

[Steve Grossman made introductory remarks. Mary Pichetti gave an overview of what has happened so far. She said the MSBA is prepared to restore funding so long as the district meets a series of stipulations. Jack McCarthy made introductory remarks.]

Lisa Bergen: The original design that the school committee presented to voters last fall met the needs of the community. Now the design has changed. Why? Without going into too much detail, does the new design still meet the educational needs of the community? For example, why does the current plan call for a rectangular auditorium rather than the splayed design called for in the original plan?

Stan Durlacher: I am impressed with your research and your diligence.

Lisa Bergen: Thank you.

Stan Durlacher: I don't know auditoriums, but I spoke to the auditorium designer who proposed the rectangular design for CCHS. Incidentally, this person also designed the auditorium at the new Lincoln-Sudbury High School. Look at Symphony Hall. It is a rectangular auditorium renowned for its acoustics. Splayed designs make for decent acoustics at their perimeters, but the people in the middle of the auditorium can't hear as well. Rectangular is better.

Lisa Bergen: I am not an expert on school construction. Why are certain types of drywall used? Why isn't the building being properly outfitted for wireless internet?

Cory Atkins: Schools need to have the most recent technology.

Stan Durlacher: School construction experts say that \$2000 per student expenditure constitutes the gold standard for technology. The current CCHS plan calls for \$1200 per student, which is the maximum amount in which the MSBA will participate for technology costs. The building committee and MSBA both agree to this. Additionally, CCRSD has a technology stabilization fund. The district plans to spend a total of \$900,000 out of this fund, which will amount to an additional \$700 per student. Together with other sources of funds, the district will end up spending about \$2100 per student on technology, which exceeds the gold standard.

Bill Fink: Carlisle used a similar calculation in the construction of the new Carlisle School.

Lisa Bergen: How much technology spending is called for in a model school?

Cory Atkins: It is important to clarify that the district's technology stabilization fund is composed entirely of money derived from local property taxes. MSBA aid comes from the sales tax, which is collected statewide.

Lisa Bergen: It doesn't matter whether the money is spent during construction or afterwards via the technology stabilization fund. Either way, it is taxpayer money. What is important is that the base building is not equivalent to other comparable schools.

Mary Pichetti: The total project budget is \$92 million. This cost is for construction, and it includes drops [places in the wall where one can connect devices to the internet]. MSBA does not participate in costs for computers, iPads, or other devices beyond \$1200 per student.

Lisa Bergen: Yes, I agree. But doesn't the current design eliminate infrastructure such as digital clocks?

Stan Durlacher: I don't mean to hijack your work, but I reviewed the same information and came to different conclusions. For example, it made sense to remove audio-visual cabling from the base building. It would be wasteful for an equipment vendor to call a series of subcontractors only to discover that the problem is with a projector, not the cabling. The building committee must continue to address issues like this.

Steve Grossman: Thank you, Lisa, for your questions.

Mary Pichetti: MSBA looks at all proposed changes to designs. There are many ways to deliver an educational program. MSBA looks to the local building committee to work out problems.

Either type of auditorium could work. In general, modern school buildings don't need as many drops [for technology connections] because of the increasing prevalence of wireless internet.

Lissa McKinney: There have been many positive changes in this process since Stan Durlacher became involved. I have examined all documents and laws relating to this project and they all speak to certain requirements in the PFA that have to be met. She learned over the past 6 weeks that when this proposal went to a vote in Concord, it was presented with slides, diagrams, and illustrations that showed the features and benefits voters expected to have. I re-watched the video of the presentation made to Concord and Carlisle voters in October 2011. I first became involved in this issue through the question of the bus depot, but now I am interested in all aspects of the CCHS building project. The August 2011 value engineering list removed an assortment of features from the design, but the October 2011 presentation made it appear as though those features were still part of the design (and there was no disclosure to the community that these items were already VE'd out). As a result, the solicitation of votes from citizens was artificial. I feel betrayed a list of items was removed from the design, and I want a public acknowledgement of the things that were removed between August and October, 2011. I feel that the previous chair of the building committee was deceptive over his handling of the bus depot issue. People said, What about transportation? And we were specifically told by the Chair of the Building Committee that they were looking into it; however, the drawings at the MSBA show that it was slated for destruction – the Building Committee was deceiving us on what we were getting. Didn't the MSBA know about this? My kids are in high school. We're all afraid that we're complaining about the horrible high school we have now, and in ten years from now that's what we'll be saying about this design. I understand that the district agreed to build a second gym for \$4 million, and the district feels the need for a second gym. We need more space in the gym because right now it is a non-regulation sized basketball court, which will not work. Please don't let this project turn out like Newton. The design presented to voters was for a \$100 million project. Reimbursement rates: C-C is one of the highest sq foot and lowest reimbursement rates. Aside from Newton, CCHS will have the highest cost per square foot in the state and the lowest reimbursement rate. A model school would cost \$274 per square foot, and yet CCHS is proposed to cost \$325 per square foot. Are we going to get out of this building at a minimum what we would if this were a Model School? When it's all said and done we voted for \$92.6 million but what they had was a \$100 million design that they didn't tell us about. A lot of the costs VE'd out will be deferred until later or plucked out of other budget years.

Steve Grossman: Can Concord officials address this?

Lissa McKinney: There needs to be more information posted on the internet.

Carmin Reiss: I defer to Fabian Fondreist and Stan Durlacher.

Stan Durlacher: I think about this in terms of two points in time: the schematic project funding agreement and the design development. The schematic designs called for \$82 million in hard construction costs. This design had expensive features, such as curtains. Value Engineering reduced that budget to \$76.5 million. The schematic design and the proposed budget were not in synch with each other. He wishes that when the proposal first came forth, the VE should have been committed to the schematic drawings so that the design, specs, and budget that were all in synchronization. Now it's very difficult to reconstruct a comparison of all proposals.

Lissa McKinney: Were those removed before the vote?

Stan Durlacher: The budget was \$74.9 million. They had to have been removed from the drawings with that VE list to be able to have a shred of credibility in front of the town to say we're doing 74.9 on the hard costs and 92.5 on the total budget.

Lissa McKinney: Did the MSBA ever receive the drawings or the budget that were presented to voters prior to the vote? But to your knowledge, the VE was not submitted to the town of Concord so it was in conformance with the pictures we were shown?

Stan Durlacher: I wasn't Building Committee chair, so I can't comment on that.

Stan Durlacher: The slides presented to the towns reflected the budget at the time. In case of litigation or other disputes, the plan with the most detail wins. It is difficult to reach any conclusions from the relatively un-detailed slides that were presented to the towns.

Cory: Was it not made clear to voters that the slides didn't represent the actual proposal?

Stan Durlacher: The pictures were only 8.5 X 11 and didn't have enough specificity to truly determine the specific details.

Lissa McKinney: The pictures and slides talked about these specific features as prominent and salient points that voters should say, Wow, this is a great building. Ex: What about a double-high cafeteria?

Stan Durlacher: That was eliminated from the plans while I was chairman.

Steve Grossman: Is the collective value of the current plan what the citizens of the two towns want? Value Engineering doesn't mean making the building worse. Is the building less valuable overall to its users?

Lissa McKinney: I understand your question. I want to hear from Lynn Salinger and Carmin Reiss about what was said at town meetings. I want more structure and stringency. Many emails I read yesterday say that I am opposed to this project. MSBA board member Terry Kwan said Concord-Carlisle has been failed by its professionals. Then the school district sent out a positive press release. We had three bidders, of which Only one bidder was qualified to bid on this project. The MSBA expressed concern about the small number of bids. I am worried about future proposition 2½ overrides that we will have to pay in the future to make the building what it should be.

Steve Grossman: I have read a draft of Mary Pichetti's letter to the district that reinstates funding. It has lots of good protections that are actionable items and stipulations that have to be comported with, some that are not normal in a project, but that will protect the interests of all the taxpayers. These stipulations reflect the very nature of the concerns expressed along the way. All tax money, both property tax and sales tax, must be well spent; it has to work for all of us. These stipulations help to ensure that the project will proceed. These common sense solutions will reassure those who continue to have deep concern whether the value they're getting is what they originally signed on for in the original vote; that you're getting a school everyone can be proud of.

Fabian Fondreist: Yes, the June 26 letter was more than appropriate and needed. I wrote down what Mary Pichetti said would be the stipulations. If I were in your position, I would have done the same thing. I like the monthly progress reports (an excellent tool for us to manage the project and for the towns to know what's going on) and the other requirements.

Cory Atkins: We can add stipulations to this list. I want everyone copied on all emails (the School Committee and the Superintendent has the email of every parent in the system – instant way to communicate). There is a crisis of confidence in this project. All emails to parents from school officials should be copied to town officials.

Bill Plummer: The Town Moderator should also be included.

Tim Hult: There is no crisis of confidence in Carlisle. I've been working on this project since it started. There has been very little resistance to this project in Carlisle (unanimous support – it does provide the value that we were originally getting). The people on that committee who were

town officials were in the same chair that we were a week before we had these conversations when we knew we were \$8 million over budget; those meetings were not pleasant. The conversations with the professionals were not “Everything is okay.” Town officials told the architects that the \$92.5 million limit was solid. That was laid out in no uncertain terms to those people. The concerns were the same.

Steve Grossman: This communications plan belongs to the towns, not to the MSBA. You can build into your communications plan whatever you feel is appropriate to make the link between the officials and the citizenry strong.

Lisa Bergen: I feel the MSBA is caught in the middle. Those of us who have struggled to get communication, we continue to ask them. Even though a communication plan was submitted, there has not been communication since that plan. I am very concerned that we continue to not get the communication we seek. The town committees have not been speaking to one another. I feel there has not been any major change.

Steve Grossman: Let’s enhance communication, but you decide how.

Lisa Bergen: What happens if the stipulations aren’t met?

Lissa McKinney: I made a few small public records requests. The district hasn’t answered them, but they sent me bills for hundreds of dollars. Stan and the MSBA sent me information for free. Why wasn’t there consideration of a model school? I am angry about the bills I got from the district. I was angry at the district, so I went to the MSBA. I am glad Stan sent me information. There shouldn’t be a charge for public records requests. It’s another way the district has precluded us from asking questions, which is why I’ve gone to the MSBA for answers to begin with. Stan is pulled out of that loop because he’s been helpful. The sky isn’t falling. The statute says who gets priority MSBA funding and why. Ex: Model School. Everyone is saying the Model School are out, why can’t we get one of those? Can we have a do-over and try it again? What I found when I looked back at the notes, there was never an inquiry into a Model School. We would’ve got as much as 40% back and far more features with a Model School. It’s not in the Building Committee minutes, it’s not in the School committee minutes, the KVA said it didn’t happen. That \$20 million is a lot of money to not have looked at the Model School. People are saying, if we don’t take the \$28 million now, we’re never going to get it. If we’re at the priority now and we change plans like other districts so, we don’t lose our priority to get funding from the MSBA.

Steve Grossman: The MSBA encourages districts to reevaluate their own communications. Cory and I wanted to convene this meeting to address concerns, but it is important to know that not all concerns will be completely satisfied today. Finding common ground to build a school that will be good for the next 40-50 years is the bottom line.

Mary Pichetti: MSBA has received numerous requests for information about Concord-Carlisle. We will post information in a FAQ format to our website that addresses model schools and other information.

Bill Plummer: I am concerned about confidence and communications relating to the issue of the bus facility. I presented a simple plan to move the ring road and make a few other changes. I met with Stan Durlacher at CCHS on July 15. Stan told me some of the problems about the site. I worked on my plan with engineers, I met with KVA architects, and I put my plan in the Concord Journal on August 23. I offered to help Brian from KVA, but he refused my help. My plan is less expensive than the five plans Brian offered. I read about Natick High School in the Boston Globe on September 2. My concern is simple. There is no need to move the bus depot. I have written a detailed evaluation of the other proposals. There are lots of problems with OMR

architects, and there is lots of evidence of bad communication. In the Concord Journal I wrote an article stating that the plan had not been evaluated, but as I understand from Fabian that he heard from Stan that it had been evaluated, but it really hadn't. That's part of the confidence problem. I will still happily work with them even if they want to put the school where the current proposal calls for and not go for a Model School, which is a travesty to the whole system. No communication, diverted attention by having to go to five cooked up plans that had nothing to do with my proposal; that's something that's ought to change. I want funding cut off again if the stipulations are not met.

Steve Grossman: Sometimes model schools don't work for a variety of reasons.

Lissa McKinney: The point is, We never had the option of building a model school. I hope I don't read that it was considered, but never elected. It would be one thing if we just had the candid dialogue that was "They just didn't consider it and we're sorry," so at least the tax payers who are throwing away the extra \$20 million know that they're doing so knowingly and not sold another story. I also spoke to architects and environmental engineers. Other towns had the option of building a model school, but we did not. I feel deceived because we only had the option of one architect.

Carmin Reiss: Thank you to Steve Grossman and the MSBA. Thanks for the kick in the pants. Overall, people in Concord are overwhelmingly in favor of this project.

Peter Scavongelli: Overall there is overwhelming support in Carlisle, too.

Steve Grossman: Accountability and communication are paramount. Moving forward is the right thing to do. Thank you to Cory Atkins for convening this meeting.

[Steve Grossman and MSBA officials departed. Discussion continued among Cory Atkins and people from Concord and Carlisle.]