

  
Town Clerk

TOWN OF NEWINGTON  
ANNA REYNOLDS SCHOOL PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

June 1, 2020, Zoom Event

- I. Call to Order – Committee Chairperson Stephen Woods called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Stephen Woods, Chairperson; Chris Miner, Steven Silvia, Carol Duggan, Jeremy Whetzel, and Cindy Stamm (joined the meeting at 5:15 PM). Others present: members of the public; Chuck Warrington and John Koplas, Colliers International; Maureen Brummett, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Public Participation – None.
- IV. Review Education Specifications – A draft of the Education Specifications (Ed Specs) was presented by Mr. Warrington. It was a total team effort. It goes through all the program spaces to allow the State Office of School Construction Grants Review (OSGCR) to review the project. The project will be staying within the current footprint of the building. It will be adding an elevator. The project rationale includes security, handicapped access and other elements for a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment. The space standard (using the State’s formulas) was around 53,000 square feet. The existing building is 61,644 square feet, a little larger than what the State would feel that we need. The State wants to make sure that the Town is not using half the building for the current enrollment. Open Choice students are also a factor. Mr. Warrington will talk with the State. He feels there is a good chance of receiving reimbursement on the whole building. There will be some changes to the summary he presented. The net square feet number is inside the walls of the building. The total gross square feet number is outside the walls of the building. The difference is only a small amount, but if you do not account for the total gross square feet when developing a budget, you will underestimate the cost. Mr. Silvia asked about toilets in the learning center (the Learning Center I Room calls for a toilet, the Learning Center II Room does not; are these the program requirements for each room). Mr. Koplas explained that they were not the program requirements, they are what is needed to be done in each room. One learning center room already has a toilet in it. The Ed Specs have to be approved by the Board of Education. Superintendent Brummett state that they are on the Board of Education’s Agenda for action. Mr. Whetzel asked if a secure entrance was part of the project. Mr. Warrington stated that it is. Under section II, Project Rationale, the first bullet, the School Safety Infrastructure Council guidelines are included. They would require this.
- V. Review Project Costs – This was presented by Mr. Koplas and Mr. Warrington. This was actually a presentation that had been made earlier. Mr. Koplas discussed activities

completed since April 8<sup>th</sup>. These included a full site investigation, review of the floor plan, how the building can be shaped to match the Ed Specs and put to its' best usage. Preliminary findings of the field investigation are that the roof needs to be replaced and that there are problems with the window system, entry way, storage capacity, the canopy, and the mechanical system. Verification of the existing building area and program spaces included verification of the existing building area, and confirmation that an addition is not required. Instead there is some proposed re-programming of the school spaces. Some areas need to be reconfigured. In the media center, some functions have been re-allocated. Colliers assessed if the plan was adequate for new programming. He also discussed the revised Ed Specs. Mr. Warrington presented the enrollment and space standards. This is a spreadsheet used by the State to make certain that buildings are right-sized. The space standards calculate out to 86% of the current actual building space. If the ratio was less, the State would have a problem. He discussed renovation status vs. renovate as new. A grant application will be submitted for the project. The State needs to grant renovation status. This greatly reduces the costs. It is not automatic. It will have to be determined if the facility is a candidate for renovation status. He will meet with OSCGR to discuss this. He spoke next about construction phasing of school renovation projects. A contractor will need spaces to work in. The work can't all be done in one summer. It will involve six to eight classrooms at a time. The work will cover two summer periods. It may include a night/second shift. The object is to make the work areas as large as possible to reduce the number of phases. He then presented an overall project schedule. This is a macro schedule. The project would go to December of 2023, with construction starting in June of 2022, following a successful referendum in November of 2020. There would be a 3 month bidding period followed by the establishment of a Guaranteed Maximum Price. The project would entail an 18 month construction period. The grant commitment would be scheduled to be received on August 1, 2021. The Town would have two years to start the project after receiving the commitment. The preliminary project budget is \$35.1 million. This includes renovation costs of \$27.5 million; furniture, fixtures and equipment costs of \$1.7 million; estimated fees and expenses (including design, consultants, commissioning, project management, construction manager's preconstruction costs, etc.) of \$4 million; and a contingency cost of \$2.3 million. The estimated district share is \$16-\$19 million. Mr. Whetzel if there were any COVID-19 requirements that had driven up the costs. Mr. Warrington replied that there was no evidence of added costs as the result of COVID-19. Some things on other projects got delayed. It is too early to tell if there will be any new requirements. Mr. Woods stated that it looks like things are starting to slow down a little bit in the construction industry. He is not seeing any big increases in materials. Projects are ending, but there is not as much that is new coming out. Contractors will want to keep their workers busy. Mr. Warrington agreed. He also stated that the architect selection should be a two part process: qualifications and then selection from among the most qualified firms.

- VI. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – Mr. Warrington felt that it was necessary to reach out to the Town Manager and the Town Council. The project is expected to be on the Town Council's Agenda for June 9<sup>th</sup> and June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Warrington will send the power point presentation to Mr. Krupinski. The Committee did not select another meeting date. Dr. Brummett stated that there was a Special Board of Education meeting scheduled to vote on the Ed Specs. Mr. Silvia stated that he had been hearing a lot of feedback about the project. This feedback wants to reduce the scope of the project and feels that the

justification is questionable. He is also hearing a rumor about refurbishing the old Town Hall to replace Anna Reynolds.

VII. Public Participation – None.

VIII. Comments by Members – Mr. Whetzel said that he is also hearing a lot of chatter about the price tag. There are lots of reimbursables here. He doesn't want to underestimate the cost like the Town Hall was. He has heard about refurbishing the Town Hall as well. Mr. Silvia said he wanted to back up Mr. Whetzel's comments. They have to present greater detail and the understanding that the building itself doesn't cost \$35 million. They need to frame the cost components. Dr. Brummett stated that she hadn't heard about Anna Reynolds going into the Town hall. The old Town Hall is contracted for demolition. The goal for Anna Reynolds is not to have any surprises. They need to stress what the real cost is to the Town, the \$16-\$18 million, not the \$35 million. Mr. Woods stated that to just renovate, the Town would spend \$12, \$14, \$15 million. Ms. Stamm stated that she is not hearing what Mr. Silvia is hearing. Mr. Silvia replied that he is not negative, these are just questions, there is some scar tissue from the Town Hall. Ms. Stamm observed that we need to be careful how we say that. Mr. Silvia responded that this was how it was said to him. The Committee might stub its toe if it is not aware. Mr. Woods noted that the Committee has the data. It is the Town Council's decision to set the limit on spending. The Committee can back up their number. The hard part is getting it on the ballot. Mr. Warrington concluded that proactive management of the budget will be needed. Mr. Woods added that this Committee will have charge of the project and will work with the professionals.

IX. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeff Baron*

Jeff Baron  
Director of Administrative Services