities.