

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOE FACILITIES COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2016**

ATTENDANCE: Mike Barbis, Chair; Art Kassimis, Yvel Crevecour, Brian Meek

OTHERS: Mr. Frank Costanzo, Norwalk BOE; John Ireland, Malone and MacBroom; Mike Zuba, Malone and MacBroom; Michelle Miller, Silver Petrucelli, Ryan Chmielewski, Malone & MacBroom; and Tim Baird; Dr. Adamowski, Superintendent of Schools (12:10 p.m.)

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Barbis called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. A quorum was present. Mr. Costanzo said that the presentation would include adding three new schools over the next 10 years. One of those schools will be located in South Norwalk, because it is a Social Justice issue.

School Facilities Feasibility Study - Utilization Phase, Recommendations

Mr. Ireland said that he believed that the study would offer a solution to the issue in South Norwalk. He said that there would also be a presentation about adding a pre-K program at every school. This will include dedicating 2 rooms to this project. Another goal is to eliminate all the portables at the schools. There is a seat deficit and this must be addressed.

Dr. Adamowski joined the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

The recommendations will also address giving parents a choice of schools, along with the concept of having a Pre-K through 8th grade school.

Mr. Ireland then began the narration of the PowerPoint presentation in terms of capital needs, site capital needs, and the past financial investments at each school.

Mr. Zuba spoke about the utilizations and deficiencies. He pointed out that there were different dynamics underway at the elementary schools and the middle schools. One goal is to keep pace and modernize the schools and where the District wants to go in terms of programs.

Mr. Ireland said that one aspect was the identification of which school buildings will allow themselves to be adaptive and changed over time, and which ones will need attention. He also spoke about having an intra-district magnet. One key is to determine

how much to improve each one of the schools. Another issue is to improve site safety via traffic circulation.

Ms. Miller then gave an overview of the State standards for space and programming for the Pre-K through 5th grade model and the proposed Pre-K through 8th grade model and the costs of doing so.

Mr. Ireland said that there had been a request to identify a location in South Norwalk and reviewed the various City owned properties. He said that the Nathaniel Ely site would be an ideal site and the Head Start program could remain onsite. Other sites that were considered were the old Armory site, the Norden site, and St. Phillip's school.

Mr. Zuba gave an overview of the factors that were considered as outlined on page 19 of the presentation. One aspect that was given careful consideration was the "unassigned district" students, who are assigned to schools outside their district. If these students were brought back into their district, the utilization percentages at the other schools would decrease significantly.

Mr. Barbis asked what would happen if these students were returned to their district in terms of racial imbalance. Mr. Zuba said that the area was 96% minority and in order to adjust the racial imbalance, the school would have to have some type of intra-district magnet program to attract other students from the District. Mr. Ireland said that it would be important to build a new Pre-K through 5 school at Nathaniel Ely. He recommended that Naramake and Ponus Ridge could be expanded to Pre-K through 8th grade. St. Philip's could become a Pre-K through 8th grade if St. Philip's agrees.

Ms. Miller then reviewed the proposal regarding configuring the Nathaniel Ely site as shown as page 23. Dr. Adamowski said that this plan would include all the unassigned students in South Norwalk along with additional students for a special thematic intra-district magnet program. Ryan then reviewed the traffic circulation pattern. Mr. Zuba said that the tennis courts and basketball courts were built with State funding, so they were not included in the plan. There was enough flexibility to keep them but they could be moved to another location in the City.

The presentation then moved to the potential expansion of Naramake School into a Pre-K through 8th grade as shown on pages 25 and 26 of the PowerPoint presentation. The expansion would require the removal of some of the athletic fields, but a proposed area could be created.

The plans for expanding Ponus (pp 27 & 28) were the next topic discussed. The analysis of the net gains with the proposed modifications of the three schools and the costs associated were then presented. Mr. Ireland said that Norwalk was in the unique position in terms of student population. He added that renovations were estimated at \$250/sq. ft.; renovate as new costs \$350/sq. ft. and new construction costs \$450/sq. ft.

Ms. Miller than presented some alternate recommendations involving Tracey School and St. Philip's School as outlined on pp. 31-34 of the presentation. Mr. Ireland said that this was a less expensive option because it would create fewer seats.

Mr. Meek asked if the Diocese had given a price for the parcel. Mr. Zuba said that they had checked with the Tax Assessor but no price had been determined yet.

Mr. Ireland the reviewed the three options involving Equity and Choice: renovations, expansion/alterations and Capital Needs for Brookside (pg. 38; Columbus (pp. 39-41); Cranbury, (pp. 42-44); Fox Run (pg. 45); and Jefferson (pp. 46-48). Dr. Adamowski asked if the addition would return Jefferson to a neighborhood school. Mr. Ireland said it would give the school much more flexibility. Discussion followed.

Mr. Barbis said that the parent drop off at Marvin School was extremely impressive and performed with military precision.

The discussion moved to Kendall (pg. 49); Marvin (pg. 50); Nathan Hale (pg. 51); Ponus Ridge (pg. 52); Roton Middle School (pg. 53); Rowayton Elementary School (pg. 54); Silvermine (pg. 55); Tracey (pg. 56); West Rocks Middle School (pg. 57); and Wolfpit (pp. 58 - 60).

Mr. Ireland said that one aspect of the discussion was how the decisions were made. The equity of the sites, education and demographics is critical, along with the investment. Based on the analysis, both Columbus and Jefferson have been recommended for renovations. Cranbury, Fox Run, Marvin, Silvermine, Tracey and Wolfpit would fall into the Alteration/Extensions. Brookside, Kendall and Rowayton fell into the Capital Needs category. Regarding the Middle Schools, West Rocks needs renovation, Nathan Hale needs alternations or extensions and Roton needs capital needs.

Mr. Ireland said that in order to get the Master Plan moving, the first thing would be the creation of the three new schools, which would take about two years to implement. He then gave an overview of the remaining plans. Discussion followed about the priorities. Dr. Adamowski said that the Naramake, the Ponus and Ely projects would relieve the overcrowding. This would be followed with the renovating of West Rocks and other projects.

The discussion moved to the role of portables during construction/renovations.

Mr. Kassimis asked for justification of the expansion of Naramake with Nathan Hale only a block away. Mr. Ireland said that Nathan Hale has no place to expand. The alternate use of St. Philips would be a major factor in that decision.

The discussion moved to the Nathaniel Ely school site and the nearby wetlands. It was also pointed out that the City had made renovations to Nathaniel Ely with State funds and that entailed Head Start's use of the building for a number of years.

Mr. Kassimis asked if there were other buildings that could be expanded. Mr. Ireland said that there were a number of other expansions such as West Rocks.

Mr. Barbis said that the next step was a meeting on February 4th. Dr. Adamowski asked Mr. Hamilton, the BOE Finance Director, when the budget meeting was. Mr. Hamilton said that he believed it was February 2nd. Mr. Barbis said that he would confirm this date.

Mr. Meek asked if there was a starting order. Mr. Ireland said that he would recommend working on all three sites at the same time. However, the first step would be working on Ely. Dr. Adamowski said that Ely would ease the economic pressures and that it would fulfill the need for a school in South Norwalk.

Mr. Barbis said that he would like clarification of the majority/minority ruling. Dr. Adamowski said that the District had changed and the margin is now 25% of the non-minorities. He went on to speak about several possible options.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. Barbis adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.