

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

FACILITIES AND SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, April 30, 2014

A meeting of the Facilities and Security Subcommittee was held on Wednesday, April 30, 2014 at 5:00 pm in the 2nd floor Conference Room of the NAGE Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mr. Noel DiBona, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, and Mr. David McCarthy, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mr. Michael Draicchio, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Mr. Walter MacDonald, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Kevin Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd, Mrs. Ruth Witmer; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox; Citywide Parents Council Co-Presidents Fiona McGarry and Paula Reynolds; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mr. McCarthy called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm and introduced Superintendent DeCristofaro who walked through the process of working with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) on the new Sterling Middle School project. Dr. DeCristofaro said that building the new Sterling Middle School is an opportunity to address enrollment issues; programmatic issues will be addressed through the design phase. Site and system enrollment has been reviewed and grade level populations are maintained across transitions (Grades K-1, 4-5/5-6, 8-9). High school enrollment is and middle school enrollment is comfortably within capacity at all buildings except for Central, which is at capacity. At the elementary level, there are several schools that are close to capacity: Montclair, Wollaston, Beechwood Knoll, Clifford Marshall, and Lincoln Hancock. Kindergarten enrollment and class sizes will continue to be monitored at all schools. Dr. DeCristofaro sees opportunity in building the new Sterling Middle School – the opportunity to create a Grades 4-5 academy and create a Grades K-3 Lincoln Hancock to focus on early childhood education and allow for expansion of academic support programs, especially in the area of mathematics. The next check on Kindergarten registration will be on May 6, but if trends continue, there will be new students registering in late August and early September. The Della Chiesa Early Childhood Center originally housed Grades K-1 students, allowing for a focus on early childhood education. When the Special Education program moved from rented space to Della Chiesa in 2008, Grade 1 moved to Lincoln Hancock. In 2009, the Kindergarten classes moved to Lincoln Hancock and Grade 5 moved to Sterling. Mrs. Mahoney said that at the time, these shifts were presented as necessary to balance the budget and retain the Special Education preschool program. Dr. DeCristofaro said this was one factor, but other factors included increased demand for Special Education programs and additional space needed for classrooms due to full-day Kindergarten and increased enrollment.

The MSBA, City Council, and School Building Committee will all have a role in assessing the feasibility of building this new Sterling Middle School. Dr. DeCristofaro has heard the concerns of parents about

Grade 4 students in a middle school setting and said the building design would limit the interactions of older and younger students. Working with the Owner's Project Manager and Designer, the feasibility of this idea will be studied. One benefit would be that Grades 4-5 teachers could work as a cohort in an elementary, rather than middle school setting. Dr. DeCristofaro said that the potential for student impact through a five-year School Improvement Plan was unprecedented, and the school could offer extended time on learning by following the middle school early release Tuesday schedule. He also cited opportunities for additional extracurricular programs and the proximity to the Djerf Community pool and Kincaide Park. A focus on STEM could designate the school as a citywide magnet school and build on the legacies of principal leadership, dedicated teachers, improving test scores, and dedicated parents.

In working with the MSBA, we are in process on the requirements for Module 1. The next step is the Enrollment meeting which will lead to Enrollment Certification by August 1. That certification will be followed by Local Vote Authorization for the Feasibility Study by the City Council. The City Council must commit to fund the Feasibility Study, for which the city will receive reimbursement at a rate still to be determined. The next stage is Module 2, when a team of professionals is assembled, including the Owner's Project Manager and Designer. We are meeting and bettering all deliverable deadlines for Module 1, but for Module 2, the MSBA calendar will drive most of the deadlines. We are anticipating this stage will be completed by February 2015. Module 3, the Feasibility Study is where the educational program is solidified, an initial space summary is generated, and alternatives are developed and evaluated. This phase is where the grade-level configuration options will be assessed and a final recommendation presented to the Sterling Building Committee, School Committee, City Council, parents, staff, and community members.

Dr. DeCristofaro said that while not everyone agrees with the grade configuration options, he would like to keep an open mind during this feasibility study phase. Dr. DeCristofaro said that issues for other elementary schools are being reviewed through the budget process and there no reason for immediate concern at any school for changes in districts or grade level configurations. Dr. DeCristofaro said it is incumbent on him to be sure that the MSBA understands that a new Sterling Middle School with a capacity for 550-600 students will allow for flexibility in alleviating future enrollment issues. Neighborhood schools work in Quincy and give students and families consistency and a base of services, teaching, and community,

Mr. McCarthy thanked Dr. DeCristofaro and noted that the enrollment documentation provided has given much information to be analyzed. He opened the floor for comments, noting that there will be opportunities to continue the discussion as the process moves forward.

Mr. Bregoli asked what the plans are for the old Sterling building once the new building is completed and Dr. DeCristofaro said that those discussions had not taken place yet with Public Buildings and School Committee. He asked for details about the site for the new school. Dr. DeCristofaro said the

architects would develop different siting options but the school will most likely be situated on fields behind the present building. Mr. Bregoli asked whether a combined Grades 4-5 elementary on a middle school schedule would work with the QEA contract, specifically prep time and professional development. Dr. DeCristofaro said this would be handled through scheduling, built in prep time would be provided for the elementary grade teachers. Mr. Bregoli asked if the school might need additional staff and Dr. DeCristofaro said there could possibly be a dedicated Student Support staff member to assist with parent concerns and perhaps having health or chorus programs like middle school. Mr. Bregoli asked if the MSBA has a base figure for funding tied to enrollment, for example, would a smaller building get lesser funding. He also asked why Quincy High School wasn't larger, but there were site restrictions because of the proximity to the older building and the marsh.

Mrs. Hubley asked for clarification on when the grade configuration vote would happen. Dr. DeCristofaro said February 2015 at the earliest. She also asked whether any preliminary sketches would be available during the consideration time and with the preliminary design involvement, this should be possible.

Mr. DiBona asked for confirmation that School Committee will have input on the building design. Mr. DiBona and Mr. McCarthy as members of the Building Committee will be involved in very detailed discussions, as will School Committee as a whole. Mr. DiBona said after hearing the concerns of parents, he would like to see different entrances and arrival and dismissal times. He would like to see the new building provide the opportunity for more, not less opportunity for the Sterling students. Mr. DiBona hopes that the information will get out to parents that this is a design process and a continuing discussion with opportunity for input. Mr. DiBona asked about other Grades 4-8 schools, Dr. DeCristofaro said this is not a common configuration, but he did visit one in Clinton, MA.

Ms. Isola said that her priority is to have the best educational opportunities, and would like to have the ability to explore options without panicking the community. As a School Committee member, she feels it her responsibility to look at problems from all sides and explore what are the possibilities without fear. This is a very complex issue, there are many issues to be considered, including redistricting. School Committee must be able to have an open dialogue that will engage stakeholders and parents must know that their formal input will always be sought. At some point, perhaps an ad hoc committee could be formed that includes parents. Let's engage in the conversation, gather information, and look at all possibilities.

Mrs. Mahoney said that she was surprised by the concerns about enrollment, having been on School Committee for nine years and participated in building Quincy High School and Central, grade level configurations having never been a part of these discussions. Mrs. Mahoney objected to not being able to ask question at the last School Committee meeting and her question was about whether additional options could be added to the MSBA submission. She is suggesting that a Grades 6-8

Sterling should be considered. She contacted the MSBA directly to discuss. Dr. DeCristofaro said that he thinks the MSBA will be flexible in working with us and he will look into this with the MSBA.

Mrs. Mahoney is not in favor of Grades 4-8 and feels that separation within the building is not enough. The majority of Grade 4 students are 9 years old, too young for the middle school. Requested to know the home schools of students awarded Open Enrollment and wants to know why the other elementary schools are no longer a concern. Dr. DeCristofaro said that he never used the term overcrowding, he expressed concerns to be monitored and the Kindergarten enrollments and class sizes will be monitored. Mrs. Mahoney said that Mayor Koch said bursting at the seams and this is now the public perception.

Mr. McCarthy said that everyone has their opinion and that basic concerns have been expressed by each School Committee member. Dr. DeCristofaro will continue will work with MSBA, and Mr. McCarthy feels that Dr. DeCristofaro has looked at many options and decided that Grades 4-8 and 5-8 were the best options. He also agrees that Dr. DeCristofaro should find out if there will be opportunity to add further configuration options during the process.

Mrs. Mahoney said that even if Clifford Marshall and Lincoln Hancock are the areas for concern, we still need to look at the whole city. She would like to propose Point Webster being used for Grades 4-5 and new Sterling house Grades 6-8 for both neighborhoods. She acknowledges that School Committee does not vote on this, but it is School Committee's job to question the proposals. Mrs. Mahoney said that the Clinton Grades 4-8 school model is not a comparison, this is a district of 1,900 total students total. This is one school being treated completely differently than others.

Mr. McCarthy summarized by saying that the enrollment and class size have always been reviewed by School Committee; there should be no surprises since we've seen increases in K-2 numbers, particularly at Lincoln Hancock and Marshall. Mr. McCarthy acknowledged that redistricting should be on the table. In the meetings to come, discussions will be held including parents, and that School Committee may have to look down the road to redistricting to alleviate pressure on other schools including Montclair. When the new Squantum School is built, enrollment at that time will need to be considered. Having gone to a K-8 school, he is not concerned about grade level span. Mr. McCarthy is confident that there will be comprehensive review and discussion before any decisions are made. Dr. DeCristofaro's preparation is always thorough.

Mr. Bregoli respects Dr. DeCristofaro's goal of keeping neighborhood school concept in the forefront, in the past, schools were closed and sold with little consideration of future growth. Quincy Public Schools has a legacy of transportation and costs from these decisions.

Mr. Walter MacDonald from Public Buildings then presented an update on the Coddington Hall renovation. Mr. MacDonald said that this is a beautiful building being restored and it is on schedule

for substantial completion in mid-June. The building's exterior work is complete, all windows installed, slate roof restored, and the building has been power-washed and repointed. Mechanical systems are in place, with permanent power expected to be completed the first week of May. A state of the art security system is being installed. School Committee room lighting and audio visual technology is being installed and a new phone system will be installed in collaboration with City IT move. Mr. MacDonald said that the building has to be completely clean before City IT can begin moving in equipment. All utilities will be underground, Coddington Street will be excavated for conduit installation. Finish work has begun on the third floor, walls have been primed, stairwells are being modified as needed. At the end of May, exterior paving and landscaping will begin. An accessible entrance is being created at the back of the building.

Mr. Bregoli asked what the time frame for excavation on Coddington Street; this is part of a larger project to move all utilities on this street underground. Work should begin next week and be completed in a few days, keeping in mind the high school arrival and dismissal hours.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for details on the security system: Brevo, a cloud based system. Mr. MacDonald said that other city buildings can tie into this system. Card readers will be present at the main entrance, video intercom system for building entry. Rear doors will be card access only, and Planning Department entry will be open for public access. A dormer was added to the roof for mechanical equipment ventilation. Mrs. Mahoney wanted to know why copper was used on this section, asked for cost breakouts for the building, including the School Committee room.

Mrs. Hubley asked about the elevator issue that had been raised at an earlier meeting. Mr. MacDonald said that the elevator controls were replaced and wiring replaced to update/upgrade the elevator, along with renovating the elevator cab.

Ms. Isola asked about parking. There will be designated visitor parking, but the number has not been determined. Ms. Isola said ample parking for parents and visitors will be important. Dr. DeCristofaro promised that it will be better than NAGE. Mrs. Mahoney and Dr. DeCristofaro said there will be additional spaces at the former QHS site to be shared by QHS and QPS administration.

Mr. DiBona left the meeting at 6:25 pm.

The last item on the agenda was the High School Lobby Security Protocols. Director of Safety and Security Michael Draicchio updated the current status of high school security protocols. North Quincy High School has video intercom system installed; Quincy High School is still in process, with the equipment on order. Visitors check-in with security personnel, identifying themselves and the purpose for their visit. Photo id is to presented upon request. Mr. Draicchio showed the red visitor lanyard that is issued and visitors are expected to return to security to check out and return their id.

Ms. Isola thanked Mr. Draicchio for presenting the written policy. She would like to see visitor identification kept by Security as an incentive to return the visitor lanyards.

Mr. Bregoli requested whether the Hunt Street door for North Quincy High School could become a student entrance once the planned new parking is completed. This would be a second building entrance, possibly more secure with the two sets of doors. Both sets of doors currently have access control for staff entrance.

Mr. Bregoli asked which door was not secured during Monday's intrusion. It was the loading dock door on the Hancock Street side of the building. Mrs. Mahoney asked if it was unlocked or ajar. Mr. Draicchio said that it is not clear from the video but an additional security camera will be installed in the corridor to immediately pick up an intruder. Mrs. Mahoney asked if there are alarms for doors that are ajar. She asked if this could be added to the new door installation at NQHS. Some exit doors already have alarms for unauthorized exiting. Mr. McCarthy said it is difficult to monitor over the course of a day because the door is open for deliveries etc. Mr. McCarthy said that this a good point, especially given the size of the high school buildings and the number of exits.

Mrs. Mahoney said that while this is difficult, it is a conversation we need to have. Dr. DeCristofaro said our response was excellent, but the issue is about being proactive so that all staff and students have the urgency to maintain the safety protocols. We learn from every situation and we need to keep up the constant reminders.

Mr. Bregoli asked about a previously discussed license reader idea, Mr. Draicchio said that the pricing is close to \$80,000 and the background information generated is limited. He spoke with other cities and towns that have these, some are simply generating a copy of the id as a badge. Mr. Draicchio doesn't see this as feasible at this time.

Mr. McCarthy complimented the response at NQHS, noting it is the human factor that can affect the best planned security. He asked whether there were doorbells for deliveries at the kitchens, loading docks, and other delivery areas and would like to see this as a future consideration. Mr. McCarthy said a crash bar alarm for little-used doors might be a consideration for various doors at both high schools.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the Facilities and Security Subcommittee meeting at 6:45 pm. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.