

Town of Stonington
K-12 Building Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 1, 2014
7:00 pm
Central Office, Old Mystic, CT
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CYNTHIA LADWIG
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: Rob Marseglia, Chairman, Julie Holland, Secretary, Bill Sternberg, Deborah Downie, June Strunk and Rob Sundman

Late Arrival: 7:09pm – George Crouse, 7:11pm – Kathy Sanford

Recording Secretary: Sandy Tisiere

Guests and Citizens: Van Riley, Superintendent; Jim Barrett, DRA; Tim Smith, Principal-PMS; Mike Fauerbach, and Paul Sartor

1. **Call to Order**

Rob Marseglia, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:04pm

2. **Approval of Outstanding Minutes**

The following motion was made by Julie Holland and seconded by Rob Sundman.

Motion: To approve the outstanding minutes from November 6, November 11 and November 18, 2014.

November 6, 2014

All: Aye

November 11, 2014

All: Aye

November 18, 2014

Rob Marseglia: Aye

Julie Holland: Aye Deborah Downie: Aye

Junk Strunk: Aye

Rob Sundman: Aye George Crouse: Aye Kathy Sanford: Aye

Abstention: Bill Sternberg

3. **Review of 2015 Regular Meeting Schedule**

The K-12 Building Committee Regular Meeting Schedule was discussed. The meeting day has been changed to Monday. As there are two meetings that are on holidays, those were removed from the schedule.

The following motion was made by Julie Holland and seconded by Deborah Downie:

Motion: To approve the K-12 Building Committee 2015 Regular Meeting Schedule

All: Aye

4. **Discussion of possible middle school locations**

Possible middle school locations were discussed. There is difficulty surrounding the committee members visiting the land located at 126 S. Broad Street. It was determined that it wouldn't be necessary to determine the feasibility of that property being viable for the middle school project as an option.

5. **DRA Architect Report**

Mr. Barrett presented and explained the three possible sites of a combined middle school and the feasibility factors of each site. To further explore the feasibility of the sites, Mr. Barrett will contact Barbara McKrell, Director of Stonington Public Works.

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The potential of a deed restriction on the land behind the high school was discussed. Bill Sternberg will speak with Ed Habarek, First Selectman, for authorization to contact the town attorney to investigate if such a restriction exists.

Dr. Van Riley mentioned the importance of including the cost savings of the option of closing some school buildings that are included in the modernization project at the community workshops. These buildings need to be evaluated to determine their highest and best use for the town to produce income that could possibly offset the costs of the modernization project. A sub-committee was formed consisting of Julie Holland, Rob Sundman, Kathy Sanford, Rob Marseglia and Paul Sartor to contact local realtors to provide these analyses gratis.

The next item of discussion was the December 16, 2014 Community Workshop. The outline will be similar to the first workshop but focus on asking the question of the community: "What do you want?" Other pertinent items were discussed such as location (MS Commons), advertising and refreshments. At the first community meeting, the K-12 Building Committee's email address was shared and the community was encouraged to email the committee. Mr. Marseglia is monitoring the emails and shared with the committee the emails that he has received (attached).

Lastly, Mr. Marseglia asked Mr. Barrett if he or a representative from CRA would be attending the Board of Education and Board of Finance Safety subcommittee meeting on December 10, 2014 at 8:30am. He answered yes and asked a question regarding container walls. Mr. Barrett then shared some overhead slides of options of reconfiguring school entrances improving building security. Julie Holland will also attend the meeting representing the K-12 Building Committee.

6. Adjournment

The following motion was made by Gene Gause and seconded by Bill Sternberg:

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:52pm

All: Aye

Julie Holland, Secretary

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ATTACHMENTS

RE: Meeting November 18 - Outlook Web Access Light

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Office Outlook Web Access Type here to search This Folder Address Book Options Log Off

Mail Reply Reply to All Forward Move Delete Close

RE: Meeting November 18
k12 Building

Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2014 3:14 PM
To: catherine krenicky [ckrenicky@comcast.net]

Hi Catherine,

Thank you for bringing this concern to our attention. I will pass your e-mail along to the entire K-12 Building Committee and Dr. Riley.

We will discuss this at our upcoming meeting on December 1, and when we meet again on December 16th for the second community meeting.

Best regards,
Rob Marseglia

From: catherine krenicky [ckrenicky@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2014 1:00 PM
To: k12 Building
Subject: Meeting November 18

Dear Committee,

Thank you for the invitation to attend these important sessions. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the first meeting. One proposal I have seen put forth is to combine the current middle schools. While there are aspects of this proposal I do find appealing, I am very concerned about having all the students together for so many years.

Given the social-emotional development of middle school age students I worry that a student could be pigeon holed/ stereotyped, in a peer group, at a young age and have difficulty breaking out as they grow and develop. I think it is nice that the schools join in high school from different backgrounds and friend groups and students have an opportunity to either stay the course they are on, or go forth in a new direction.

While it may turn out that financially building one new middle school is most feasible, I do hope there is consultation with an expert on social-emotional development of this age group, to make sure it is the best for the youth of our town in the long run. I do not know the answer. I just want to put forth my immediate concern.

Thank you.

Catherine Krenicky

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RE: Public Workshop 1 Regarding Elementary School Modernization in Stonington - Out... Page 1 of 2

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RE: Public Workshop 1 Regarding Elementary School Modernization in Stonington
k12 Building

Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2014 7:45 AM
To: Mark Minar [markminar@yahoo.com]

Hello Mark,

Thank you for sending an e-mail. I will try to give you the perspective of the Committee with my reply.

The K-12 building committee was re-established because of the age and condition of the W. Broad Street school. We recognized immediately that we should not continue to educate children in W. Broad. From Jan-May of 2014, our initial discussions centered around adding to and modernizing the W. Vine street school during phase 1 of the project, and upgrading Deans Mill school in the 2nd phase. The idea of keeping the W. Broad street school as an operating school building was not the direction we were going.

Then, in late spring of 2014, the idea of a single middle school starting popping up more and more, so we felt compelled to explore this option in parallel with the W. Vine addition/Deans Mill upgrade. We wrote a request for proposal that included the four options identified during our first community meeting, and the architect understands the various options we want to evaluate.

With four options to explore, we've been telling people that we don't have a selected option at this time. However, all of the options we are evaluating do not have W. Broad Street School as a school building when this project is complete.

Rest easy - we have not been and will not be distracted by nostalgia for a building that is 112 years old. It is a grand old building, and I personally hope that the town can re-purpose the building to be something useful - just not a public school.

I hope this e-mail is helpful, and we hope you will attend our second community meeting on December 16th.

If you do attend, please take a moment find me and say "hello".

Rob Marseglia

From: Mark Minar [markminar@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 10:59 AM
To: k12 Building
Subject: Public Workshop 1 Regarding Elementary School Modernization in Stonington

Good day,

Thank you for the opportunity to attend last night's Public Workshop Regarding Elementary School Modernization in Stonington. The presentation was quite impressive and informative. As a long time resident of Stonington, I must admit that I've never given the school system infrastructure much thought other than when driving by the new high school. My thoughts during these occasions has

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always been "wow, nice school".

Now in 2014, I have two children under the age of 5 and I am paying much more attention to the education they will receive as well as the schools that they will attend. I would like to be able to say "wow, nice school" when I drop my children off for elementary school everyday and walk the halls to attend events. Despite being a long time resident of Stonington, I did not grow up here and as such, didn't attend any schools in town. One thing seems certain after last night's meeting: many of the schools are not prepared to educate our children in the 21st century. In last night's meeting, I was particularly struck by the fervent nostalgia for the West Broad Street School that was voiced by several attendees. In fact, the majority of the time spent in the "Container" break away group that I was part of, focused exclusively on this topic. Unfortunately, children aren't educated by nostalgia or ghosts from the past. They are educated by dedicated individuals who need the best tools that a town can afford, such as modern schools. It was apparent that several of these dedicated educators were in attendance last night and they spoke eloquently about some of the conditions in which our children are educated in.

I hope that the committee will not be unduly distracted by any potential ongoing debate regarding the fate of the West Broad Street School when attending to its task of school modernization in Stonington. This is a distraction the taxpayers and more importantly, the children of Stonington can ill afford. One thing that was certain in my mind last night, the West Broad Street School is not prepared to be a part of 21st century education in Stonington. Hopefully a lot of resources, i.e.: time and money, won't be spent debating this topic. Perhaps the West Broad Street facility has the potential to make for stately offices which could even be shared by some of the departments that are in the rather cramped confines of the Stonington Town Hall, but that debate can perhaps be addressed at a later date.

Thank you,

Mark S. Minar

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Music Thoughts - Outlook Web Access Light

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The screenshot shows the Outlook Web Access interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Type here to search" and a dropdown menu showing "This Folder". To the right of the search bar are icons for "Address Book", "Options", and "Log Off". Below the search bar is a navigation bar with icons for "Reply", "Reply to All", "Forward", "Move", "Delete", and "Close".

The main content area displays an email titled "Music Thoughts" from "Hilbie, James [jhilbie@stoningtonschools.org]". The email header shows it was sent on Saturday, November 15, 2014 at 7:03 AM to "k12 Building".

The email body contains the following text:

k12 Building Committee,

I will be unable to attend because I will be rehearsing the MMS Jazz Band from 7:00-8:30 PM but would like to share a few thoughts: (big order but it's for the students, why not!!)

I would love the design to have for our students a music suite with the following: chorus room, general music room, band room with at least four practice rooms in each ensemble room and an "auditorium" across the hall, like SHS. I would also like to have a recording/broadcast studio in between the band and chorus room so we could make high quality recordings of our ensembles/individuals and also use for daily broadcast of school announcements. If this is a 6-8 school, then I would say that we would need at least 3 full time music instructors. I would also recommend starting instrument in the 4th grade - better to train the ears earlier even though the facilitating of playing the instrument is a little more of a challenge - ear is ALWAYS first. *Lastly for now, the auditorium design of the seating I would love to have is like McGee Middle School and Timothy Edwards Middle School - the bottom (orchestra seating) part regular design but when the seats go up, have two sections that can also be used as two amphitheatres with portable walls - could be used for meeting, lectures, etc., more bang for your buck in my opinion.

Thanks for allowing recommendations - please respond to this e-mail so I know you received and my sincere thank you for supporting Stonington Public Schools.

Jim Hilbie