

COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

October 2, 1996

6:30 PM

Chairman Higgins called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: School Committee Members Higgins and Healy
Aldermen Clancy, Domaingue and Reiniger
School Committee Member Zebrowski was absent.

Messrs.: Leslee Stewart, Lorraine Lamontagne, Robert MacKenzie,
Alfred Testa Jr., Len Bernard, Richard Houle, Richard Girard

Chairman Higgins addressed item 3 of the agenda:

Communication from the Director of Public Buildings Services
submitting a status report relative to the Summer 1996 School
Construction/Planning Projects.

Chairman Higgins requested that Mr. Houle update the Committee on the
progress of the Middle School.

Mr. Houle advised that the architect had submitted as part of this package his
project schedule for the school, completion had been targeted for August 6,
1998.

Chairman Higgins asked if any scheduling had been done for neighborhood
meetings.

Mr. MacKenzie answered that the Planning Department would be meeting
with department heads in the near future to review plans with departments
that may be involved with in either development or operation. After that
there would be more technical meetings with the technical resource people

from those departments and then work would begin on the details. There was a neighborhood meeting tentatively set for November 21, but that may change due to conflicts.

Chairman Higgins asked when the department head meetings take place, would Planning have the technical people form some sort of committee.

Mr. MacKenzie answered the department head meetings would be just a briefing so that the department heads would know what the project was and the importance of it in order to appoint the right people to the project.

Chairman Higgins advised that Ald. Clancy had brought up a good point, would necessary departments be able to review and sign off on the plans, especially the fire department.

Mr. MacKenzie answered that he hoped so, and that Chief Kane would be attending the meeting.

Mr. Houle advised that Fred Testa, the Airport Director, was there to give a presentation on the runway repairs and the possible impact on the new middle school.

Ald. Domaingue stated to Mr. MacKenzie that she may have a conflict with the November 21 neighborhood meeting date, and asked Mr. MacKenzie to let her know before scheduling the meeting.

Chairman Higgins addressed Mr. Testa, stating that the big concern was the construction of the new runway, and the noise and the flight pattern, and how they would impact the middle school.

Mr. Testa stated that he had copies of a Part 150 update map showing the proposed take off pattern and the noise associated with same.

Mr. Testa explained that the map showed what was thought to be the noise curves from the airport around the year 2003. The projects included in the Airport master plan were the lengthening of the runway 1735, which was the main north/south runway. It was necessary to lengthened the runways because they had not been reconstructed since about 1940, with 1000 feet being added for safety overrun areas. In order to complete that, the other

runway would need to be made usable by adding about 2,000 feet over Harvey Road to the northeast end of that runway. What that would do is make that runway usable, and by utilizing it, the noise curves would be reduced. He went on to explain the map to those present.

Ms. Stewart asked if there was more noise on takeoff or landing or did it make a difference.

Mr. Testa answered there was more noise on takeoff because the plane was full of fuel and passengers. The noise curves on the map also represented a tripling of the air traffic currently. He explained the day/night average of noise energy, noting that the level around the school at any time would be about 70-75 decibels which was estimated high. The building was probably designed to alleviate that noise level already because of its close proximity to the highways. The school should not have any problem as planned.

Chairman Higgins asked the architect, Frank Marinade, if he had taken these items into consideration in his design.

Mr. Marinace stated the maximum readings taken near the school site were 65-70 decibels, and that was from the highway, so it was not anticipated that the air traffic would pose any more of a problem.

Mr. Testa stated his feeling was that the airport traffic should not be a concern because of the takeoff patterns and lack of heavy air traffic.

Mr. MacKenzie asked Mr. Testa if the takeoff path had been changed recently because he had thought it was slightly different from what was depicted on the map.

Mr. Testa answered yes it had been changed to allow for the planes to get out of the area quicker.

Mr. MacKenzie asked if the pattern could be altered a bit again to keep the air planes out of the path of the school.

Mr. Testa answered yes. The airport was mandated to look at the takeoff pattern again in five years, if the anticipated improvements were constructed,

or not, the path could be altered enough to alleviate fears of the planes going too close to the school.

Ald. Domaingue stated some committee members may hear from some parents regarding the altitude issue, and asked at what altitude the planes were at when they near the school site.

Mr. Testa answered between 750 and 1000 feet. All the newer aircraft had tremendous climb out characteristics, the larger planes like the ones used by Federal Express would be at about 1500 to 2000 feet. He felt it was possible to keep the outgoing airplanes away from the school.

Chairman Higgins asked so they would not go over the school.

Mr. Testa answered that was correct.

Mr. Healy stated there would be a number of flat roofs on the new school building, would that enhance the noise level.

Mr. Testa answered even a flat roof could be designed to prevent noise.

Mr. Marinace indicated the roof could be designed without trouble to prevent noise problems.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the type of roof that should be put on the new school.

Mr. Testa advised the committee that he would have his sound engineers take a look at the plans for the school and offer their advice, and/or suggestions.

Ald. Domaingue asked if the line of flight could be brought out a bit.

Mr. Testa answered yes.

Mr. MacKenzie asked if Mr. Testa would like to receive a written request to that effect.

Mr. Testa answered yes.

Chairman Higgins asked if any of the committee members had questions.

Mr. Houle advised that the engineer was on hand to answer questions.

Chairman Higgins advised that Committee member Zebrowski was concerned about a dip in the road near the front of the middle school.

The engineer stated that had been taken into consideration and there would be no problems with drainage.

Chairman Higgins addressed the next item relative to the middle school:

Mr. Houle advised that the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Bernard, had a status report relative to the negotiations for the use of the Hevey School.

Mr. Bernard stated the Hevey School; unfortunately what had happened was that Fr. Mark had not considered the idea of pre-schoolers going in with the small furniture and specialized equipment required. In order to have after-school Christian education and other kinds of things in the building, it would be logistically impossible because the pre-school equipment would need to be moved frequently. As a result, in the course of negotiations Fr. Mark suggested using the basement for Christian education as well as use of the gymnasium and auditorium, which would be shared with the City. He had spoken with the Special Education Director and Nancy Evans, who put together a list of pros and cons of leasing the Hevey School, what it came down to was safety, there was no question that the Hevey School would be better than what existed at Chandler, but in terms of the cost effectiveness of that it did not make any sense. He had discussed it with Mr. MacKenzie, and thought that maybe they should consult an architect to find out if Chandler was worth remodeling. Rather than say the Hevey School will not work and forget the whole thing, we need to come up with a solution to make this problem go away.

Chairman Higgins stated her understanding when the offer to lease the Hevey School was made, that it was the entire building being leased and the City would put money into it to make it accessible for the City, her opinion was that if the City was not getting the whole building, it did not belong

there at all. In other cases it had been a problem with security, equipment usage, etc. The taxpayers should not pay for a building that they would not get the full use of. She could not support leasing a building for five years, and putting money into it, when the City would only be using two floors.

Ald. Clancy agreed.

Mr. Girard stated he wished to clear up a couple of misconceptions. The Mayor's first proposed use for the Hevey School was as a sixth grade, under that premise, Fr. Mark was willing to let the City use the whole building during the day, because the furniture would allow him to continue to teach his religious education classes there after school closed for the day. That changed with the proposal for the pre-school, which in turn caused Fr. Mark to propose that the City have full and free use of the first and second floors, but maintain the use of the basement with shared usage of the kitchen, cafeteria, auditorium and gymnasium. The uses of the Church other than day time office use of the staff would be at a point after the school day ended. There would be no sharing of equipment, the basement would be a segregated facility. As to the money issue, the purpose of that proposal was as a stop-gap to saving the addition to Parkside Junior High School, when the Chandler possibility came up, that option provided the City with a relatively low cost option to accommodate the Chandler School population, to satisfy the pressures from the State which jeopardized school building aid, and provide the district with the time necessary to find a more permanent solution. Every indication that the Mayor's office received regarding the renovation of the Chandler School showed that there would be substantially more expense to do that than renovate the Hevey School. Fr. Mark was amenable to sharing the space any way he could.

Ms. Lamontagne stated she originally was opposed to the plan especially for the sixth grade, but the Committee had not been informed that the parish would maintain partial usage of the building.

Mr. Girard stated that was not true.

Ms. Lamontagne stated it was true, the Committee had not been told.

Chairman Higgins stated if it was a misunderstanding, she had been part of it because she had not known that the parish wished to maintain usage of the premises.

Ms. Lamontagne stated the other issue of using the Hevey School for the Chandler School population, costing less money or having smaller classrooms, but more of them would mean the City would have to hire more teachers to service the special education children. She did not think it would be prudent to lease the building with others using it at different times. She supported the Superintendent's opinion to not lease the Hevey School.

Mr. Bernard stated the other thing to remember in terms of cost effectiveness was if the City could take Chandler and move it completely out, the City's budget would be helped because of the loss of heating and electric bills, but if the Child Find office had to stay at Chandler, the entire building would have to still be heated.

Ald. Clancy asked if a lease had been drawn up for the Hevey School.

Mr. Bernard answered no. The proposal had been made but the issues were not resolved.

Chairman Higgins commented that there would be many phone calls regarding missing items if the school was used by two parties.

Ald. Domaingue commented for the record that those types of problems currently exist.

Chairman Higgins agreed but stated the City would have no control over the situation in this instance.

Ald. Domaingue stated she believed the Committee ought to send this issue back to the parties that originated the idea of using the Hevey School to see what type of solution they could offer because it was not up to this Committee to decide. She did not think it was appropriate for the Committee to make that decision without the administration from the Hevey School present so that the City could explain its reasons for the turnabout in its decision.

Mr. Bernard asked if she was referring to Fr. Mark.

Ald. Domaingue answered yes, and asked Mr. Bernard if Fr. Mark was aware that the City may not wish to lease the Hevey School.

Mr. Bernard answered yes, Fr. Mark was aware of that and had toured the Chandler School also.

Mr. Healy stated he felt this Committee was able to decide whether or not to lease the Hevey School.

Ald. Domaingue stated she was concerned with what the purview of this Committee was, and that the decision to lease the Hevey School might be within the scope of the School Board's responsibilities, but the agenda tonight included discussion relative to school painting, and discussion was being held regarding a decision that may affect the direction the School District would take in terms of its obvious need for these types of facilities, but whether or not it was the purview of this committee was questionable. The State law states that the job of this Committee was the consideration of all new school houses being constructed, in the City Government Book under definition of Joint School Building Committee, it states the duties were to oversee and decide all matters relative to the construction of school buildings, and cites construction progress, budget and construction of the school house. If the Hevey School was not being constructed, she questioned whether or not it should come into discussion before this committee. This committee is formed by State law and local Ordinance to determine how the construction of new school houses should take place, but there are lines and definite definitions regarding who has the authority in selecting a site, and it was not in purview of this committee to determine the Hevey School situation.

Chairman Higgins asked if she was suggesting it be sent back to the School Board.

Ald. Domaingue answered the School Board and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at least need to have some amount of discussion on it, but whether or not the decision about what to do rests with this committee is questionable.

Mr. Girard stated for the record the Mayor's office echoed those concerns about the purview of this committee. The Mayor's office had been concerned for some time regarding agenda items.

Chairman Higgins acknowledged the comments for the record.

Ms. Lamontagne stated if this issue was to be discussed she would like Mr. Girard to excuse himself because he was a parishioner of Saint Marie's and was on a committee there, and felt this was a conflict of interest for him.

Ald. Domaingue stated there would probably be parents that were parents of children that are also parishioners and have as much stake in what happens to those children as anyone else.

Chairman Higgins stated Ms. Lamontagne was entitled to her opinion, it was noted and Mr. Girard heard it, that was all that needed to be said.

Mr. Houle stated relative to the issues of Hevey School and the painting, I will take the responsibility for those items on the agenda. It is clear that they do not come under the purview of this Committee, however there are concerns about what was going on and the SCIP Committee felt the Joint School Building committee would be interested in hearing about the progress of these projects. The painting was a matter of concern for the School Board and the SCIP Committee was trying to work within the same time frame of implementing the improvements and were trying not to go it alone.

Mr. MacKenzie stated even though school painting, per se, did not come to the Joint School Building Committee, the SCIP Committee wished to bounce it off the elected officials and the School Board had an issue with the school buildings, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen fund these projects, and the SCIP Committee simply wished to inform the Joint School Building committee of these projects.

Chairman Higgins asked if the Committee objected to discussion of those items being discussed. If they did the matters would be referred to Building and Sites, but she had been asked if those items could be put on their agenda and she had no objection to it.

Ald. Domaingue stated she felt it would be appropriate to ask the City Solicitor for a definition of the Joint School Building Committee's function. The authority of where the School District puts its children was under the School Board itself, and the funding for that came from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Mr. Healy stated the issue before the committee was the Superintendent was informing them that the Hevey School was not conducive to the City's needs, and there were six school board members present and if the Superintendent was telling them that building was not conducive to the City's needs, then he would agree and would inform the Aldermanic Board of the committee's feeling.

Ald. Domaingue asked if he was asking the Aldermen to bring that opinion back to the Board of Aldermen, because she felt it would be more appropriate if the School Board communicated that to the Board of Aldermen.

Mr. Girard stated if the School Board sent a letter to that effect it would be on their agenda.

Mr. Bernard stated that historically the Joint School Building Committee had operated on a meeting as needed basis as opposed to a monthly meeting, what happened was once a project was begun there were few meetings because there was not that much to do, but once the project was rolling the meetings became more frequent because there was more to be discussed. When this Committee decided to meet once a month, it was difficult to find items to bring for discussion.

Chairman Higgins agreed but added it had been brought to her attention that the Committee must meet monthly.

Ald. Domaingue stated it was written that the Joint School Building Committee must meet monthly.

Chairman Higgins stated but if there was nothing to discuss the Committee should not hold a meeting.

Ald. Domaingue agreed. But commented that she raised these issues not because she wished to meet monthly but because if a legal entanglement was encountered, she would not want the committee to be hung up on the fact that it did not follow its own rules. She felt the committee was obligated to meet monthly.

Mr. Healy stated what was the point in meeting if there was no item on the agenda.

Chairman Higgins suggested that the Committee question the Solicitor regarding its duties and responsibilities.

Mr. Houle stated the State law changed about two years ago and he believed that was when the monthly meeting rule took affect.

Chairman Higgins requested that the Clerk's Office send a memo from the Joint School Building Committee asking for guidance regarding the Committee's responsibilities and whether or not it must meet monthly.

Chairman Higgins asked if the Committee objected to continuing with the agenda items.

Ald. Domaingue stated with the exception of School Painting which was not in the purview of this Committee.

Chairman Higgins answered yes, but I would like the Committee to hear the proposal.

Ald. Domaingue stated then why don't you bring it before the full Board.

Chairman Higgins asked the full Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Ald. Domaingue answered first of all, has the school painting issue gone before the full Board of School Committee.

Mr. Healy answered it would not because before anything was done, it would go before the Committee to be studied at that level.

Ald. Domaingue asked has it gone before Building and Sites.

Mr. Healy answered no.

Ald. Domaingue asked then why is it here.

Mr. MacKenzie stated it was unfortunate that there was a debate about something that is important because it was missing the entire point of what was being done with the schools. It does not have to come to CIP, it does not have to come to the Board of School Committee, it does not have to come to the Joint School Building Committee. It can be decided by the SCIP Committee, which is the authorized agent. The SCIP Committee wished to inform others of what was going on in order to work on a consensus basis, in order to build support for projects, get them done with everyone supporting it. This was a case in point that this was a perfect forum for discussing what may not be big dollars but could be a big improvement to the schools. Building & Sites Committee, School Board and a good portion of the School Committee were on this committee, which made it seem to be the perfect elected official forum to discuss some of these issues.

Chairman Higgins stated it was more of an FYI than a vote required discussion.

Ald. Domaingue stated she agreed in theory but did not want to be put into a situation of being at odds with written rules or laws of the Board because if the City was to get into a legal situation it would have a tough time explaining that it did not know its own rules.

Mr. MacKenzie noted that the agenda item was *discussion* of school painting, and the SCIP Committee just wanted to inform this committee that money was set aside.

Ald. Reiniger stated why not discuss the items on the agenda as everyone was already there.

Mr. MacKenzie stated in the past there have been difficulties in the schools because there was a gap between certain projects that should be done in the schools but were not large enough to be bonded. The City has not had smaller amounts for objects that could not be bonded, the Mayor recognized

that there were a lot of small things that needed to be done that could be accomplished with a small amount of money. There was an amount of money budgeted this year; the SCIP Committee had looked over a list of small items requiring attention in the schools to try to work on getting them done. Painting had been selected because it had not been done in many years in most of the schools. There was \$80,000.00 in the SCIP cash school program this year. The SCIP Committee felt it could design a program that could, given the right person as a project manager, go through and spruce up the schools a bit.

Chairman Higgins asked if that included the Vista volunteer that had been discussed, or Americorp volunteer.

Mr. Houle answered no. The Vista people had liked the idea, although nothing had been proposed to date.

Ald. Domaingue asked where the \$80,000.00 came from.

Mr. MacKenzie stated it was allocated in the CIP program.

Ald. Domaingue asked for what purpose.

Mr. MacKenzie answered for improvements to the schools that cannot be bonded.

Ald. Domaingue asked are we talking about \$80,000.00 worth of paint or a portion thereof.

Mr. MacKenzie answered he was going to let Mr. Houle look into what type of a program could be developed, the intent was with \$80,000.00 they should be able to hit most, if not all of the schools.

Ald. Clancy suggested the City utilize inmates from the Hillsborough County jail.

Mr. Houle answered he was aware that they could utilize the inmates.

Discussion ensued regarding various volunteer painting projects that had taken place.

Ald. Domaingue questioned the safety of using inmates.

Chairman Higgins advised that item 5 of the agenda, discussion relative to ADA compliance, was to be referred back to the Board of School Committee for consideration.

Chairman Higgins asked if Mr. Bernard was looking for an answer from this Committee regarding the Hevey School.

Mr. Bernard stated in terms of the educational facility and the use of the Hevey School, the Board of Education decided, which they had apparently because he had written them a letter asking if they objected to his recommendation not to use the Hevey School, and no one objected, so he would assume they would not want to use the Hevey School. Whether the Chandler School got renovated would be the next issue.

Mr. Houle stated if Hevey does not move forward, and the Committee wished to move forward it would have to address the redirection of those funds through the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Mr. Girard advised that the issue would not have to go back before the Board because the CIP authorization had been given for either the Hevey School or the Chandler School improvements.

Chairman Higgins stated then Mr. Houle can go ahead and direct the architect to look at Chandler and see what could be done for the amount of money that had already been allocated.

Ms. Stewart suggested that intention be formalized at the next Board of School Committee meeting.

Ald. Domaingue suggested sending communication to the Board of Aldermen to inform them of the proposed course of action.

Mr. MacKenzie stated he believed the elementary enrollment would decline over the next ten years so he would be hesitant to recommend building any new capacity at the elementary level.

Ald. Domaingue stated she did not agree with the elementary enrollment declining because of the increase in single family home building that had occurred in Manchester recently.

Mr. Girard stated for the record that he was in attendance at this meeting in his capacity as a representative of the Mayor who is Chairman of the Board of School Committee, and for the third time in public, he would stated he is a member of St. Marie's parish and does not serve on any committee's or boards for the parish.

Ald. Domaingue addressed the location that the meetings of the Joint School Building Committee. She indicated that the meetings should be held at the same location all the time.

Mr. Healy stated the intent was to have the committee meet in the locations where work had been done or was being done, and felt it was a good idea and they should continue it.

Ald. Clancy stated he felt it was a good idea to meet at the schools.

Ald. Domaingue stated she did not disagree with the importance of visiting the schools, but was asking for some consideration as an Alderman who may not remember where that meeting is to be held because of moving around and being very mobile. If in fact I an Alderman does not make a meeting and does not have the information that the committee may have come to a decision on, they may raise some serious questions at the Board level which would further hold up projects.

Mr. Healy stated he did not think it would be difficult to make a note to know where you were expected for a meeting.

Chairman Higgins stated she agreed with Mr. Healy and Alderman Clancy, but would try to come up with some type of compromise plan to put before the committee.

There being no further business to come before the Committee on Joint School Buildings, on motion of Ald. Reiniger, duly seconded by Ald. Clancy, it was voted to adjourn.

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A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee