

Minutes
Long Term Facilities Planning Committee Meeting
July 11, 2013

Superintendent D'Agostino called the meeting to order at 11:05 am with the following in attendance:

Richard D'Agostino, Chair	Catherine Bonang	Lynn Dambruch	Paul Cannistra
Dennis Mullen	*David Testa	Mark Carruolo	Stephanie Van Patten
Robert Bushell	Ed Racca	Mary Townsend	
Anthony Ferrucci	Frank Ricci	Nancy Plumb	
Amie Galipeau	Jacqueline Harris-Connor	Patty Nazareth	
*William McCaffrey	Kim Carson		

*Absent

Superintendent Remarks:

Superintendent said that Paul Cannistra contacted him and removed himself from the Committee. Kim Carson, will not return to the Committee as well as retired Principal Frank Ricci. Dr. D'Agostino has asked Mr. Ferrucci to serve as a resource person to the Committee. Dr. D'Agostino said he has been contacted by some Committee members requesting to remain on the Committee. He expressed that he hoped PCAC and PTA members would nominate amongst themselves one representative to serve on the LTFPC.

Committee members expressed that they were asked to serve on the committee by the previous superintendent and they did not want to resign, nor did they feel they were representing their organization, but rather serving as a parent and taxpayer.

Action Items:

Approval of Minutes:

Motion 2013-10 Moved by Ms. Galipeau and seconded by Mr. Bushell to approve the June 25, 2013 minutes with the following noted by Mr. Testa (via Mr. Racca). David Testa said he was not the committee member who stated (page 3) that Mr. Ginolfi said he was not a proponent of the middle school model.

Motion passes (13-0)

Richard D'Agostino	Catherine Bonang	Mary Townsend
Dennis Mullen	Ed Racca	Nancy Plumb
Robert Bushell	Jacqueline Harris-Connor	Patty Nazareth
Amie Galipeau	Lynn Dambruch	Stephanie Van Patten
	Mark Carruolo	

Mr. Racca stated that Mr. Ginolfi is not against a middle school model, he just has concerns that it is implemented in the right manner.

New Business:

Superintendent D'Agostino distributed a Mission Statement which he wrote as a starting point to help guide the Committee and which emphasizes the charge of the Committee from School committee. He sought Committee members input to this "draft" Mission Statement.

Ms. Galipeau and Ms. Van Patten brought to attention that in the Mission Statement the LTFPC was typed LRFPC. The Committee agreed that going forward, by all, it will be referred to as the Long Term Facilities Planning Committee (LTFPC).

For the record, the Mission Statement reads: *The purpose of the LTFPC is to provide a written plan for the school district that will provide the buildings and structures to house students and staff for the next five years and that are flexible enough to accommodate changes and/or upgrades to programs, grade configurations, etc. by the school administration and school committee.*

Ed Racca asked if it is the intention to plan for alternative configurations or not plan for them. The superintendent said we should look at our structures for configuration that could be developed, but not limit ourselves to that. We need, he stated, to anticipate needs for 5 years ahead.

There was much committee discussion regarding the members vote to not close Gorton. Some members expressed that they felt dividing the LTFPC into 2 subcommittees had been counterproductive and they said they were not fully informed about what would result in not closing Gorton Junior High School. Members expressed that, at that time, they were not informed what the long term effect would be and had they known, they may have voted differently. Committee members felt that sub-dividing them (the Long and Short Term Subcommittees), left a portion of them out of the conversation. The Superintendent and Mr. Mullen said they presented and provided all Committee members with all the pertinent data relating to the junior and senior high schools.

Mr. Carruolo said it seems that the Committee had redirected its' focus from looking at facilities and grounds to programs and curriculum, which became counterproductive to the mission. He also stated that committee members need to respect the judgment and opinion of WPS administrators and believe in the statistics provided by administration. If we are going to work as a group, he stated, we have to trust the information being provided or we cannot proceed forward. He encourages committee members to research the numbers and information provided, as he did, but to demonstrate public support for administration. He continued to say that Dr. D'Agostino picked up this task where the previous Committee (under previous administration) left off. Richard did not want to repurpose this committee. He (Richard) did his best to try and continue the work that was started.

Jacqueline Harris-Connors said she was in agreement with Mark Carruolo and said she believes part of the problem was that we (the Committee) never got out in front of a story. The Committee members agreed to move forward...make a decision and move on. If we (the committee) want to look at junior and senior high schools, we need to do it.

Mr. Racca said WPS does have a decent educational system and children will not suffer when schools close. Mr. Bushell said that when the elementary schools closed, the children adjusted very well. Administration identified those students that needed extra help in transitioning and provided for them. The same will occur with any secondary school closure. Ms. VanPatten believes class size is a concern to be focused on in consolidation. She believes a smaller class size is a better education.

Ms. Dambruch said we need to get our schools in line with the 21st Century. Look at facilities, what changes need to be made to facilitate consolidation and still meet the needs of students. Dr. D'Agostino said the Committee needs to look at the whole picture and we need to utilize resources and facilities better. The Committee, as a whole, agreed that any school building with low enrollment capacity should not be open.

Motion 2013-11 Moved by Dennis Mullen and seconded by Mary Townsend to accept the Mission Statement as written.

Motion passes (13-0)

Richard D'Agostino
Dennis Mullen
Robert Bushell
Amie Galipeau

Catherine Bonang
Ed Racca
Jacqueline Harris-Connor
Lynn Dambruch
Mark Carruolo

Mary Townsend
Nancy Plumb
Patty Nazareth
Stephanie Van Patten

The Committee decided that at the next meeting Dennis Mullen would review the high school numbers he presented previously. Mr. Mullen told the committee that he would not be able to give them accurate numbers based on this year's figures, at this point, because schools were still in a state of flux regarding their enrollments for September. The committee agreed that last year's figures would be fine to present. Stephanie VanPatten said we shouldn't have to close "connected" schools....e.g., close Gorton...therefore you have to close Veterans HS. The Committee agreed to look at the "best buildings" to close. The closure of a high school opens up ample space for bringing two junior high schools together.

The Committee agreed the next meeting will be August 13th, at 5:00 pm.

Motion 2013-12 moved by Mark Carruolo and seconded by Dennis Mullen to adjourn.

Motion passes (13-0)

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Robert Bushell
Amie Galipeau

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Adjourn 12:00 pm