2013-2014 Middle School Facilities Advisory Committee

Minutes—December 19, 2013

Present: Catriona Sangster, Chair; Sandy Prince, Superintendent; Donn Davis, Assistant Superintendent; Bill Hansen, Director of Facilities; Kate Brix, School Board; Michelle Jordan, Windham Resident (arrived at 7:00 PM); Tammy Hamilton, Raymond Resident; Kim Hartwell, Windham Resident; Valerie Hammett, Teacher – JSMS; Peg Brown, Teacher – WMS; Randy Crockett, Principal – JSMS; Charlie Haddock, Principal – WMS; Ed Gagne, Marge Govoni, School Board and David Nadeau, Windham Resident (Left due to commitment at 6:55 PM)
Unable to Attend: Jennifer Moore and Joyce Logan (scribe)

Chair Catriona Sangster called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

Catriona introduced Lyndon Keck, Architect and Principal of PDT Architects, to outline various building conditions. It was noted that Mr. Keck has designed many Maine school buildings across the State, including some of the Windham sites. Additionally, PDT Architects has provided various building reports for both the Windham and Raymond communities. Following is a summary of Mr. Keck's overview.

Overview of the building conditions of Jordan Small Middle School (JSMS), Windham Middle (WMS) and the Field Allen School (FA S).

JSMS –

- Was initially an elementary school. Subsequent renovations transformed the school into a middle school – renovated in the 1980s.
- Small scale – feels like an elementary school. The school will not support all Windham and Raymond middle level students.
- The school is on a small site – 10 acres. The State recommends a 25 acre site plus 1 acre for each 100 students. Site is too small for all MS students in the district.
- The topography of the site is flat – creating poor drainage.
- The school building is 52k square feet.
- The design capacity of the school is 350 students - State guideline for new middle schools – (150 sq. feet per student – middle schools are being built larger than that since 1990s – 155-180 sq. f.t per student. Westbrook middle - 600 students – at a cost of $33,673,000 – includes 220 sq. ft. per student.)
- The school building is currently underutilized with fewer than 200 students.

WMS –

- The school was built in 1977 – built with a 40 year life cycle. The school was not particularly well built and has met its' useful life cycle.
- The school is on a small site--14.5 acres (see comment above regarding State guidelines). An application was submitted to the State seeking State funds to build/renovate the school recently. The State did not rate the need as high as other school needs across the State and the application was ranked 43 out of 71 applications. The ranking is more a function of the dire need building needs across the State than our application submittal.

- The State intends to honor only 6 applications and it may be years before applications are opened again.
- The Academic side of the building has a lot of wood framing – classrooms are too small functionally.
- Due to the building construction it is not a good candidate for renovation.
- The school is also tight up against property lines limiting outside vehicular and pedestrian traffic, sports, etc.
- Safety on the site is compromised as people must cross driveways to get to playing fields. It would be a challenge to build new school on the same site – campus is small.

Field Allen-

- The school was built in 1953 as an elementary school.
- All of the systems have gone past their useful life – some updates/renovations have been accomplished to keep the building viable.
  14k sq. f.t (150-160 student capacity).
- The school is somewhat "in the way" via the road into the campus and general campus safety, etc.

Manchester-

- Single story school – built as open plan school and renovated in 1999/2000.
- Not rugged – not well built – all dry-wall. Adequate as an elementary school but not built for the rigors of middle school students.
- The school is on a flat site.
- The site is situated on 20-29 acres with little road frontage.

Review of Demographic Data by Planning Decisions –

- 2012 – study done by Planning Decisions, Inc.
- Cohort survival predictions are difficult to fully rely on as they include live-birth predictions and it is difficult to project those that will move into---or out of---a community. Still, but we do the best we can predicting enrollments with the data that we can collect.
- In general, the study shows declining student population in Raymond and flat or declining populations in Windham

Middle School Major Study Options as prepared by PDT Architects

- These options were developed by Lyndon Keck of PDT Architects to simply aid the committee in its consideration of formulating a future recommendation(s). They were developed for discussion purposes only. No recommendations or decisions have been made at this time.
  See attached document entitled RSU 14 Middle School Study Options.

Financial Considerations-

- State funding unlikely for the next 15-20 years.

- 2014 construction costs – a neighboring community recently constructed a 900 student middle school for $34 million – the community already owned the land and some additional expense was added due to adding municipal space needs.

Scheduling implications-

- Study and concept design – 12 months
- Prepare for a referendum – 6-8 months to communicate that to the community before going to referendum.
- If the referendum passes – 10-12 months in developing construction drawings and gaining construction permits.
- 2 years to build the school (possibly 18 months for option 1).
- Time elapsed is approximately 5 years.

Action Steps:

The School Board members will explore the process by which they may seek to learn of possible parcels of land that may be available in the communities of Windham and Raymond.

We will order an update of the Planning Decisions report to gain a better understanding of demographic considerations.

Staff will prepare financial data regarding the cost of maintaining the two middle schools and will compare the life cycle costs of the existing buildings to that of a possible new school.
We will communicate the legal process of school idling/closing.

Agenda items for January 16th:

Begin to flesh out the many different possibilities and determine what additional information we might need for scenarios we want to more seriously consider.

Future Meetings: Jan 16th, Feb 27th, March 27th