

JFAC Meeting
July 8, 2021-
Approved
August 12th
2021

1. Called to order at 1808 In attendance: Shannon Gascoyne, Brian Coogan, John D'Angelo, Tom Gauthier, Amy Facey, Steve Berube, George Torres, Laura Taylor, John Bowkett, Victoria Parisi, Christine Grayson, Adam Steel, and Lisa Eastland
2. Approval of Minutes: Victoria makes the motion to approve amended June minutes. Shannon notes there is not a quorum of attendees so the amended minutes cannot be approved. Minutes tabled until the next meeting.
3. Facility project committee:
 - a. CM Timeline Update: Amy Facey: Move forward with the construction manager. then talk with the USDA. She recommended the process get put on hold until a more information is available.
 - i. USDA wanted updated designs in RFP
 - ii. Wanted us to meet requirements of free and open competition.
 1. We will be expanding outreach. This puts the process on hold until we can get the design to where we want it and include it in the RFP.
 - iii. The USDA allows us to take advantage of Federal funds and get a lower interest rate. This makes a lot more hurdles to jump, however.
 - iv. Meeting on Monday with Banwell and USDA representatives and their architect.
 - v. Application financing requires cost estimates.
 - vi. Brad, from Banwell Architects, advised getting all the architects talking to expedite the process.
 1. Banwell thinks this is good because it allows them to get more info for the RFP and cost analysis.
 2. Meeting is Monday on Zoom at 1230. John asked where this was going to be held. Amy invited him to SAU to attend.
 - b. Wetlands:
 - i. Adam has scheduled a meeting with the BOS Chair to connect with the Zoning board regarding the wetlands issue.
 - ii. Brian suggested an ACC rep attend along with the Planning Board. May need to require a waiver or some other mechanism based on conceptual designs that may bleed into conservation land.
 1. Victoria mentioned current portables are more into the wetlands than the new building.
4. Finance Subcommittee Update: Nothing new to report
5. PR Subcommittee Update:
 - a. Meetings on hold for now. Awaiting conceptual designs and more solid info.
 - b. Poll volunteers Josh Conklin, Ellen Grudzien, Brian Coogan (and fam) all helped with community outreach.

6. Banwell Architects: Ingrid and Brad from Banwell shared new designs. Have had multiple meetings with staff at AMS and Admin, but not with Wilkins staff regarding Options.
 - a. Two different designs for Wilkins.
 - i. Option A: Plateau option. 2 storied building
 1. Lower building: Admin and media in the front. Caf and gym in the back.
 2. Classrooms on the hill.
 3. Road around runs around the side of the building and an access field in the back.
 - a. Loop road is in wetlands setback.
 4. Parent drop off or bus drop off. More to follow about that.
 5. They could build all the classrooms and the bulk of the gym and cafeteria. Everything could be done and 5th grade could come down during the 2nd or 3rd phase of reno at AMS.
 6. Grade wing as the upper level building with satellite nurse and satellite admin. PK-1 would be on the first floor of the lower level building.
 7. Two stairwells down to the first floor where core elements are.
 - a. Alleviates traffic pressure and increases security.
 - b. 2-5 grades and SpEd upstairs, along with a nurse.
 - c. Grades 2-3 would be on the left flank.
 - d. Grades 4-5 on the right flank.
 8. Upper field was built by the Land Water Conservation Fund so we may need to replace that same field somewhere else.
 9. Building into the hill would be something to take into consideration
 10. Tom asked about parking at both locations.
 - a. Would need two entrances which makes security a challenge.
 11. To keep the scale of the building down, it is a two story design.
 - a. John asked if the intent was to let the town use the fields in the back and a new one placed in front?
 - i. Banwell pointed out where more fields could be built.
 12. Laura asked about the house on Jones Rd that seems very close to the building. She asked if we would need to buy that property.
 - a. No we wouldn't as all of the projected building is w/in property lines, but usage of Jones Rd will change.
 - b. Neighbors and their impact should be taken into consideration.
 - c. Adam said we need a secondary egress for fire. He wonders if the State Fire Marshall will approve this design. He said we will probably have to tie into Jones Rd with

either option. Adam says it doesn't have to be open to the public, but AFD has to have access to the buildings.

1. Miscellaneous discussion regarding Option A and traffic:
 - a. Brian answered John's suggestion about shifting the building which gives a bigger buffer to residents and allows better access from Jones Rd.
 - b. Brian mentions from a PR perspective, moving the fields away from the neighborhoods would be a good thing.
 - c. John and Brian said a possible fix is shifting the whole building to the right and moving the road on the left rather than the right.
 - d. Victoria thinks we should stay away from Jones Rd because that is a significant change to the neighborhood. She also questions having the admin so far from the classrooms as well as pick up from there.
 - i. The Question she has is "Are we willing to change Jones Rd?" as a committee. She suggests we ask the town if there is a better way to utilize the roads around the school BPR and Jones.
 - e. Brian suggests if busses go up on Jones then it reduces volume on BPR.
 - f. Laura thinks it will improve the traffic flow through the village.
 - g. Lisa said she doesn't love this design because it seems like putting the kids' bedrooms in a different part of the house than the parents.
 - h. Adam says the architect's job is to design something, the Site and Civil Engineer will determine what will actually work and refine the plan. Adam reminded us the spaces can always be moved around. This is just a conceptual design.
2. Advantages:
 - a. Uses hillside to free space on site.
 - b. Can separate core functions for community use at entrance.
 - c. Majority of the building is outside the existing building footprint.
 - d. Large phase 1
3. Disadvantages:
 - a. Complicated foundation.
 - b. 3 stories not preferred
 - c. Cafeteria seems remote from classrooms.
 - d. Smaller performance space

b. Option C:

- i. Use the existing footprint and build out the back onto the current field.
 - ii. The MPR can still be used. Architect thinks it needs some updating and TLC but the slab and bones are great.
 - iii. Would build a two story classroom wing on the back side.
 - 1. Downside is you can't move 5th grade down while building.
 - iv. Creates a loop around the building and encompasses an outdoor classroom.
 - v. Special Ed and core functions would be in the current building footprint.
 - 1. Some portables would be needed for Admin and Sped for a year while building is going on.
 - vi. Road will go into the wetland setback.
 - vii. Second floor has 2-5 grades.
 - 1. All associated spaces and a satellite nurse on the second floor.
 - 2. Can look down into the gym. Lots of stairs. (Noise issue from gym classes?).
 - 3. The approach to the school is still a one story building so it looks the same and fits the neighborhood.
- c. Advantages:
- i. Retains MPR (over 1M of savings),
 - ii. Retains stage and kitchen.
 - iii. Doesn't disturb upper playing fields.
 - iv. Good solar orientation/natural daylighting/courtyard.
 - v. Can separate core functions for community use at entrance.
 - vi. Simple foundation compared to option A.
 - vii. Pre K is far away from the entrance.
 - 1. Could move things around for a separate drop off and a small playground.
- d. Disadvantages:
- i. Smaller phase 1 than option A but could still accommodate approx. 33 classrooms
 - ii. Less area for parking/bus drop off in front of school. Have to get creative with bus and parent drop off.
 - iii. Banwell says AMS renovation would happen a lot over the summer, but 5th graders would stay at AMS a year longer.
 - 1. If both projects take two years, the cost would be similar.
 - 2. Portables could be moved out front.
 - 3. Could Clark be used and keep K there for a year until the space is available? Answer is yes and could save us a bunch of money.
- e. Miscellaneous conversation regarding Option C
- i. Traffic will always be an issue and Brian pointed out if a permanent road is built going up to Jones, then some traffic will be diverted.
 - ii. John Bowkett asked about the fire access road. Adam said we need to wait and be prepared for the State Fire Marshal.
 - iii. Lisa asked about soundproofing around the gym.

1. Ingrid at Banwell said it would probably be a glass wall to alleviate sound issues.
- iv. Victoria mentioned having separate gym and café space allows for more reasonable lunch times.
- v. Laura prefers this option for sentimental reasons and financially as a taxpayer.
- vi. Shannon agrees and thinks this will be a cost saving and appreciates the simplicity of this design. Lots of areas for cost savings in this design versus Option A.
- vii. John B asked if we could get a pictorial design at our next meeting—like a Google street view.
 1. Ingrid said they can do that.
- viii. Lisa thinks this option will be much easier to sell to the taxpayers and points out this option also saves money on playing fields.
- ix. Brian asked about expansion abilities and wants the committee to keep a long range vision in mind when designing.
 1. Ingrid at Banwell pointed out several areas that could be added on to and another wing could be added onto the further back.
- f. AMS Renovation Option 2:
 - i. Banwell got input from every educator and admin in the building. Broke out needs, wants, wishes.
 - ii. The layout looks a lot like the existing building except for a small addition at the entrance of the building.
 - iii. Adam suggested we do whatever we can to avoid additions.
 - iv. Shannon said it does make the building more secure by having Admin completely in front and adjacent to the entrance.
 1. Banwell thinks security needs a lot of improvement. Any person, once allowed in the building, has complete access to the building.
 2. Tom pointed out, while it is a selling point, people will just point out to spend the stupid money and fix that problem.
 - v. Banwell is trying to minimize building impacts to the new wing, cafeteria and gym. Lots of walls are moving around, but not new buildings.
 1. Moving music to the Specials wing will reduce noise pollution for the main wing and get a properly sized space for the classroom.
 2. Grades would be grouped together into their own pods.
 3. FACS would be moved into the current 7th grade math area with an additional kitchen.
 4. Pre-Core math would have a dedicated classroom.
- g. Option 2 pros/cons and discussion.
 - i. Shannon asked about the square footage comparisons. Banwell used the 2021 comparisons for the program.
 1. Banwell says they have a comparison between last year and this year. Comparing the Master Plan, the spaces were not accounted for last year.

2. Brian asked if this plan included heating/cooling, doors, etc.
 - a. Banwell said our windows were of “such a vintage” they all need to be replaced. Lighting is included.
3. Tom pointed out we are keeping as many exterior and interior walls as possible, but the inside will be updated.
4. Lots of questions about removing/moving walls and will integrity still be in place. The answer is “yes”.
5. Brian asked about phasing of construction.
 - a. Banwell thinks there will be two summers of active construction, but it will not happen during the school year.
 - b. Banwell says as we move forward a serious room count will be required.
6. Steve asked about the cost of moving science labs into the other parts of the building.
 - a. Banwell thinks the infrastructure has to be improved anyway so the cost of moving shouldn't be that significant.
7. Victoria asked if Science should be in the odd shaped room.
 - a. Banwell says they give more flexibility
8. Laura asked about the number of students and teacher team numbers.
 - a. There are two levels of classrooms so there are two teams of grades. The design could be flexible—top and bottom of each other, or all one level.
9. Laura asked if we are limiting the population by saying two 4 person teams per grade? Can we expand if we need to?
 - a. It is possible to build a new wing if needed.
10. Lots of discussion surrounding expansion potential and how to approach the taxpayers.
 - a. We need to be aware we may need to expand sooner rather than later.
11. Laura says there are 24 classrooms in the plan and the cafeteria is too small.
12. Tom: As we do the AMS project, could the back corner that has some potential be prepped for possible expansion?
 - a. Steve agreed that site readiness and getting infrastructure in place can be done and should be looked at while other work is being done.
13. Lisa asked if there will be AC going to be in place. Not defined yet.
 - a. Lots of options to cool things down.
 - b. What is the base package to increase airflow in the building?
 - i. Significant renovation at AMS so requirements are different. Air flow has to increase in new building codes.

- ii. Geothermal might be the answer.
- 14. How to bring costs to taxpayers?
 - a. Upfront costs vs operating costs.
 - i. Gotta let the town vote on the lifestyle of the users after approving the building.
- 15. Laura asked if Music and Chorus are now going to share a space. How will that time be allotted towards the classes?
 - a. Adam reported that Dr. Bernasconi, AMS Principal, said the designed space can work. Some of the music lessons would be happening more at the elementary level so the needs for AMS would be different.
- 7. School Board Updates--Board Reps: Nothing new to report.
- 8. Other business:
 - a. John has not met with the Historic Commission or the Planning Board. He has not been able to get on the agendas. He'll let Shannon know when the formal meeting is going to be.
 - b. Victoria will do an intro for the BOS meeting on Monday night and give an update to the Amherst School Board.

Next meeting on 8/12 at 6:00 pm at the Brick School house.