

**HHU Parent Advisory Committee to School Committee
Meeting 1
October 27, 2015
Kingsbury Room, Wellesley Police Department**

The first meeting of the HHU Parent Advisory Committee to School Committee convened at approximately 7:05 PM.

In attendance: School Committee members Patti Quigley, Chair Matt Kelley, Vice Chair Wendy Paul, Secretary Sharon Gray and Tony Bent; Superintendent David Lussier; Assistant Superintendent Judy Belliveau; Karen Briggs and Tam Kennedy from Bates; Jessica Graham from Fiske; Maria Davis and Ingrid Houghton from Hardy; Michael Batka and Sarah Kulka from Hunnewell; Kristen Whitaker and Beth Willett from Upham; Meghan LeBlanc and Jenn Fallon from PAWS. Absent: Lou Madge from Fiske; Jackie Hoglund and Julie Crafton from Schofield; Brook Rosenbaum and Elaine Marten from Sprague.

Introductions

Ms. Quigley introduced herself as facilitator for the first meeting. She has been a part of other advisory groups and believes great things come out of them. The first meeting will be about getting to know each other, establishing norms for the committee, reviewing the charge, going over School Committee guidelines for the HHU project, and establishing a list of guiding questions that advisory committee members would like answered. All members introduced themselves to the group.

Norms

The committee determined norms of for each meeting. They are:

- Commit to attending and adhere to start and stop times
- Reinforce mutual respect for our membership
- Consider all ideas on the table/keep an open mind
- Bring snacks
- Stay on topic
- Be prepared
- Avoid side conversations
- Let everyone's voice be heard
- Try to be succinct
- Consider what's best for entire community
- Understand that meetings are posted and open to public
- Consider walking in others' shoes
- Value interests over positions
- Assume positive intent

School Committee Guidelines

The committee discussed the guidelines for the HHU facilities project set by School Committee. They are:

- 1) high quality education for all students
- 2) maintain class size guidelines
- 3) safe building and environments to support 21st century learning
- 4) retain neighborhood schools model
- 5) ensure capacity for future needs and flexibility for the next 25-50 years
- 6) fiscal responsibility to the Wellesley community
- 7) respect for the town's geographic natural boundaries when forming attendance zones
- 8) minimize disruptions to students and learning

A number of questions arose related to the guidelines. Ms. Graham said she wanted clarification on the neighborhood schools model, as it could have several different meanings. Ms. Graham also wondered about the importance of respecting the town's natural boundaries. Ms. Houghton said there might be several ways to define natural boundaries. Ms. Kulka asked for more clarifications about minimizing disruptions, and suggested that some of the guidelines need to be better defined. Ms. Davis asked whether the School Facilities Committee had similar guidelines when undertaking their work.

Charge

The group discussed the charge for the committee determined by School Committee: *Provide a recommendation to the School Committee for a comprehensive solution to facility needs at Hardy, Hunnewell and Upham based on School Committee guidelines and previous School Facilities Committee work.*

Several parents voiced their desire to see a reference to solution that helps the whole town reflected in the charge. Ms. Gray suggested adding the phrase "town-wide" before the word "solution." The group agreed on this change.

Guiding Questions

Ms. Quigley asked the members of the committee to express their questions and concerns related to what they knew about the HHU project. This list of guiding questions will help inform the agenda for the next five meetings.

The guiding questions that emerged from this segment included:

- How can we make a decision without knowing how the redistricting will play out?
Can we talk about possible solutions?

- How does PAWS and its possible expansion fit into these plans?
- Are there other options within Wellesley to use for school facilities (town planning integration)?
- Why not “new” at Hunnewell?
- why did the SFC not present any three-school solutions?
- How did the North 40 play into the considerations?
- Can you provide more details on potential operational savings - why is a 6-school solution better than 7?
- What is the ideal school size and how does it affect education?
- How can parity be encouraged among all schools?
- Discuss school size and total capacity. What does the state (MSBA) build?
- How would the proposal affect children in the specialized programs?
- What is the impact on after school care programs, outside programs, recreation uses?
- How are construction costs estimated?
- How will technology affect teaching and learning in the future?
- How will the school security project tie into the HHU facilities?
- Can you tell us about the traffic study commissioned by the SFC? What did it cover? Did it cover impact to the Upham neighborhood from a bigger school?
- Can buildings be configured to be more flexible and accommodate population shifts?
- More info is needed on current/future capacity and current/future enrollment.
- What does shutting a school down do to the neighborhood and the community? Are there zoning implications?
- If Hardy closes, what happens to the building and property? Will it be torn down and sold to developers?
- What about the historic considerations for Hardy and Hunnewell?

Next Steps

The committee will have its second meeting on November 18, 2015. School Committee will provide the advisory committee with a member list, minutes of the meeting, and an agenda for the next meeting with detailed information on topics to be discussed. Data on the HHU project will be going up on the town website soon.

At approximately 9PM, upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Ms. Paul, School Committee VOTED unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Gray
Secretary, School Committee

