

**MAYNARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
FOWLER SCHOOL LIBRARY  
MARCH 24, 2016**

Present: Dawn Capello, Justin Hemm, Jamal De Vita (Absent), Mary Mertsch, Bethlyn Houlihan  
Administrators: Robert J. Gerardi, Jr., Superintendent; Peter DiCicco, Business Advisor  
Jennifer Gaudet, Curriculum Director

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Capello.

Ms. Capello reminded the audience the meeting was being videotaped.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Hemm to approve the minutes of March 10, 2016 as constituted.  
2nd by Ms. Houlihan.

Chairman's Report

Ms. Capello and Dr. Gerardi met with the Town Administrator and BOS Chair Chris DiSilva this week. Among the many discussion items were capital projects and capital needs. She also thanked the audience for attending the meeting this evening.

Superintendents' Report

The curriculum sub-committee met on March 22. They discussed the current foreign language model which is an exemplary model of instruction compared to the specialist model of 2 days per week. Latin is a success in grade 6. If the 8th grade moves back to Fowler in the future that will change the foreign language schedule. We will leave the Latin at Fowler status quo for now. Ms. Capello explained that the school committee breaks into smaller committees during the year and the curriculum sub-committee is comprised of Dr. Gerardi, Ms. Gaudet, Bethlyn Houlihan and Mary Mertsch. The decisions that are made from these sub-committees are a result of many months of review and other input.

Student Representatives' Report

Students from Maynard High School Jazz Band and Fowler School Stage Band invited the school committee to the Jazz Cafe on April 1st at 7:00 p.m. They also have a special guest: Blueprint Jazz Club and also gave the committee a free ticket to the evening event.

Citizen's Comments

None

Fowler Fields

Dr. Gerardi explained that the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) would like the school committee to endorse the Fowler Fields Study.

Steve Jones has been to the committee before to discuss the use of the fowler fields study which is mainly used by soccer. Last time the committee didn't feel there was enough information to put the school committee support behind it. The CPC said they needed a letter of support or not,

and given the amount of information the committee had at the time, the difficult decision was made not to support it.

The CPC went forward and granted the money for the Fowler fields study. The School Committee invited Mr. Jones back to continue the conversation.

CPC agreed to put forward an Article at town meeting if the CPC board could get a letter of consent from the school committee. The groups involved in the Fowler Fields are Maynard Youth Soccer, Friends of Maynard Soccer and Maynard Recreation.

Jim Hines is a Maynard Youth Soccer Board Representative. He explained that there is a group at the High School called Friends of Maynard Football that supports HS football, and they do fundraising for that group. He is trying to get a group together called Friends of Maynard Soccer. All soccer groups are presently at Fowler practicing, and all varsity games are played at MHS alumni field. Rockland fields are primarily for U10 groups. The condition of the Fowler fields is challenging. Safety is a big concern. Looking to revamp the fields. That is what the CPC study will look at.

#### Members discussion and comments

Ms. Capello - MHS is reserved for football and soccer varsity games. And youth soccer and youth football games.

Ms. Mertsch - in terms of dollar amounts - CPC approved to put on warrant.

Mc. Capello - Rockland owned by conservation commission - Crowe is owned by the town - School is under the school department. No one is opposed to the project. Issue is the genesis of the request. We need to work together. To move forward successfully someone on the town and school side has to head the project. The suggestion we came up with is that we approve the study with the condition that Kevin Caruso leads the study. Kevin is looking to study all the fields. We want the project to move forward. If Kevin can work with Aaron and all stakeholders, then we can move forward. That is what I am proposing.

Steve Jones said at the last CPC meeting, the selectmen said they would support this effort.

Ms. Capello proposed a motion that we instruct Dr. Gerardi to write a letter to CPC with our support conditioned on the agreement that Kevin Caruso, Athletic Director, lead the study. 2nd Mr. Hemm.

#### Discussion

Mr. Hemm - My provisional support on this is contingent on Kevin Caruso getting involved. I am feeling frustration on this as this is the second time we looking for support on this project. The other project was the GM playground. Last time there was a statement that there was more than enough funding to go around and then later in the process the GM project died. We need to be careful of the way we support projects in the town and careful the way we support citizen volunteers. There is only one pot of money and we need to look at where we are spending it. I want to see it move forward. We need to be school guided and community supported.

Ms. Houlihan - I wholeheartedly 2nd this motion. I love in Maynard, the way we have so many people who are invested and engaging. We are all trying to do that. Unless there is ownership in the places where there needs to be ownership, if there are pieces where we don't have citizens and we don't have expertise to be able to do a construction project in the end to make engineering decisions, then you really need all on board in order to be successful and move forward.

Appreciate your having the energy and excitement and appreciate collaborative considerations.

Steve Jones - The CPC wants a person to follow through and someone with the expertise to do that. Aaron Miklosko is the person.

Ms. Capello - Moving forward, Dr. Gerardi will write a letter to the CPC giving consent for the project, conditionally upon the agreement that Kevin Caruso take ownership of the project today. We cannot have a citizens' group run it. They don't have the expertise and Kevin already works with all the people involved, and has a great relationship with Aaron. This is a great way to wrap it up and move it forward. When it comes to the next step of the Fowler Fields we will have conversations around that because it will involve funding.

Ms. Capello - My motion is let's go forward with the study on the fields and the Athletic Director can drive the study as he wants to do all of the fields.

Ms. Mertsch - As a logistical study of all the fields in terms of cost savings and doing all at the same time, does it make sense to do Fowler fields first?

Dr. Gerardi - There is already a meeting next week involving all the fields.

Ms. Houlihan - Do we need co-leaders? One from town and one from school?

Motion passed 4-0. We will get the letter out to CPC as soon as possible.

Ms. Capello - Thank you to everyone for pushing this forward.

John Dwyer CPC chairman - CPC assigns liaison who is in constant communication with the project leader.

Ms. Capello - The leader is Kevin Caruso, Athletic Director and the CPC liaison will be Steve Jones.

### GM Traffic and Parking Study

Jason Sobel from Green International Affiliates, who is a local Dad and engineer, was contracted by the Town of Maynard and he did the study traffic study. He already gave the presentation to the BOS.

Ms. Capello - There has been historical problems in that Green Meadow has traffic and parking problems and issues and safety. The previous School Committee requested this study be done.

Ms. Mertsch - The BOS wanted feedback from community members on the study.

Ms. Capello - There are two different designs - tonight we are looking at a path to go forward on this project

Mr. Sobel - here tonight to obtain public feedback and get opinions from the community.

Project started last fall with a concept study approved at town meeting.

Met with school staff, Aaron Miklosko, DPW Director and the Town Engineer.

We Identified the big issues. Parking for staff and Crowe park for drop off for pedestrian safety for drop off at Crowe Park

Staff lot - not enough parking. Circulation issues - Bus drop off and parent pick-up and drop off.

#1. New roadway link connection straight out to Tiger Drive area in front of the school is a one-way circulation. buses would exit without looping around. Small area for pick-up and drop off.

Added staff parking lot spaces. The 2 driveways to that parking lot; recommended single entrance and exit to new roadway.

#2. Crowe park area - new parent pick-drop off loop that provided more convenient location and dismissal would be on the side of the building. This would separate parent/visitor traffic from buses and staff. Students walking would not need to cross any roadways.

Collected data and site observations. Have data to support these issues.

Recommendation - buses drop off and exit to tiger drive. Added parking at the staff lot. Single entrance and exit.

Crow park area - pick up and drop on the north side by K wing.

### Questions/Comments

Alana - Concern for sidewalk on the north loop for cars pulling over. Like the expanded parking. Concern about the loop is the line of traffic out to route 117. Traffic is closer to kids dismissing. Have kids running through parked cars.

Jason - this is a concept plan. There would be no woods on the loop.

Tom - how does this fix the people moving process?

Mr. Hemm - We have been tasked by the BOS to identify what we consider to be a workable solution to the identified problem and report back to BOS so they can write a warrant article for town meeting so they can fund a study that goes along with the plan that we have identified would be a potential fit.

Tom - This only addresses one piece of the problem.

Ms. Mertsch - Recap. The biggest concern is that we wanted parent involvement. Curious in hearing What do you perceive as the issues? Right there at Crow Park is wonderful community time at the end of school. There is one handicapped spot out front.

Mr. Hemm - We are looking at one plan. The packet has 3 options. We were tasked to have a community conversation about what is the best fit. In agreement, we are not done yet.

Parent - Concern about the loop coming into the parking lot. Have you thought about options for foot traffic. Keep trees in the wooded area. This area is an unstructured playground and decompression zone after school.

Principal Dankner. - We support people coming at the end of the day. It is a challenge in the morning and in winter. In morning at corner of tiger drive, we like children dropped closer to the building. Need to review the arrival dismissal process also. Safety with the community feel. Way to think about both. Option #1 - move the drop off closer to the school.

A parent who works in another school has circular lane drop off. Parents sit in line waiting for an hour with idling cars. Parents are frustrated and pulling out of line. Unsafe conditions.

Mr. Hemm also teaches at a school has active drop off and pick up area. Support drop off lane in the morning and shutting it down in the afternoon for many of these reasons. If the idea is a learning community includes the students and families, the type of behavior at my school fractures the relationships that already exist.

Parent - Consider moving with the project. Is GM staying at its location. Is it to be rebuilt at a different location in the future? PK gets walked to the door.

Parent - Would like to see a solid sidewalk on both sides of the Crowe lot.

Randy - concerned about safe access to and from the parking lot. What are the goals? Maybe make parking spaces wider.

Where do we direct the students to go? If we are adjusting the bus loop, why is it so close to the school?

Also dedicate equipment to plow the lot and sidewalks. Safety and implementation.

Nance - people there make an idling factor. At the drop off where it is now, behind a car dropping off two or three children and in a hurry to get to Fowler. Cars are passing while students are being dropped off. Would like an option closer to the door. Huge number of safety concerns.

Jennifer - this zone won't work. There are lane issues bus vs. car. Trying to get to the handicapped spots is a challenge. No spaces in Crowe lot for handicapped and it is non-compliant. Sidewalk is bad from Crowe Park, it is not graded. Uncomfortable with drop off for young students. Like that there are more handicapped spaced.

Fiona - unclear about process. Is this a done deal? Justin we have spent money to improve the safety at GM

BOS wants an identified plan 1,2, or 3 to dedicate engineering and design funds identify concept or theme that we can tweak through the design process. We are looking at a short period of time. Report back by 29th for town meeting article. So the town can authorize funds that can go to design work. Tonight identifying what we like or don't like about the plans. Then the designs are developed.

Ms. Capello - School Committee had concerns on plans. We are putting on the front burner. BOS had concerns about safety. School Committee had concerns on safe passageways. BOS feel that anything we will do would improve 117 traffic. I don't necessarily agree with that. Identify a pathway forward.

Parent - Staggered dismissal times?

Ms. Dankner - Teachers walk students to bus and to an adult for safety. Everyone is connected with their next step.

Tom - Do you have to pick A, B or C - can you go back with options?

Justin what the BOS tasked us to do is identify option 1, 2 or 3 as being most like what we would like to see someday using that as a conversation starter so we know approximately how much the design and engineering plan would cost in the long run so they know how much to put on the warrant article. Each plan is unique to give us enough leeway between them.

Physical security is something to consider; proximity to buildings, public safety aspects.

Jason - Pedestrian access on all sides - one additional connection. This is a concept plan, the design details to be worked out

Ms. Mertsch - Good input from people who do this every day.

Jason - There will be a design committee that is a working group of 6-7 people to work out specific details. i.e. Handicap access, sidewalks etc. lengthens the design process, usually with a good outcome.. Existing condition survey can start as a base plan Design schedule- ideal time is when school is not in session. If it is approved in May they can start the survey

Parent - Question about GM renovations in the future.

Dawn - There is a long term capital plan was presented earlier. GM placeholder in 2025 - they will look at GM (MSBA). There is not a perfect answer. But on the capital plan to look at. Dawn concept #3 with loop was \$600K for construction including design.

Dr. Gerardi - could fund just the engineering part of it. School Committee would want more input. Regarding building a new school - the MHS took 8 years.

Ms. Capello - Feel ready to go to the design stage.

Ms. Mertsch - if we vote design study, what is the timeline?

Jason - Survey would be over the summer - engineering design would go out the to the following spring.

Ms. Mertsch - Are we missing a walk ability study. Is this part of the process?

Ms. Capello - We are a complete streets community.

Ms. Houlihan - People with young kids are not represented here tonight.

Ms Capello - Look at drop off and pick up with the loop.

Ms. Houlihan - The parking lot is the issue - could be back up

Ms. Capello - The BOS wants guidance as to which way we are leaning. Design based to concept one not the loop. At the next meeting, we can form a design committee.

Jason - estimate \$60K for design \$10K for survey \$20K for permitting. Not sure if SC needs to provide a number to the BOS

A Motion was made by Mr. Hemm that we move forward with design and implementation of a design review committee based on concept #1 sans traffic circle. 2nd Mary 4-0.

#### Citizens Comments

None

#### Members/Questions/Comments

Ms. Houlihan thinks that there is a lot of schedule intensity. She would like to Talk about research how to help kids with social emotional learning. She was talking to substitute about hardworking teachers at GM.

Love to be able to have a conversation about social emotional learning. What does it look like PBIS support. And another counselor at GM. Finding ways for free play.

Look at academics. Have a conversation this year.

Ms. Capello went to the recent parent coffee at GM and had a discussion about emotional social learning. Like to have an agenda item and have further discussion.

Dr. Gerardi would like to talk about grade configurations and possibly moving 8th grade to Fowler and a Central office move. He would like to take the next step by hiring an architect to look at the Band Room for the Central office. As such he asked the Committee to approve that process. The cost last year for 2 plans for \$9K.

a motion was made by Ms. Capello to have Dr. Gerardi continue the process discussed above.

2nd Ms. Mertsch. Motion passed 4-0

A motion was made by Mr. Hemm to adjourn the meeting by roll call vote at 9:02 p.m. without the intent to return to open session. Second by Ms. Mertsch. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Moore  
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent