

SIT Facility Committee Meeting Minutes:

April 23, 2009

In attendance:

Dr. Karen Crews
Tawana Franklin
William Feeney
Allison Feeney
Scott Cheney
Jonathan McHugh
Barbara Balman
Jon Bender
Kirk Rankin
Andrew Smiles
Ann Beumel
David Thompson
Emily Strulson
Doug Wonderlie – Tenleytown Historical Society
Jane Malhotra
Sam Serebin
Heather Roy
Nicolet David
Glenn Williamson

The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Janney ES multipurpose room. Dr. Crews welcomed the members and Andrew Smiles, LSRT Chair and SIT Facility Committee Chair, outlined the purpose and format of the meeting.

This committee is tasked with providing recommendations to the Office of Public Education Facilities and Modernization, OPEFM, plans to build an addition to the school and complete a school modernization. The four areas of concern of the committee are:

Programming Specifications
Site
Scheduling Structure
Advocacy

Programming Specifications:

The meeting began with a lively conversation regarding the school model presented by OPEFM to create a school population of 550 students. The proposed configuration would allow for two PreK classrooms and four classrooms per grade, K-5th. The committee debated if by increasing the student population would we be compromising the in-boundary population and the integrity of the neighborhood school. Others felt that

part of the school charm is the diversity of our out-of-boundary population. This diversity is an important facet of our school community, and currently the AU park community does not provide other means to naturally create diversity. There was also concern that by recommending a smaller addition to ensure reduced enrollment we would find that we had outgrown our addition shortly after the renovation. Although, the committee was not privy to any demographic information that would suggest that the in-boundary school population would markedly charge.

David Thompson, who facilitated the addition and renovation of Phelps Architecture Construction and Engineering High School in NE, offered that we should not recommend to OPEFM they reduce the size of the school but that the Principal would and should manage the population of the school community. The school population is independent of the work of OPEFM. He advised that the committee's focus should be continually on the programs of the school; the school program drives the construction of the building, the building does not drive the program. Mr. Thompson advised that all discussions with OPEFM be as precise as can be regarding the program.

Site:

The current specifications provided by OPEFM provide for 34,000 square feet of additional space; but of that space only 22,500 s.f. would be usable area, with the remaining space allocated for hallways, walls, etc. The three specifications provided by OPEFM show a three story building to the West of the school and two other configurations with additions wrapped around the back of the school, referred to in the Site Plan of Existing Conditions.

Glenn Williamson proposed a third option for consideration. The current All Purpose Room be demolished and a new renovation be built on the same footprint with a cafeteria on the first floor, a media center on the second floor and a new Gym/Auditorium on the 3rd floor of the building. This would provide for a more efficient addition of usable area since we would use the existing hallways on the first, second and third floors. Mr. Williamson has outlined his proposal in the Yahoo SIT facility e-mail group for reference. Jonathan McHugh also posted several potential designs with variations on the suggestion.

Questions were addressed to Mr. Doug Wonderlie from the Tenlytown Historical Society. The committee invited him to speak to the requirements that would be imposed if Janney Elementary School received historic designation. It was the understanding of the committee that an application has already been submitted. Mr. Wonderlie did not specifically address that issue but did encourage the committee to keep Mr. David Maloney from the SHPO apprised of our progress. He did reassure the committee that the Historic Preservation committee would be flexible.

Barbara Balman, landscape designer, encouraged the committee to include improvements to the grounds as an important element of the addition and modernization. She specifically spoke to the problems of the hillside to the West of the building, and the

erosion issues. She also addressed how we should speak to the priority of a sustainable school to support a green curriculum, if that would be a priority of the teachers.

It was recommended that the teachers weigh in on any programmatic recommendations that the committee might make.

Parking issues have always been of great concern to the school community. In recent years, since the improvement and the reconfiguration of the green top, it has been a priority to ensure that the parking requirements of the school do not encroach into the play space. Mr. Bill Feeney offered that one option may be to place a parking structure on the on the hillside to the West of the Building using the natural fall of the land. It would be more cost effective than digging under the current field to the East of the building.

Scheduling Structure:

The time-line provided by OPEFM has the ground-breaking for the addition, January 2010. The concern is the school population remaining in-place while there are at least two construction projects, the library and the school addition and perhaps a third, the renovation of Oakcrest to the rear of the school and the disruption to the instructional program at the school. The group discussed the option of moving the student population to a swing space during the construction and modernization. Examples of other school populations that were moved to a swing space included Hardy Middle School and School Without Walls. The teachers present at the meeting, Ms David and Ms. Roy asked that the committee be very thoughtful in proposing this option. They offered that the instructional staff was already overwhelmed with the proposed changes and moving the school would create another hardship. There was a discussion of the Deal renovation and a general preference for having the students remain at Janney during the renovations and addition.

Advocacy:

The committee suggested the need for more input from the instructional staff of the school to support the programmatic needs of the school to assist in the committees' recommendations to OPEFM. A website is to be created to invite input from the staff and school community. Dr. Crews would provide the educational specifications to the staff and invite their input. A group would convene to distill the information in preparation for the next scheduled meeting with OPEFM on Tuesday, May 5, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. by Andrew Smiles.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Beumel