



HARRIMAN

MEETING NOTES

To

Deb Alden

From

Mark Lee, Lisa Sawin

Date

June 28, 2021

Project

RSU 10, Feasibility and Planning Study
Project No. 19536

Subject

Site Selection Straw Poll

Attendees

Deb Alden, Jill Bartash, Crystal Casey, Scott Holmes, Crystal Duguay, Cheryl Gurney, Lori Cayer, Katie Nolette, Lynn Gould, Jeanne Lapointe, Jessica Casey, Vanessa Child, Marianne Hutchinson, Brian Carrier, Ryan Casey, Veronica Child, Janet Brennick, Greg Buccina, Jerald Wiley, Charles Maddaus, Michelle Casey, Gail Parent

Lisa Sawin, Mark Lee, Emilie Waugh (Harriman)

1. Introduction

- a) Deb Alden welcomed everyone, both in person and those attending via Zoom. She explained that Harriman would be giving a presentation, after which there would be a nonbinding vote about how the community feels about the project moving forward on the proposed site.
- b) Mark Lee emphasized that tonight is about understanding community support about a school at a particular location, without getting into specifics of the school design or makeup.

2. Project Schedule/Process

- a) We are following a 21 step process under DOE guidelines, and are now at one of the major milestones.
- b) We are garnering community support for the location of a school project, and then will be able to complete the site application for DOE, that they will then take to the State Board for approval.
- c) All the technical data and investigation we've been gathering has been working toward this moment, with just a few more steps to getting that approval for the location of the school.
- d) From there, we will move into Concept Design (which we have begun working on in parallel before we close out the site selection process).
- e) Looking at the overall project schedule, we are more than halfway through the site selection/concept design phase, and will then move into design development and

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construction documents. At that point, contractors will bid on the project, and the lowest qualified bidder will then start construction on the school. Construction is expected to take approximately 26 months.

- f) The site selection process followed a series of steps:
 - i. First we looked at various criteria defined by both the Department of Education and the things that are important to the community.
 - ii. Next we collected a variety of data from GIS mapping, as well as physical maps and records. This included things like sizes and geographic features of sites or utilities. We cast a wide net and evaluated a range of sites.
 - iii. We then polled the community if the site selection criteria was favored and the general location where we were looking.
 - iv. From there, we created a list that met the acreage requirements, and narrowed down the areas we could look at.
 - v. After getting feedback on the list of sites, we went further into the details of the features of those sites.
 - vi. We then created the top three sites and presented to DOE, who has been our partner in this process, and got feedback from them on the appropriateness of the sites.
 - vii. Finally, we arrived at the best possible site to support the factors we wanted, based on DOE and community criteria.
- g) We started with 7 sites. We narrowed it down to 3 that aligned with the criteria from DOE and local individuals. We eliminated one site based on an NPS grant that restricts development. We eliminated another site in a wellhead protection zone. Then we landed on our preferred site and performed environmental studies.

3. Site Selection Criteria

- a) There were six areas of site selection criteria.
 - i. Boxes 2-6 are identified by DOE and ensure that we are thoroughly understanding the site and making sure we explore all our options.
 - ii. These criteria include size and topography of the site, soils (and any cost we might incur by building on them), transportation (including sidewalks, bussing impact, etc.), access of utilities, and proximity to first responders, community facilities, public transportation, etc.
 - iii. The major community values for site selection were:
 - i. The site should be 3 miles from the bridge.
 - ii. The location should balance the community schools.
 - iii. The site should be fiscally responsible (maybe a site we already own or that has already been developed).
 - iv. Access to nature (we heard repeatedly how important this is for the programs already in place).
 - v. Continued collaboration with clubs, land owners, and community members.
 - vi. Maintain and enhance collaboration between the surrounding towns.
 - iv. Using all this criteria, we selected 7 potential sites within the radius.



- v. Using the criteria, we filled in a chart weighing how each site measured up against the different criteria.
- vi. From there we were able to reduce the list down to three sites (Mexico Rec Center, Mexico Public Works, Meroby Elementary/Mountain Valley Middle School).
- vii. Looking at an example of our detailed investigation, we had an environmental study done on the MES/MVMS site right out of the gate because we knew it was a potential site. We were happy to find that there were no vernal pools. We do have some wetlands, but we will be doing work to mitigate or work around them.
- viii. There is a grant program through the National Park Service that is inventoried by the state. They set aside land for recreation to be used in perpetuity. There are ways of translating it to another location, but it's a long encumbered process, so the State frowns upon it. It would be a significant cost and time issue to get around. Therefore, this moved the Mexico Rec site down on our list.
- ix. The Mexico Public Works site was found to have well protection overlay, which made it very difficult to develop. This meant that, with all the data and criteria before us, the Meroby/Mountain Valley Middle School site was the best site for our project.

4. Proposed Site

- a) Lisa and Mark presented the site diagram showing that all the desired components could potentially fit on this site.
 - i. The school could be placed between the two existing buildings, so they could remain active while a new school was being built, without having to find swing space.
 - ii. There is room for a compliment of programs and athletics as well, including the relocation of the existing track and field, additional ball fields, playgrounds, parking, separate parent/bus drop off, and easy access to the nature program.
 - iii. It's important to note that this is simply a diagram. We do not yet know the exact shape or location of the building or other site elements.

5. Next Steps

- a) We meet with DOE on July 22nd (and will be having some interim meetings with them as well).
- b) We are working toward meeting with the State Board Construction Committee on July 30th, then go to the State Board for site approval on August 11th.
- c) The next community forum will be the concept design straw poll. We are targeting August or September for this.

6. Q&A

- a) What is the State Board Construction Committee?



- i. They are a group that makes the recommendation to the State Board. Scott Brown from DOE prepares all this information to send to the Construction Committee. They ask us questions, preparing us for the State Board.
- b) When will we see analysis of the economic impact of going from three buildings to one? It's important for us to understand as we go forward. We probably don't need it for today's vote, but will before the next meeting.
 - i. We have prepared that information and reviewed it with DOE last week, getting ready for publication in our site application. As soon as we have vetted it through the state, we will share it. It's not important for tonight's vote, but we will share before the next.
- c) Are we going toward some sort of LEED certification or green school design that will take into account the environmental impact within the school and the occupants' health?
 - i. We're working closely with the sub-committee that focuses on sustainability and building systems, focusing on passive design strategies. The rating system for LEED would not be paid for by the State. It would be a local expense, but many of those design strategies are being incorporated into the design.
- d) Why wouldn't the state want us to go in that direction?
 - i. The actual cost to apply for the certification is what they don't pay for. It's outside the state's formula for what they can cover. They have a document covering what they will support for equity.
- e) Is there a way we can push back on this? We don't want equity with schools from the 20th century. We need to push back because this is a huge investment for our community and get as up to date systems as we can.
 - i. Deb Alden noted that in meeting with DOE, they have a very prescribed list of what they will and won't pay for. They question everything in great detail so they can understand why it is needed. Deb was able to advocate for us being allowed to have space to serve CDS students.
 - ii. Mark Lee said as part of our process we champion the most sustainable building we can in the areas of insulation, building envelope, harnessing renewable resources, etc.
 - iii. Deb noted with geothermal, the state will pay for 50% of the system, but that's where equity comes in. They can't pay 100% for us and only 50% for another school.
- f) Is there a list of what they will and won't pay for?
 - i. It is called their "Building Standards" and is available on the state website.
 - ii. Deb will locate it and put it on the District website.
- g) We've sat through the presentations and it has raised a lot of excitement about what we might get, then we've been told a lot of the things we've asked for would have to be locally funded. We went in thinking we'd get a K-8 school, can we not count on that as of today?
 - i. The nuance is that today's decision, as regulated by the process, is just to gather the opinion of local support for a school project on this particular site. The next vote will be more explicitly about a K-8 school.



7. Straw Poll

- a) Do you favor moving forward with a project on this site?
 - i. 9 in person and 8 online voted in favor of the site.
 - ii. 0 voted against it.
 - iii. No one said they were unable to vote.
- b) Deb asked if people were comfortable having these kinds of meetings this way (before a Board meeting).
 - i. Everyone said they were fine with it, therefore Deb said the next straw poll vote for concept design could be held either August 23rd or September 13th.

If written notice is not received within two weeks of receipt, the above meeting notes represent an accurate summary of the meeting and its conclusions.