

May 11, 2010

Special Meeting
5:00 p.m. Land Use Meeting Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Rimsky, Ms. Gager, Mr. Frank Mrs. Jahnke

ALTERNATE PRESENT: Mr. Carey

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Mrs. Braverman, Mr. Fowlkes

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Hill

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Bedini

Mrs. Roberts called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and seated Members Frank, Gager, Jahnke, Rimsky, and Roberts. She noted the purpose of the Special Meeting was to review and report per Section 8-24 of the state statutes on Town expenditures for maintenance projects at the Washington Primary School. She read a draft resolution of approval provided by the Town Clerk's Office.

Ms. Gager asked if the motion was written by the school's business manager. Mr. Bedini said, no, it was language required by the state. Mr. Frank said the language met the bonding requirements.

Mr. Frank asked Mr. Bedini to describe the project. Mr. Bedini responded there would be no major changes to the buildings; that it was mainly a repairs project. He noted work to set up the project had begun in 2008 when the Selectmen asked for assurance that if the school building was ever returned to the Town, it would be in reasonable condition. He noted standard repairs had not been made during the ten previous years. He gave a short history and described the project timetable. The work to be done at the three primary school buildings included replacement of old and rusted outside door frames, replacement of old windows, installation of new hardware on eighty percent of the doors, removal of the carpet in the nurses office and installation of a new floor, replacement of rotted outside boards at Booth School, and repairs and maintenance to the stormwater management system at the Washington Primary School.

Mr. Rimsky thought these were the kinds of repairs that should have been made routinely by the school district. Mr. Bedini agreed. He added there was now a new maintenance manager, but noted there was not much money or staff to maintain the five existing buildings.

Ms. Gager asked if Roxbury and Bridgewater would approve the repair project and if they did not, what impact would that have. Mr. Bedini stated all three towns had agreed to approve the project.

In response to a question from Mr. Carey, Mr. Bedini described the savings that would result from changes in the construction management of the project. He also briefly detailed the selection process for the construction manager hired.

Mr. Bedini noted it would be difficult to get all of the proposed repairs done before school begins in the fall. Due to previous commitments for use of the Washington Primary School property, for example, work there can not begin there until July 26.

Mr. Frank read from the "Community Issues" section of the 2003 Town Plan of Conservation and Development in which he found a basis for the approval of the resolution.

Mr. Carey asked Mr. Bedini what had happened to the idea of the consolidation of the primary schools. Mr. Bedini thought the option on the land for a central elementary school on Rt. 199 in Roxbury had expired. He said the Board of Education is putting together a committee to work on drafting a strategic

plan for the school district.

MOTION:

Resolved, that the Washington Planning Commission approves the following project solely for purposes of Section 8-24 of the General Statutes of Connecticut: Various renovations, improvements, and related work to the Washington Primary School in Washington Depot, the scope and particulars of which are to be determined by the Board of Education of Regional School District #12, or any building committee or committees delegated all or any portion of such responsibility by the Board of Education.

Further resolved, that this resolution is for approval of conceptual plans only. The project is subject to and shall comply with all applicable zoning, site plan, subdivision, inland wetland, and other laws, regulations, and permit approvals, and this resolution shall not be a determination that the project is in compliance with any such applicable laws, regulations, or permit approvals. Further resolved, that the Commission report its approval of this project, for purposes of Section 8-24 of the General Statutes, by sending a certified copy of this resolution to Regional School District #12.

By Mr. Frank, seconded by Ms. Gager, and passed 5-0.

Several commissioners and Mr. Bedini thought the public should be educated about the extremely poor condition of the three primary school buildings and the very high cost of operating the schools in the manner they are now being operated. Mr. Bedini said the new maintenance manager was already saving the towns money, but noted that Washington taxpayers are spending \$25,600 a day 365 days a year to operate the school. It was thought Town citizens should be concerned about spending tax money frugally. Ms. Gager asked for the comparable cost of running the Montessori and Rumsey Hall Schools, but this was not known. Mr. Bedini did say, however, that with the district's enrollment of 946 students, the Region #12 school budget is higher than most in the state.

The commissioners thanked Mr. Bedini for attending this meeting and for all of his work on the Board of Education.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Mr. Rimsky.

Mrs. Roberts adjourned the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,
Janet M. Hill
Land Use Coordinator