

**Facilities and Enrollment Task Force**  
**October 30, 2019**  
**Board of Education Conference Room**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Minutes**

**In attendance:** Matt Curtis, Superintendent; Neil Sullivan, Director of Personnel; Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent; Tara Willerup, BOE Member; Susan Salina, BOE Member; Scott Baker; Maria Capriola; Mike Luzietti; Craig Meuser; Andy O'Brien; Steve Patrina; Derek Peterson; Maggie Seidel; Jeff Shea; Bill Sickinger; and Jeff Wyszynski of Tecton Architects.

**Not in Attendance:** Scott Aronowitz; Andy Estell; Burke LaClair; Lisa O'Connor; Tom Roy; Colleen Thompson; Jeff Tindall; Matt Wittmer;

Tara Willerup called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**Approval of October 1, 2019 Minutes:**

Mike Luzietti: MOVE that the minutes of October 1, 2019 be approved

Steve Patrina: Seconded.

Abstain: Susan Salina

So Moved

**Facilities Master Plan Update**

Mr. Curtis opened the meeting welcoming Mr. Wyszynski back sharing that since the October 30 Task Force Meeting, Tecton presented to Administrative Council and engaged in an in-depth conversation about the various options. He went on to say that tonight's meeting would be in preparation for the November 12 Board of Education meeting and the November 20 Public Forum.

Following introductions, Mr. Wyszynski stated that the presentation for this evening is a "dry run" for the upcoming presentations, and that he would welcome questions throughout. It is important to look through the lens of the community while listening this evening. He indicated that we are now focusing on two options for the initial phase of the Master Plan – Option 2, adding a new 5-6 school; and Option 3, adding 6<sup>th</sup> grade to HJMS and building 1 new elementary school.

He reviewed "What we have Heard so Far," from previous Public Forum, Administrators, Walk-Throughs, and Facilities and Enrollment Task Force:

- No surprises about current conditions
- We are currently making the best use of our facilities and they are being used to their maximum potential
- Sustainability is an important topic (Mr. Wyszynski shared that we may want to consider adding a few more slides regarding this topic and resiliency.)
- Fiscal Responsibility

Feedback from the Community includes:

- Spaces should be flexible and not oversized
- Security
- Open Minded Approach – there are no preconceived ideas for the options

- Transparency

He briefly reviewed the slide illustrating the information on our current schools and enrollment stating that the number of additions built over the years has created some inefficiencies. He went on to share that the elementary projections provided by Milone & McBroom illustrate a growing community, with the fastest growth projected at Latimer, Squadron, and Central School; Tariffville School is projected to remain stable.

He stated that during the interactive sessions with the Facilities & Enrollment Task Force and Administrative Council, there were important considerations noted:

- Elementary Schools need the most work
- While renovation in place seems more “comfortable,” you get less value than new build, and there is no swing space to house the students during renovation.
- Redistricting will be necessary in all options, so shouldn’t be a major determinant
- Plan for decommissioned buildings?
- School Populations should be manageable

Mr. Wyszynski reviewed the capacity at the elementary schools stating that Latimer Lane and Squadron are already in need of space, and that at current capacity, there is no flexibility for a bubble class or exploring further curricular improvements. He went on to discuss the reimbursement from the State for Renovating as New, stating that as long as at least 55% of the core is original at time of completion, we would obtain the 10% higher reimbursement rate.

Mr. Wyszynski shared the following for discussion:

Option 2: Construct New 5-6 school at Henry James, reconfigure elementary schools to K-4; and repurpose Tariffville as PK and the Board of Education space. A & B relate to how many schools will be maintained – 3 or 4.

Option 3: Renovate Henry James to accommodate 6<sup>th</sup> grade and reconfigure elementary schools to K-5; repurpose Tariffville as PK and Board of Education space. A & B relate to how many schools will be maintained – 3 or 4.

He suggested that for this discussion, we disregard whether we will maintain 3 or 4 elementary schools as that decision is 10-15 years out in the Master Plan. In either option, capacity at elementary schools will be an issue in the near future; therefore, it is important to create swing space in Phase 1. He provided proposed costs for Option 2 as \$54,255,146 and Option 3 as \$60,607,360 – neither cost includes State Reimbursement. He added that in Option 3, there is more flexibility for further growth, as well as swing space during the project. Mr. Wyszynski discussed the benefits of Option 2 as:

- Providing swing space for projected increase in elementary students
- Campus environment at Henry James
- Most flexible options as existing schools
- Exciting first step

Benefits of Option 3:

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade can be built with minimal impact to HJMS and creates necessary swing space
- Maintains a majority of the current neighborhoods
- Elementary schools are similarly and appropriately sized

A discussion ensued regarding further areas to explore for presentation for the full Board of Education and Public Forum presentations:

- Connector between a new 5-6 school and the current 7-8 school
  - provides a “campus-like” experience
  - Shared areas, i.e., new auditorium
- Provide more information about the multiple phases with timelines about decision making on next steps
- Impact of operating costs and potential staffing efficiencies of both options
- Discuss current state standards for student population, which have changed since Simsbury schools had higher populations.
- Provide details of what will be improved i.e., technology, security, educational facility, environmental impact.
- Discuss why status quo renovations are not a fiscally responsible choice

A brief review of the other options was provided as requested. It was agreed that we would have information and answers about maintaining 3 or 4 schools at the back end, but that it is not the priority during Phase 1 and can be revisited along the way. Also, Future Proofing will be a very important part of Phase 2.

Mrs. Salina requested that as many members of the Facilities & Enrollment Task Force as possible attend the November 12 Board of Education Meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Mike Luzietti:                      Move to Adjourn

Susan Salina:                      Seconded. So moved at 7:47 p.m.