

PLANNING BOARD

TOWN OF TISBURY
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MEETING MINUTES

DATE: July 12, 2017

TIME: 6:00PM

MEMBERS: Bellante-Holand, Doble, Robinson and Seidman

PLACE: Town Hall Annex, 66 High Point Lane, Tisbury, MA

6:00 PM Colleen McAndrews (Chairman, Tisbury School Building Committee),
Richard Marks (OPM), Peter Turowski (architect) & Libby
Turowski (t2 Architect) - A presentation and open discussion on the
Tisbury School Building Project
Attendance: Henry Stephenson, L.A. Peak, Kate Scott, ME Larsen, Wendy
Andrews, Falla Friedman, Caroline Little

R. Marks, the Owners' Project Manager (Daedalus Project) for the Tisbury Elementary School Building Committee noted that he and the architect were providing the Planning Board a short informational presentation on the status of the school building project and process.

P. Turowski, the project architect indicated that he made a similar presentation to the Board of Selectmen at their meeting last night, and wanted to review the information that led to the final vote by the committee with regards to the preferred schematic. R. Marks clarified for the record that the preferred schematic report did not represent or refer to a schematic design. He thought it was misleading to name the particular phase of the project "preferred schematic", when they were essentially discussing a conceptual design (massing and siting of a building based on the educational program). He explained that the educational program was designed in conjunction with the MSBA's template for elementary schools. The MSBA was funding approximately 40% of the cost of the project.

R. Marks explained that the school building committee designed the educational program with the school district and educational planner named David Steven. The educational program was designed and completed for submittal to the MSBA in March 2017. It provided them with a rough estimate for the square footage of the building (79,000 sq. ft.). During this time they were simultaneously studying nine potential sites for the

school, as required by the MSBA and looking into a conceptual design (i.e. test fits). It was only recently that the school building narrowed down their site selection to three, then to the one at the existing site. T2 Architects began to develop a very rough plan (elevations, detailed classroom layouts, building materials, mechanical/electrical narrative, etc.) based on the data.

B. Robinson inquired about the public review process during the development of the educational program, and the community's feedback. R. Marks indicated that the educational program was written by J. Custer, the school principal with the assistance of the Superintendent of Schools and reviewed by individual staff and the school building committee. C. McAndrews explained that the information was made public at the school building committee meeting and their website.

C. McAndrews understood that there was much debate about the classroom size, but few were familiar or expert on the subject. They relied on the knowledge and expertise of the principal and the Superintendent of Schools. B. Robinson noted that the community expressed an interest and concern about the cost of the project. Based on the tax treasurers calculations, the new school building had the potential of increasing their taxes by 13%. He inquired if there was any flexibility in the program to reel in the cost, because it was never discussed. B. Robinson felt they simply presented a particular program that the community had to accept or not.

C. McAndrews did not agree, and noted that they've traditionally had two classrooms, which they wanted to continue. It was an issue for the MSBA, but an item they felt strongly about. The school needs a larger cafeteria and gymnasium and they have to improve their special education program. D. Seidman note that the school had been cited for not meeting the state's requirements, so that it was not negotiable. C. McAndrews noted that the class room sizes were negotiable. B. Robinson inquired about other negotiable items. C. McAndrews believed the proposal for Pre-K was negotiable, but that the Superintendent of Schools was going to make this a requirement. They decided to dedicate 1100 sq. ft. of space for the pre-K program to be proactive. B. Robinson inquired if there were additional negotiable items.

P. Turowski noted that they were essentially providing additional space for their special education program, meeting the state's minimum requirement for classroom sizes, maintaining the number of classrooms per grade and enlarging the school gymnasium and cafeteria. B. Robinson inquired if the school gymnasium was negotiable. P. Turowski replied in the negative. B. Robinson inquired if the locker rooms were negotiable. P. Turowski replied that they were reduced. B. Robinson noted that it was difficult to understand where they had the ability to scale down the program, so that they could have a great school at an affordable price. He mentioned that the cost factor was not limited to the construction cost. A larger school required more maintenance and staff. C. McAndrews indicated that they were not increasing staff. P. Turowski assured B. Robinson that they reviewed and negotiated all of the negotiable items with the state to reduce the cost. B. Robinson explained that the town had to understand how they arrived

at 79,000 sq. ft. and if there was any room to scale down the program. He was concerned that if they locked themselves into a particular program at this junction there was no possibility for reducing the cost, except for material choices, which was not cost effective in the long run.

C. McAndrews had an issue with reducing the program. She did not think it was the purview of the Planning Board. B. Robinson replied that it was the purview of the town to decide what they want to support financially. The Planning Board would like to see a project that the town was willing to support. The OPM, architect and staff (L. Turowski) agreed that this was not within the Planning Board's address. C. McAndrews noted that the School Building Committee held fifteen to twenty detailed presentations. L. Turowski believed the teachers and MSBA were the best suited to determine the educational program. B. Robinson indicated that they also had to consider that the town was ultimately going to vote on the program at town meeting.

D. Bellante-Holand mentioned that in any corporate structure, the employees did not decide on their budget. She felt the town had to inform its citizens about the project's financial impact, which would impact their decision to support the project. D. Bellante-Holand appreciated the discussions, but felt that it was important to address the issues the Planning Board identified and have not been addressed elsewhere. She'd like to go past the items they've already covered and discuss the issues that could potentially derail the project. She wanted to make sure that they have the hard conversations before they moved further on the project.

C. McAndrews thought part of the issue was that there was some confusion about the educational plan. She explained that the school was not changing anything, except for adding a Pre-K program (shared service program). B. Robinson reiterated that he was concerned about the program that added up to 79,000 sq. ft. to replace a program that is deficient on some ways, but definitely not deficient across the board. L. Turowski understood, and noted that the MSBA functioned as the checklist in the process to make sure that the communities did not go overboard on their projects. D. Bellante-Holand thought it was important for everyone to understand that they have the right discussion to achieve the right size project with the right quality of design".

R. Marks recommended going over the power point presentation they had prepared for the discussion. He confirmed a 10% increase in the tax rate (\$1.00) based on a loan for thirty-three million dollars. It would increase by 1.09 in the peak year, and on the average, another .9.

D. Seidman wanted to clarify that the MSBA based the square footage for the average classroom size for 23 students, while Tisbury on the average had only 17 pupils. He did not understand why they had to conform to the MSBA's template which requires a minimum of 900 sq. ft. per classroom if they did not need the space. He did not like the rigidity in the process because it failed to recognize the individuality of the school district and its needs. R. Marks understood, and noted that they negotiated 900 sq. ft classroom

size from the minimum requirement of 950 sq. ft. He also felt there were benefits in having a 900 sq. ft. classroom that were not considered in the equation.

Board members reviewed the site plan of the existing school site with the new three story construction. P. Turowski explained that the new construction was located on the east end of the school property so that they could maintain the existing structure during the construction of the new building. In keeping the existing structure, they eliminated the need for modulars at a savings of three million dollars. Total construction was expected to be 23 months from start to finish (May 2019 – September 2021).

P. Turowski indicated that the existing circulation pattern on the property was going to remain the same. Parents would continue to drop off their children to school from West William Street, the buses were going to drop off students on Spring Street and staff was going to keep their parking area on Spring Street. There was additional parking for staff and visitor parking on site. Total parking spaces on site added up to seventy with a potential for an additional thirty-seven spaces. The seventy spaces were on par with existing accommodations.

The plan setup aligned the classrooms in an east-west orientation to optimize the daylight exposure from the north-south. The middle areas were designed for the shared programs (all grades), whereas the end part was reserved for the public space (afterhours use by the community). P. Turowski noted that the design placed the Pre-K, K-1st graders on the first floor to separate them from the older students.

The new structure met the setback requirements for the district and the plan included a tree buffer between the building and neighbors. D. Seidman inquired about the garden. P. Turowski replied that it was a small playground for the Pre-K, K and possibly first graders. He noted that they were also installing the wick system along West William Street further back from the setbacks, so that it moved the construction project closer to Spring Street.

P. Turowski reiterated that the plan reflected a conceptual arrangement of spaces, in which they maintain the Kindergarten through Grade 8 model with the addition of a Pre-kindergarten class, which is currently provided by a neighboring district. The modern three-story construction include shared spaces that could serve as community space after school hours. They were located on the ground floor and securely separated from the academic areas. The share spaces on the first and second floors were limited to the students. Program spaces tailored for the middle school population were housed on the third floor. The classroom wings on each floor featured small clusters of three grades, a central project area or gathering space and a special education resource room. The travel distances to the resource areas varied, with the shortest travel distance assigned to the lower grades. The Pre-K and K appeared to have direct access to a separate outdoor play area (garden). The media center and library were on the second floor and served as an important gathering spaces and dedicated projects spaces on every floor. The first floor

common area and main lobby were contiguous and adjacent to the stage that opened to the cafeteria and gymnasium.

P. Turkowski noted that the grading at one end of the building was depressed by 2 ft. so that they had to add a railing to improve the grade from north to south. Board members were shown elevation plans and a 3D site overview and rendering(s) of the new three story school. P. Turowski reiterated that it was just a conceptual design that was bound to be revised. He also shared that the MSBA had just revised their reimbursement rate per square footage so that it reduced their estimate by \$700,000.00.

P. Turowski indicated that the total project budget was \$44,903,422. B. Robinson inquired about the portion of the total cost that was reimbursable. R. Marks noted that the construction costs were capped at \$3.26 per square foot, so that 27,000,000.00 of the town's share of 33,078,585.00 was reimbursable. All of the other items were reimbursable at a \$39.26 rate or 42% with the additional 3%. B. Robinson noted that it was closer to 27%. R. Marks noted that it was 42% of eligible costs that were capped at \$3.26.

B. Robinson inquired how they arrived at their data estimate (430). R. Marks replied that it was based on two estimates. One of the estimates was performed by his office and the second was done by the architect. The estimates were reconciled with subcontractors and compared with past municipal projects on the Vineyard. D. Seidman inquired if they ever considered a modular construction. R. Marks replied in the negative because it did not have a 50 year life, which is a MSBA requirement.

B. Robinson inquired about the meeting with the Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (FAS). P. Turowski referred the Board to the schedule of upcoming events, in which they were meeting with the MSBA's FAS Committee on July 21st, the MSBA's Board on August 23rd, the Schematic Design Subcommittee on November 9th, the MSBA's Board regarding the Project scope and budget, the MSBA's Board for the project funding agreement and in April 2018, town meeting. R. Marks clarified that the FAS' meeting was limited to three members of the MSBA's Board, who will review the details of the project with the OPM and consultant on Jul 21st.

B. Robinson wanted to know what they would be locked into after the reviewed the details of the project with the FAS. R. Marks answered that they would be locked into the program and the spaces. B. Robinson indicated that it was what concerned him the most. He would rather scale down a project to have more room in the cost to build with the right materials, than to make compromises in the materials. R. Marks demonstrated that they had designed for 900 sq. ft. classrooms. He reiterated that the MSBA required 950 sq. ft. for the 23 students. He thought it was possible to negotiate 850 sq. ft. with the MSBA. D. Seidman believed it would have a significant impact on the cost.

Additional discussions ensued with this regard, and C. McAndrews informed the Board that "they" met with the MV Commission staff to discuss the project. They MVC

acknowledged that they did not have any jurisdiction over the project, but were happy to offer their assistance, if asked.

D. Bellante-Holand was shocked by the structure's mass and its impact on the abutting properties. She felt it dwarfed the scale of the existing buildings. P. Turowski noted that the proposal was just a concept that was going to go through several modifications during the schematic design phase.

C. Doble was curious to know just how much flexibility they had within the phase. She explained that the proposed site was driven by the idea of keeping the existing school in place during the construction of the new school building. She asked if they've explored the benefits in building on the existing school building site, re-orienting the building or demolishing a portion of the existing school building. R. Marks did not see why they couldn't study the impact of the structure's mass and the removal of the gym as part of the initial phase. He also mentioned that they've discussed the removal of the closest constraint e.g. gym, but abandoned the idea because it was difficult to replicate. R. Marks noted that the east end of the property was chosen because it provided the lowest elevation, and reduced the height.

D. Bellante-Holand noted that the Planning Board had the responsibility of protecting the character of the neighborhood, and did not find the new school building to complement the existing neighborhood. R. Marks did not think it was inconsistent with the existing school. She raised the issue, because she felt as a Planning Board member she wanted to make sure that there was a consistency in maintaining the characteristics of a town that the people felt strongly about. She inquired if there was any possibility of reducing the square footage and volume. P. Turowski thought they could alter the roof.

B. Robinson refocused the discussions to the "program", where he felt they needed to make the most progress. He inquired about the waiver exception process for the MSBA's requirements. P. Turowski replied that they had made two submittals to the MSBA. The first was the programming and site analysis, and the second was the preferred schematic. The MSBA closed the discussion on some of the program items, and left others open for additional discussion. He hoped to conclude those discussions with the FAS on July 21st. R. Marks doubted that the MSBA would permit significant revisions in the square footage of the building. He also noted that the school district was inclined to pursue a reduction.

B. Robinson inquired if they compared the program for Tisbury with other schools in the state. P. Turowski replied that they couldn't because their student enrollment was very different. C. McAndrews added that all of the island schools were bursting at the seams, and in need of additional space. She also noted that they needed a new building that could address their school needs for the next half century.

Additional discussions ensued with this regard, and B. Robinson asked R. Marks and P. Turowski to clarify at what point could they challenge the MSBA's prescriptive requirements. L. Turowski asked B. Robinson who was best qualified to make the

decisions and recommendations, because she believed it was the members of the school building committee that was comprised of the educational experts in the community. She felt the community “would probably accept the experts”. She explained that she felt that the principal of the school had a better idea of running the school, than the community”, and that the community had to support the school. L. Turowski asked B. Robinson what he wanted to see reduced. B. Robinson thought they could revisit the classroom size. D. Seidman concurred, and did not agree that the experts were always “right”. B. Robinson thought every spaces should be re-evaluation to determine what their actual space needs truly are.

R. Marks noted that Edgartown constructed a new school with 79,000 sq. ft. to serve 328 students. D. Seidman noted that their enrollment was listed at 285. D. Bellante-Holand refocused the discussions to the primary issue with the design. She reiterated her concern with the structure’s mass, and the impression it will have on the town voters. It concerned her that if they did not address the design early in the process, the town would not support the project.

H. Stephenson, town resident thought they would have much more support if they had chosen the renovation and expansion option because it also accomplished the educational program. He noted that the visual scale of the current structure was brilliantly reduced by building half of the first floor into the hill. It had a beautiful façade up front, very carefully articulated and it fits into the context of the neighborhood. Looking at the site and building from Spring Street, the renovation gave them a great opportunity to improve the area significantly. He thought they could easily span out on that side and restructure Spring Street. H. Stephenson thought they could have integrated the old school with the “new” to create a good and practical school.

H. Stephenson noted that in past discussions about all of their options, he did not recall anyone ever thought it was a good idea to tear down the existing building. He did not think anyone thoroughly thought through the options (including renovation/addition) together. He recalled that the Planning Board had asked the school building committee to step back a bit to look at both options. Now that they were down to the one site, it was ever more important to look at both the restoration/expansion and new construction options, because they’d discover that the restoration and expansion may offer them more possibilities, and community support. Regardless of their decision, he felt that they were not going to see a difference in the cost estimate.

R. Marks understood, but wanted to clarify that they were two issues with the renovation, in that they were working with an 82,000 sq. ft. building (not 79,000 sq. ft as previously stated) and that it would require the use of modular structures for an additional three million dollars. It also meant that they had to disrupt the educational program for a year and a half. The MSBA’s mandate requires them to pursue the most cost effective option that met the educational program, which he believed the School Building Committee accomplished.

M.E. Larsen admitted to having issues with state mandates, because of the costs to the town. The issue she had with the MSBA's prescriptive requirements was that it did not take into account the specific needs of the individual towns. R. Marks explained that the MSBA's mandated was not as rigid as she may believe. It was logical. M.E. Larsen also felt that their proposal to tear down the existing school was going to jeopardize the project's endorsement.

K. Scott noted that when she attended a forum, the public comments made by the teachers in attendance was prefaced by their commitment to continue to deliver a good education to the students of the school, irrespective of the school building committee's decision to renovate or construct a new building. She further noted that they all made it explicitly clear that they loved the school, which confused her, because they were all supportive of its demolition. She had also heard that the existing school would have to gutted, and that the option for renovation was much more expensive, but would like to see the cost estimates for this, because it was never presented. She also wanted to express her concern about the mass of the structure and disappointment with the architectural renderings for the façade, tower, etc. Her preference was for the renovation and expansion of the building.

L. Peak inquired if the MSBA's template required that the women's restrooms be larger than the men's restrooms or designed to accommodate the appropriate number of people. R. Marks replied in the negative. P. Turowski clarified that the restrooms did not have to be larger in size, but retrofitted with a greater number of fixtures. B. Robinson noted that it was governed by the building code and not the MSBA. He also wanted to know if they were engineering the building to support solar arrays on the roof. R. Marks replied in the negative, but were proposing to design an energy envelope i.e. insulation. L. Turowski thought they could include the recommendation, if it was what the town wanted to pursue as part of the project. He was advised that the additional cost to construct the infrastructure to support the additional weight for the solar panels was negligible.

L. Peak, as a former Planning Board member also wanted to speak to a comment made earlier regarding the Planning Board's involvement in the project. He mentioned that when the Planning Board was instituted by town meeting article in 1927, it was charged with reviewing any municipal structure and given the power to solicit all pertinent information to make a report to the town. The language did not give them the power to intervene or overrule in the process, but it was important for all to understand, including current Board Members that they had a responsibility to address their mandate.

R. Marks acknowledged and agreed. He explained that it was the reason he requested a meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Finance Committee. He thought it was important to solicit everyone's opinions and support on what he believed was a good solution for the town. L. Peak noted that the solution may be good for the present, but committed them to the solution for the next fifty years. R. Marks acknowledged. L. Peak also wanted to share with the committee that he did not think committing to K-8th grade for the next fifty years was responsible for both educational

and financial reasons, nor that there was an excuse to ask the islanders to support four middle schools when the education in general has rapidly changed in the last ten years. L. Peak also thought that it was going to be difficult to ask a town with a very small population to pay for a major infrastructure, or to justify the cost on the argument that it was the best alternative, when school enrollment could decrease by 25% in ten years or more, and the educational system continues to change.

R. Marks understood, and noted that there were constants in the type of school building they would construct, in that pitched roofs were still preferred because of their longevity. Secondly, good size classrooms and naturally lit classrooms worked were the standard in the MSBA's template because they've been proven to work well. All were going to be part of the new construction.

D. Bellante-Holand interrupted the discussions to refocus on the issue the Planning Board wanted to address with the school building committee. She explained that they were particularly interested in learning how they can effect change in the process to get a different design option on the table and incorporate a solution to prevent the existing school's demolition. She wanted to know how they can include the recommendations they've heard represented in a different design. B. Robinson recalled at town meeting, that the town was going to be offered one or two options.

C. McAndrews concurred, and noted that they were providing the town with one option. She also expressed concern that town did not appear to be completely on board with the school committee's decision, and that some of the comments that have been circulating about the project implied that the school building committee was simply pursuing their own agenda. She thought the nineteen member committee was representative of the community and earnest in their endeavor to present a proposal that benefited the town. Because of the community appeared very divisive on the project, she felt obligated to call a special school building committee meeting for Monday evening on 17 July 2017 to discuss "where they were" and possibly take a re-vote to see if they can get the town on board.

D. Bellante-Holand asked C. McAndrews what the process entailed to have two options. She wanted to know if they were too far down the road to include an option for a renovation and addition. P. Turowski replied in the affirmative. C. McAndrews noted that both options and estimated costs were presented several times and in detail at the school building committee meetings, which were videotaped. D. Bellante-Holand thought she understood that they no longer had the option to consider a second option. B. Robinson clarified that they could, if the school building committee were given the opportunity to rethink their vote. D. Bellante-Holand did not understand how the school building committee was going to inform the public or to solicit their input to know for certain whether they've preferred the one option or two. C. McAndrews indicated that the meeting was going to be posted and advertised on the webpage. She recommended that everyone should reach out to their constituents to inform them of the upcoming discussions.

Discussions ensued with regards to the makeup of the committee, and the fluidity of the committee's membership, in which they could add members at any time.

B. Robinson felt that the meeting on Monday evening could also address how they come to a consensus without necessarily voting on a specific course. He felt it was important to figure out what the community was going to support, when they considered the amount of time, work and effort the project still required of them in the next six to eight months. He mentioned that the Planning Board wanted to be proactive in the process.

K. Scott thought the school building committee did not reach out to the community and recommended press releases and other sources of social media. She felt C McAndrews reliance on the school building committee members to contact their constituents was not sufficient. She was never contacted. C. Doble agreed that the committee needed a better strategy.

C. Doble requested a clarification. She wanted to know if they were locked in to the proposal once they met with the FAS, or if they had the option to work constructively towards a solution that was accepted by the community. R. Marks noted that they had a lot of opportunity to work on a design.

B. Robinson closed the discussion at 8:01 PM and R. Marks offered to send the Planning Board staff a copy of the power point presentation for the Planning Board's record. Board members regrouped and prioritized the issue(s) they wanted to discuss at the school building committee's meeting on Monday night. D. Bellante-Holand was very surprised and concerned with the mass of the new school building. B. Robinson agreed. He did not think it was appropriate that kind of density to the neighborhood. C. Doble thought the siting of the architecture contributed to the mass. She noted that the building spread across the entire lot, whereas it currently spread along the lot, so that you never have the view of the full face of the building from the street.

C. Doble questioned whether the location of the new building on the east end was in fact the best location on site. She suspected it was to allow them to use the existing building during the construction of the new building.

B. Robinson was concerned that the architect and OPM were continuing to advance the design, while they kept assuring them that they were going to investigate some of the issues and recommendations they suggested. He did not understand how this was possible. C. Doble thought it was important to have a conversation on the presentation of the information. She did not find the information was being presented in a way they could make a constructive decision.

D. Bellante-Holand thought they could repurpose the existing school building if the demographics or education changes. C. Doble agreed. B. Robinson thought the Planning Board should convey to the school building committee that there were two major hurdles

July 12, 2017

to the project. There was an issue with the cost and the demolition of the existing school building, and they had to decide on the easiest one to tackle at town meeting. Razing a historical civic building to accommodate a new structure was not going to be supported at town meeting, especially when the towns have been experiencing several problems with the recently constructed municipal buildings.

C. Doble thought the committee had to know that there were several concerns with the project, and that if they were not acknowledged and addressed in a reasonable way, they could jeopardize the problem. B. Robinson added that they had to balance the needs of the school with the needs of the community.

PRO FORM

Meeting opened, conducted and closed in due form at 8:30 P.M.
(m/s/c 4/0/0)
Respectfully submitted;

Patricia V. Harris, Secretary

APPROVAL:

Approved and accepted as official minutes;

Date

Benjamin Robinson
Chairman