

District Facilities Committee  
June 17, 2004

The meeting began with a review of the agenda by Dr. Baughman. The following items will comprise the discussion:

- Time line status
- Handouts
- Iroquois MS review
- Ideas and alternatives to ponder
- Once around.

Dr. Baughman announced that the next meeting will take place on July 7 at 5:30. At this meeting, the group will review cost estimates for the high school.

- August 4 meeting will include enrollment projects for elementary and middle schools. The group will also review cost estimates for elementary and middle school projects. The goal will be to present proposals with cost estimates to the BOE by November. This could result in a March 2005 public vote. If this timeline turns out to be more optimistic, the public vote could be postponed until September.

Mr. Crandall, the principal of Iroquois MS, presented the facilities needs and recommendations of Iroquois.

Items for discussion:

- Locker replacement and updating of mechanical systems. All are original from the original building constructed in 1969.
- Drainage problems have existed for years on the site of the school. Periodic flooding and moisture problems have occurred in the sixth grade area.
- Replacement of sidewalks. Some damage has occurred due to frost heaving. Certain doors can no longer be opened due to the displacement of sidewalks.
- Energy efficient windows would result in major cost savings.
- Modernization of eighth grade science rooms will already take place this year using funds from the current budget. Construction will occur in June.
- A dirt floor still exists in the custodial area. This floor should be replaced by a regular concrete floor.
- Addition of a breezeway or other entrance to highlight which door is the main entrance of the school. Entry doors should be replaced. A keyless entry system is recommended. This type of entry system would enhance security within the school. Access to the building could easily be limited as needed. The SDM has identified this issue as a possibility for the future, not as an urgent need. As doors are replaced, this may be an opportune time to change over to a more secure entry system. Dr. Baughman added that the district is considering this type of system for many locations within the district. Mr. Weber, the architect, noted that many other districts are considering a similar option. According to Dr. Baughman, this might eventually lead to the use of a Vendacard to be used by students for a wide variety of purposes.

- The fact that the MS has music lessons and band in the high school provides talented students the opportunity to progress at a faster rate. Mr. Crandall noted that the current system for providing music lessons seems to serve students' needs well.
- The addition of a large group instructional space. This area could be used for a variety of purposes. For example, half-teams could gather for instructional purposes in such a space. Another option might be the creation of several rooms with movable walls. Some discussion indicated that such rooms might not be utilized as regularly as a large group room created specifically for that purpose.
- Improved athletic fields. Fields are currently in somewhat poor shape. They need grading and smoothing.
- Installation of bleachers within the gym. This would encourage attendance at athletic events. The current gym does not have sufficient space to have bleachers and conduct gym classes simultaneously.
- The current weight room is not well-equipped. Most of the equipment is not currently usable. A properly equipped weight room would allow gym teachers to include a module on weight training for students. As a point of information, VA does not currently have an adequate weight room.
- Repair of ceiling tiles.
- Improved storage spaces. By comparison to other schools in the district, Iroquois is somewhat more spacious. However, some space might be required for maintenance equipment which is currently kept in the boiler room.
- Built-in locks in the locker rooms. Fewer problems occur when the lock is built into the locker.
- Improvement of the faculty work space. Current space is used for many purposes (copying, eating, planning). It might be beneficial to create separate spaces for those activities.

Mr. Sive suggested the expansion of the Iroquois library, noting the fact that some of the space of the library was taken over by the TV studio.

Mr. Lindsay noted that the current WIRO studio is not well-integrated into the work of the school. He further noted that the flagpole may not be properly placed at the front of the school.

Further discussion revolved around the idea of relocating the main office on the first floor. Mr. Crandall noted that the juxtaposition of the counseling and nurse's office to the main office is very efficient. There would not be sufficient space for such a configuration of rooms on the first floor. In addition, since most classrooms are situated on the second floor, it is logical to have the main office on the second floor as well.

Mr. Lindsay questioned the effectiveness of the current security system of having a person sitting at the main entrance to check those who are entering. Mr. Crandall responded that SDM continues to consider this issue in its discussions.

Mr. Matthews inquired about the placement of computers within the Iroquois library. Mr. Crandall responded that he would not want to take any space away from the library classroom which is often utilized. Another option to obtain greater space within the school might be to reduce the number of BOCES classrooms. However, Mr. Crandall referred to the many positive aspects of having BOCES students included in the general school population.

Dr. Baughman noted that the committee has so far considered mostly traditional ideas for facilities repair and expansion. This might be an opportune time for discussion of original and creative ideas for facilities enhancement.

Ideas related to the construction of a new high school.

- Repair of the current facility may involve excessive repairs and renovation. One option might be to add an extensive new wing followed by the gradual closing and renovation of older sections of the building.
- It might be more efficient to construct a new facility without students in it.
- Another option might be to construct a new facility on the sports fields, but such an option might result in unforeseen repercussions (political, economic).
- If a new high school is to be constructed, a plot of land at minimum 25 acres will be required.
- The aid ratio is the same for new vs. renovated construction. State aid might not cover the cost of a new building due to the expanded space that a new school would require.
- If a new school is built, what would the current high school site be used for?
- K-5: population is growing, yet there is no space to provide additional capacity. The district is committed to keeping neighborhood schools.
- Middle schools: committed to keeping middle schools small.
- Kindergarten: recommend the maintenance of kindergartens within the elementary schools.
- Other needs: Additional space is needed for storage, the creation of an alternative HS and MS, training purposes for staff.

Ms. Macan made note of the fact that the question of class size at the elementary schools is an issue that is still under the scrutiny of several committees and the BOE. The outcome of this work may impact the question of facilities expansion.

A possible re-configuration of the class levels might be:

K-4	5 elementary schools
5-8	3 middle schools
9-12	1 new high school

Possible use of the current high school site:

Craig elementary school rebuilt  
Nott St. Middle School  
Alternative programs

Current Craig site:

Use as district office

Storage

Alternative programs

Maintenance

Other: rental to BOCES?

Current district office could move out of VA to create more room for VA Middle School.

This suggestion is still very much under discussion and subject to change and alteration.

Some issues that came up in discussion:

- How does the fifth grade integrate into a middle school?
- How do we minimize the number of transitions for students?
- Is constructing a new building consistent with the reputation of our school?