Concord School District
Capital Facilities Committee

School Board Committee: Capital Facilities
Date: October 17, 2012
Committee members present: Tara Reardon, Acting Chair, Nick Metalious, Bill Glahn, Elizabeth Hoadley
Other Board member/s present: Kass Ardinger, Chris Casko, Barbara Higgins
Administrators: Superintendent Chris Rath, Matt Cashman, Jack Dunn
Others: Matt Mayberry from WBIN TV; John Fournier, Facilities Manager and Cindy Lewis, Architect, from Concord Group Insurance

Before the meeting began, Board President Kass Ardinger appointed Tara Reardon as Acting Chair for the Capital Facilities Committee in the absence of Clint Cogswell.

Ms. Reardon began the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The agenda of the meeting is to discuss the pros and cons of three proposals for the sale of the Walker School building.

Business Administrator Jack Dunn reviewed information on the state law that provides for properties qualifying for a reduced property tax rate.

The Committee developed the following criteria for the consideration of each proposal:
1. That the property be placed back on City tax rolls;
2. That the property’s historical character be preserved;
3. That the use of the building has public support;
4. That the property’s use be consistent with the character of the neighborhood;
5. That parking requirements be met;
6. That consideration in the property transfer be given to the timeframe and carrying costs to the District for building maintenance;
7. Price;
8. The extent to which the building can continue as a community resource;
9. The impact to the neighborhood in terms of increased traffic and noise of the eventual use of the property;
10. The extent to which the new owner of the property is a community asset.

The Committee discussed the WBIN TV and Concord Group Insurance proposals and how they meet the Committee’s criteria.
Mr. Binnie’s history of successful development, the project’s 100% taxable nature and lack of contingencies, low employee numbers on site (therefore little to no traffic impact), and the offered cash price were strong elements of the WBIN proposal.

The Committee noted the positive aspects of the Concord Group Insurance proposal: its history of being a good “corporate citizen,” its 100% taxable nature, acceptable use, landscape and removal of the back pavement, lack of necessary changes to the building, and the ability to pay cash and not be subject to financing contingencies.

After discussing the criteria, Committee members concluded that the Stratford Group proposal has too many contingencies; would need to tap a number of different resources; is the only proposal with significant construction; and would take too long to obtain funding. The Committee decided to eliminate The Stratford Group proposal.

The Committee concluded that both other proposals had merit and should be further negotiated.

Several members of the public provided input to the Committee. As a concerned abutter, Concord Group Insurance voiced concerns about cell towers, technology and impact on the visual roof line by WBIN TV. Mr. Fournier of Concord Group Insurance asked if easements will be a consideration, and whether Mr. Binnie will eventually rent out parts of the building as he does in his Portsmouth office. Mr. Mayberry, a representative of WBIN TV responded that small satellite dishes approximately 2 feet in size would be present on the roof. Mr. Mayberry also stated that when Mr. Binnie buys a building, he holds onto them and he will not “flip” the Walker School building. He said Mr. Binnie’s businesses provide growth in their communities but do not detract from their character.

The Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the full Board to authorize the administration to begin negotiations with WBIN and the Concord Insurance Group (motioned by Bill Glahn, seconded by Elizabeth Hoadley).

The committee voted to adjourn (motioned by Tara Reardon; seconded by Nick Metulous).

The committee adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Tara Reardon, Acting Chair
Matt Cashman, Recorder