

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
Milton Access Cable Studio
Milton High School
December 18, 2019
7pm

Committee Present: Sheila Varela, Chair; Dr. Craghead, Vice Chair; Margaret Eberhardt, Dr. Kevin Donahue, Ada Rosmarin, Betty White.

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Karen Spaulding, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Human Resources; Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02

2. **Approve December 18, 2019 Agenda**

Updated and Approved

3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH - 15 minutes)**

None

4. **Facilities Advisory Committee**

a. **Cunningham/Collicot Green Space**

Ada Rosmarin introduced Parents from the Cunningham/Collicot School to speak on behalf of the Green Space Project.

- Parents expressed concerns at the growing student enrollment and not enough space for the children to play during recess
- Discussed the extra space available behind the Cunningham/Collicot School
- Have up to 1300 students using the playground and has become a safety issue, up to 7 children a day reporting to the nurse with playground injuries due to the over crowding
- Large parent support for the new playgroup and ready to organize fundraisers once the project is approved

Ada Rosmarin reported that School Committee members Chair Varela and Ms. Eberhardt met in June with parents and neighbors about the Green Space. Stated the meeting was challenging. Both Ms. Rosmarin and Ms. White worked with Cunningham/Collicot leaders to move this project forward. David Ehrmann, an Executive Coach/Facilitator agreed to facilitate the first meeting with the neighbors. With the advice of David Ehrmann, Ms. Rosmarin and Ms. White called all the abutting neighbors over the summer to listen to their questions and concerns. After

several months of due diligence and searching for volunteer architects the CC Green Space Committee met Alex Fernandez and Bill Madden, both architects agreed to volunteer their time for the Green Space Project. Both Fernandez and Madden have children at the Glover School. Both brought professionalism and expertise to this project. Neighbors were relieved to see professional architects added to the project.

Ada Rosmarin reported that Alex Fernandez and Bill Madden provided a presentation on the new playground for Cunningham/Collicot.

Design Considerations

- Diversify the play experience
- Consider abutters interest
- Mindful of project cost
- Implement sustainable design strategies
- Consider Donor Opportunities
- Design for student safety and security
- Integrate curriculum into play experiences
- Opportunity to engage potential monetary donors
- Opportunity to integrate into the school curriculum

Design Aspirations

- Play through exploration, invention and imagination
- Models
 - Milton Academy Lower School – Shelters in the woods
 - University of Chicago Lab School – early Childhood Center Playground

Abutter Playground Design Concerns/Suggestions

- Playground Concerns
 - Loss of privacy and integrity of neighborhood
 - Noise in close proximity of adjacent property
 - Loss of tree canopy
 - Possible teenage hangout at night
- Playground Suggestions
 - Provide more definition offer playground spaces, soccer etc.
 - Clear out debris in the woods and integrate ropes swings, etc
 - Provide setback between abutters and playground

Design Response to Abutters Concerns

- Design Integration
 - Noise – maintaining tree canopy adjacent to the property line to assist in reducing noise levels
 - Noise – located the active play area away from the abutting property line
 - Noise – maintaining a minimum side yard setback of 40’

- Drinking – removing low tree branches and removing vegetative screen for open views from the parking area into the woods to reduce the likelihood of underage drinking on this piece of the property

Ada Rosmarin reported that the original turf area has been reduced from about 9,4 00 sqft to 8,000 sqft. Dr. Craghead asked why the space was reduced. Ms. Rosmarin reported that neighbors were concerned about the adequate buffer space.

Parents reported that they will be researching fundraising grants and reaching out to the community to support the Green Space Project. Currently have 945 Cunningham and Collicot families between the two schools, hoping everyone can donate as much as they can. Plan is to be complete with the fundraising efforts by March and start the project by the summer. Goal would be to have the playground completed by the fall.

Betty White commented that seeing the images given by the architects are transformative. To now see what the space will look like when complete is really exciting. Ms. White reported that the architects also created images for the neighbors of the views of the green space from their homes.

Parents have also reported that the abutting neighbors are now excited about the new playground space. Once the project is approved and the funds are available the project should be completed in 3 to 4 months.

Margaret Eberhardt asked what the fundraising amount goal was. Parents reported \$275,000.

Dr. Craghead suggested expanding to the community for donations, posting on Milton Neighbors and reaching out to others beyond Cunningham/Collicot.

Dr. Donahue commented that the project is a phenomenal success. Being able to engage with the neighbors and turn this project around is very exciting.

Chair Varela thanked Ada Rosmarin, Betty White and the Facilities Advisory Committee for partnering with the parents and for all their hard work. The first meeting with the neighbors was challenging and any change in Milton can cause concerns. Abutting neighbors are the main concern. Glad you were able to work as a team to make this project possible. Chair Varela commented that Milton is a great community and it will be great to see this project completed for the children.

Superintendent Gormley thanked the parents and the committee on behalf of the district for forming the team for this exciting project that will have a positive effect on the children forever. Principals, administrators and parents are all equally excited.

Chair Varela made a motion to approve Cunningham/Collicot Green Space.

Second: Ada Rosmarin

Vote: 6-0-0

b. Facilities Five Year Elementary Space Plan

Ada Rosmarin reported that our schools are bursting at the seams; Milton has an enrollment crisis and has formed a Building Committee and is in the process of making plans to build a new school. School Committee and MPS need a short term plan to help with the current crisis until the new school is built.

Dr. Pavlicek reported the Milton Public Schools - Short Term Space Plans

• **The Need: 4 additional classrooms over the next 5 years (2020-25)**

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Grade 5	16 strands	17 strands (+1)				
Grade 4	15 strands		17 strands (+2)			
Grade 3	16 strands			17 strands (+1)		
Grade 2	17 strands	Already 17 strands				
Grade 1	16 strands					17 strands (+1)
Kindergarten	17 strands	Already 17 strands*				

* Kindergarten may need 18 strands if enrollment goes over 385

• **Projected Conversions:**

	School	Space	Conversion
FY 21	Tucker	Office for 7 staff	Staff would be put in classrooms, Library, etc. Teachers' Room would relocate here. Teachers' Room would become classroom.
FY 22	Cunningham/Collicot	4 th Floor	Create teachers' room freeing up two teachers' rooms in the building. One to be used in FY 22.
FY 22 (2 nd room)	Glover	Music Room	Music would not have its own space.

FY 23	Cunningham/Collicot		Second teachers' room
FY 25	Cunningham/Collicot	Library	Partitions would create space at Cunningham end of Library

The cost of any of these conversions would be the cost of new furniture and materials (approximately \$10K). The Library would also involve some temporary partitions (~\$5K). Conversion of the fourth floor of Cunningham is contingent on receiving capital funds of approximately \$250K (currently in Capital Planning Improvement Committee proposal for FY 23 but would need to move to FY 22).

Chair Varela questioned what if our numbers grow over the summer? How is the housing market in Milton? Dr. Pavlicek replied that home sales have lagged over the last year, hopeful that numbers will not grow over the summer.

Ada Rosmarin commented that the narrative in other districts is to look at the preschools to project the kindergarten enrollment. Milton has researched this already but could go further down the road, look at all preschools not just the Milton preschool programs.

Chair Varela suggested that after kindergarten information night/registration, School Committee should revisit this discussion. All School Committee members agreed with Chair Varela.

Margaret Eberhardt asked why the 4th floor space at Cunningham can't be used as a space other than teacher space. Dr. Pavlicek replied that it would be a fire safety concern, Milton Fire Department did not want children in the 4th floor space, would be a lot of work to get kids out of the space quickly in an emergency situation.

Chair Varela suggested presenting at the Town Meeting and Dr. Craghead agreed. Chair Varela stated the enrollment crisis should be addressed with urgency.

Chair Varela thanked the Administration and Facilities Advisory Committee for all of their hard work.

5. Superintendent's Report

a. FY21 School Year Calendar

Superintendent Gormley reported that parents are reaching out regarding dates in the 2020-2021 school year. Looking to review and approve the School 2020-2021 Calendar.

- School will start after Labor Day this year (later than usual)
- Note there will be no school on national Election Day (teachers will need to report but students will have the day off of school).

Chair Varela made a motion to approve FY21 School Year Calendar.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

- b. **Happenings**
- Dec 23-Jan 1 Winter Break
 - Jan 9 Preschool Information Night

6. **Chair's Report**
a. **Schedule of Upcoming Budget Presentations**

Chair Varela reported the upcoming dates of the Budget Presentations.

- Glover/Tucker
 - January 28th – Tucker Library, 6:30pm
- Collicot/Cunningham
 - January 29th – Co/Cu Library, 6:30pm
- MHS/PMS
 - February 12th – MHS Auditorium, 6:30pm

Chair Varela stated that at the Budget Presentations we need to be realistic about the budget with the parents and community members. Chair Varela commented the presentations should explain how we work with Site Councils, Athletics, etc and the reality of the budget.

Margaret Eberhardt questioned when will School Committee know what in the budget was approved from the Warrant Committee? Dr. Pavlicek replied information from the Warrant Committee should be available mid to late March.

Chair Varela reported that the 3% cuts would be discussed but also inform the parents and the community that School Committee does not support the 3% cuts.

Betty White suggested inviting everyone to the presentations (Town Meeting/Leaders, parents and members of the community).

b. **Update on Meeting with Warrant Committee**

Chair Varela reported good discussions took place at the Warrant Committee meeting. Will meet again in February and then break up into sub committees.

7. **Finance Subcommittee Report**

a. **Grant Internal Control Manual**

Dr. Craghead reported that the Grant Internal Control Manual was created, the town auditors strongly recommended we create and use the manual. Dr. Craghead also thanked Dr. Pavlicek for putting the manual together. Dr. Pavlicek reported that Lisa McDonough and Amy Dexter also helped with the Grant Internal Control Manual.

Dr. Craghead put forth a motion to approve and accept the Grant Internal Control Manual.

Second: Margaret Eberhardt

Vote: 6-0-0

b. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Dr. Craghead put forth a motion to approve Vendor Warrant number 24 dated December 12, 2019 in the amount of \$211,009.64.

Second: Margaret Eberhardt

Vote: 5-0-1

Dr. Craghead put forth a motion to approve Vendor Warrant number 25 dated December 19, 2019 in the amount of \$404,312.54.

Second: Margaret Eberhardt

Vote: 6-0-0

Dr. Donahue asked if School Committee would be injecting into the conversation with the Select Board regarding the Ice House Project. Ada Rosmarin commented 40B permit for 54 units will impact our schools. School Committee agreed that this is concern for our already overcrowded schools.

Dr. Pavlicek commented that not enough commercial tenants for the original plan for the Ice House. With the 40B permit, 54 units would be built in a 3 story apartment building.

8. Policy Subcommittee Report – Dr. Donahue

a. Second reading Policy JGA, Program Assignment Policy

Dr. Donahue put forth a motion to approve the second reading of Policy JGA, Program Assignment Policy.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

b. Second Reading, Policy JB Equal Education Access

Dr. Donahue put forth a motion to approve the second reading of Policy JB, Equal Education Access.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

10. Approval of Minutes

Chair Varela put forth a motion to approve School Committee Retreat Minutes of August 5, 2019

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 5-0-1

Chair Varela put forth a motion to approve School Committee Minutes of November 6, 2019.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

Chair Varela put forth a motion to approve School Committee Minutes of November 20, 2019.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

11. Old Business

Chair Varela asked for a moment of silence for Mary Ellen Burke, former Collicot Elementary teacher who has passed away.

12. Citizen Speak Topic Response

None

13. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Next meeting agenda was edited and updated to be provided at the next meeting.

14. Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH - 15 minutes)

None

15. Executive Session

Chair Varela moved to adjourn to go into Executive Session not to return to the open session for the purpose of discussion of Negotiation Strategy for Union Personnel, AFSCME, MEA and approval of minutes.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm.