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25 July 2012

Thank you for guiding the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee back toward budget and back toward the original project scope as voted on by the towns of Concord and Carlisle.

Perhaps you are not aware of the expressed opposition in Concord to the way this project has been managed. When our Building Committee selected the present site on June 15, 2011, from several suggested by OMR Architects, there was large collateral damage that the School Administration hid from the Town for several months. The site they chose, unlike others offered, “required” demolition of an existing town asset, the transportation facility that houses and maintains our fleet of 36 school buses and about thirty other school vehicles.

We were repeatedly told that the MSBA chose this unfortunate construction site, but later were told that the architects chose it; both excuses were incorrect! The Building Committee chose it.

The plan to destroy that facility was not revealed when we voted for the \$92.5 million construction budget at our Special Town Meeting in November 2011. We were told that the School Administration was “exploring all options” for continuing our bus transportation, but actually they had made a undisclosed decision earlier to outsource the entire operation, and had begun discussions with a consultant to do just that.

When the outsourcing plan was revealed, it was roundly opposed in a large public meeting in February 2012. Again, we were told that other options were being examined. But we learned that only outsourcing was being considered from July 2011! Deputy Superintendent John Flaherty solicited bids for that work and advocated a contract with First Student, known locally and nationally for their poor service, but was stopped when we discovered that he had violated the 30B law and informed the Office of the Inspector General. At that time, John Flaherty told us that outsourcing would save a lot of money needed to balance the school budget. But the scope of the work he was trying to contract was defective, because it did not include all of the bus transportation now provided to our students and their activities, nor the continued maintenance of the other town vehicles. On April 23 our School Committee reviewed new quotes for outsourcing and agreed that the cost was either higher than in-house, or a wash. They have since realized that we will need to develop a new site for storing our buses even if the driving is outsourced.

Concord reacted to this covert and destructive activity by the School Administration and School Committee by collecting 500 signatures on a petition and by introducing three articles by petition in a Special Town Meeting on April 24. Article 3 called for blocking bus outsourcing for at least another year. Article 4 set up a Citizens’ Transportation Committee to review and study other options and report them out this fall. Article 5 called for much greater transparency in the School budget that we are asked to approve each year. These three articles were all heavily supported by several hundred people present for the voting. Various citizens remarked that they had lost confidence in our School Administration and School Committee because of their secrecy and conflicting excuses! I have attached a file detailing the history of this problem: “**ConcordTransportationTimeline.pdf**”.

More recently we have learned from the MSBA that the new school building *that was described to us* when we voted for the \$92.5 million budget is NOT the building we are going to get. Because we now must work to a more realistic construction budget, we evidently will not have a double-level cafeteria, nor multiple staircases to facilitate movement between classrooms on four levels, and many of the rooms will be made smaller and lower. The cupolas and large sunlight shafts now seem to be

reduced to three simple skylights. Other cost reductions will be needed in building shape, layout, and materials. Many citizens now assert that their November vote is now not valid because of these many cost-driven changes.

I took a detailed look at the site plan posted by OMR Architects on June 27, compared it with a Google Earth view of the present site, and discovered that the planned site for the new school does NOT require removal of the transportation facility. The distance between the transportation facility and the new school is at least 60 yards! We do not know why our School Administration is so determined to outsource the bus transportation, despite massive and continuing Town opposition when it was never necessary. The relative locations of the facility and the most recent school site plan are shown on the attached file, "**Intact\_Facility.pdf**", where a red circle marks the bus maintenance building. I copied and pasted the transportation facility from Google Earth.

The day before your July 16 meeting I discussed this new option with Stan Durlacher, the new Chairman of our Building Committee, at the site. Stan admitted that the architects could indeed have worked around the transportation facility rather easily if they had been asked to when the site was first selected, just as they had already been told, "Don't touch the football field". But Stan says that nothing can be done now to retain our town asset because "*the MSBA would never approve*" the grading changes and minor road relocation needed to fit everything together. Stan promised to mail me copies of the site plan pages EX-3 and EX-4 that detail the grading work, but I have not received them in more than a week.

I explained to Stan that he is now at a watershed, and that he has an opportunity to work with the MSBA to achieve the minor grading and road location changes that will make the new construction compatible with our transportation facility, and restore some of the lost School credibility, or else he can destroy that asset and see more of the enduring wrath that the Town has made clear. *Concord will still be paying for our threatened transportation facility for about five more years!*

John Flaherty has repeatedly told us that it may take an additional \$1.2 million (not related to the MSBA budget) to rebuild the bus facility elsewhere in Concord or an adjacent town. The School Committee has tried to block the easier solutions to this problem by moving to prevent relocating the facility anywhere else on the Regional School grounds. Their excuse for doing so depends largely on arguments against repositioning it in about three specific places on the grounds, without analysis of other possible placements or proper consideration of grandfather clauses in the environmental requirements. But the letter from the School Committee spelling out these excuses does not include the real reason for their vote: Louis Salemy is trying to get Carlisle to refuse to accept another location on the Regional School grounds.

I request that the MSBA now take a fresh look at this option for retaining our transportation facility exactly where it is, with only the minor grading changes and ring road position adjustments that are needed to clear it. It will save Concord a lot of money. Perhaps more of that ring road can also be reshaped to avoid destroying our existing tennis courts on the west. Or perhaps most of that ring road can be eliminated as a further cost reduction.

Best regards,

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