

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
HELD AT DODD MIDDLE SCHOOL JANUARY 11, 2022 AT 7:30 PM**

Committee Members Present: Andrew Martelli, Samantha Rosenberg, Timothy White (7:05)
Other Board Members Present: Anthony Perugini, Anne Harrigan, Adam Grippo, Faith Ham
Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer
Additional Participants: Charles Warrington and John Koplas of Colliers International

Public access made available through live streaming the Cheshire Public School's YouTube Channel. Public comments were accepted through CPSCovid19@cheshire.k12.ct.us.
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NOTE: Due to technical difficulties, portions of the audio recording were not intelligible during this meeting.

1. **CALL TO ORDER – 7:30 P.M.**

- A. Roll for Quorum. The roll was called and a quorum determined.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.
Mr. Martelli led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. **AUDIENCE**

None.

3. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING SCHOOL MODERNIZATION**

Mr. Martelli, Chairman of the Planning Committee, explained that tonight they would be discussing and possibly taking action on a plan to be brought forward to the full Board of Education. He shared a presentation (on file) outlining the Cheshire Public Schools Next Generation Phase 1 Plan. He began by reviewing the history of the School Modernization Committee (SMC). The group was formed by an act of the Town Council to examine and deep-dive into our school facilities and other buildings throughout the district, and conduct a full study of current enrollment trends, as well as future projects over several years to consider available options to upgrade the school facilities, including new construction, renovation of existing facilities, closing and repurposing facilities, and other creative viable proposals. The SMC was tasked with developing recommendations for modernizing our schools that will address the educational needs of CPS students in the 21st century while considering the fiscal impact on the residents of Cheshire.

Mr. Martelli reviewed the enrollment projections noting that the projected Pre-K through Grade 6 “high enrollment” for 21-22 was 2,185. Current actual enrollment is already higher than the projection at 2,246. He noted that there are many housing developments being built in our community. He shared a graphic that showed the functional capacities at each of the schools and how they will be over-capacity in the near future. Following a tremendous amount of work and research, the School Modernization Committee’s final recommendation is as follows:

Phase 1

- Two new K-6 Elementary Schools
 - (1) located at the north end of Town and
 - (1) located at the south end of Town – possibly on the Norton Site
- Existing Darcey and Chapman buildings are taken offline
- Norton is demolished (pending south end school location)
- Redistricting to be addressed as required
- Phases 2 and 3 (note that the specific order of the following projects may be modified as the program progresses)
 - Renovations to Doolittle and Highland (as K-6)
 - Renovations to Dodd Middle School
 - Renovations to Cheshire High School
 - Humiston and BOE Offices are TBD

As future phases are planned, a study should be conducted to determine the actual construction sequence.

The estimated phased financial overview from the School Modernization Committee for the CPS Next Generation Plan is below:

Cheshire School Modernization Committee
 Scenario 6
 Two New Elementary Schools
 Updated Per Conceptual Re-Districting Values
 provided by SLR dated March 15, 2021



	8-Year High Enrollment	Building Size		Total Budget		Estimated District Share	
		Low GSF	High GSF	Low Budget (\$M)	High Budget (\$M)	Low District Share (\$M)	High District Share (\$M)
New Elementary School K-6 (North)*	653	88,547	96,980	\$ 52.7	\$ 63.7	\$ 35.3	\$ 42.7
New Elementary School K-6 (South)* (Assumed demo of Norton also)	669	90,716	99,356	\$ 56.8	\$ 68.0	\$ 38.0	\$ 45.6
Estimated Total for Phase 1				\$ 109.5	\$ 131.7	\$ 73.3	\$ 88.2
Renovation of Remaining Elementary Schools							
Doolittle ES (K-6) (Capacity is 806)	612	82,987	90,890	\$ 42.3	\$ 57.6	\$ 24.4	\$ 33.2
Highland ES (PK-6) (Capacity is 827)	780	111,300	111,300	\$ 55.2	\$ 69.2	\$ 31.8	\$ 40.0
Darcey (Taken offline)							
Chapman (Taken offline)							
Dodd MS 7-8 (Renovation)	789	134,927	134,927	\$ 64.6	\$ 79.6	\$ 37.3	\$ 46.0
Renovate HS (2030 - Midpoint)	1262	278,200	278,200	\$ 153.1	\$ 189.3	\$ 88.4	\$ 109.3
Humiston-TBD	30	14,800	14,800	\$ 4.40	\$ 12.00	\$ 4.40	\$ 12.00
Total Estimated Costs-exclusive of Maintenance Costs to Darcey and Chapman:				\$ 429.14	\$ 539.47	\$ 259.64	\$ 328.58

Mr. Martelli reviewed steps taken to date and shared the conclusions, which include:

- Test fits will allow for construction on both sites.
- Both sites passed initial geotechnical and environmental evaluations.
- Darcey School will not fit on the Highland Site and needs to be planned for inclusion on the north end Site.
- Humiston School and Central Office should be included in future phases.
- Subsequent phases will be necessary and require extensive review and planning independent of this process as circumstances change.
- Construction of a new North End Elementary School to include the Birth to Three/Preschool programming from Darcey School.
- Construction of a new Norton Elementary School on the existing site.

- Chapman Elementary School and Darcey School are taken off-line when the new schools are built.
- Elementary redistricting will occur when the new schools are built.

One of the next steps for this project to move forward will include the Planning Committee of the Board of Education approving a plan and making a recommendation to the full Board of Education. After the Board of Education approves a plan, it will be sent to the Town Council for approval. If approved by the Council, they will appropriate the needed funds and approve State-required motions. The project must be brought to the community for a referendum. Mr. Martelli noted that June 30, 2022 is the deadline date to submit the School Construction Grant Application, and the referendum must be held on or before November 8, 2022.

Ms. Rosenberg asked if there is sufficient capacity at Dodd for all of the current and projected students. Dr. Solan responded that there are currently 600 students and in the past there have been as many as 900 students. He said, in a few years, we would have a much greater problem with our elementary enrollment. He said, as Mr. Martelli mentioned, this is Phase I. Dodd will need to be revisited for Phase II.

There was continued discussion by the attendees regarding future student populations in Cheshire and the need for a Phase II.

Ms. Harrigan said she will not be voting to support this project and believes it is a flawed concept. They really did not take into account curriculum and did not address the middle school. She does not agree with renovating Dodd on the existing site and has listened to the public conversation about the benefits of a new 6-8 middle school. She said it is also about building space, classroom size, new furniture, and space requirements as well as optimizing traffic patterns. The conversation moved away from considering the educational value of all of the schools, to a financial consideration and with this project, she feels like we are leaving a lot of educational value behind, especially regarding the middle school. Ms. Ham questioned why Ms. Harrigan thinks the elementary enrollment issue is less important than the middle school enrollment. More discussion ensued regarding enrollment and the need for a new middle school in Phase II.

MOTION by Mr. Martelli and seconded by Ms. Rosenberg

***MOVED** that the Planning Committee recommends that the full Board of Education reviews and approves the CPS Next Generation Phase I Plan so that it can be forwarded to the Town Council for their consideration and approval.*

VOTE: The Motion passed 3-0.

Discussions continued between Board members and representatives from Colliers regarding timelines, next steps, and responsibilities of the Board, Town Council and

Colliers. In addition, there was discussion regarding grant applications, educational specifications, and building characteristics including energy efficiency.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a Motion by Mr. White and seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Martelli, Planning Committee Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 1-21-2022.