

Joint School Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes of the October 4, 2006 Meeting

A meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, October 4, 2006 at the Portsmouth Middle School, Room 106.

Attendance: Present:
Chair: Joanne Grasso, Councilor
City Council Member: Ned Raynolds
School Board Members: Nancy Novelline Clayburgh, Sheri Ham Garrity and Mitchell Shuldman
Planning Board: Anthony Coviello
Advisory Members: Rose Sulley and Eric Weinrieb
Ex-Officio: Robert Lister, John Stokel, Helen Maldini and Steve Bartlett

Presenter: City Manager John Bohenko and Steve Parkinson, Department of Public works.

Call To Order: Chair Grasso called the meeting of the Joint School Advisory Committee to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes Approved: The Chair called for the approval of the September 20, 2006 minutes. Ms. Garrity moved and Mr. Coviello seconded, the minutes be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

Presentation: City Manager Bohenko came to speak with the members of this committee to help answer some questions about the Parrot Avenue Site and the Jones Avenue Site regarding the consideration of an RFP or RFQ.

The City wants to be a resource for this committee. To do a Feasibility on the city would be somewhat simple. There is about \$30,000 available for an assessment. The City handed out a DRAFT on The Engineering Services Middle School Site Feasibility Assessment and a list of questions the City Hall Staff had. The Staff will need to know what the extent of the expansion would be at the Parrot Avenue site.

There has been a lot of work already done on these sites including work done on the Parrott Avenue site due to the building of the new Portsmouth Public Library. The information gathered that has already been completed will help cut the costs of a feasibility test.

Discussion:

Questions arose as to whether some of this has already been done. Appledore completed some work as did Team Design which this committee should review. Any and all information generated should be added to the feasibility report. Some issues such as wetlands and the contours are areas that have been looked at by Team Design. Team Design completed some work but did not continue because they were waiting for further instruction.

Mr. Bohenko would be willing to meet with the Team Design, Appledore and others along with representatives of this committee so the City Staff can be a resource for this committee.

Mr. Coviello made a motion and Mrs. Sulley seconded to appoint a sub committee including John Stokel and Bob Lister to meet with the City Staff along with Team Design and Appledore to gather and evaluation what has been accomplished before and RFP can be done.

The committee will include Steve Bartlett, John Stokel, Bob Lister, Eric Weinrieb and Rose Sulley. Eric and Rose will report back to the JSAC committee.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Once the information is gathered together from the previous studies and new studies done, the idea is to have equal information on both sites to help this committee move forward. This committee must keep in mind that the end result is a quality education for all students.

Once the committee meets to look at what information is already available at Jones site then the Parrott Avenue site needs to be reviewed. Information must include a number of costs including costs to build, costs to bus students to sporting events, costs to rent a location for students to be while building an addition and renovating the current site on Parrott Avenue. The committee needs to look at what the sites will look like and what needs to meet the educational narrative. The Superintendent stated that a review of the educational narrative should be done at a future meeting.

The City Staff would then, after looking at what is available already, decide if there is enough information to determine if there is a possibility to build at Jones Avenue site. Then the committee can look at what needs to be done at the Parrott Avenue site to get a total look at what needs to be done in order to build at the Jones Avenue site or build and renovate at Parrott Avenue site.

The committee needs to keep in mind the costs and what is still available for this work to be done to get the information needed.

There is a plan of what the Middle School would look like at 180,000 square feet, an ideal site, no matter where. This was made up based on input from the teachers and staff. It is just an idea of what an ideal school would look like.

Mr. Coviello made a motion to abandon the discussion of looking at the soft sites. Mr. Raynolds seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 7 – 1 with Ms. Ham Garrity in the negative.

Because of the needs of the sites, there is no way to determine the cost to construct a new building or to renovate.

Mr. Weinrieb made a motion that someone from the library come in to explain whether or not it would work programmatically to have the library adjacent to or connected to the new city library. Mr. Coviello seconded.

After some discussion about costs, security, what the library could offer the students and the possibility of bringing this up again once the previous studies on the sites have been done, the motion was withdrawn from the table. The Superintendent was asked to contact the Library Director to discuss this informally.

Action Steps:

At the next meeting on Wednesday, October 18, 2006 Dr. Arthur Maerlander will speak to the committee. Rus Wilson will also come to meet with the JSAC members at 8:00 p.m.

A meeting on Wednesday, November 8, 2006 was also decided.

The sub committee will look at what is already done, and find out what else needs to be done at Jones Avenue site and what the cost will be and report back to the JSAC committee. The City will also give to the sub committee any information they have on the Parrott Avenue site. A “giggle test” must be conducted to see if the property can meet the needs; building, parking, fields, delivery services, bus turn around, student pick up, etc. Once it is determined that this can happen, it must be determined whether or not the building can meet the educational narrative.

Ms. Novelline Clayburgh made the motion to have Team Design come up with the middle school concept plan to make it work and pass the “giggle test” on this property and the Peirce Property. Mrs. Ham Garrity seconded.

The motion failed 3 to 5 with Ms. Novelline Clayburgh, Ms. Ham Garrity and Mrs. Grasso voting in the affirmative.

Ms. Novelline Clayburgh made a motion to ask architects to submit a proposal to determine if a middle school concept can fit on the Parrott Avenue site. Ms. Ham Garrity seconded.

Mr. Coviello made a motion to table this to the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reynolds.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Coviello asked for a map from the city that shows a larger area surrounding the Parrott Avenue site including Leary Field. Mr. Bohenko will provide it.

Ms. Grasso handed out information from Mr. Shuldman about Middle School configurations from a professional journal.

Next Meeting:

The Joint School Advisory Committee scheduled future meetings for:

A walk to the site on Jones Avenue will be Saturday, October 14, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. meeting at the Athletic Building at Portsmouth High School.

Wednesday, October 18, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Portsmouth Middle School, Room 106.

Wednesday, November 8, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Portsmouth Middle School, Room 106.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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