

Westside Community Schools
Facilities Task Force Committee Meeting
October 7, 2014 ~ 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Blane McCann opened the meeting at 4:00.

The middle school has reached capacity and we acknowledge that now we must work through operational costs. Thanks to architecture consultant for all his help. We need to figure out what's best for kids as we work through these decisions.

Small groups reported on what was discussed the last time they met. What are the construction/finance costs? What kind of community support is there for what has to be done? What is the Westside Community Schools community telling us?

Bob Zagozda talked about the Town hall meeting and led the focus group review.

What did people think of the process, how did it go, what did we learn?

Do we have a feel for how many community members attended?

Blane thought all together there were maybe 100 people in attendance. There was a good cross-section of people represented including open-nesters and young taxpayers who did not have children in the schools, which he thought was surprising.

Group 1 felt that the group felt very benign and positive. They also felt like the group walked away more educated. It was great to see how information was shared. Information spread got community member to community member, like community members were educating each other. They added that elementary schools getting bigger was an important point.

Group 2: Some people felt there was a lot of focus on the middle school but not on elementary schools. If schools need infrastructure work, why aren't we working on that? The group shared with them that we will do that but we have to prioritize and the middle school is a priority. People seemed generally supportive of the 6-8 grade issue. One community member was concerned that we be fiscally responsible but added that we have been and should continue to be.

Group 3: The group included a retiree from district, a teacher from district, a couple Westside personnel, and probably 8-9 community members. One person said we should re-do facility study. (Blane interjected that we did have someone look through DLR study.) There is a tremendous level of education we still need to do because there are still misconceptions. Some examples are: Do we want to be like Elkhorn? How did we pick DLR? Closing Loveland is a concern.

Group 4: This group included folks from different schools, all age-group parents. Support for 6-8 was split. It seemed there was a lot of misinformation in the group. There is also concern about Loveland closing and concern about long-range dollars, not just to build, what would it take away from other areas. People felt they need more information like what are the phases. How much for each phase? Why hasn't

this already been done and where will we be 20 years from now? Why is this now on our shoulders? There was also a sense that the people not in favor of 6-8 are looking more through a lens of their own children, not opportunities to come.

Group 5: Education was a big piece of the conversation. Some people thought the Learning Community dictated to us how many kids we had to take each year. There was a good mix of people. People seemed OK with the 6-8 idea and concerned about the parking garage. Are we getting rid of tennis courts to accommodate a parking garage? One person was concerned that putting 6th graders with 7th and 8th graders will cause them to lose their innocence that much sooner. How do we prepare 5th graders for that? Is the state forcing us to do the 6-8 thing?

Blane - early childhood is cloudy at best. When you look at needs, we will need to leave some for a later group to do down the road.

Someone said we need to make sure we don't fill up classrooms with Pre-K kids and then still have a problem with space in the classrooms. The importance of early childhood is there but we have immediate needs we have to get done. Some schools are built easier to include Pre-K, which may be a way to organize that. Do we need it at every building? Blane thought it might be a good idea to start putting early childhood at title buildings initially then move from there.

Group 6: The group felt we should keep it positive and keep the community informed. Opinion on 6-8 was mixed but probably everyone in the group would support 6-8. Some who had kids in 6-8 in Millard were very positive, but they added that we need to make sure we keep small class sizes and that the student/teacher ratio stay small. They questioned whether the plan is financially feasible. However, creating a 6-8 building makes a good connection between elementary school and high school. It was suggested security should come first and we should make sure buildings are safe.

Group 7: There were lots of Swanson and Loveland parents. After- and before-care space should be available. The group expressed concern about the possibility of Loveland closing. There was concern about Swanson's footprint, about that physical space if it will be rebuilt. Everyone in the group was in favor of 6-8. Did we consider putting all the 6-8 kids at the current middle school location, buying some of the commercial property surrounding then middle school and expand that way. There were also concerns about the parking garage.

Bob Zagozda reported that tours are now scheduled for looking at remodeled buildings. Three Council Bluffs schools and also Dundee school in Omaha will be toured on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. The schools in Council Bluffs are good to look at because they are similar to what we are looking for. One school ended up building a separate gym and cafeteria. Dundee renovated quite a while ago but architects in town say they had a very involved community and the tour will be more about the process. How do you upgrade a school and retain the character of the building?

Bob Zagozda then asked that everyone break into groups and talk about how important are these spaces and what priority might they be.

Bob the architect ran through the DLR report, condensed the data, and tried to give a refresher on how those numbers were derived.

He randomly chose Rockbrook. They looked at traffic patterns, the condition of the site, and also a functional assessment with two scenarios of K-5 and K-6. He looked at what do you want vs. what do we need. What we need to do is find a realistic number in between.

He went through mechanical, electrical, and safety estimates. The costs are today's prices, not escalated. Total needs at Rockbrook are \$4.5M. The numbers are less than the actual cost because at the end there is an added 25% to account for contractor fees, which is not escalation. That is how these estimates are built. Adding 25% gets to true cost. Last part of report is a scorecard.

He looked at different options per school with a K-5 vs. K-6 configuration. If Rockbrook got everything we wanted, K-6 would add 25,000 square feet; K-5 would add 20,000 square feet. There is a big difference between the two numbers.

As a district, how much square footage do we have? Now we have in K-6 1.148 M square feet. If we kept the middle school configuration we would end with 1.5M square feet. With a K-5 configuration we have 45,000 less square feet, which would keep utility bills lower. In K-5 CCC would be reconfigured elsewhere. In this report Sunset Hills, Swanson, and Westgate are torn down as options and rebuilt. Then we look at needs. He took existing facilities and improved facilities and looked at traffic. WMS total \$12M, needs HVAC \$30M, \$7M safety, infrastructure \$7M. Different priorities were assigned. A quick look at escalation over 10 years added probably a 25% escalation. It can't all be done at once. It is probably a 10-year process to get it done. He figured a 3.5% per year increase in cost escalation. So for instance if \$100M dollars were approved, we would only really have in the \$80M's to spend. Overall in the K-6, 7-8 configuration, the total package was \$191M renovating schools, not re-doing. In a K-5, 6-8 configuration, it would be \$194M. This is actually cost neutral based on accuracy of estimates. We need to look at additional square footage, what do we want, and a reasonable budget to use as a basis in the future. If we have a target we think we can ask for and get approved, what would that look like? We can prioritize which schools to do first, major renovations vs. top priority like security for instance. Blane added that we have to make sure we communicate that to the community, that over the next maybe 10 years we will need money to maintain facilities and not wait for this to happen again. We are working with other schools in the area to see what their energy efficiency plans are. Baseline data help us estimate that.

Next Facilities Task Force Meeting:

Thursday, October 23, 2014
4:00 p.m. ~ ABC Building