

Hanover Public School District

Act 34 Public Hearing

Washington Elementary

April 15, 2010

Call to Order 6:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Mr. Engle, Mrs. Funk, Mrs. Lingg, Dr. O'Connor, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Watson

Members Absent: Mr. Bortner, Mr. Edwards

Others in Attendance: Robert Corbin, Tara Kauffman, April Hobson, Shawn Klunk, Dan Brady, Doug West, Jane West, Troy Wentz, Dr. Tom Krout, Rick Musselman, Dr. Al Moyer, Mark Hershner, Heather Faulhefer, Evening Sun, Jim Baumgardner

Dr. Moyer Welcome and Purpose of the Meeting

Dr. Moyer introduced all in attendance. The Plan Con process was explained and the importance of the public comment section of the meeting. A Facility Study is available along with the Act 34 booklet for the project. The District is striving for Educational Equity among the elementary schools. The importance of the public comment period was indicated.

Mr. Baumgardner Overview of the Project.

Meetings with interested parties were held within the District. An educational spec was created. Projected growth numbers analyzed and 3 options were created: 1. Add on to existing structure 2. Do nothing 3. New structure. Three temporary classrooms have cost the District monies over the years and there is a desire to eliminate them. Technology needs abound and multi purpose room needs along with heating and cooling needs. The administration office is currently centralized which is a hindrance to security. The library size is not adequate and additional storage is needed. Kindergarten is projected to become full day and LIU fair share classroom is needed. Small group instructional rooms and 2 extra classrooms are in the design. The building will be handicap accessible and asbestos abatement will occur along with a new roof and additional parking. A site orientation plan was developed with Wilson Avenue entrance.

Troy Wentz presented the cost analysis of the project.

The bond issue was taken out in May of 2005. The bond was a variable interest rate bond that is saving the District on interest due to the current low rates. No current millage impact for 2010-2011 is anticipated. Total project costs and reimbursements from the state were highlighted per the Act 34 booklet.

Dr. Moyer discussed the facility study and plan on D prep and educational equity importance.

Tom Krout presented the Educational and Programmatic Summary of the project. The building will become a community site with educational and programmatic increases. The cooling and air conditioning needs improved. The roof currently leaks and needs replaced. There are a lack of screens on the windows and the building is busting at the seams with students and storage needs. Science labs, art, music classrooms will be enhanced. Boiler system will be replaced. Satellite of food is currently occurring. Confidentiality in the nurse's office needs improved with a nursing area. The building needs to be handicap accessible. The drop off area for students will be enhanced. The plans were shared with PTO and faculty.

Dr. Moyer commented on the involvement of the staff in the input and design of the project. For the elementary projects the principals collaborated on the two building designs to achieve equity of programs. Disruption of education during construction is sensitive and discussions are being held regarding the relocatable, use of a local church, Clearview open space and timing of the construction and performing construction in segments.

Public Comment is an important part of the project and the notes will be included in the Department of Ed documentation.

Tara Kauffman, 745 Spruce Drive, Hanover, questioned the instructional housing of the students during construction.

Robert Corbin, Corner of Moul and Wilson Avenues commented on the AM congestion and wondered if the starting times for high school and grade school could be staggered along with staggered hours of the business' opening. Already a school guard has been hit at this intersection and it is another accident waiting to happen. The new design will create a back up on Wilson Avenue due to the number of cars. He questioned the number of high school cars and who can drive to school at the high school. Student drop off and the intersection were questioned.

April Hobson, , wondered if option #2 is an option, which is build a new school. Disappointed students are missing out on opportunities that other elementary school students are receiving. School not updated since 1961 and spacing and traffic concerns have limited the students. Construction of an environmentally friendly school was questioned. Dr. Moyer discussed staggered hours and without transportation provided by the District, difficult to stagger due to siblings being brought to school. The Borough police and Borough manager have been questioned as to whether the infrastructure of this area can handle the traffic flow. A trained policeman at the intersection has no support from the Borough due to statistical analysis indicating no need for it. Asbestos situation and abatement over summer and there is no harm to the students currently. District personnel are addressing the bees. Dr. Moyer reminded everyone that safety of the students is number 1.

Dan Brady, , Emergency services in this area would be difficult due to the lack of volunteers and manpower. He encouraged pressure to fix the traffic situation and commented on the pressure of the Wirt Avenue Tea Party gathering. He encouraged contact with Will Tallman and round table discussions and involvement to put the pressure on the legislatures. Truck traffic and rail traffic will double over the next 5 years in Hanover. Control, like in York City, needs to be given up.

April Hobson discussed a need for a walking line plan with stop signs currently only being used. Dr. Krout indicated that training of walking line people is held every year and evaluation of this process occurs annually. Lindy Lingg indicated the dedication of the walking line personnel in terms of safety of the children.

Tara Kauffman wondered about the traffic at intersection of Wilson and Moul Avenue and the same traffic problem will occur at Washington and Moul Avenue with the proposed new traffic pattern.

Robert Corbin reiterated the need for staggered start times, car pooling and business traffic at the intersection and questioned why so many underclassman need to drive to school.

Dan Brady told the group about the Right To Know Law and the Borough request for application and questioned the statistics that are generated on certain activities.

Shawn Klunk, , discussed the traffic situation and the turn off Washington, right turn only onto Wilson, to keep traffic away from Moul Avenue and for the safety of the students.

April Hobson indicated the right turn only would cause people to go out of their way by a longer distance.

Robert Corbin reiterated the traffic problem at Moul and Wilson Avenue. He thought the air conditioning was a good idea, but make sure it is energy efficient.

Tara Kauffman wondered if the project is delayed, is there a plan. If asbestos is not removed what will occur with heavy construction during the school year. Dr. Moyer indicated the following school year might need to be moved back to start school to complete the project. Dr. O'Connor indicated the major asbestos removal was completed in 1998 or 1999.

Shawn Klunk commented that the asbestos is around the steam pipes and flooring and being familiar with asbestos is not concerned about the removal.

Tara Kauffman questioned whether mold would be found. Dr. Krout indicated that continual testing has been done.

Robert Corbin discussed the strict monitoring of asbestos removal and inspectors and regulations and he too is not concerned about the asbestos removal.

Doug West, 205 S. Forney Avenue, Hanover, provided comments, which are attached as his statement was written.

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I appreciate this opportunity to address the board and would like to begin by commending the Board for moving ahead with these building projects. The community, the district and, most importantly, the students have been waiting a long time for this and the kids who attend the schools are in great need of these renovations. My comments here do not relate specifically to Washington, or even to Hanover Street per se, rather they apply to all the projects. I hope you will indulge the general nature of my remarks.

As I look back, I was surprised to realize that we actually began this entire process way back in 2003 – seven years ago. In fact, for more than ½ of my 12 years on the Board, we had this issue in front of us. Mr. Edwards can no doubt remember the early stages and may well be experiencing déjà vu. I am delighted that when these Act 34 Hearings and the public comment period are complete, you can move forward with the PlanCon process, ultimately leading to the securing of bids and ground breaking shortly thereafter.

While I am extremely pleased the process is once again moving forward, I must confess, I was somewhat surprised when I read in the paper that this Act 34 Hearing was scheduled so soon. During my final 2 years on the Board, part of which was spent on the Building and Grounds Committee, although we had seen plans for Washington, no plans had been put forward for Hanover Street (and in reviewing recent Board Minutes, it does not appear the Hanover Street plans have been discussed or reviewed by the entire Board since the new members have been seated), nor had cost estimates been generated for either project. (I know Mr. O'Connor often asked about cost estimates.) Discussions about the stadium and track had been on-going and plans finally seemed to be coalescing around a decision to renovate Shepherd Myers and move the track to the High School / Middle School. The general consensus seemed to be that locating it on campus would

make it accessible from both buildings and available not only for sports but also for student educational programs as well as for community use.

That being said, you can understand my surprise at the announcement of the Act 34 Hearing. In order to better understand how the district had moved so quickly in such a short period of time, I felt compelled to go back and read board minutes, listen to the audio recordings of the meetings, talk with sitting board members, contact the affected building administrators and teachers, and even speak with the superintendent. I read the Project Description Books for both Washington and Hanover Street Elementaries prepared for this Hearing, and finally today was able to review the Facility Study the board passed on January 11. Unfortunately the study was not available until about noon today, but I did at least have some time to take a quick look at it.

After doing all this leg work, I am pleased to say that I could not be happier that the Hanover Public School District is finally on the verge of beginning a building project which has been sorely needed for many years. It has been a long road to get here and many of you in this room know that I personally have not always been happy with the twists and turns the road has taken – dare I even mention the debacle at Moul Field brought on by the eminent domain case initiated by the borough, the public outcry over the future of Shepherd Myers Stadium, multiple changes in district administration and the elimination of some administrative positions, questions over the demographics, concerns over the costs associated with the proposed projects, criticism of the initial architects selected by a competitive review process and their subsequent replacement by a local professional. And while all of this went on, the teachers and the kids patiently waited.

So here we are. And, when you look at the plans presented tonight and compare them with the original plans for Hanover Street and the final renovation projects submitted for Washington by previous architects, the footprints don't really differ all that much. The costs, however, seem to be higher today. In fact, six years ago, the cost estimates included money for whatever final decision may have been made regarding the track and Shepherd Myers Field. Even though we did not move ahead, it was fortunate the funding

was put in place during the 05-06 budget year to make this possible, although future plans regarding the track and the stadium are still up in the air.

But enough about the past. Today I would rather focus attention on the fact that these long-overdue projects are now finally on the verge of getting done. Those who know me know that when I sat on the board I almost always deferred to the teachers and administrators when it came to the educational program. I still think that is the right thing to do. So, I have spent some time asking them again in preparation for this Act 34 Hearing. I can report to you that they are not only happy with the proposals set in front of us tonight, but they assure me that what is proposed here will guarantee that regardless of whether an elementary student goes to Clearview, or Washington or Hanover Street, they will all have access to the same quality educational program. To a person, everyone I spoke with is comfortable that the proposed facilities will make that possible. For me that has always been a central point and is what this entire building program is really all about.

If I have concerns at all about what is being presented, they are over two issues: 1) that the education of the kids will not be adversely impacted while the building projects are underway and 2) that the track be moved to the High School / Middle School complex, unless there are overwhelmingly apparent reasons not to.

I understand the urgency of getting these projects done now while, given the current state of the economy, bidding for construction may be optimum. Heavens knows the kids have waited long enough. However, I also want to be sure that we are not in such a hurry that they are adversely affected during the process. I understand that discussions are underway to address this concern, but I trust there will be adequate plans in place to house and educate the kids during the disruptive phases of these projects. The PDE website says the average time to go from PlanCon A to PlanCon G (that is from the project description phase to Bids) is normally 9-12 months. We will be accomplishing that in less than 5 months. I know we have waited a long time, I just hope we aren't rushing the final stages.

With regard to the track and Shepherd Myers, it seems they are once again taking a back seat. I know of almost no one who would not argue that the education of the children is the most important focus here. However, I feel strongly that the track should be placed at the High School/Middle School Complex. There are currently 47 kids in the district participating in track this year. I believe that is the largest number of students participating in any Varsity sport. One of the beauties of the sport is it's wide-ranging appeal and there is little doubt that a Middle School program would attract even more kids to the sport.

Moving the track, and the costs associated with that and with renovating the track and football field at Shepherd Myers, have been repeatedly studied over the years. I would urge you to take a look at those studies. I have seen past estimates for placing the track on the campus, with and without the football field, and they seem to raise questions about the estimates currently posted on the district website and presented in the Facility Study. But beyond the costs, I would ask the board to take a very close look at the educational and community benefits as well. And don't forget that the District owns Moul Field. We need to look into ways of working with the Borough to enhance its community use. This could provide a wonderful opportunity for the cooperative development of baseball, softball, field hockey and soccer fields and renew a positive relationship between the Borough and the District.

So, in closing, would I have preferred that what is being proposed here tonight was done 5 or 6 years ago? Absolutely. But that is water under the bridge. We are where we are. The past is the past. I am hoping that these Act 34 Hearings will allow us to move forward and give the kids of the Hanover Public School District what they have needed and deserved for years.

Best of luck as you move forward.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.