

Building Subcommittee Meeting with BOE

Attendees: Bryan Hensz, Andrew McElroy, Mary Ann Risley, Kelley Dilley
Alex Rubenstein, Harvey Roseff, Joe Sabatini, David Romano
Date: August 21, 2018

Alex stated that the building subcommittee has continued to discuss utilizing approximately 10,000 square feet of the open space area at the school. They would like to move to the next step in discussion. Alex emailed Andrew in July, and Andrew shared the email with the BOE, and they discussed it as a group.

Court - we do not have a municipal court now at our municipal building. The joint court contract comes up for renewal at the end of 2019. Andover feels that the arrangement is working and doesn't have any plans right now to end the agreement. When Lafayette designed its building they did it without a court since they had a shared service with Wantage, which could be an avenue that Byram takes.

Meeting space - All of our committees and quite a few outside groups use our meeting room in the evening. The seniors are the only group that use it during the day. Joe stated that very infrequently a special council meeting is arranged during the day but generally no public attends. Alex said that it could be a condition of a lease that any meetings occurring during the day need school approval.

Andrew stated that every time there is a gathering a custodian with a black seal license must be present because of the boiler. Bryan stated that the school staffs the building during the week until 11 p.m. If the Township utilized the building on the weekend or beyond 11 p.m., the school would have to have staff present which would incur a cost. David Romano stated that if there was a separate heating system for the Township space, it wouldn't eliminate the involvement of school personnel.

Routine business brings people in daily to the Township. Andrew stated that he did discuss this with the board and they didn't feel it was a concern. Mary Ann Risley stated that parking in the evening during concerts or special events would not be good nights to hold Council and/or Planning Board meetings.

Alex asked what the BOE felt about giving up the outside space that the Township would use for parking. Andrew stated that they didn't have an issue—the members just wanted to make sure the school area was secure because their major concern was security and safety of the children. The BOE would like to see the same background checks done on all Township employees as school employees. There should be a clear delineation of school and township areas. David Romano

suggested erecting a wall totally separating the two areas. The plan would need to be looked at by an architect for separation and fire code regulations. Bryan suggested putting fencing between the playground area which will become the municipal parking lot and the school area.

Kelley Dilley stated that pick up and drop off times will make it difficult to access the school parking lot. The parking lot is closed during these times. David Romano stated that the parking area at the municipal building can be utilized for overflow. He stated that it was equivalent from walking from MacDonald's to the entrance of Shop Rite.

Alex stated that the building subcommittee is looking at 3 options and moving the administration offices to the open space area is one of them. Alex asked if there has been any discussion about cost to Byram for this option. Andrew stated that the more work that the Township will take on and the less that the school is responsible for, the lower the cost of the lease would be to Byram. Andrew said there will be another Board meeting tomorrow night and he should be able to give some information to Alex by the end of the week. David Romano said that the way the committee is looking at it is that all improvements would be done solely by Byram Township. David Romano said that we could even decide to improve the facade of the entire building to blend in with the Township space.

Kelley said that they are bound by State regulations, and projects have to be submitted to the State Department of Education for approval first. Joe asked what determines what has to be sent to the State. Bryan stated that all projects have to be reviewed for security and to make sure proper procedures regarding bidding, etc. are followed. Andrew said that the roof project had to go down to the State for approval. Alex asked if we can give a conceptual design to the State for approval to move forward. Andrew and Bryan said they can ask if they would entertain that. Bryan did comment that he had called the State Department of Education to discuss the possibility of leasing out an area of the building to the Township, and the State said that it has been done before. Harvey thought it would be good to touch base with Senator Oroho because he mentioned possible grant money for a project like this. Andrew can reach out to Senator Oroho to check to see if he would like to be involved. Harvey said this could be a marquee project, and David stated that Senator Oroho has been very helpful.

Alex talked about the term of the lease, and he stated that we would want at least a 20-year lease. David suggested a 20-year lease with several 5-year renewal options. Joe said that the bond counsel may want a 30 or 40-year lease. Joe was asked to follow up with bond counsel about this.

Andrew reported that Byram has entered into discussions with Stanhope and Netcong about regionalization with elementary schools. This is in the infancy stages and will take 2-3 years to get to a feasibility study to put out to the public.

South Hunterdon went out to ballot to do a feasibility study. The feasibility study sometimes turns out to be the deal breaker. Hackettstown, Great Meadows, and Liberty studied regionalization, but it died. Bloomsbury and Greenwich also did a feasibility study and Bloomsbury which was the smaller district, felt they were losing and it did not pass.

Alex asked if the BOE would have a problem going forward with leasing space to Byram with the consolidation looming. Andrew couldn't speak for the Board, but he doesn't think it will stop them from moving forward on this. The Open Space area hasn't been utilized in about 2 years. Alex asked about a comparison of enrollment from this year to last year. Bryan said there was a reduction of about 25 kids. Andrew said that the school is losing \$1.7 million in the next 7 years, and that we owe it to the public to look at options.

At Wednesday's BOE meeting, Andrew will review points talked about at this meeting regarding the space and lease term, and cost--finding out if the Township opts to lease the building and do all the interior and exterior work necessary to house the administration offices and secure the school area, what price are we looking at.

Prepared by: Doris Flynn