

MINUTES
CABARRUS COUNTY SCHOOL FACILITIES BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2007
GOVERNMENTAL CENTER/7:30 A.M.

Attendees: Gary Embler, Niblock Construction
Jeff Joyce, First Charter Bank (absent)
Tim Lowder, W. K. Dickson
John Morrison, Morrison Lumber Company
Rick Price, Cardigan Company (real estate)
Vernon Russell, Attorney
Alice Steele-Robinson, Retired Educator and Director of Academic Learning Center
Dr. Glenda Poole, Retired Educator
Jim Amendum, Assistant Superintendent, Cabarrus County Schools
John Day, County Manager
Pam Dubois, Deputy County Manager/Finance Officer
Mike Downs, Deputy County Manager
Gene Jordan, Cabarrus County Schools, Finance Officer (absent)
Jonathan Marshall, County Planner
Sam Masters, Director of Construction, Cabarrus County Schools
Susie Morris, Commerce Department
Joe Sides, Director of Facilities, Cabarrus County Schools
Jeanette Trexler, Public Relations, Cabarrus County Schools
Dr. Harold Winkler, Superintendent, Cabarrus County Schools

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Vernon Russell called the meeting to order.

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL TOURS

Mr. Vernon Russell asked for a debriefing on the school tours that the committee conducted on Wednesday, November 7, 2007. The following comments were offered:

- Commendations were offered regarding the staff at all the schools.
- Overwhelmed at the quality of the people.
- Overwhelmed with demographics and how they are changing.
- Dr. Winkler and the staff have done a tremendous job.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO IN THE FUTURE?

Mr. Sam Masters stated that the last high school cost \$158 per square foot. It was a low-bearing, masonry building. This price included everything on the site and the grading. We are at or below costs compared to other systems. Dr. Winkler pointed out that some comparisons are made with just the cost of the building and not including the land, etc. Ten years ago, an elementary school cost \$7 million to construct. This price has increased more than \$5 million in the last ten years. The new high school will cost \$162 per square foot and it is partially two stories.

Structural masonry has a longer life span and these schools are cheaper to operate.

Other Issues Raised:

- Bethel Elementary cost \$9 million and it is a one-story structure.
- Site design is easier for a two-story building.
- A two-story is more efficient, less expensive, less roof.
- Three-story elementary schools might bring schools closer into neighborhoods.
- The Board of Education made the ruling that all students may have the opportunity to ride buses to schools, even in walk-zone areas, for safety reasons.
- Evacuation time for a two-story elementary would be a concern.
- EC classrooms could not be placed on a second or third floor.
- A potential site has been identified on Miami Church Road for a new A. T. Allen Elementary replacement school. Mr. Day stated that the accessibility is not as good as property on Heglar Road. He suggested that we plan school sites where they integrate better with subdivisions to allow for safe pedestrian access, among other things. Mr. Amendum stated that as we place schools, we have to consider the districts that need relief with school sizes.
- As we build schools, there is a need for open space outdoors. They can be used as a teaching tool. Planning parks and quiet places should be tied into buying property. The stream between W. R. Odell Elementary and Harris Road Middle Schools will be restored. We need to make certain that the schools know that this is happening. Efforts are being made at Clark Creek to try to get conservation easements. Mr. Morrison noted that John James Audubon's right-hand man declared in 19th Century that this area was the most diverse place for birds and plants that he had seen. The access roads are substandard. The EEP and DOT have done mitigation projects and they have banked the points.
- Can we reduce the cost of the schools by reducing the courtyards? This will be taken under advisement.
- Would it be more beneficial to have APFO fees or have the developer provide a school site? A school site would be preferred.
- Land banking would control where the developments should be approved.
- Pam Dubois stated that the County had a greater surplus in the FY 2007 than anticipated in the 5-Year Plan. This money could be used for land banking.

BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING:

- The staff will categorize the Wake County and Mecklenburg County studies into general topics related to the committee's original charge and provide additional information. The committee will make recommendations at the next meeting and determine if subcommittees will be appointed.

NEXT MEETING

The date for the next meeting:

- **Tuesday, December 4, 2007 at the Governmental Center at 7:30 AM.**

ADJOURN

Mrs. Alice Steele-Robinson made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Tim Lowder seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Minutes Prepared by Jeanette Trexler