

Name of Committee: Runkle School Building Committee

Meeting Date: 23 November 2011 Time: 8:30 a.m. Meeting Location: Town Hall, Room 103

Nancy Daly	x		
Kenneth Kaplan	x	Anthony Guigli	x
Vanessa Beauchaine	x	Charles Simmons	x
William Lupini	x		
Sean Cronin		Jennifer Fischer-Mueller	
Michael Shepard	x	Gregg Schroeder	x
Peter Rowe	x	Bob Bell	
Mel Kleckner	x		
Helen Charlupski	x		

Others Present: Jim Stoddard, Runkle Vice Principal, Vin Pelleriti, Design Partnership of Cambridge, Ralph Gifford, Thompson Consulting Engineers, Scott Newman, parent

Public Present: Michael Oates, Chad Ellis, Roger Tackeff, Lowell and Luisa Bryan abutters, Gill Fishman, George Sopel and Pam Lodish, neighborhood. Carla Benka and Janice Kahn, Advisory Committee, Amy Kershaw, School Committee, numerous parents of Runkle School children.

Topic: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes of 9 November 2011 unanimously approved.

Topic: Date of next Meetings

The date and time of the next meeting is Monday 5 December 2011 at 8:30 a.m. in the Selectmens' Conference Room, 6th Floor, Town Hall. Among the topics of that meeting is a presentation by DPC/Warner Larson as to the play equipment design, proposed method of bidding and proposed bid and construction schedule. The next meeting after that is Friday 16 December 2011 at 8:00 a.m. in Town Hall Room 103. Among the topics of that meeting is a presentation by Engineering and the Traffic Departments as to an update and schedule of proposed traffic improvements and the permit parking plan.

Topic: Roof top equipment:

N. Daly opened this part of the discussions with a reminder that the Runkle Building Committee meetings are public and all are welcome. She also stated that the contractor has requested a one-month time extension of Substantial Completion to August 15, 2012 owing to project issues (unrelated to the current discussions on the roof top units). Also, the Town is in receipt of a letter from some neighbors requesting the work be stopped until the roof top issue is resolved. In addition, she is in receipt of a number of

communications from concerned Runkle School parents as to the delays to date and the potential for further delay. H. Charlupski noted her long term involvement in school projects and that, for one reason or another, each one has had some delay. She further indicated her hope that this meeting would be productive and that civility would be observed here and in the neighborhood.

G. Schroeder then presented a matrix of the current options that have been under discussion. He noted he had been working with his staff, TCI and the acoustical engineer over the last few weeks to explore these options. The purpose of the matrix is to lay out the options in an organized way and to provide some qualitative information on them that may be useful to the Committee in deciding which, if any, warrant further exploration.

He noted again that the costs shown are the “value” of the work in the opinion of his cost estimator. The actual costs are likely to be much higher owing to the fact these would be done presumably as change orders so there is not the benefit of price competition. All options would result in delays, some more than others. Assessing delay is difficult and would really need to be addressed by the contractor. The benefit to neighbors is based solely on two factors; sunlight and increased view. Sound mitigation is not compromised with any of the proposed potential options and some have program implications. Some are not permitted by code or are not recommended.

M. Kleckner stated that the matrix is a useful tool because the committee needs to narrow down the options and focus more on any that might be potential solutions. He further stated that from his perspective, he wants to understand how the neighbors feel about any of the options that might have some potential.

G. Schroeder then began to briefly describe each option in the matrix along with the qualitative merits of each of them. Option #5 is not permitted owing to requirement to laterally brace the entire existing building. Option #2B is not permitted for similar reasons. Option #1B is not recommended because of potential sound issues with the HVAC units.

In response to questions, G. Schroeder further clarified why equipment cannot be moved to the existing building roof for seismic and other structural issues. There is the potential that the top foot or two of the acoustic screens might be made of a translucent material, or alternatively, the top of the screens could be “angled” inward. A “green roof” screen for the units was not considered as a nod to the neighbors as this actually makes the visual darker owing to plant material.

Option #7 might result in HVAC units being a little shorter (1-2 feet), would involve major redesign, high cost and delay and medium benefit to neighbors. The Committee chose to shelve this option.

Option #6, in addition to high cost and delay, has major benefit to neighbors. It would also result in diminished outdoor play areas and the acoustic screens would likely be

higher as sound radiates upwards and the units would now be at ground level. The Committee opted to shelve this option.

Option #4 was shelved because of cost, delay and negative impact on shading of courtyard and classrooms that have windows that face the courtyard.

Option #3 was shelved again because of cost, delay and the fact there is no unprogrammed space in the building that could be used for the music room.

A further discussion of the music room included the fact that some music programs have been cut in the past owing to budget issues; the Town is again facing budget issues. G. Fishman stated his amazement that another space in the building cannot be found for the music room. M. Oates stated his belief that there is more space in this building relative to student population and program than at other public schools in Brookline. B. Lupini stated that may be due to the fact that Runkle have programs for special needs students that other schools don't have to the degree they are served here. P. Rowe also stated the size of the gym and Multi-Purpose Room contribute to this as well.

G. Schroeder stated that Options #1a and #2a assume moving three units only. Any three might be moved (or lowered) or more than three might be moved (or lowered). All parties questioned whether either of these two options would yield enough changes to be satisfactory to the neighbors.

In further comments, a number of parents expressed their concern as to any further delay or diversion of resources to address neighbors' issues. Neighbors stated that they support the school and its renovations but also want their concerns addressed.

Finally, the Committee directed the architect to provide some visual/graphics as to what are likely to be the difference between what is designed now with respect to HVAC roof top units (and their acoustic screens) and what might be seen if either Option #1a or #2a are implemented. To address the concerns of the Bryans, the architect will also look into what is involved with potentially moving the units closest to their home would be.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Guigli
Project Director