

July 10, 2007

Washington Primary School Building Committee-2007

Present: Dick Sears Chairman, Mark Lyon, Peter Bowman, John Quist, Phil Markert, Wayne Hileman, Roxann Kraft, Walter Whitney

Board of Education Members: Michelle Gorra, Matt Franjola, Tony Bendini, Valerie Andersen, Irene Allan

Guests: Jack Field, public

Call to Order: Chairman Dick Sears called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed all present. Mr. Sears began by saying that the goal of this committee was to bring forward a up to date renovation plan for the Washington Primary School (WPS) that is best for the town and children and will be supported by the taxpayers.

Introductions: Committee members gave brief personal histories and experience they bring to the table.

Charge: Mr. Sears informed members that they were not working from scratch; a lot of work has already been done. The goal is to have the best design including education specs, taxpayer support, energy efficiency, maximum state aid and be ready to present in two months.

Mr. Sears listed the following as the committee's objectives:

1. To review the February 2006 "Master Plan" renovations for WPS to take into account material changes that have occurred, and are expected to occur by fall of 2007, when a new referendum is planned.
2. To examine specific public and other concerns voiced about that plan, to evaluate alternatives to accommodate those concerns and to determine the additional costs required.
3. To prepare an Alternative Town Plan that represents what is "Best for Washington".
4. To submit the final plan to the Region 12 School District, after review by the Washington Boards of Selectmen and Finance and the legislative body of the Town of Washington, as the Town's recommendation for consideration by the Region for inclusion in its planned Fall referendum of choice between the "best" 3 School and Single School options.

Review of Former WPS Plans: Dick Sears introduced Jack Field who explained prior work done on proposed renovations to Washington Primary School (WPS). Members were provided with a four-page document entitled **Introduction of the 2007 Town Building Committee for WPS to Prior Work -2004 to Date** and a ten-page document entitled Washington Primary School Project Overview.

Discussion: Mr. Sears asked members for questions or comments. Mr. Quist asked about the full day kindergarten. Ms. Allan replied that it is sensible to plan for the full day kindergarten, at present morning and afternoon kindergarten overlap in the middle of the day and there is a very real possibility of a mandate for full day kindergarten classes. Mr. Markert asked if this wasn't just a rehash of work that's already been done and asked about the consolidated school proposal. Mr. Sears stated that the job of this committee is to work only on WPS. Mr. Lyon added that the committee should come up with the best plan to renovate WPS to serve as an elementary school that makes sense for the children and taxpayers;

to be review by the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance, then take the plan to the Board of Education. Michelle Gorra felt that finding out why the previous plan failed would be helpful. Peter Bowman spoke about target reimbursement from the state for things such as new library and code upgrades. Walter Whitney questioned the projected enrollment figures in the WPS Project Overview packet, saying that young people are leaving town at an alarming rate and doesn't think the figures reflect this. Mr. Hileman who is on the Housing Commission with Mr. Whitney agreed and went on to state that an increase in children would not cost more. Irene Allan encouraged members to look at the physical condition of the building; the teaching space is outdated, too small. Mr. Sears stated that the building has to house two classrooms per grade and two kindergarten classrooms. Jack Field noted that the package previously presented was the lowest cost option and the feedback was that it was cut too thin. Mr. Field went on to say that you have to look at what needs to be added back in to be acceptable to the people. Ms. Allan encouraged members by stating that you have an existing shell, look over previous plans, a lot of work has been done. Peter Bowman gave the following observations of problems with the existing building. Peter felt that circulation was a problem; you have no control over entry to the building. The "old high school" section is the most attractive part of the building and should be used by WPS. He feels there is enough footprint it just needs to be organized, you need a kitchen space and the kindergarten and first grade need to be together on the ground level. The physical plant is in bad condition. He suggested using the "old high school" first floor for a library/computer area and move the regional office to the second floor. Create a new entranceway between the "old high school" and the currant WPS building and have the noisy space (gymnasium, music) together. Move the cafeteria to where the library is now. The intent is to leave existing walls, which is cost saving as well.

Mr. Sears called the meeting to a close and asked members to indicate what dates they would be available in July, August and September for meetings on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday July 17, 2007 at 7:00pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary