

**Auburn School District
School Improvement Committee
December 13, 2017**

Committee Members Present: Peter Miles, Chair; Alan Villeneuve, Mike DiPietro, Tom Gonyea, Jim Headd, Diane Proulx, Melissa Prunier and Lori Collins.

Also Present: Janice Baker and William Herman

Mr. Miles convened the meeting at 6:03 PM.

School Board Update:

Mr. Villeneuve provided the Committee with the latest initial cost study for the proposed project as developed by Bonnette, Page and Stone. He noted there were still refinements being worked through by the School Administration, architects, School Board and BPS, but the project costs were looking extremely favorable. The current project budget was coming in at \$14,204,250, but Mr. Villeneuve cautioned there is one significant piece not yet calculated and that would be the potential full restoration of the athletic fields to be legitimate fields (baseball, softball and/or soccer) moving forward after construction is complete. He indicated site logistics for construction access needs to be discussed, but the ideal access would be from the back of the property via current access trails and to use the recreational field as the construction staging area.

Mr. Villeneuve also noted the \$14.2 million figure included \$487,152 to re-roof the entire remaining roof areas of the Auburn Village School. He indicated the School Board had initially determined the roof would not be something they would include in a construction bond, but rather phase in over five or six years through operating funds. However, the School Board was seeking input from the School Improvement Committee as to whether this should or shouldn't be part of this overall project.

Mr. Gonyea felt there has been strong sentiment to not bond something that was a maintenance item. Mr. Villeneuve acknowledged this, but noted the approximate 2% interest rate for the bond versus the potential annual 3 – 5% construction inflation may result in the cost of the roof being less expensive as part of the bond as opposed to through the operating budget.

Mr. Headd felt there was value to including the roof in the overall project cost. He felt the District would be protecting areas of new renovation; there would be the benefit of a warranty for the entire roof, and he felt the public would not want to spend an additional \$500,000 after a building renovation project is approved. He felt the roof should be included in the project costs. Mr. Miles indicated he agreed with Mr. Headd and felt it made sense to include the roof in the project costs. Mr. DiPietro said it would be prudent to do all the roof work while the contractors are in and mobilized. He also felt it would never be a smaller cost if it were done in the future. Mrs. Prunier agreed.

Mrs. Prunier moved the School Improvement Committee recommend the School Board include the re-roofing of the existing portions of the Auburn Village School in the school renovation project as currently listed in the Initial Cost Study for 2018 Bond Effort. Mr. DiPietro seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Villeneuve indicated earlier the School Board had approved a maximum not to exceed cost of \$14.8 million for the total project. He indicated the cost of the improved recreational fields at the end of the project needs to be determined if it is going to be included in the overall project costs. He noted the School Board has scheduled a special meeting for January 3, 2018 to establish the maximum not to exceed cost for the project, which he assumes will be less than \$14.8 million.

Mrs. Prunier asked if there will be more bathrooms in the proposed school renovation than there was currently, and Mr. Villeneuve indicated there would be. She asked if there would be shared bathrooms, and he indicated there were shared bathrooms for the primary classrooms as designated by the administration. He though primary classrooms included kindergarten, first, second and possibly third grades.

Mrs. Prunier asked if the project includes new windows for the library, and Mr. Villeneuve indicated it was not part of the renovation project. She asked if there was any improved ventilation in the library, and Mr. Villeneuve said there was not in the current plan, but it would be handled through maintenance budgets in the coming years.

Mr. Villeneuve noted when the School Board met with the Board of Selectmen, the Selectmen felt a 15 year bond issue for the school project made the most economic sense. Mrs. Baker indicated the School Board has not made a formal determination, but she felt a 15-year capitalization of the project cost is appropriate and protects the overall investment of the Town.

Mrs. Proulx moved the School Improvement Committee recommend the School Board propose a 15-year bond for the proposed school improvement project. Mrs. Prunier seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Villeneuve again noted the School Board needs to look at and address the restoration of the fields.

Open House, Tours and Presentations:

Mr. Villeneuve reported they had an easel board and handouts available at the Santa Breakfast. He said he spoke with 25 or so folks and generally received a positive response to the current plans. He said the only concerns he heard expressed was the plan did not address parking or school buses.

Mrs. Prunier reported she and Lori Collins provided handouts from an information table at the First & Second Grade Concert, and would be doing the same at the older student's concert on December 14th. She reported a notice also went home with student report cards.

Mr. Villeneuve noted he has one poster version of the renovation plan without the gymnasium and the "Plus Four / Minus Four" that are not part of the revised proposal. He indicated it was a simple view of the project, but provides a clear indication of the scope of the proposed project. Mr. Villeneuve indicated he would attend an upcoming Longmeadow Breakfast with the poster and handout sheets.

It was suggested the School Improvement Committee make a presentation on the project at the January AVS faculty meeting.

Other Outreach Activities

Mr. Villeneuve reported Jason Tyburski forwarded an e-mail message to Peter Miles and himself updating the status of items he had been tasked with.

He indicated the former FixAVS.com domain name is not available, but he has found others that may work including: Fix AVS.net; AVS Fix.com and FixAuburnVillageSchool.com. The Committee members' preference was to secure FixAuburnVillageSchool.com as a domain name.

He reported the Families of AVS are still active and are willing to help in promoting the project. In addition, Mr. Tyburski is still working on a one-page informational flier and will circulate a draft to committee members when it is complete. He indicated he was still working on the "Fact of the Week" effort and needed to determine how best to manage that effort.

Mr. Villeneuve indicated he was approached by John O'Hearn of Auburn, who works with Microdesk.com. Mr. O'Hearn offered to assist the School Improvement Committee in its efforts and the Committee sentiment was to take him up on his offer.

For the January edition of the Auburn Village Crier, it was agreed to submit the flier informing the public of the three open house / project presentations scheduled for January 10th, February 17th and March 8th.

Future Committee Meetings and Events Schedule:

Monday, January 8, 2018 – 6 PM – Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 10, 2018 – 6:30 PM -- Open House Forum
Wednesday, January 24, 2018 – 6 PM – Committee Meeting
Wednesday, February 7, 2018 – 6 PM – Committee Meeting
Saturday, February 17, 2018 – 9 AM – Open House Forum
Thursday, March 8, 2018 – 6:30 PM – Open House Forum

Meeting Minutes:

Mr. DiPietro moved to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2017 meeting as printed. Second by Mrs. Prunier. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion carried.

Adjourn:

Mr. Headd moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 PM, seconded by Mr. Gonyea. A vote was taken, all were in favor, and the vote was passed unanimously.