

Minutes of the Building Committee of the Board of Education
Regional School District 14 www.ctreg14.org
February 9, 2009

A meeting of the Building Committee of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, February 9, 2009 at 6:30 pm in the library of Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, CT.

Committee members present: John Chapman, Robert Van Aiken, Sal Catalano and Stephen Sordi

Also present:

Jay Hubelbank, Mike Molzon, architect Paul Lisi, construction managers Bruce Gelbar and Brian Holmes, and NHS student Chris Mooney.

Chairman Stephen Sordi called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Mr. Sordi requested that Mr. Gelbar review a cost summary sheet that included turf options, lighting costs and conduit fees, which he did.

Mr. Hubelbank reported that the NHS athletic director put together a practice/game schedule that could be used if a turf field was available, and that it worked well. Rescheduling of rainouts may cause a back up, he said, but the AD is confident of fitting everything in, at least until it begins to get dark early, around October.

There was considerable discussion regarding prices associated with Options 4 and 5 on the new cost summary sheet. Mr. Chapman pressed Mr. Gelbar on unit costs as the numbers for the grass areas in those options seemed low. He wanted to be able to see an "apples to apples" comparison. He questioned Mr. Gelbar on what work would be done to the grass in Options 1 and 2 that would be different than in Options 4 and 5. Mr. Lisi commented that work to the base would be different. Mr. Chapman asked for a unit price for grass work.

In speaking with coaches, Mr. Chapman believes losing a softball field would be detrimental. Two softball and 1 baseball field, at minimum, is needed.

Mr. Van Akin felt A1 and A2 are very similar; he recommended going with A1 and adding another field later if the need was there.

From a cost perspective, Mr. Chapman noted that leveling the fields, seeding and changing the layout costs approximately \$400,000. Total site and field work, then, is \$1.45 million. If a turf field was installed, he felt lighting would be needed to maximize its use. The cheapest turf option, Option 5, with lighting would be approximately \$2.46 million. That is a \$1 million difference and, if the committee was asked to explain costs, it would be able to say that turf with lights runs \$1 million more.

Mr. Sordi expressed concerns over the changes to what was originally thought to be needed. Irrigation, sub-grading, etc. are now gone, and the committee is considering \$400,000 just to level and seed.

Mr. Chapman asked if competition fields can be achieved with just grading and seeding. Mr. Hubelbank thought not, that irrigation will be necessary.

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Mr. Molzon said the soccer field takes a beating when there is no rain; that is less of a concern with the baseball field.

Mr. Sordi asked the committee to consider turf with irrigation, and no lights.

Mr. Catalano said Option 4 was at the top of his list, without lights. He noted towns such as Watertown and Waterbury who funded lighting using state grants. He felt installing the conduit would be planning for the future.

Mr. Hubelbank read an email from Dan Murphy, who favors Option 4. Mr. Van Akin agreed with Mr. Murphy's opinion, adding that Option 1 would be his second choice, as it was for Mr. Catalano.

Mr. Chapman was hearing that irrigation would be key. He felt the \$1.5 million figure in Option 2 is inflated. He felt Option 1, with the \$1.5 million figure reduced by half, is a reasonable number to give to the Board.

Mr. Van Akin asked Mr. Gelbar to describe what work would be done to the fields for the \$1.5 million, and he listed several things such as adding sand to stockpiled topsoil. In the new plans, only screening would be done to the soil, he said.

Mr. Van Akin wanted a fair analysis and asked O&G to price Option 1 with the same field treatment as in Options 4 and 5.

Discussion returned to unit costs for field work.

Mr. Chapman concluded that grass and irrigation should be closer to \$750,000; and for \$1.3 million that same treatment could be done on a portion of the fields in addition to the installation of a turf field. With that argument, the advantages of a turf field are clear, considering it lengthens the playing season and extends the life of the grass.

With regard to the entire project, Mr. Hubelbank suggested giving a recommendation to the Board but then if they came back with "what can you do with \$8 million?" give them further recommendations for what to cut to keep within that budget.

In response to Mr. Chapman's concerns, Mr. Van Akin pointed out that, in the original estimate, a considerable amount would be spent readying the fields for work, and cutting that figure in half is not reasonable. Regardless of the scope of work, that prep work must be done; therefore, the savings that Mr. Chapman had calculated might not be realized. The committee agreed with this.

Mr. Sordi suggested narrowing to 2 the number of options O&G would recalculate.

He asked Mr. Molzon if sub-grading could be eliminated. He said it could.

Mr. Hubelbank suggested, if the group was leaning toward Option 4, calculating a number for the whole field area minus sub-grading since it is the same type of work/design.

Mr. Chapman restated that to see a number for addressing current field conditions, with incremental change for a turf field, would show the rationale for turf.

Mr. Van Akin asked if the committee should put 2 options out to the Board and say, "pick," or give them the committee's preference. Mr. Sordi felt if the Board was given 2 options, they would weigh them as the committee has; however, giving them a choice would allow them a way to go if they felt a lower cost was needed.

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Mr. Chapman felt the Board needs to know that the incremental cost of turf makes sense, and that nothing can be done for less than \$1 million.

Mr. Van Akin asked if there is a way to calculate maintenance of the grass vs. turf over time. It might cost more initially, but pay for itself over time. Mr. Lisi pointed out that it would also cause less wear on the grass and that this would figure in to that argument.

Mr. Molzon did not feel maintenance of one over the other would be less, just different.

Mr. Catalano contended that taking cleats off the grass in the fall would have to improve the quality of the grass.

In advance of meeting with the Board, Mr. Hubelbank suggested listing changes to the plan since it was presented to them last year, as opposed to going line by line.

Mr. Sordi agreed. The committee just needs to defend the numbers, not cloud the issues.

Mr. Catalano thought the Board should be shown \$2.2 for Option 1 versus \$2.37 for Option 4.

Mr. Van Akin said the consensus seems to be to give the Board Option 4. Mr. Catalano added that the numbers for the whole project, auditorium, cafeteria and all should be given.

Mr. Van Akin worried about the town selectmen, who he feels need to be on board.

Mr. Hubelbank felt the Board comes first and then the selectmen, reminding the committee that the Board will be focused on passing a budget first.

Mr. Van Akin reminded Mr. Gelbar to calculate reimbursement numbers, minor as they are.

There was discussion of a possible motion, but it was agreed to wait for the new numbers. It was agreed that a consensus on Option 4 exists.

Hearing nothing further, Mr. Sordi requested a motion to adjourn, made by Mr. Van Akin, seconded by Mr. Chapman, and the motion unanimously carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen F. Sordi

Stephen Sordi

Building Committee Chairman

Regional School District #14 Board of Education