

1 Mont Vernon Middle School Study Committee

2 Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

3 Meeting Minutes- Approved 01 05 2022

4

5 Attendees: Peter King- Mont Vernon NH School District Moderator, Chair MVMSSC, Dagmar  
6 Vlahos- Mont Vernon, NH, Jennifer Heneberry- Mont Vernon NH, Charline Brown- MVVS  
7 Teacher (non-voting member), Howard Brown- Mont Vernon NH (non-voting member), Craig  
8 Wiley- Mont Vernon, NH, Autumn Grdina- Mont Vernon NH, Anne Dodd- Mont Vernon NH,  
9 Andrew Stokinger, Mont Vernon NH, and SAU #39 Assistant Superintendent-Elementary,  
10 Christine Landwehrle.

11 Meeting Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

12 Public: John Quinlan, Mont Vernon, NH.

13 I. Opening Comments

14 Mr. King introduced Assistant Superintendent- Elementary, Ms. Christine Landwehrle.

15 He noted that they need to define the problem before they start coming up with solutions. Ms.  
16 Landwehrle being here at this meeting is ideal because they have questions and want to  
17 understand. They are careful about not proposing solutions. At the end of the day, their goal is to  
18 give information to the school board. Again, I see this as a short-term committee so that the  
19 voters can understand the information. He expects the work to be done in January.

20 II. Minutes Approval

21 He asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

22 **Ms. Dodd motioned to approve the minutes of November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. Ms. Heneberry**  
23 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

24 Mr. King asked for a motion for the November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Minutes.

25 Ms. Brown noted a clarification on page 8, line 243, in reference to the start and end of our day.  
26 It was the start and end time of the high school (SHS).

27 **Mr. Stokinger motioned to approve the minutes of November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as amended. Ms.**  
28 **Dodd seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

29 III. Discussion

30 Mr. King noted that they had a series of questions listed under the “documents and requests”.

31 Ms. Landwehrle inquired if it was easier to go through the checklist in the Trello Board. She  
32 added that SAU #39 Facilities Director, Mr. Roger Preston, could answer the question with the  
33 site plan and building information.

- 34 Ms. Vlahos opened the Trello Board showing all of the relevant documents.
- 35 Mr. King added that the big question is this site buildable anymore.
- 36 Ms. Dodd remarked that there has to be a more recent site plan.
- 37 Mr. King mentioned the field next door is owned by the School District.
- 38 Mr. Stokinger added that the Town does own it and lets the school use it.
- 39 Mr. Quinlan added that the Town does own it, there are no regulations.
- 40 Ms. Dodd commented that the McCollum trustees transferred that to the Town and not the  
41 School District.
- 42 Ms. Landwehrle noted that she did speak to Mr. Preston and although she is not in support, the  
43 bird garden is buildable. They would have to move the driveway around and then the septic/leach  
44 field is on the left-hand side of the far driveway.
- 45 Mr. Stokinger requested to pull the information up on the screen.
- 46 Ms. Landwehrle noted that they would want to build not where the driveway and septic are, and  
47 aesthetically it is not optimal.
- 48 Mr. King noted that he does not think that location is wide enough. There was a plan for an  
49 auxiliary septic that was put in but that could be moved somewhere else. Other than that, there is  
50 no flat land.
- 51 Ms. Landwehrle added that Mr. Preston noted that if they did build out from the MRR that they  
52 would hit the septic there is not much room there.
- 53 Mr. King commented it is not ideal, but he would never say that it is not buildable.
- 54 Ms. Dodd added that the septic plan is old. It must have been approved for 280 students because  
55 that was the capacity stated.
- 56 Mr. King remarked that the huge issue is that the well runs out of water.
- 57 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it happened over the summer and impacted their Title I program,  
58 they had to end it early. They just replaced the well pump this summer.
- 59 Ms. Grdina commented on the septic capacity.
- 60 Ms. Dodd added that she is not sure about the number.
- 61 Ms. Landwehrle noted that she will ask Mr. Preston.
- 62 Mr. King noted that an add on could be done with engineering.
- 63 Mr. Stokinger asked for a ballpark cost.
- 64 Ms. Landwehrle added that she can ask Mr. Preston to come to the next meeting.

- 65 Mr. Brown asked if they thought about building up.
- 66 Ms. Dodd remarked that would be a significant upgrade with adding an elevator and sprinklers.  
67 The elevator cost is not bad it is the sprinkler system. 4 classrooms would be considered a major  
68 upgrade.
- 69 Mr. King added as long as they have exterior exits, they do not have to do sprinklers. He  
70 remembers that they did several upgrades to the building.
- 71 Mr. Stokingier asked if they could add 6 classes and not 4.
- 72 Ms. Landwehrle noted that Student Services Director, Ms. Meg Beauchamp, mentioned that they  
73 can have a specialized program here. They can tuition in students.
- 74 Mr. Stokingier added that if they did tuition in students that would be revenue for the school  
75 district.
- 76 Mr. King remarked that the cost per square foot there has to be savings in site work.
- 77 Mr. Stokingier added that with class size they can have sports, maybe not soccer, but basketball.
- 78 Ms. Vlahos asked if they could build in the top right corner.
- 79 Mr. Quinlan added that they can, the Town owns that property.
- 80 Ms. Landwehrle added that Mr. Preston said that a civil engineer would have to review the site,  
81 septic and water and an architect would place the addition in and review the program to help  
82 develop the size. Also, the current septic tank is 4,000 gallons.
- 83 Ms. Heneberry noted that it would be important to see the cost comparisons between the two  
84 projects, meaning staying with Amherst or building.
- 85 Ms. Dodd remarked that she would like someone to look at cost numbers.
- 86 Mr. King added that the building and site are covered. If Amherst goes forward with their  
87 facilities project, what is it going to cost us since the 5<sup>th</sup> graders are leaving.
- 88 Ms. Landwehrle added that she will pull up the tuition agreement.
- 89 Ms. Vlahos asked if the 6<sup>th</sup> grade MV students were going to be sent to Amherst.
- 90 Ms. Landwehrle replied they would then have the room for it, and it would be a discussion for  
91 the MV school board.
- 92 Mr. King added that they should consider it.
- 93 Ms. Vlahos remarked that she is thinking that the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades go to the Amherst Middle  
94 School.
- 95 Ms. Grdina added that she thought that was brought up during the reconsolidation talks.
- 96 Ms. Vlahos noted that she was not proposing it just considering it.

97 Ms. Grdina mentioned that it would be better for the kids to all go together.

98 Mr. King asked about the education requirements.

99 Ms. Landwehrle replied in NH they have education rules that govern the schools and would have  
100 to comply with minimum standards. The rules are different for a middle school than an  
101 elementary school. Her assumption would be that they would be creating a K-8 elementary  
102 school if that is the direction that you are recommending to go with.

103 If you are trying to develop a middle school, you have more requirements to meet and more  
104 programming and curriculum you have to offer. I supplied you with the elementary regulations  
105 which you can use through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It is also different because AMS is a middle school and  
106 they are required to provide middle school programming, it would not be an exact match.

107 Mr. Brown asked if they did go with a K-8 school, how would the domain leaders fit in.

108 Ms. Landwehrle explained that the major difference with programming is around the Special  
109 areas. They can offer the same experiences with the regular content areas as Amherst Middle  
110 School. They wouldn't have Innovation and Design, which is our old Woodshop that we have  
111 created into a stem/engineering lab. Additionally, with Family and Consumer Science, that is  
112 cooking, sewing, nutrition, economics, you would have to have a fully equipped kitchen. AMS  
113 has 4 kitchens and multiple sewing machines, it is a robust program. It is also challenging to find  
114 a FACS teacher. With the domain leaders, as long as they are partially employed by the district  
115 can still come here and have that continued continuity.

116 Mr. Brown asked if Assistant Superintendent (secondary), Mr. Steven Chamberlin, would be  
117 able to come here as well.

118 Ms. Landwehrle replied yes, she may overlap with Mr. Chamberlin's work.

119 Ms. Brown added Mr. Chamberlin works with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and their 5<sup>th</sup> grade students  
120 benefit from having him as a resource as well.

121 Ms. Landwehrle noted the AMS sports list. Most of the sports teams are 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, for  
122 example soccer, Cross Country is 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. If we had our own teams, they could  
123 offer Cross Country.

124 Ms. Brown asked if it is mandated for the spring sports to be 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

125 Ms. Landwehrle replied yes, Tri-County does dictate that.

126 Ms. Brown asked where do they go now.

127 Mr. King replied the Recreation Department.

128 Ms. Brown added that they offered Track and Field here and had a lot of kids, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up  
129 with parent volunteers. The students loved it.

130 Mr. King commented that they would not be able to support much for sports.

131 Ms. Landwehrle added that they tried that with Tri-County, and they refused to let MV students  
132 participate with Amherst students. If MV was its own school, it may be different.

133 • FTE Discussion

134 Ms. Landwehrle remarked that Art and Music are two days a week and they would need them  
135 three days. With Art and Music, they would need more stipends for clubs. Currently, they have a  
136 0.6 PE teacher, they would definitely need a 1.0 PE teacher. They could get away with a 1.0 PE  
137 and Health teacher. If they are dual certified, they could teach both. They would need a health  
138 teacher, which is something they don't have. It is tricky for 6th grade to make sure they are  
139 meeting the state expectations. Our recommendation would be if we could move to a full time  
140 PE teacher and a 0.2 Health teacher is possible or some other combination. It would give our  
141 students more PE time and closer to what AMS offers.

142 With Spanish they would need to move up to full time, it would keep K-5 at their current contact  
143 time but would allow for 6- 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The current 6<sup>th</sup> grade would get more Spanish if they had a  
144 full time. It would mimic what the AMS students are currently receiving for Spanish. French is  
145 offered at AMS, it would be very difficult to offer that choice up here unless we wanted to hire a  
146 0.2 French teacher. They already have a full time Library Media Technology Specialist and  
147 would be ok.

148 With the related Special Education, they are making their best guess. They would most likely  
149 need a full-time School Psychologist; they only have a 0.5 position.

150 Mr. Stokinger asked what OT and PT stands for.

151 Ms. Landwehrle replied Occupational Therapist and Physical Therapist. Those are required for  
152 students that have an IEP.

153 Mr. King asked if the OT and PT are special education costs.

154 Ms. Landwehrle replied yes.

155 Mr. King added that they are going to pay for that regardless. They can take that out of the  
156 equation.

157 Ms. Landwehrle added that she will check with Ms. Beauchamp and separate the regular  
158 education from the special education.

159 Mr. Stokinger noted that the real question is if they can they employ someone for only three days  
160 a week.

161 Mr. King added that it is it is hard to hire a 0.4 position and to keep them.

162 Mr. Stokinger mentioned that is the same as the custodial position, more space would allow for  
163 two full time custodians.

164 Ms. Landwehrle added that it is better for the school environment and better for continuity.

165 Ms. Brown added that in terms of teachers, they would be bound to the CBA that they currently  
166 have or whatever is negotiated. With that schedule you have some classroom teachers getting  
167 more planning time than other classrooms.

168 Ms. Grdina asked about special education capacity in this building.

169 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they would have to do an analysis of the special education students.  
170 That special ed population it is a moving target. In Amherst, they have a separate Kindergarten  
171 special education program and then at Wilkins 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade and the same for 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade.  
172 You can have an early elementary and an upper elementary special education program, it is  
173 based on student need. There are two different programs one is for students with intellectual  
174 disabilities and the other for emotional/behavioral disabilities. Are you going to have enough for  
175 each type of program because those are different programs with different needs, different  
176 certifications.

177 Ms. Heneberry inquired if students with an IEP and 504 plan will still need services.

178 Ms. Landwehrle explained that a 504 plan is to ensure equal access to education for students  
179 with any type of medical disability that has trouble accessing that learning because of that  
180 medical issue. That could be a student that is a diabetic or a student that just broke their arm and  
181 can't do state testing without a scribe. It could be temporary or long term. Those services are  
182 typically more counseling and nursing type services although not exclusively.

183 Ms. Brown added that the Guidance Counselor is providing most of those services.

184 Ms. Landwehrle remarked if they see an increase, they may need more than just one full time  
185 school counselor because they oversee the whole lengthy process. 0.5 of the position is teaching,  
186 the other .5 is supporting 504 plans and providing individual and group counseling for students.  
187 They are lucky enough to have a licensed social worker who is also their school counselor.

188 as far as teaching staff, they would need 4 classroom teachers. There are two options with the  
189 way this works. You can hire someone who holds a K through 8 certification, there are very few  
190 people who hold that type of certification because they are no longer available, they have to be  
191 grandfathered in. There may be some programs that lead to a K-8 certification but that may be  
192 pretty difficult because you have to do all the elementary work and the middle school work. That  
193 could be a barrier to finding that certified teacher.

194 The other option is hiring a middle school math teacher and having them also teach science. it  
195 would flag on their DOE report that they do not have a certified teacher. It does not get them in  
196 trouble, they are allowed to have a teacher that teaches outside of their content area as long as it  
197 is less than 50% of the time. It does show up on a state report as having a no non-certified  
198 teacher. At the Amherst Middle School, they have just a math teacher, just a science teacher.  
199 They would not be able to do that model. It would have to be a 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade model but  
200 you are spanning across so many grade levels, it would not be good.

201 Mr. King added that Warren, NH has that model.

202 Ms. Landwehrle added that you would most likely need Lunch/ Recess monitors. They currently  
203 have 4 professionals and that is not enough to support lunch.

204 With office staff they would be ok, but they would need more IT staff, there would be 60  
205 laptops. They do not have a Food Service Director and right now they have a .5 position open.  
206 They cannot seem to fill it. Mr. Preston put the custodial information in there. The more people  
207 you have you can stagger.

208 Mr. King added that the chart is really helpful it gives them a ballpark idea of what they would  
209 need for staff.

210 Mr. Stokinger asked how much more space would they be adding.

211 Mr. Wiley added that he is concerned about the MPR.

212 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they have lunches K-3, and 4-6 rotated into two segments. It might  
213 be a K-4 lunch then a 5-8 lunch and the MPR is pretty full.

214 Ms. Brown added that it would not work during covid protocols.

215 Mr. King noted that they have 4 lunches at middle school, and it is crazy.

216 Ms. Landwehrle noted that it would impact the Master Schedule.

217 Mr. Wiley what is the cost of the tuition for the students they have now once that 5<sup>th</sup> grade gets  
218 pulled. That is the number that they need.

219 Ms. Dodd commented that the website shows that there are 645 AMS students. If 50 are MV  
220 students that is 600, if they remove the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, that leaves 400 students. That 20% does not  
221 work at all.

222 Discussion ensued.

223 Mr. Wiley asked what are the two sums that they are paying.

224 Ms. Brown added that she believes they are responsible for that portion of costs for capital  
225 facility projects and then they would be responsible for the tuition costs.

226 Ms. Dodd mentioned that the Amherst Facility Project cost is widely known, and people are  
227 upset. They need the SAU to produce that number.

228 Ms. Landwehrle noted that she can work with SAU #39 Business Administrator, Ms. Amy  
229 Facey, and SAU #39 Finance Director, Ms. Katie Hannan on that number.

230 Mr. King added that they think it is closer to 10%.

231 Ms. Landwehrle commented that they need to use the cost per pupil calculation for tuition.

232 Ms. Dodd added that it is the bond that what is making people uncomfortable.

233 Ms. Brown mentioned that their cost would be between \$7-8 million.

234 Ms. Dodd noted that the amount of the facilities project was in the community way before the  
235 meeting.

236 Ms. Landwehrle added that there is an example in the tuition document.

237 Ms. Dodd added that no one is worried about the tuition because they have been paying for that  
238 all these years but the building cost that they do not know is not sitting well with the community.

239 Ms. Brown asked about the tuition agreement.

240 Mr. King noted that the same language is in the 2009 tuition document.

241 Ms. Dodd added that they have not done a lot of work on the school either. The bond costs have  
242 been minor all these years.

243 Mr. Wiley added that it seems to be based on the number of students going.

244 Ms. Landwehrle replied that the number that was used in the example was a \$4m bond.

245 Mr. Wiley noted that it should not be \$7.8m.

246 Mr. King clarified that the \$7.8m was over time.

247 Mr. Wiley asked if they should have a plan in place for when this does happen.

248 Mr. King agreed.

249 Ms. Landwehrle noted that she will get the projected MV costs for the current renovation project.

250 Mr. King added that is the biggest piece of information that they need.

251 Mr. Wiley questioned if it was a 50- or 30-year bond.

252 Ms. Dodd replied that she saw at the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee Public Forum that they  
253 were using a 30-year bond. They showed the figure with the Amherst home valuation.

254 Ms. Landwehrle added that the club list is added, and it changes. What is also included are the  
255 Ed Rules and this is what governs public schools in the State of NH. They would not fall in that  
256 middle and high school range because they would still be an elementary school. The only other  
257 thing is that a Science Lab cannot exceed 24 students and that is for safety reasons.

258 Ms. Dodd asked if they would need a Science Lab.

259 Ms. Landwehrle replied yes, for a middle school but not for a K-8. She would have to look at the  
260 requirements for a true laboratory, again, these are for K-8, not a middle school. There is a lot of  
261 detail in here and these are the things that they need to have, and they do. For example, play  
262 based kindergarten they have already. They have all of these for an elementary, and she added  
263 links for greater detail. The only thing they are missing is Health from that list and Technology  
264 and Engineering are required. They have them at AMS so your students would be losing that  
265 model.



- 266 Mr. King questioned Ms. Landwehrle in that they do not need these items as a K-8 but in a  
267 middle school model, but they do need to provide Health.
- 268 Ms. Landwehrle replied, yes.
- 269 Ms. Brown added that it is not the whole year.
- 270 Ms. Landwehrle replied yes it does not have to be. They have expanded it out and the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>  
271 grade have electives. There are a lot more opportunities now. The other important thing to  
272 consider is that with their Advanced Math Program by the time they get to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade they can  
273 join an accelerated course. That would be the biggest challenge.
- 274 Mr. Stoking asked if they could create a system where they could offer an advanced math class  
275 here.
- 276 Ms. Landwehrle replied that they can have further discussion on that, sometimes transportation is  
277 a challenge.
- 278 Ms. Brown added that is a big consideration, they have had a large population of students  
279 approx. 30% going into that program.
- 280 Ms. Landwehrle commented that you might need an additional part time math teacher.
- 281 Ms. Brown asked if they would have to find a teacher with middle and high school certification.
- 282 Ms. Landwehrle replied yes. They would need that person to have a middle school certification  
283 the K-8 certification is not the right certification.
- 284 Mr. King inquired about the office staff.
- 285 Ms. Landwehrle added that they are ok with two full time office staff.
- 286 Ms. Dodd asked if would be feasible to have the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the high school as they have  
287 excess capacity.
- 288 Mr. King asked if they could rent the classrooms and send down the teachers.
- 289 Ms. Landwehrle replied as long as it is completely separate, there are so many complications.
- 290 Mr. Stoking asked if that applies to the high school.
- 291 Ms. Landwehrle replied that there is not a union, and they are not the same grade levels. You  
292 would be sending down your PE teacher from here and there would be travel costs and time.
- 293 Mr. Wiley asked about the union piece synced to the building.
- 294 Mr. King replied that it is the staff.
- 295 Ms. Dodd added that they are avoiding millions of dollars in costs.
- 296 Mr. King inquired what if they rent space and teachers from Souhegan.
- 297 Ms. Landwehrle added that some have middle school certifications.

- 298 Mr. King asked if they could expand Souhegan by 2 grades.
- 299 Ms. Dodd added that legally it took years with Souhegan.
- 300 Ms. Vlahos added that they are thinking outside of the box. The trend is that a lot of businesses  
301 are going remote and that leaves a lot of space for lease.
- 302 Mr. King noted that is what the charter schools are doing.
- 303 Ms. Landwehrle mentioned that the other option would be the Clark School. That building is  
304 most likely going to be a senior center, if and when they build a new building.
- 305 Mr. Stokinger asked if bringing the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades to Souhegan was off the table.
- 306 Ms. Dodd added that there were 650 students in the first year, the Annex was built for an  
307 additional 400 students.
- 308 Mr. Wiley commented that you are going to lose the sports and activities.
- 309 Ms. Landwehrle added that Tri County would let them still be the MVVS even if the building  
310 was Souhegan.
- 311 Mr. Brown noted that he believes that the problem was the time constraints in getting the  
312 students from here to over there.
- 313 Ms. Landwehrle replied that was the issue then but not now. Tri County still will not allow MV  
314 students to participate unless they attend AMS.
- 315 Mr. Stokinger added that it would pay the capital costs and they would be paying rent. He  
316 inquired what is the better long-term plan for the students.
- 317 Ms. Vlahos asked what if Souhegan expands and needs back the space.
- 318 Ms. Dodd added that interest rates are low, but the cost of materials is high.
- 319 Mr. Stokinger added that materials are high and maybe interest rates will be high when they  
320 break ground.
- 321 Ms. Landwehrle noted that they would not have a principal on site and there may be high  
322 turnover.
- 323 Ms. Grdina mentioned that it would not be good socially either.
- 324 Mr. Brown added that all three busses pick up Amherst students on the way through town to go  
325 to the middle school and Souhegan.
- 326 Ms. Landwehrle noted that the busses should be prorated rate.
- 327 Mr. Stokinger added that the original statement is a temporary solution.
- 328 Ms. Dodd added that they would need the projected enrollment.
- 329 Ms. Vlahos mentioned that maybe they can come up with a short term and long-term plan.

330 Ms. Vlahos questioned if they did have the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders here what would be the start time.

331 Ms. Landwehrle responded that K-4 could have a different start time and 5-8 could have a  
332 different start time. Additionally, they could all start and end at the same time for example 8-3.  
333 There could be a little bit of a bus issue there but not anything that they could not work around.

334 Ms. Vlahos added that if they did stagger it would help with the capacity in those shared areas.

335 Mr. King mentioned that someone had called in conducting school in yurts. He added that they  
336 are doing that in Amherst.

337 Ms. Landwehrle remarked that she has current enrollments in every grade, and she can roll them  
338 up. It has been hard for them to come up with accurate projections.

339 Ms. Vlahos commented that projections have to be tied to the construction.

340 Mr. King added that in the past Mr. Dodd had completed the enrollment projections.

341 Ms. Landwehrle added that they are not required to report live births to the town anymore. She  
342 added that there are enrollment tabs in the Trello board that should be helpful.

343 Mr. King noted that Ms. Landwehrle attending this meeting was really helpful.

344 **The next meeting will be on Tuesday December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7PM in the MVVS Library**

345 IV. Meeting Adjourned

346 **Mr. Stokinger motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:45PM.**

347

348