



Facilities Planning

**Meeting Minutes
Bellaire High School**

MEETING NO.: 010

LOCATION: Bellaire High School

DATE / TIME: July 15, 2014, 9:30 am

ATTENDEES: Michael McDonough, Principal; Diana Leeson, School Business Manager; Swati Narayan, Parent; Judy Long, Community Member; Steven Gee, TCM Project Manager; Sue Robertson, HISD- GM of Facilities Planning; Dave Funk, HISD Facilities Planning; Melissa Turnbaugh, PBK – Architect; Rick Blan, PBK – Architect; Jorge Tiscareno, PBK – Architect; Richard Chi, PBK - Architect; Debra Campbell, Communication; Dan Wikes, Science Teacher; Rocky Manuel, Teacher/Coach; Andrew Monzon, Assistant Principal; Clay Clayton, HISD- Facilities Planning; Todd Granato, Turner Construction; Sylvia Wood, HISD; Anne Marie Kilday, News Reporter; Joseph Nguyen, Technology; Jay Stubbs, teacher; Marianita Snodgrass, Neighbor; Carol Wingrad, Neighbor; Marc Wingrad, Neighbor; Mark Thibodeaux, Neighbor; Amy Thibodeaux, Neighbor; Kevin Kelleher, Community Member, Lynn Kelleher, Community Member; Sandy Wilson, Neighbor; Steve Freeman, Neighbor; David Upton, Neighbor; Gil Baumgarten, Neighbor; Garrick Behelfer, Neighbor; Kate Belhefer, Neighbor; Daniela Fuentes, TPP Rep.; Carlos Artime, Neighbor; Thomas Noblo, Neighbor; Joe Stafford, Neighbor; Bille Stafford, Neighbor; William Anderson, Neighbor; Barry Goldblatt, Neighbor; Cindy Goldblatt, Neighbor; Pattie Osburn, Neighbor; Nicole Elder, Neighbor; David Elder, Neighbor; Meredith Foster, Neighbor; Katheryn James, Neighbor/Parent; Aparna Shewakramani, Neighbor/Alumni; K. Wohlford, Neighbor; J. Wohlford, Neighbor

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to review additional options and continue discussion about priorities.

AGENDA ITEMS:

- Welcome – Principal McDonough
- Prioritization Exercise – Sue Robertson
- Present Revised Options – PBK Architects
- Discuss Options – PAT small groups
- Report Out – PAT small groups
- Next Steps
 - Next PAT Meeting: August 4, 2014 at 1:00 pm

NOTES:

Principal Michael McDonough welcomed everyone and noted that there were a number of community members attending the Project Advisory Team (PAT) meeting for the first time. He informed these community members that the PAT had been working for almost a year to plan, develop and review concepts for the new Bellaire High School.

He introduced Sue Robertson, HISD's General Manager of Facilities Planning. Ms. Robertson introduced Jay Stubbs, Bellaire teacher and it was noted that he had recently received several awards related to his efforts with the Bellaire Debate team.

After introducing herself, Ms. Robertson asked the group identify themselves. There were PAT members, Bellaire faculty and staff, HISD personnel, community members and the press present. Ms. Robertson reviewed the planning process as well as efforts underway to inform the Community about its results. She reviewed the meeting agenda noting the PAT will be asked to prioritize factors important to the success of the project at Bellaire, that the Architect will be presenting conceptual options, including a few new ones and that the PAT will be asked to review and consider these for further development.

Ms. Robertson reviewed six factors which need to be considered when reviewing the options: Safety, Budget, Student Life, Schedule, Design Function, and Community Impact and asked each member of the PAT to individually rank in priority order. She noted that the individual rankings would be compiled into a group consensus during the Architects' review of the concept options under consideration. She also stated that the compilation would be shared prior to breaking into smaller groups to discuss each option. Lastly, she noted that it was intended that the prioritization of each factor prove helpful in reviewing and determining which options should be further developed.

Ms. Robertson introduced Melissa Turnbaugh and Jorge Tiscareno of PBK Architects and asked them to present the options which have been developed. Ms. Turnbaugh first reviewed a timeline for design and construction which will allow for construction to start by January 2016. She noted that there are four options that will be presented. Each follows the same timeline for design however the construction time of each option varies from 2.5/3 years to 5 years. She also noted that for each option, PBK and the Construction Manager at Risk, Turner Construction, have evaluated the "Risk Factors" and assigned a rating to each factor. These are the same factors that the PAT was asked at the beginning of the meeting to prioritize. The higher the number, the greater the impact will be to the project. She noted that their evaluation of these factors was based solely on the impact during the construction and to the construction budget and schedule.

Mr. Tiscareno then presented the four options including two new options developed since the last PAT meeting:

South Rice Option

*Safety 5, Budget 5, Student Life 5, Schedule 5, Design Function 5, Community Impact 4
(values for each option are the opinion of the design team)*

Mr. Tiscareno noted that this option will require 3 or 4 phases. This option commences with new construction on the existing parking lot at the northeast corner of the site with each of the remaining phases entailing demolition of existing facilities and construction of new in their place. There were a number of questions related to the height of the building and the City of Bellaire's requirements. Ms. Turnbaugh noted that the City was in the process of changing their requirements and discussions were underway with them to determine what will be allowed. One

neighbor wondered if compensation will be offered to nearby property owners whose property value will be impacted. Mr. Tiscareno noted that all options attempt to lessen impact to the community by keeping the majority of traffic along South Rice rather than bringing traffic onto the residential streets. One participant asked why this option was the longest and most expensive. Ms. Turnbaugh noted that the need to abate and demolish the existing building and have the transitions between phases take place during normal school breaks resulted in this option taking the longest to construct. One meeting attendee asked why the safety factor is so high given the transitions happen when students are offsite. Todd Granato with Turner Construction - the project's Construction Manager at Risk - noted that even though the transitions take place while students are offsite, the construction of the new facilities will take place during the academic year. He noted that moving students safely from one side of the construction site to the other will be the greatest safety challenge. One attendee asked for explanation of why additional abatement will be necessary. It was explained that even though abatement had been done during previous renovation projects, that only areas affected by the renovation were abated. Additionally, it is often safer to leave fully encapsulated hazardous materials in place rather than disturbing them so there are still some materials safely in place. However, during a demolition, they will need to be abated. Ms. Turnbaugh noted that they had ranked the impact on Student Life as a high impact due to the ongoing construction and its likely impact on learning.

Ferris Option

*Safety 2, Budget 2, Student Life 2, Schedule 2, Design Function 2, Community Impact 5
(values for each option are the opinion of the design team)*

Mr. Tiscareno reviewed this option which builds the new buildings on the existing athletic fields and creates new fields along South Rice Avenue. This results in the entry to the school facing Ferris Drive. He noted that in addition to the increased impact to the residential neighbors along Ferris, the distance of the parking garage (located on South Rice) from the buildings is a concern. Ms. Turnbaugh noted that because there are fewer phases, the safety impact is less as is the budget and schedule. Student Life is also less impacted and the design is believed to function better. However, the impact to the Community may be the highest.

Maple Option

*Safety 3, Budget 4, Student Life 4, Schedule 4, Design Function 3, Community Impact 3
(values for each option are the opinion of the design team)*

This option is a hybrid version of the two previous options. The new facilities face Maple Street but a new Auditorium maintains a presence on South Rice Boulevard which many have said is important. A PAT member asked if the new Auditorium would be smaller than the existing. Ms. Robertson noted that unless the PAT agreed to re-allocate square footage from other programs this would likely be the case. Ms. Swati Narayan asked if the existing auditorium could be retained and the garage built around it. Ms. Turnbaugh responded that PBK had considered this but splitting the garage was problematic. She also noted that their review of this option pointed out many benefits but that there were also a number of liabilities. The most significant was the location of the garage away from the athletic building. That could be problematic during competitive events.

Green Field Option

*Safety 0, Budget 0, Student Life 5, Schedule 0, Design Function 0, Community Impact 0
(values for each option are the opinion of the design team)*

Ms. Turnbaugh noted that this option is the only one that requires the Bellaire High School student body to leave the campus during the construction period. Mr. Tiscareno noted that reviewing all the options was typical of the design process, and that, therefore, they had prepared this new option. He noted that in this option, all abatement, demolition and construction can take place as a single continuous phase. He stated that starting with a relatively clean site allows the design to

include the best educational practices – including separation of noisy areas from the academic areas which typically are quieter.

Ms. Robertson discussed the impact of moving the student body offsite. She stated that it will require three or fewer HISD campuses to house the students. She noted that taking this approach will obviously impact the short-term but suggested it is worth considering if it allows for the optimal long term facility. Ms. Judy Long stated that the PAT has worked hard over the last year to remove this option due to concerns over the impact to the student body, teachers, and Bellaire culture. One attendee asked and Mr. McDonough answered that 20% of the students at Bellaire are not from the attendance zone.

With the presentation of the options completed, Ms. Robertson reported that the group consensus rated the factors in the following order from least important to the most critical: Design, Safety, Community, Student Impact, Budget, and Schedule.

Ms. Robertson then asked the Project Advisory Team to break into two groups to review each option and develop comments on each. She suggested that they consider PBK's evaluation of each factor and if they revise it to reflect their opinion. With that information as well as the group consensus, she requested they discuss whether any of the options could be discarded or any options selected for further development

While the PAT met in small groups, Mr. McDonough, Ms. Robertson and PBK Architects fielded questions from the community attendees. The following is a summary of those questions and the discussion:

Question: Has HISD explored selling the property and building elsewhere?

Answer: No

Question: Has HISD explored buying adjacent properties?

Answer: No, because the adjacent properties are very valuable and funds have not been designated for property acquisition. One community member noted that this was explored in the 1990s with the same conclusion.

Question: What type of fence is planned on the north side of the property?

Answer: Typically during construction a chain link fence is used. The long term fencing will meet City of Bellaire's requirements.

Question: What will be done to alleviate the noise impact the existing physical plant has caused the nearby neighbors?

Answer: The new central HVAC plant would be more centrally located and will be acoustically separated.

Question: Will the top deck of the parking garage be lit? The concern expressed was the impact on neighbors.

Answer: Any impact would be taken into account when designing the lighting plan to address this concern.

Concern: There was a concern expressed about windows facing into neighbors' lots.

Response: The group was asked which was preferable to those neighbors whose property abuts the northern property line of the school – windows or a parking garage. No consensus was reached.

Question: How tall will the gym be?

Answer: Approximately 30 feet.

Question: Will temporary buildings be used?

Answer: Due to the number required as well as concerns related to student safety, t-buildings would not make a significant impact or allow for simpler phasing. It was also noted that the high cost of moving and installing temporary buildings is considered to not be the best use of taxpayer funds.

Question: Why does Bellaire have the same capacity as Lamar but less site?

Answer: The bond referendum set the capacities for each school based on demographic information and Board of Trustee decisions.

Question: Could Bellaire's Agricultural Farm be considered as location for a temporary campus?

Answer: While it will be considered, it is unlikely due to its location, lack of infrastructure and shared nature with Lamar.

Question: Could a temporary campus be built and used several times to provide swing space for several schools while their campuses are under construction? It was reported by one attendee that Trustee Mike Lunsford stated prior to the Bond Referendum that moving students offsite to a temporary campus would be the only possible solution at Bellaire.

Answer: While this scenario is often used, due to the relatively short construction duration of the 2012 Bond Program it isn't possible to use a single temporary campus as described by the questioner.

Question: How many parking spaces will be built?

Answer: PBK is working with the City to determine the required number of parking spaces. The options presented include over 1000 spaces. Currently there are approximately 450 spaces on site.

Question: Is there any consideration of moving a portion of the student body off-campus to simplify the phasing?

Answer: All options are under consideration.

In response to several questions, Ms. Robertson noted that the facility is sized for 2,800-3,100 students per the Bond Referendum. Principal McDonough noted that current capacity is 3,600 students. General concern was expressed by those present that the capacity should not be so large. A concern was also noted as to why the facility is being designed for fewer students than what is currently at the school. Ms. Robertson noted that the bond referendum was based on demographic information and Board of Trustee decisions. Mr. McDonough noted that anyone within the Bellaire attendance zone is allowed to attend Bellaire High School. He stated that the school only has the ability to determine the magnet students accepted to Bellaire. After being asked by an attendee, he noted that the current diversity at Bellaire doesn't allow them to participate in the minority to majority program. Mr. McDonough also stated that in addition to the magnet program, a few students are transferred for the IB and CTE programs. He reviewed that there are a few Principal transfers – typically to allow a student to continue specific studies. He used Japanese language instruction as an example; if a student moves to Houston and is already taking Japanese, Bellaire is one of the few HISD schools that offers upper level Japanese and therefore a transfer might be allowed. He stated that he doesn't anticipate the magnet program changing – it has been successful for many years. He noted that while the magnet student population has declined, the zoned student population has grown. This has maintained Bellaire High School's population. Ms. Robertson responded to a question about the process for the Community to request a school to be rezoned. She noted that this could be discussed at the upcoming Community Meeting. She also stated that a "near-neighbor" meeting will be held soon to engage those neighbors directly abutting or across the street from school property.

Mr. McDonough responded during a discussion about homeless students and the recent immigrant students that continuity of care is always the priority in this situation. The group noted that there was a small number of students at Bellaire in this situation.

Some neighbors noted their concern with students roaming the neighborhood, parking illegally and trespassing on their property. Mr. McDonough noted that this is a historic concern and, while he and his staff make every effort to address with the students that it is also the property owner's right to manage this issue.

Mr. McDonough responded to several questions related to communications methods being used to inform the community. He noted that in addition to the HISD website, the Bellaire website has up to date information on any meetings taking place. Ms. Sylvia Wood, HISD's General Manager of Business & Bond Communications, noted that her office has been in touch with all the local news outlets. The group suggested that advertisements of upcoming meetings in the local newspaper should be considered.

Mr. McDonough responded to several questions about the Architects and how they were selected. He noted that PBK was one of several firms interviewed and was the consensus choice of the group from Bellaire who participated in the selection process. He noted that PBK has a great deal of experience in designing schools and suggested the community review the school projects posted on their website.

Mr. McDonough and Ms. Robertson thanked the community for their time and reminded them to sign in so that future information can be shared with them.

As the group left, several expressed disappointment that the planning process had gone on for a year without any notification to the neighborhood. Some within the group were overheard to state that they were aware of the meeting through information in the local news while others stated that a flyer had been posted on their front door. Additionally, two attendees noted that the open campus during lunch was a concern as students used their property for lunch and other activities.

The PAT reconvened and each group was requested to report on their small group discussions. Ms. Swati Narayan reported for Group 2 and offered the following:

South Rice Option

Safety 5, Budget 5, Student Life 3, Schedule 5, Design Function 5, Community Impact 2
(Numbers in red are PAT revisions to the Design Team Evaluation)

The group's greatest concern is with the length of time it takes to complete this option. The only benefit to this option is its presence on South Rice Boulevard.

Ferris Option

Safety 2, Budget 2, Student Life 2, Schedule 2, Design Function 2, Community Impact 5
The group noted that it is difficult to not consider the City's point of view that Bellaire should have a presence on South Rice Boulevard. Ms. Robertson noted that this should show in their evaluation of Community Impact. The group agreed.

Maple Option

Safety 3, Budget 3, Student Life 2-3, Schedule 3, Design Function 3, Community Impact 3
(Numbers in red are PAT revisions to the Design Team Evaluation)

The group expressed a number of concerns (service drive, small auditorium) but believed that the use of temporaries could reduce the number of phases required for this option.

Green Field Option

*Safety 3, Budget 4, Student Life 5, Schedule 1, Design Function 1, Community Impact 1
(Numbers in red are PAT revisions to the Design Team Evaluation)*

Group 2 stated that although they believe this option could provide a more satisfactory final facility, but because of the need to move students off campus, this option is not acceptable. They noted that they had evaluated the factors significantly differently than was done by PBK and Turner. For example, safety was increased due to the moving of students to another campus and the group's concern with mixing of students with another student body. Ms. Robertson stated that if it is determined to move students that the goal will be to identify facilities where the students from Bellaire could be housed separately from students currently on the swing campus. Concern was also noted that program impacts would be negative. Ms. Robertson and Mr. McDonough noted that additional resources would be required to make this option work and provide access to Bellaire's educational programs. The group noted that they had increased their evaluation of the budget factor based on the overall cost not just the impact to the construction budget. The group suggested consideration of phasing the Green Field option. They provided one scenario for doing so. It was agreed that this would be explored. The PAT expressed concern that the Green Field option was under consideration given the consensus stated at the previous PAT meeting. They did however note that they were pleased that this option is reflective of the original Bellaire design.

Group 2 stated Maple Street is their first preference unless a way can be found to phase the Green Field option so that students remain on campus during construction.

Mr. Stubbs then reported on Group 1's discussions. They did not re-evaluate each option using the factors. He reported that their consensus is that the Green Field option should not be further considered. They are opposed to moving students off campus. The group also noted their concern about the reductions of classrooms (compared to the existing facility) inherent in any of the options. They proposed asking the Board of Trustees to renovate rather than building new facilities. Ms. Turnbaugh noted a renovation would likely result in a facility that was not in keeping with the vision of a 21st century educational facility and would also have phasing impacts. The group reiterated their request that a full renovation be considered. The group also stated it is unreasonable to ask the PAT to make decisions without an understanding of the class room sizes and number of classrooms. Ms. Turnbaugh noted that each option included blocks reflective of similar square footage for each of the organizational blocks included in the program. She further stated that within these blocks, each option can be designed to reflect the educational philosophy of Bellaire. Ms. Robertson and Ms. McDonough noted that the trend in education is to not have just direct instruction (lecture) but that there is more emphasis on a blended approach to learning. The PAT discussed that because they are on a traditional schedule that fewer breakout spaces are needed and expressed concern over the number of classrooms being planned. The PAT requested further development of at least one option so that they can better understand what the blocks represent. Ms. Turnbaugh stated this can be accomplished.

Ms. Robertson summarized the take-aways from the meeting:

- PAT would like more information on the actual room layouts
- PAT doesn't have a strong preference for the main entrance location
- PAT is interested in Green Fields option if can be accomplished without moving students off-campus

Ms. Robertson noted that there is deep concern within HISD related to student safety with the phasing plans but asked PBK to look at the implications of phasing the Green Field option.

One PAT member noted that they had been told initially that students could not be moved off campus and is concerned about why doing so is now under consideration. Mr. McDonough noted that he doesn't believe that there is any real desire to move students but it needs to be considered because of the many constraints of phasing, safety, City of Bellaire parameters, etc.

It was agreed that the next PAT meeting will be held on August 4 from 1-3 pm.

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Ms. Robertson and Mr. McDonough thanked the PAT members for their continuing efforts and hard work.

ACTION ITEMS

- None

What to Expect at the Next PAT Meeting:

- Further discussion of siting options

NEXT MEETING: The next PAT meeting will be held on August 4, 2014 at 1:00 pm.

Please review the meeting minutes and submit any changes or corrections to Steven Gee. After five (5) days, the minutes will be assumed to be accurate.

Sincerely,

Steven Gee
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