

North Greenbush Common School District

Community Advisory Committee

Agenda – September 4, 2019

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Welcome | Matthew Jaworski |
| 2. Brief Overview | Christine Hamill |
| 3. Purpose of Community Advisory Committee | John Yagielski |
| 4. Planning for the Impact of New Housing | John Yagielski |
| 5. Development of Capital Project | Ed Anker |
| 6. Reactions, Thoughts, Questions | Committee Members |
| 7. Committee Process – Next Meeting | John Yagielski |

DRAFT North Greenbush Common School District Community Advisory Committee – September 4, 2019

The North Greenbush CSD Community Advisory Committee convened to advise the Board of Trustees as it develops a capital project proposal, held its first meeting on September 4. Board Vice President Matthew Jaworski welcomed the group and thanked them for their participation. Committee members then introduced themselves.

Brief Overview

Superintendent Christine Hamill provided a brief overview of the planning work to date.

- The district recently entered into a contract with LaSalle for purchase of 3.2 acres of land surrounding the Little Red School House, pending voter approval.
- The district is considering a two-part referendum later this year for the 1) purchase of the property and 2) a capital improvement project to build additional classroom space and to repair and preserve the Little Red School House.
- The option to purchase the land and the hiring of the Phinney Design Group comes after the board convened a comprehensive study of enrollment/financial trends and projections beginning last year. The independent study, conducted by retired superintendent John Yagielski, projects a 17 percent growth in enrollment due to residential property growth.
- Rather than view this as a problem to solve, the board is looking at this as an opportunity to plan for its future. The key to this project is to acquire additional land, beyond the footprint of the Little Red building. It was noted that this land could have been sold to a private developer for a higher rate.
- The capital project being considered would:
 - o Add new classroom space, allowing the district to return to K-2 operations;
 - o Address repairs and improvements to the interior and exterior of the Little Red building (originally built in 1861);
 - o Move the district office across the street to our school site for convenience, safety and cost savings;
 - o Increase the parking area available for buses and parents/guardians (in addition to separating the flow of buses and cars for safety purposes); and
 - o Improve the playground and field areas (currently owned by LaSalle).

Purpose of the Community Advisory Committee

Consultant John Yagielski discussed purpose of the Community Advisory Committee.

- The primary purpose of the group is to assist the Board of Trustees and superintendent in their efforts to build understanding across the community for both the land purchase and the capital project.
- During the early stages of this planning process, Yagielski asked the group to:
 - o Provide open and honest feedback;
 - o Provide insights into community reactions;
 - o Help the district shape responses to questions and concerns; and,
 - o Help community members to understand the district's plan as well as circumstances for pursuing a land purchase and capital project at this time.

Planning for the Impact of New Housing

John Yagielski presented information from the district's formal study. A copy of this presentation is available on the district's website (www.northgreenbushcommon.org), along with the initial impact study completed in the summer of 2018.

Please note that the debt service calendar is for illustrative purposes only. The board has not yet decided on a proposed budget, scope of work or schedule/method for borrowing. This slide was meant to demonstrate how additional property tax revenue (available through the building of new residential property) could pay for a proposed project and keep the tax rate at the current level.

Development of the Capital Project

Ed Anker of the Phinney Design Group provided committee members with a preliminary project milestone schedule and the work that his firm would provide to the district.

- Anker indicated that the district would need to start with a referendum vote date and work backwards to finalize a project timeline. This is necessary to account for several milestones related to regulatory needs, including a site survey and State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) resolution. He indicated that some preliminary work has been completed, but at this time, his firm is still collecting information. The site survey will determine how they proceed.
- The pre-referendum programming period will run through October 2019. Under the preliminary timeline, the board would establish a referendum budget at its October 2 meeting, adopt a project/referendum at its October 23 meeting and schedule a public vote in early December. A public information period would follow the board's formal adoption of a project.
- Committee members reviewed an aerial tax map, which outlined the property that North Greenbush CSD is looking to acquire adjacent to Rt. 4 and LaSalle's property. Anker said the land to the north of Little Red is relatively flat and dry, but they need to complete a wetland review and site survey (to determine the property lines and the 3.2 acres would be subdivided from LaSalle's property, pending voter approval). This aerial map is attached.

Reactions, Thoughts and Questions

Committee members provided feedback in response to the presentations and community letter.

- What is this going to cost and how will it benefit my kids?
 - o A committee member said that cost and student benefits are the two biggest questions. He also discussed the importance of considering other spaces not available in the current setting, such as resource space.
- Why is the district seeking to return to K-2 operations? Is bringing back grade 2 an absolute?
 - o Superintendent Hamill said there is something unique about K-2 and that research supports this configuration. Grade 2 was located at LR up until about 10 years ago, when capacity became an issue then. She also indicated that if the district was looking to build, then it could also look at the opportunity to buffer against future enrollment fluctuations (more development is possible)

and paying additional tuition for Grade 2 students to neighboring districts. It should also be noted that some of our partner schools have and may also be experiencing capacity issues as well.

- A community member commented that second grade students matured more by staying longer in the Little Red.
- Another community member said she would have a concern about the district returning to K-2 (since students are ready to go to something larger) but indicated that she does not feel strongly about this since she does not have kids that age.
- What does it cost to educate a student in-house compared to out of district tuition?
 - Out of district tuitions average \$8,250 per student. Average class sizes of 11 would mean that tuitions at today's rate would equal \$90,000. (Not answered specifically at meeting. Now confirmed answer)
- How many residents and taxpayers are there in North Greenbush CSD?
 - There are 848 taxable parcels within the North Greenbush School District and @ 700 resident households. (Not answered fully at meeting. Now confirmed answer).
- Are you going to buy land and then build? A community advisory member said that there are different financing options available.
 - Superintendent Hamill said that the district has already started to discuss options with Fiscal Advisors in Syracuse. The conditions will ultimately determine which option the district pursues. Ideally, the district would borrow the least amount possible.
- There was a question about the two-part proposition.
 - Residents would be asked to approve one two-part proposition for the total project to pass. (Confirmed answer)
- If the capital project is approved, will there be an impact on students attending during construction?
 - The timeline would seek to minimize any impact. Separate construction outside of the building can be done while students are attending school at Little Red. A connection between buildings would be added later.
- What would go in the new space besides classrooms and offices?
 - This will be determined. At this time, the district is not considering a gym, but is looking for space to serve hot lunches. Anker indicated that returning to a K-2 model would require two additional classrooms (at a State Education Department minimum space requirement of approximately 770 square feet). Right now, the building addition is estimated to be at least 4,000 square feet (including office space, which is currently leased across the street). Little Red School House is approximately 665 square feet.
- Why does LaSalle want to sell the land?
 - They are not using this part of their property and private schools, like public schools, also face financial challenges at this time. The land sale would provide additional revenue while preserving Route 4's educational corridor with North Greenbush CSD, LaSalle and HVCC.
 - Superintendent Hamill also noted how closely the two institutions work together. Per state regulations, North Greenbush CSD hires and supervises special education teachers who serve LaSalle students as well as provides health services (through its school nurse). These services are billed back to

the home school districts of origin. North Greenbush CSD also orders software, textbooks and library supplies as part of a state loan program (the district is reimbursed for these purchases to LaSalle through the state). The district and private school have occasionally collaborated on grants. Additionally, LaSalle has provided North Greenbush CSD with use of its land (via the parking lot and playground areas) for many years. The land purchase, if approved, would transfer this land to North Greenbush CSD.

- A committee member said that LaSalle is being a good neighbor in trying to help preserve our school district.

Other comments

- There was discussion about the design and how the architect would tie together a historical building with an addition with a modern design.
 - The architect is looking at various options. Ultimately, the goal is to preserve the unique, historical look of the Little Red School House.
- A committee member discussed the current parking issues (particularly during special events and inclement weather). She said it is wonderful that they are looking at safety as part of the planning process.
- Is Little Red the only active one room schoolhouse in New York State?
 - We believe so.

The meeting ended with a homework assignment. Committee members were asked to think more about what was shared this evening, to discuss it with friends and neighbors and to be prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

Community Advisory Committee Members

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| - Lisa Bonafede | - Lisa Lillis |
| - Dave Casale | - Mary Ann Ryan |
| - Bill Cronin | - Melissa Stefanko |
| - Bill Deeb | |
| - Ruth Dickson | |
| - Kevin Killgallon | |



PRELIMINARY REVIEW COPY

LEGEND:

UNMONUMENTED ANGLE POINT - ○
 CAPPED IRON ROD FOUND - C.I.R.F. ●
 IRON ROD FOUND - I.R.F. ●
 IRON PIPE FOUND - I.P.F. ●
 CAPPED IRON ROD SET - C.I.R.S. ●
 UTILITY POLE W/ UTILITY LINES ————○—————
 LANDS NOW OR FORMERLY OF - LANDS N/F OF
 DEED LIBER & PAGE - L 100 P. 100
 DEED VOLUME & PAGE - Vol. 100 P. 100

MAP REFERENCES:

- 1) "MAP OF A SURVEY FOR THE HUDSON VALLEY TECHNICAL INST."
 DATED MAY 1959
 PREPARED BY JAMES F. HOFFMAN
 FILED IN THE RENSSELAER COUNTY CLERKS
 OFFICE IN DRAWER 47 AS MAP 32
- 2) "MAP OF A SURVEY FOR LA SALLE INSTITUTE"
 DATED JANUARY 6, 1961
 PREPARED BY WILLIAM R. HARRISON
 FILED IN THE RENSSELAER COUNTY CLERKS
 OFFICE IN DRAWER 44 AS MAP 28
- 3) "SURVEY OF LANDS OF THE COUNTY OF RENSSELAER AND THE FACULTY
 STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, INC."
 DATED NOVEMBER 8, 1979
 PREPARED BY BOUTELLE, MacFARLANE, MEYER & SELSE, P.C.
 FILED IN THE RENSSELAER COUNTY CLERKS
 OFFICE IN DRAWER 1983 AS MAP 137
- 4) "SURVEY AND MAP OF PROPERTY... A PORTION OF LANDS OF LA SALLE
 INSTITUTE TO BE LEASED TO HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE"
 DATED OCTOBER 13, 1974
 PREPARED BY PAUL A. WEISS AND CHARLES E. VENTER JR.

NOTE:

ADJOINING
 ASSESSOR
 THIS IS
 AN UP
 AND IS
 ABSTRACT

REVISION

This
 of re
 field