

Building Committee Meeting
January 26, 2022
6:00 - 7:00pm

Attendees: Stacy Maghakian, Chip McGee, Dave Mermelstein, Darlene Greenwood, Debbie Ryan, Pattie Lamontagne, Troy Bressette, Abigail King, Deb Mahoney, David Wholey, Billy Beauchesne

Not in Attendance: Morgan Benson, John Gould, Jen Grover, Kristin Corey, Brian Sands

Chip started the meeting stating that it was good to see everyone. And since it has been a while with the consolidation of the last meetings, a lot has happened in the last 6 weeks.

Chip asked Dave M. to start with the building update and then he would follow up with an update on the work done with the budget and timeline by the subcommittee.

Chip stated that we were making headway on the budget and the guaranteed max price and that we have a decision regarding the brick that he'd like to resolve.

Chip asked if there were any questions before we launch in?

No questions.

Budget and Timeline Updates

- Dave M. began by stating that the construction foundation work continues and most is complete. The last of it won't be installed until the spring, like the tower in the front of the building. They will be doing miscellaneous site work as weather permits and more exploratory work on the inside. They recently installed a new water line.
- Dave continued stating that the team continues to grow as far as subcontractors. We have been receiving ideas on how to phase the project considering cost expectations. We are also working through budget savings ideas, for example areas where the architect specified a block wall, landscaping, walkways - all geared toward delivering a finished product much like the high school.
- Chip stated that there has been a big impact inside for students – the hallway between the main classrooms and café/gymnasium. They put a temporary wall over the windows so they can connect the addition to the front. Chip is not sure why that had to happen but it's a big change in the feel of the building.
- Stacy added that we are doing iReady and they are doing foundational things, causing disturbances to happen, but they have been inconspicuous with the exception of the hallway. Kids seem to feel that it is what it is. We lost light but impact-wise, it's not a big deal. Noise is expected but for the most part it's ok.
- Chip asked if other staff want to mention things that they are seeing that we hadn't seen before in terms of the progress?
- Billy added that there's no outside access, but we can't go outside anyhow so it's not a huge impact. He also mentioned that they will need the equipment closet in the next couple of weeks but that's not a huge impact either except for finding a place for everything.

- Dave M stated that it's not an easy process and there will be times when people will be interrupted but you can get in touch with Larry or himself and shut things down easily.

Bid Process

- Chip stated that BPNS is the general contractor and they are now very far along as far as accepting MEP bids. They are working with a lot of different companies to determine who has the best price as well as quality of service and availability, in addition to bringing us back into cost alignment. BPNS is close with the major subcontractors they are going to use. Just yesterday the project management team (Trident) met with the school district represented by Stacy, Deb, me, and Brian Sands. We sat down and began going over value engineering and budget management. It's not ready for prime time but we want to share some of the decisions the group is beginning to make to get us back in line with the budget.

Older Material for Review

- Chip continued discussing earthwork and site work as it relates to the landscape allowance, which included expensive benches that the architects added totalling \$90K. The project management team decided to remove those. It also included specialty pavers added by the architect for the courtyard which added \$64K and instead we will use concrete. We will also reuse some of the fencing around the softball field with a savings of \$50K. This makes \$200 in reduced costs with just those 3 items.
- Chip stated that the last time we met we were looking at a design which was \$4.7M over max price but included things that were not in the original proposal presented to the town. We are now pointed in the right direction.
- Chip continued to the thermal/moisture aspect of the exterior surface of the wall. PHS used hardy panels and aluminum channels. The linear metal siding made a difference of \$206K.
- Chip stated that BPNS is identifying areas and eliminating things where we can save money.
- Chip added that the stage flooring had been designed with plyon which is a nicer surface than we have the PHS, and we can't create a better stage space than the PHS. We went with a hardboard flooring saving \$35K.
- Chip continued that there are a lot more things than this and he wants everyone to have a feel for how we are working to get this back down to where we need to be.
- Chip confirmed that not a single one of these changes touches the student experience or a daily program or what we told the community they would be getting.
- Chip brought up one last thing which concerned the additions on the north side of the building referred to as Science Towers instead of pods, for academic value. As designed and presented they had beautiful curtain wall windows.
- Dave M stated that these are typically seen in commercial applications – floor to ceiling glass.
- Chip said there is one at the PHS near the principal's office
- Chip stated that we asked them to look at eliminating corner curtain walls. Using ½ walls is a \$27K cost saving. He asked what if we went further and simply used normal

windows? They are still looking at that, which will change the look from the graphic design but he thinks it's a worthwhile trade-off.

- Chip said that we need to think about whether those sorts of changes are ok. When we get those numbers back he wants to bring those back to the group to see what it would look like and what impact it will have. We are trying to whittle away at that \$4.7M and going in the right direction but we have work to do.
- Chip asked for additional feedback.
- Deb R stated that this gives a good picture of the conversations we are having.
- Dave M stated that this captured the bulk of the conversations.
- Stacy added that they are looking at what is not going to impact the student experience but also what is still aesthetically pleasing. Floor to ceiling windows can turn those areas into hot boxes. We are having those conversations as well.
- Chip asked if anyone has questions for Dave before he has to leave?
- Billy B stated – I am a taxpayer and live in Pelham. With a purpose of finding a solution, and with understanding of general contracting and how all of this works, I am comparing this to bringing in 5 contractors to bid on a job and then choosing a company. I am really struggling with the fact that we are left making these decisions. Someone is accountable. The parking lot was supposed to have been done at the beginning of school. The road around the building was supposed to have been done at the beginning of school. Then there was a mistake with the type of concrete. We are left struggling to figure out how to cut costs. This was bid, we selected this company, and now we are stuck having to make these changes.
- Dave M responded that he understands his frustration but this is not a lump sum bid. It's known as Construction Management. The only way to obtain a lump sum bid is to spend millions up front on a design and lock a contractor into that based on the conceptual design programming needs of the school.
- Billy responded that as a teacher and taxpayer he pushed beyond belief on the contract presented, but to be \$4.7M over budget and to have a lot of the things that are selling points not part of the project... One thing was the connector. Is that still part of the project?
- Chip replied that this is still part of the project and that we are fighting for everything.
- Billy stated that ethically someone dropped the ball.
- Chip responded that that's not right. This is not a lump sum project.
- Pattie L added that we were told this is a guaranteed price and we went to voters and told them and now it's not that price.
- Billy continued that because of the cost of materials and the current state of where we are...
- Dave M responded that this is Construction Management. We hire a team to build a project.
- Billy asked who is responsible for things like concrete and why did we have to change that which increased the cost?
- Dave M replied that the architect specified a 4500psi concrete and we fought with them for weeks. If we want the project to be completed with their certification, we need to follow their requirements.

- Billy stated that we are spending all this time on how to cut costs and someone has to be held responsible.
- Dave M replied that we are spending time every day. Who is responsible? It's a team approach.
- Billy continued that rather than us having to cut costs, the person who made the mistake should eat the cost.
- Chip added that another \$250K from the construction managers contingency fee is another move we are trying to make. We are fighting those fights but we don't want half poured foundation and a lawsuit.
- Dave M added that we are talking about lump sum bids versus delivery of construction management. He is equally as frustrated.
- Deb R added that she understands what Billy is saying. These were things being brought up as we were marketing this project. In order to bring forward plans so it's exactly to specification, it would have cost us over \$1M as a warrant article to create a set of plans which is THE set of plans and then go back to the voters the following year to approve the project. If it's voted down, then we're out \$1M.
- Dave M added that he has a client that spent over \$1M last year, then priced the job, and it's \$20M over what it was a year ago. We had to work a full year and now the client is spending \$400K to bring it closer in line. That's typical with the delivery method of public projects. At the end we have a number that we are going to hit.
- Chip stated that the number is \$31,980,000 to be specific.
- Billy said that he doesn't want this to be viewed as pointing fingers but why did we use the concrete company?
- Dave M responded that Haraman was chosen by the district and committee to deliver this project. They submit professional development proposals.
- Chip added that the engineer said we had to do it but the build comes from the general and site contractor.
- Dave M added that the school district selected an architectural firm or design team. Haraman has everything under one roof and has control over the structural product. Anything to do with life safety the architect is responsible for.
- Billy asked if we have used this architect before?
- Dave M replied No.
- Deb M asked did we use this architect for PES?
- Dave M replied that the folks that did the architecture of PES were bought out by Haraman. We had 4 firms, we interviewed, talked amongst the selection committee that would be best for the project, then ranked firms and opened the bid envelopes. You don't want to select by price because it's not always the best value.
- Chip interjected that this is not going to get us to a better place but he is glad that Billy is on the committee. I heard you and we are trying to figure out how to constructively move forward
- Dave M told Billy that he appreciated his concerns and that we are working hard on them. He asked Billy to send any questions to Chip.
- Dave M logged off the meeting at 6:45pm.

Brick Exterior Recommendation

- Chip said that he wanted to switch gears to brick yet continue to be responsive to committee feedback and issues of cost. He noted that the white brick was not viewed favorably so we went back to the project management team to recommend an alternative.
- Chip continued that we also got masonry bids in, of which there are 2 manufacturers in the country. Haraman had recommended white brick. The contractor presenting the low bid has used Morin which provides \$80K in cost reduction.
- Chip stated that he included a picture of the brick and rendering, a red brick. Morin offers red brick and brown gray. They cannot provide a matching brick. This is a contrasting brick and I want to get this ordered and in our hands before price escalations.
- Chip said he doesn't have a good sense of taste and asked for questions.
- Darlene G asked if they can put a finish over it?
- Chip replied that academy smooth was chosen. It's solid red and the grout will be gray. They opted for smooth because it is in contrast with existing rough brick.
- Troy began by asking - Did you hear about the man who had a brick wall fall on him? He was in "mortar Peril".
- Eye rolls and moans followed :)
- Troy continued that he was acutely aware of all brick combos and the red on red is one of the more appealing combinations.
- Chip mentioned that you can see the sample and it was held up against the current multi-colored brown. He doesn't have a strong opinion but he thinks we should decide.
- Pattie asked if there is a rough version? As a middle schooler it will be easier to write on
- Stacy asked if this is the only option?
- Chip replied that Morin has this and a gray-brown color in 5 different finishes.
- Deb R asked if the other pictures on the link is what showed the contrast?
- Chip responded Yes
- Ded R said that it doesn't look so bad and seems a little more doable.
- Stacy asked that they are saving the current brick, correct?
- Chip replied yes, that they are going to clean it and re-plank it where needed.
- Darlene G stated that she can't tell if it does or doesn't look good.
- Abigail asked if this is the same color as the PHS brick?
- Chip replied yes, very close.
- Dave W added that you are never going to match that brick. To him this is a good compromise to the original siding. The solid color would look better than a blended. He thinks it's a good choice – better than the white/gray color discussed on the last call. In terms of the writing, the smooth brick will be easier to clean.
- Stacy added let's stop giving Abby suggestions!
- Dave W continued that he likes it because it ties into PHS but does not match PES.
- Chip stated that he thinks we should proceed with the brick.
- Deb R added that after what Dave W said, she's in.
- Chip asked if there was anyone who wanted to continue the discussion?
- Chip stated that there is a consensus that the red brick as presented is what the Building Committee can move forward with

Minutes

- Chip stated that both the October and December meeting minutes were included and need to be accepted.
- Chip asked for a motion to accept the minutes
- Troy B - First
- Darlene G - Second
- Chip asked for a thumbs up for all in favor
- The minutes were unanimously to approve

Other Questions and Comments

- Chip stated he knows if we are uncomfortable we are doing the right work, thanked Billy for his input, and told him he would be in touch with him.
- Chip continued that the construction project is a lot of money that we are getting from taxpayers so we better make darn sure how we are spending it.

Meeting adjourned - 7:00pm