

**CLIENT: HUNTINGTON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROJECT: LONG RANGE BUILDING PLANNING COMMITTEE
BBS FILE NO.: 07-161**

**COMMITTEE MEETING – HELD AT HUNTINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
CAFETERIA 7PM**

DATE:	June 15, 2010
SUBJECT:	LONG RANGE BUILDING PLANNING
MTG. INITIATED BY:	BBS & B.O.E.
PURPOSE:	TO BEGIN COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF LONG TERM . . . BUILDING PLANNING
PREVIOUS MEETING DATE:	<i>Not Applicable</i>

PREVIOUS SUBJECT:	<i>N/A</i>
PREVIOUS PURPOSE:	<i>N/A</i>
DETERMINATIONS MADE:	<i>N/A</i>

GENERAL NOTES:
Analyze long term needs and solutions for (K-6) including discussions of availability, functionality & costs of various building options including existing, previously owned and potentially new school buildings, additions & alterations. Ascertain option with highest potential level of public support that also meets the needs of Huntington UFSD students.

LONG RANGE BUILDING PLANNING COMMITTEE

John J. Finello- Superintendent
David Grackin- Assistant Superintendent
Joe Giani-Assistant Superintendent
Ken Card- Assistant Superintendent
Shelly Marino- Principal, Southdown Primary
Margaret Evers- Principal, Jefferson Primary
Marlon Small- Principal, Flower Hill Primary
Marsha Neville- Principal, Washington Primary
Mary Stokkers- Principal, Jack Abrams Intermediate
Jarrett Stein- Principal, Woodhull Intermediate
John Amato- Principal, Finley Middle
Carmela Leonardi- Principal, Huntington High
Julissa Garris-Shade- Teacher, Flower Hill Primary
Karen Fischer- Teacher, Jefferson Primary
Joanne Cicio- Teacher, Southdown Primary
Georganne White- Teacher, Washington Primary
Laraine Schirripa- Teacher, Jack Abrams Intermediate
Diane Grassi- Teacher, Woodhull Intermediate
Michele Kustera- Parent, Flower Hill Primary
Cathy Ribando- Parent, Washington Primary
Jeanine Mulroy- Parent, Southdown Primary
Jennifer Hebert- Parent, Jefferson Primary
Patrick Giles- Parent, Jack Abrams Intermediate
Paul Eidle- Parent, Woodhull Intermediate
Carrie Nicodem- Parent, Finley Middle
Kevin Thourborne- Parent, Huntington High
Don Kiley- Parent, SEPTA
Jennifer Casey- District Resident
Crystal White- District Resident
Christian Wenk- District Resident
Barbara Wanamaker- District Resident
Richard Oehmler- District Resident
Paul Rispoli- Director of Facilities
Georgia McCarthy- Health, PE, & Athletics
Chris Bene- Trustee
John Paci- Trustee

R. Smith, AIA, LEED AP - BBS

K. Walsh, AIA, LEED AP - BBS

Jason Lee - BBS

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BBS Principal, Roger Smith, AIA, LEED AP

- *Introduced BBS*
- *Asked each Committee Member to introduce themselves.*

- *Stated “ground rules” in order for the meeting to be as productive as possible.*
- *Stated that this is this not the architect’s meeting, that he is simply facilitating the committee’s meeting.*

- *Provided examples of how other neighboring school districts have grappled with similar issues; that Huntington UFSD is not alone. BBS has helped Harborfields, Commack, Patchogue-Medford, Three Village and others through this process before.*

- *Stated that there are many issues relative to this planning process, including both facts and emotions. He asked committee members to ask themselves if they felt any of the following:*
 - Crowded?*
 - Safe?*
 - Affected?*
 - Content?*

- *Then went on to include other factors to be considered while looking at the districts issues:*
 - Community?*
 - Neighborhood?*
 - Inclusion? (Do you feel included)*
 - Cost?*
 - When?*
 - Why?*

- *That no matter where this conversation goes, these feelings, facts and parameters are always to be considered.*

To conclude the introduction. Mr. Smith posed the following:

- *Configuration of the district is important.*
- *Are our solutions short term or long term?*
- *Can we provide a recommendation to the B.O.E. that can garner a (7-0) vote? That should be our goal as a committee.*
- *We need an identifiable and “unifiable” plan.*
- *Decisions need to be made. A series of meetings has been scheduled for this purpose.*

- *The big issues are what grades to house where, why and how.*
- *What’s the best for the children?*
- *Cost is a huge defining factor.*
- *Remember this is your meeting.*

Mr. Smith then introduced Superintendent of Schools John J. Finello.

- *Mr. Finello has lived in Huntington all his life, went through the school system, was a teacher before becoming superintendent.*
- *That many of the configurations discussed have been done before- and that they all worked.*
- *The district has continued to change to meet enrollment trends.*
- *The district has done a good job, “working with what it had.”*

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LOOKING AT THE BIG PICTURE

- *Looking at the district, it is a big “square,” with four primary schools at each of the four corners. These schools feed into the intermediate and secondary schools that are located nearly centrally.*
- *The current configuration is working.*
- **There are four areas to look at that inform the configuration**
 - 1.) *Educational Program*
 - 2.) *Facilities*
 - 3.) *Fiscal Issues*
 - 4.) *Political Issues*
- *These factors are what generate community support.*
- *(K-3) is working as a smaller environment.*
- *Finley is working for (7-8) students and for the most part is OK. There may be future improvements here, but they would be costly.*
- *Woodhull (WH) is centrally located, with the most “buildable” land, on nearly (25) acres.*
- *Jack Abrams (JA) is nearly a centrally located school as well, with some issues to discuss, but it is operational.*
- *The Education Program for (4-6) is to bring these students together earlier and to stay ahead of the game educationally per Federal and States standards.*
- *Research shows that the fewest transitions of (K-8/ 9-12) may be ideal; but there is little evidence beyond that 2,3 or 4 transitions yield negative data.*
- *The positions logic is that (4) schools go into (1) school; then travel in groups from then on.*
- *(K-3) is ok; (7-8) is ok; (4-5) has great potential at WH. (6) at JA will be Grade 6 Center in September.*
- *We are not that far away from having a plan to satisfy most people and a continued successful educational plan.*

General Discussion:

(C= Comment, R= Response, WH= Woodhull Intermediate, JA= Jack Abrams Intermediate)

- *C: Shouldn't we make our primary schools (K-2) instead of (K-3) to prepare for over flow?*
- *R: Numbers are not projected to go up (based on information packet)*
- *(K-3).*
- *C: Configuration could be based on a longer primary experience and could we add onto primary schools? Maybe fiscally prudent to slide from (K-3) to (K-4); (K-3) to (K-2)?*
- *C: A committee member expressed confusion with the capacity numbers because it seemed to make sense that JA is under utilized versus WD.*
- *R: Mr. Finello stated that the demographic studies have been inaccurate for primary schools; that the numbers are lower.*
- *C: Clarify the number of years on the lease of the modular classrooms?*
- *R: (Mr. Grakin) 3 years.*
- *R: Roger mentioned in some districts portable classrooms have stayed on site for as long as thirty eight (38) years. However, since Huntington is leasing for a 3 year term it's evident that the district has thought this through as a short term solution.*

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- *R: There is some discussion that the enrollment “bubble” per the 2007 demographic study may have already “moved” from the primaries and will slow itself into in the intermediates and secondaries next into the coming years.*
- *C: As the growth “bubble” moves to Woodhull- what must be budgeted if you add to it? (Woodhull)*
- *R: Until we know more about long term plans for Woodhull we can’t know that. If we are going to make a fix we should fix it once and coordinate the short term solution w/ long term solutions.*

- *C: What are the effects of adding on to Woodhull vs. adding on to the Primary Schools? Also Abrams is our newest school and it’s a great facility. If we add onto WH what are we going to do with JA if closed?*
- *C: If JA is not used as a school; what will we do with the building?*
- *R: (Roger: in my opinion) Never discard property; we must then look at the value.*
- *C: One committee member stated that she was there when a shooting occurred; had no fear then and has no fear now. “Abrams is a superior building and we should not get rid of it.”*

- *C: As far as the demographics what are the projections of the long term plan?*
- *R: (Mr. Finello) None of the numbers for projections are correct.*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) While we can base it off demographics, our biggest worry is about where we want to place the children.*
- *R: (Mr. Finello) We may be entering into what may be one of the toughest budget cycles in my tenure. Based upon cuts in certain aid, and increased costs in other areas. To keep this in mind a bond referendum might be created because the biggest issue is getting community support both next year’s budget as well as any consideration of a bond referendum.*

- *C: How do we get a demographics study?*
- *R: These are hired out services (Mr. Grackin) that cost about \$9,500.00*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) State Education looks at the demographic study for needs for building when given the \$0.37 on the dollar aid.*
- *C: Would the State give us the go ahead of adding onto? (WD?)*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) I don’t know. They might ask why you are building 10 new classrooms at WH when you have 10 over here at a vacant building at JA.*
- *C: State Aid discussion- \$0.37 on the dollar for approved utilization.*

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- *C: (Athletic Director) stated that Abrams is the second best facility; it houses multiple teams for practice and play. Moving students to other schools would make physical education cramped.*
- *C: Are they looking at Avalon Bay also? (Demographics)*
- *R: Yes. (That's their job).*
- *C: Is having a longer Primary experience an option, having a K-4?*
- *R: The comments all from the community member, Mr. Smith just said that we'd look at all of it. Expanding primaries a (K-4) is not only adding classrooms. There are core space issues like art, music, supports, etc. We will look at all the options.*
- *C: Why are the demographic studies off?*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) I don't know, there are so many factors that could have played a part, schools opening/ closing. Number of kids going to and leaving private school, etc.*
- *C: As far as configuration why can't we have four (K-3) schools, two (4-5) schools and one (6-8) Middle school and one High school?*
- *R: (Principal) Issues tend to increase due to this transition. The transitions work better the way they currently are.*
- *R: (Mr. Walsh) Although the demographic projections appear to be less accurate for (9-12) they are accurate for (K-3), (4-6) and (7-8). The number as a whole is close as compared with current enrollments as projected.*
- *C: How did the primary school capacities shown in these drawings today jump so quickly over the last two years?*
- *R: Two years ago we used (25) students per classroom as a planning standard. Today's plans illustrate how the district's class size policy as modified by available square footage per S.E.D. Guidelines fit into existing classroom space. (These classrooms as utilized "today".) Building capacity will change with any changes in building utilization. The district's class size policy is currently (28) students per section for (K-4).*
- *C: Is this committee only looking at long term goals or are we also looking at the spacing for the Primary schools and Woodhull next year?*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) The modulars are coming next year and will help, temporarily for WH. Then we need to know what long term plan is at WH so that short term and long term can be coordinated effectively.*

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- *C: Lets find out what we are doing for (4-5-6), choose where they are going. Can we reconfigure the placements of the children and not even spend money?*
- *C: Also is there a space we could purchase to place administration to keep those costs down?*
- *R: (Mr. Grackin) There is no space available to lease for administration. If we build a new administration building we will not receive building aid, for appropriate expenditures currently at \$0.37cents on the dollar.*
- *C: If we take the two million dollars that was already budgeted, the cost of the modulars and the capital reserve, could we use that to build now onto Woodhull?*
- *C: We already know (WH) is going to house two universal grades plus the modulars won't be there in September. Can we design additions with that money and at the same time design with future expansions of that initial addition? Can the money for the modulars be put into permanent construction?*
- *R: (B.O.E.) The reason we reconfigured the district was to have a permanent fix not a quick fix. We need a permanent change, not a move here now and another move down the road.*
- *C: Is there a price difference in building a 1 story building vs. a 2 story building?*
- *R: No.*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) I need to know if all the buildings are "in play," we need to know if Abrams is in or out.*
- *C: Abrams should still be utilized, if not as a school then place administration there and also make it a community center for the neighborhood. Lease the rest of the building for office space.*
- *C: Abrams is a school, let it be a school. Adding onto Woodhull will not solve our problems.*
- *C: What will make Abrams safe, we're already talking about moving kids but we can't decide until we know what we want to do with Abrams. But don't we need to know all our options with Abrams first?*
- *R: (Mr. Smith) As your Architect, I work from your property line in. There are things I can do within those lines. For example we placed a fence in Bay Shore HS. There are options like this available to you.*
- *C: Safety and money go hand in hand.*

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- **C:** *On a 20 million dollar bond our taxes will go up 1% which is about \$100.00 per household annually.*
- **R:** *(Mr. Smith) Remember money is a factor here, so the question then is do we go for a number of small additions or are we looking towards a large addition. (i.e.- small additions @ primaries or smaller or large additions to WD)*
- **R:** *(Mr Grackin) a 20 million dollar bond issue will be between \$90.00 to \$100.00 per household assess at \$7,000.00.*
- **R:** *(Mr. Smith) The best time to buy is now, we are still seeing bids come out 25% less than the budget. Two years from now its hard to say.*

- **C:** *Can we have cost projections to make a financial decision which includes utilizing Abrams? We need to see comparative costs of different configurations.*
- **R:** *(Mr. Smith) We will have that information at the next meeting. If Abrams is out we need to house (375) kids and that's potentially a*
- *20 million dollar decision if you built for the 6th grade at WH.*
- **C:** *Will we get aid for that? (20 million to build 6th grade @ WH)?*
- **R:** *(Mr. Grackin) Probably not.*
- **R:** *(Mr Smith) We need the demographic numbers on Avalon Bay. The district needs to get an updated demographic study.*

Summary By Roger Smith

- *We will look at Woodhull 4-5 with solutions of modulars,a series of small additions, and a large addition.*
- *A Solution to where the 6th grade would go to Woodhull.*
- *Other options include looking at (K-2)/ (K-4), etc.*

- **C:** *Closing Abrams solves none of our issues. I'm thinking and speaking for others that we should go back to the original configuration, we need to look at that also. (2 (4-6) schools).*
- **R:** *(Mr. Smith) We are going to look at all options, but keep in mind that it isn't just about adding classrooms. There may need to be changes to the cafeterias, gyms, auditoriums etc.*

- **C:** *Is Abrams safe? What are the police saying, what is the FBI saying?*
- **R:** *(Mr. Finello) We can't answer those questions, we must ask them.*
- **C:** *Can we have them here at our next meeting?*
- **R:** *(Mr. Finello) We could ask them to be here.*
- **C:** *(Mr. Smith) Thank you for coming.*