

MEMO

TO: Sharon Matyas, President
Members, Board of Education

FROM: Greer F. Fischer, Ed.D.

C: Members of the Facilities Steering Forum & Project Team

RE: **Report on Public Input Session on Haviland Bus Loop
September 30, 2010**

DATE: October 1, 2010

On Thursday, September 30, 2010, we held our third and final public input session with regard to the design for the reconstruction of the Haviland Middle School (HMS) bus loop.

In preparation for our Facilities Steering Forum (FSF) meeting next Wednesday, October 6, I made note of the following comments regarding the design made by members of the community and the related responses from the Project Team members to questions and concerns expressed. I am including those expressed during the Board's Public Participation segment, as well.

Mr. Skip Mootz (during Public Participation):

- ✓ Lives across the street from Haviland, had two children go through Hyde Park schools, and is an active community member associated with the local fire department.
- ✓ Had addressed the Board of Education in spring prior to the vote on the bus loop proposal
- ✓ Was disappointed with the pre-vote design and asked to be included in the work to find alternatives
- ✓ Was never contacted and received no communication from the District regarding the earlier meetings to develop the alternative designs
- ✓ Finds shortcomings in the designs' failure to address access to the school for emergency vehicles:
 - No evacuation window access
 - No emergency vehicle access, particularly to playing fields
- ✓ Sees need for alternative route onto and off Haviland property
- ✓ Would like to see planning for the future in layout of final design

- ✓ Would also like to see some of road drainage problems developed from runoff from Haviland pavement addressed by District's design
- ✓ Hopes to be included in continued planning of final design

Mr. Raymond Nichols (during Public Participation):

- ✓ Would like to be a member of the committee working on the design
- ✓ Is also a member of the local fire department
- ✓ Desperate need to have emergency vehicle access, especially to playing fields in rear of school
- ✓ Student hurt in recent football game, and emergency vehicles could not get to field because access was blocked by cars
- ✓ HMS property needs appropriate signage for parking areas, including playing fields

Mr. Nichols (during the Public Input Session):

- ✓ Design 16 appears to be the best option
- ✓ It does not require a lot of walking for students
- ✓ Question: What about the cars that currently park in the bus loop area? Will this be allowed to continue?
 - George Treadwell: No. Cars would be prohibited from parking in the bus loop, regardless of the final design.
 - Bill Wisbauer: The other enhancement from the public comments on Sept. 15 was the addition of landscaping between the faculty parking and the road to provide a visual block for the neighbors.

Mr. Tim Liebrand:

- ✓ Why can the design not have the busses parking on the opposite side closer to the building? This would prevent children from crossing the loop to get to the busses parked along the west side.
 - Bill Wisbauer (Tetra Tech): There is not sufficient width to align busses side-by-side on the east side of the loop without having to disrupt the septic field in the middle of the island. Disrupting the septic field would escalate costs and involve other agencies [such as the NYS Department of Conservation (DEC)]. An earlier design attempted to align busses on that side, but either septic beneath island would be affected or septic beneath lawn to the west of the old building would be affected.
Also, per another suggestion from the Sept. 15 FSF meeting, Design 16 now includes landscaping (a low hedge) which was added to help block students from crossing the loop.
 - Matt Latvis (in response to Tim's comment that students will still cross): No, they won't, because administrators and bus monitors will not allow them to.
 - Greer: Right now, there is no predictability in the parking line-up of the busses from one day to the next. Predictability will aid the staff in managing the dismissal procedure, and students will get used to where to expect their bus to be parked. This also will cut down on any students attempting to cross the loop.

Donna VanLeuven (noted by Mr. Hieter as District bus driver):

- ✓ There is a problem with Design 16 in that as busses move away, the distance between the rear of one bus and the front of next gets smaller. If a student(s) is running behind a bus, they could get squeezed. Only this afternoon, a student was running to get on her bus as she was getting ready to pull out.
- ✓ Students will need to stay on the sidewalks and in the crosswalks.

Mr. Hieter:

- ✓ With regard to Design 17, can't the road turn left near the beginning of the curve (to go behind the school) and have the road go through the district property to exit onto Route 9G?
 - Bill: There are designated wetlands on the District property to the west of Haviland close to the southern property boundary. North of that, there are steep slopes that might require excavation. Finally, the District would have to negotiate entry onto Route 9G with the NYS Department of Transportation (DOT). DOT might want the District to exit onto Route 9G farther north. There is no room for an exit road at that location.
 - Greer: In addition, building that road would also be more expensive than the budget.
 - Bill: A suggestion from an earlier input meeting was to put a road behind the building and have it exit farther east on Haviland Road. This would help eliminate the blind curve. However, it would also cut through the other area of designated wetlands.
 - Bill: Design 16 is also flexible, as it allows for a future road to provide access behind the school, with or without access to Route 9G. Having the more flexible design would allow for the planning time necessary to work with the DEC and DOT. Finally, a road going behind the school would need an SED variance to cut through the school's existing playing fields, reducing the playground capacity.

Vinnie Arata:

- ✓ He has attended both of the prior meetings, and all of the comments that others have made have already been covered at those meetings.
- ✓ Design 16 is the only way to go.
- ✓ If students insist on attempting to cross the island, then the district should install a low fence or heavy shrubbery.
 - Mr. Watson suggested that the District might want to substitute a stone wall for either fence or shrubbery.

Mr. David Ray:

- ✓ Initially he had been adamantly against the District's proposal because of the placement of the bus loop on the historic front lawn.
- ✓ Truly appreciates all of the work done.
- ✓ The historic lawn provides a frame for the magnificent architecture of the school, and this should not be disturbed.

Mr. Ray Nichols:

- ✓ Parking problems at events like Open House should be helped by the proposal, since it provides more paved area. It would eliminate the difficulties people have with parking on the front lawn, particularly in bad weather.

Mr. Mittermaier:

- ✓ Appreciates the potential for assisting with the parking issue, which needs to be better organized.
- ✓ Difficulty may be presented by people being unsure of how to line up for parking

Ms. Matyas:

- ✓ Volunteers may be able to assist in helping people park

Vinnie Arata:

- ✓ On election night, everyone parks on the lawn even though there is paved parking available in the nearby lot.
- ✓ Hopefully people will be able to use the paved areas.

Mr. Duffy, addressing Mr. Nichols:

- ✓ At FDR high School, there is an emergency access road to the athletic fields. What can you suggest the District do to assist with access for emergency vehicles at Haviland?

Mr. Nichols:

- ✓ The District needs to designate emergency vehicle access where no other vehicles could park.
- ✓ If the District can mark a gateway sufficient for ambulances, that would be helpful.
- ✓ This would have to be monitored to make sure that no one is ignoring the signs.

Anthony Crandall:

- ✓ Facilities & Operations can put stanchions in place and mark a path for ambulance / emergency vehicle access.
- ✓ Attendees at athletic events held at HMS would need to be educated so that they do not block the access.

Bill Wisbauer:

- ✓ With regard to the concerns expressed about drainage issues in neighboring homes, the District will be responsible for handling the storm runoff in self-contained areas on its own property. This includes during and following construction.
- ✓ Understands that the Town of Hyde Park wants to be able to dialogue with the District so that it can coordinate its work on resolving the roadway issues in this area.
- ✓ No additional water will be flowing onto Haviland Road.

Mr. Seagren, to Matt Latvis:

- ✓ District is looking to make this change due to safety issues.
- ✓ Has attended the FSF meetings and is very please with the work, the updated sketches, and is very happy with the efforts to include the community's concerns.
- ✓ Was one of the District's early "nay sayers."
- ✓ Is pleased with either Design 16 or 17.
- ✓ Matt should have a very strong say in the final design, as he is the one primarily responsible for the day-to-day safety of the students who will be moving to and from the bus loop.
- ✓ Matt should tell the Board which design he believes is best suited for him to manage with his staff; he should be outspoken about his opinion.

Matt Latvis:

- ✓ Haviland staff with work with whichever design the Board ultimately chooses.
- ✓ Presently, Design 16 appears to be the optimal layout.

Carole Pickering:

- ✓ All were tremendously happy that Proposition III passed in May
- ✓ Original design displayed to the community alongside the proposition was only (1) of options for reconstructing the loop.
- ✓ Has been thrilled with the work of everyone involved.
- ✓ Has been very happy with the dialogue and the process.
- ✓ This proves what can be accomplished when the District and the community choose to partner with each other.

As I indicated at the close of the September 30th meeting, the next steps in the time line for identifying the final design are:

- ✓ Wednesday, October 6, Facilities Steering Forum: review and recommendation of a final design to the Board of Education
- ✓ October 28, 2010, Board of Education meeting: presentation of FSF's recommendation to the Board
- ✓ November 9, 2010, Board of Education meeting: Board vote on final design

You are welcome to attend this Wednesday's FSF meeting. If you have any questions, please advise.