

TOWN OF MADISON
CONNECTICUT 06443-2563

MEETING DATE: Thursday, November 1, 2018

MEETING PLACE: Town Campus, Room D, 8 Campus Drive, Madison, CT

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Ad Hoc Academy Building Guidance Committee

Members Present: Sarah Barrett, Henry Griggs, Rob Card, Bob Hale, Kathryn Hunter
and Tom Scarpati

Members Absent: Jerry Davis

Others Present: Al Goldberg, Board of Selectmen

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m.

II. Public Comment:

There was no initial public comment.

III. October 25 Minutes:

Mr. Hale moved that the October 25 minutes be approved with a short amendment that Ms. Barret had circulated earlier in the week. Tom Scarpati seconded the motion, which was approved by all members present.

IV. Update on Conversation with GreatBlue Research and Questionnaire:

Henry Griggs reported on his communications with GreatBlue regarding various matters: (a) GBR will have a test version of the online questionnaire available through a private link so that Committee members can fill it in and see if it works as it should. (b) The online survey will run for 2 weeks and will be accessed through a link on the Town website. Ms. Hunter reminded Mr. Griggs about the need to set up a dedicated computer in the Town Clerk's office for public use. (c) Regarding the use of per-household cost figures, the Committee agreed that the information should come from

an independent source, most likely the office of the Town's Director of Finance. Jerry Davis will be asked to follow up. (d) GBR confirmed that the online survey will mirror the phone poll, with the "honor" question added. (e) Mr. Griggs expressed his discomfort with using the hard dollar figure for the total project cost for two of the community based options net of savings from preservation tax credits. Mr. Scarpati suggested that the poll language be re-cast to state that the credits could amount to as much as a \$2 million to \$4 million reduction in the total estimated cost of \$14 million for said options, which the Committee members thought was a good revision.

V. Preparations for Public Information Sessions:

Ms. Barrett asked whether arrangements had been made for audio-visual support at the two public information sessions. Mr. Griggs said he had contacted staff at the Senior Center and would follow up with Madison Community TV about AV support and video-taping at Polson.

The conversation turned to making arrangements to re-organize the Town website to move outdated materials off the main pages and to update the site with the latest proposals and other current materials relative to the Committee's work and the upcoming poll (such as the matrix comparing developers' proposals and another matrix comparing the community based options). Mr. Griggs, Mr. Hale and Ms. Hunter will arrange to meet with the Town's Webmaster to go over these issues and also to discuss the link to the online survey questionnaire.

Members discussed where and when the Committee will disseminate information regarding the phone poll and online survey and details of the proposals and options to be presented at poll. Mr. Griggs noted again his interest in posting to social media sites. Catherine Flynn-Donovan offered to provide a list of Madison sites. Zoe Roos offered that she is compiling years of articles, historical information and background materials on Academy which may be accessed by the public by a dedicated link on zip06. The Committee asked Ms. Roos to confirm that the Source will cover and publish feature articles on the AGC Public Information Sessions and GBR's polling and survey efforts.

Ms. Hunter asked Mr. Griggs to confirm that the GBR draft questionnaire for the phone poll and survey are nearly final, with minor tweaking based on tonight's meeting. Mr. Griggs confirmed.

Ms. Hunter pressed the Committee to review a revised version of the "script" for AGC's Public Information Sessions and provide edits and feedback to guide in the preparation of the PowerPoint for the sessions. Members discussed the sample slides Mr. Griggs had circulated earlier in the week and agreed that there should be a limited amount of content on each slide.

With respect to impacting factors and details to be included in the public information materials, Mr. Scarpati repeated his view that the Committee should make a disclaimer at the start of each public information session that it is neutral and does not support or favor any given proposal over any other, and that the information being conveying is information that was presented to the Committee. Ms. Hunter noted that she generally agreed to the neutral

stance, but feels that part of the Committee's Charge is to add "flesh" to the options by providing details and impacting factors. She explained that while it is accurate that the private developer proposals were solicited and presented to the AGC by and through the Town, some of the analysis regarding the proposals is the result of AGC due diligence. And, the community based options on the poll and survey, including cost estimates, are the result of the Committee's work with Colliers. Al Goldberg suggested that the Committee would be well served to consult with Town Counsel regarding any "do's" and "don'ts" on this subject, and Mr. Griggs agreed to follow up.

The discussion turned to what happens after the poll. The contract with GBR clearly states that the results will be conveyed by GBR to the BOS and the AGC. Members queried whether the BOS would hold a joint session with the AGC, which will be open to the public, to discuss the results. Mr. Goldberg suggested that the Board of Selectmen would hold a special meeting to present the survey results when they become available. Ms. Hunter stated for the record that she hopes the Committee will make a recommendation to the BOS based on the poll/survey results. All agreed that such a recommendation will depend on whether a clear direction is indicated by the results.

VII. Meeting Schedule:

Sarah Barrett raised the question of the Committee's future meeting schedule. The Committee agreed that its last regular meeting will be Thursday, Nov 8, followed by the AGC Public Information Sessions on Nov 14. Ms. Hunter asked if there might be Committee work between the Public Information Sessions and the start of the GBR poll/survey on Nov 26th. The Committee left open whether another weekly meeting will be scheduled.

VIII. Public Comment:

Catherine Donovan urged the Committee to develop its message regarding impacts of the various proposals in order to present the pros and cons at the public information sessions. She noted that the private developer proposals have very different business terms which may determine public support. She also stated that she was pleased with the Community Center option to be included on the poll (as described at the meetings).

Catherine Ferrante suggested that the Town website lay out the seven proposals being tested on the survey in one highly visible location (including the Horton Group proposal which is currently not on the website) and that all relevant and up-to-date information and materials on Academy be easily accessible. She asked if the questionnaire and/or public information materials will note that the Horton Group proposal takes a portion of the baseball fields and some of the open space for access and parking (more than the other proposals). It was explained that the use of land for each of the developer proposals is noted briefly on the poll/survey questionnaire, but will be further explained in the public information sessions.

Roz Fahey reiterated that all seven proposals, with details and supporting information, should be included on the Town website and in the public information sessions. She suggested that the Town run a “banner” along the home page of the Town website alerting residents to the GBR poll and online survey. The Committee agreed to ask the Webmaster if this is possible.

Dick Passero asked the Committee to seriously consider whether it is providing sufficient information, details and support for the private and community proposals to be included on the poll/survey for the public to make an informed decision.

IX. Adjournment:

Mr. Hale moved to adjourn, and Mr. Scarpati seconded the motion, which was approved by all members present. The Committee adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

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