

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
October 28, 2013**

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education of School District #90, Cook County, Illinois, was called to order in the Roosevelt Middle School Auditorium, 7560 Oak Avenue, River Forest, Illinois on October 28, 2013 at 7:10 p.m.

The following Board Members responded present on roll call:

Mr. Patrick Meyer, President
Mr. David Latham, Vice President
Mrs. Liz Fischer, Secretary
Mr. Roman Ebert
Mrs. Anne Gottlieb
Mr. James Weiss
Mr. Ralph Martire

ROLL CALL

Administrators present: Dr. Ed Condon, Superintendent
Mr. Anthony Cozzi, Director of Finance
and Facilities

Recording Secretary: Ms. Tari Marshall, Communications and
Community Outreach Coordinator

Community present: A copy of the Speakers Roster as well as the
Attendance Roster is attached to the minutes.

Mr. Meyer welcomed visitors, thanked all for attending, and provided introductory about information the proposed Roosevelt School exterior project. He noted that this topic has polarized the community, yet the process is still ongoing. He informed the audience of the previous public meetings held as well as the stakeholder meetings held over the summer as per the Strategic Action Plan. He also noted that, as part of the action plan, the exterior design committee will be reconvened with expanded community representation. He introduced Dr. Condon, who echoed Mr. Meyer's comments by thanking the community. He then discussed the project overview and presented the Functional Needs Inventory, which was created to identify needs that any version of the project should be designed to address. He introduced Mr. Cozzi, who gave a presentation of the project's current architectural drawings and cost estimates. Afterwards, the floor was opened for public comments.

Public Comment

Al Popowits, 1020 N. Harlem, spoke that senior citizens contacted him about landscaping and reduced parking spaces in the North Lot. Seniors ask that the board take a comprehensive view, considering all stakeholders. He suggested making arrangements with the library to use the congregation area on their land instead of the parking lot area for a gathering space. Most accidents in the North Lot were car on car. The lot belongs to the community and should be used by the community.

Public Comment (continued)

Senior citizens don't have contact with the school but they do have contact with the library. They have mobility issues. He referred to the project as a landscaping deal. The school contributes to the value of local homes and he appreciates the value of the school.

Chris Hauri, 751 Bonnie Brae, said that what is missing is an impact statement about the number of people affected by the plan and how to evaluate the success of the plan.

Margaret Tafilaw, 1234 Ashland, asked what door the 7th and 8th graders will use to go into the building. Is it possible to designate parking on Lathrop south of Oak so that it is clear where people can legally park? Suggested that the parking lot not be changed but keep the sidewalk at the north end of the North Lot included so students could congregate in front of the library.

Sarah Lempia, 543 Lathrop, is a parent of two Roosevelt students and neighbor of the school. Appreciates the current changes to the traffic flow to ease congestion. Feels Roosevelt has been a good neighbor. Feels the current board is left to "clean up short-sighted planning" from previous years. Thanked the board for the plan, likes the book drop off and would like a mail drop box as well.

Mary Jo Taira, 1023 Thatcher, is a parent of Roosevelt students and questioned the need to separate the entrances for 7th/8th graders from 5th/6th graders.

Michael Sichlau, 130 Keystone, is a parent and considers the components of the project as facilities repair. His son fell on his bike due to the mud on the sidewalks. Students should be able to ride or walk around the building without going through mud or a parking lot. Majority of the cost is for excavation and grading. He feels these are needed repairs. The cost supersedes parking needs.

Dave Elsner, 7205 Iowa, thanked the Board. He is a resident who supports the plan, including the reconfiguration of the North Lot. It is an important safety issue as part of a comprehensive plan.

Daniel Lauber, 7215 Oak, asked the board to check the number of handicapped parking spots required by ordinances. Wants Board commitment to use permeable surfaces where feasible to reduce flooding. Suggests considering moveable barriers in the North Lot during gathering times. Said safety issues are more imaginary than real. Encouraged the board to review zoning ordinance requirements for off-street parking. He said that according to ordinances, the school must provide 40 off street parking spaces. Spoke on behalf of his wife, an educator, who says there is no good reason to segregate the students for entrance to the building.

Public Comment (continued)

Mary Vanker, 1234 Monroe, noted that as a parent of a 6th grader she addressed the segregation of classes for entrance to the school. She has witnessed the extreme congestion in the 6th grade hallway in the mornings. She has talked with village residents and walked around campus reviewing the plan and noted that a main feature that excited people was the mid-block sidewalk from Lathrop to Jackson. This is a benefit to the community. It opens parking on Jackson, with a safe passage throughway 24 hours a day. Praised the Board for their work and feels their hearts are in the right place, with the students and staff as their primary consideration.

Jim Lucci, 947 Clinton, walked around the campus and reviewed the plan with committee members. Feels the plan creates a flow around the campus and provides parents with confidence about dropping their children off in a safe place. Feels greenery will help with drainage problems. In winter months the children currently can't go outside, but they could with the new plan. The breakout of cost is deceptive. He suggested breaking it out by what needs to be done. The "nice to have" items are incidental.

Julie Halperin, 1329 Lathrop, has been in River Forest for five years. She is the parent of a former Roosevelt student and a future Roosevelt student. She supports the plan to provide outdoor spaces for students. She chose to live in River Forest because of the schools and feels this is a phenomenal investment.

Kristen Coe, 611 Edgewood, thanked the Board for holding a forum. Two areas of concern: the selection of the members of the design committee, and the excessive cost of the plan. Feels the cost is staggering, and feels the focus is on aesthetics. The property is a community asset and is administered by the District. The Board should consider the needs of the whole community. She feels the committee is a closed group. Regarding the cost, feels mission creep has moved in. She suggested a gathering space on the southwest corner allowing a close proximity to Oak entrance. If something could be changed with relative ease, consider it instead. The project should move forward with a new committee and reduce the costs to the community.

Susan Balter, 947 Jackson, has had three children go through the schools. She does not think the proposed cost is an issue. She is concerned about the loss of parking spaces. As a senior citizen, the walk from Jackson to the library is treacherous. She hopes the final project could have some, if not all, of the parking in the North Lot kept.

Bonnie Marsico, 935 Monroe, disagrees with losing this number of parking spots. Feels that losing that many spots for a short time period each day is without consideration for nights, weekends and holidays. Feels there are alternative gathering places for students. She supports movable barriers in the lot and is concerned that we may spend now to close off the lot only to spend more later to open it up again.

Public Comment (continued)

Frank Marsico, 935 Monroe, does not think it is a good plan.

Patty Henek, 731 Bonnie Brae, agrees with some elements of the plan, yet wants it to address school needs as well as the needs of the community. She commends the Board for tabling the project in February to gain more input. She is disappointed, however, that we are still in the same place. She feels there is overspending on unnecessary elements and that the committee does not reflect the community at large. Feels the communication about this project was poor. Feels the information should have been brought to the community in other ways, more proactively. Need to expand the committee and allow more time to consider what elements of the plan are necessary.

Julie Moller, 1006 Forest, feels that the Board has done a good job communicating. Providing safety for students and increasing the value of the school is not extravagant. Most of the funds are for items that must be fixed. She does not think the Board is being foolish with the money. She is tired of hearing about parking; the distance community members are being asked to walk is not farther than they must walk from parking at other locations.

Gerri Humbert, 1319 Park, feels that the safety issue is not imaginary. She had an incident with her own child. She feels the process was comprehensive, inclusive and well thought-out and was diligent on the Board's part.

Ellen Milad, 7314 Oak, agrees with Kristin Coe. While some of the ideas are fantastic, she feels the cost is exorbitant. She is against spending more money to improve the school while there are those that are personally struggling financially.

Kim McGuire, 305 Thatcher, pleaded for a common sense approach for everyone who has a vested interest to benefit from the plan. She feels that the Oak Avenue plan is a great plan. The North Lot plan does not make sense to her, however, because it brings students closer to the parking area, and parking is needed for senior citizens and others. The gathering space in the North Lot is a luxury. There are limited days and times that students will be using the gathering space in the North Lot. She likes the East Play Lot and Oak Avenue Entrance plans.

Renee Sichelau, 130 Keystone, thanked the Board and community members who have worked on this plan. She applauds the plan. There will never be a perfect plan that all will agree on. This plan enhances the accessibility of this campus and allows for greater mobility. We should be creative about parking to ensure that the existing spaces are there for those with the greatest need. Hopes the current plan goes forward.

Public Comment (continued)

Sarah Joyce, 946 Park, noted that there will not be a perfect plan. This is a good plan and a good opportunity to have a more useable, safe, friendly exterior to the building. She commended the process. She does not think the cost is unreasonable.

Kari McGrath, 633 Thatcher, supports the plan.

Allan Lowson, 819 Forest, supports the plan. He pointed out that this is not a landscaping plan and thinks the majority of the cost is for rain water management and to preserve the building for the future. He thinks it is a reasonable budget. To include some funding to beautify the landscape once the work is done is reasonable. Asked if a study has been done about when the parking is used and asked if that could be communicated to the community.

Mark Coe, 611 Edgewood, does not agree with all the conclusions in the plan, but applauded the Board for its work. He cautions that in its current form the plan will cause pain, damage and distress to mobility-impaired residents, including senior citizens and those with young children. The District should not ignore the needs of some of its residents. He wants to leave the parking in the North Lot for those who truly need it.

Suzanne Morrison, 7205 Iowa, applauds the Board for its commitment over the year to open the process to more feedback from the community. The feedback of the community has been reflected in the various versions of the plan. Many of the suggestions made this evening have already been considered by the committee and the Board. The community has been heard. Expanding the planning committee will allow a few more voices to be heard. She trusts that the Board understands the budget and needs of the school and community. Therefore, we all must trust the Board to make a wise decision. All government entities must get together to discuss parking issues and not expect District 90 to resolve the parking issues of the entire community.

Emily Hampsen, 11 Thatcher, is a new resident with young children. She doesn't agree with separating the entrances for the grades. Some parents have children in multiple grades and this would cause problems.

Julie Raino, 20 Franklin, is a school administrator outside of District 90. She feels that reducing the number of parking spots for parents and not increasing handicapped parking is a problem. The plan also reduces access to the library.

John Phelan, 600 Thatcher, is a parent and also the President of District. 200 Board of Education. He noted that Dr. Condon is an exceptional school leader and Mr. Meyer is a very thoughtful Board President. He is pleased that there will be an expanded committee to review the project.

Public Comment (continued)

He agrees that something must be done with the exterior in a way that benefits the students as well as accommodates senior citizens.


Gina Voci, 624 Lathrop, commented about the need for windows and ventilation in the schools. There are broader issues needed besides this project. Before we beautify we must take care of basic needs. Kids can live with blacktop and chain link fences.

Gabriel [REDACTED], is an 8th grade student at Roosevelt. He likes the plan. As kids, losing parking spaces doesn't affect them, but he understands it affects others. Agrees there is a need for ventilation in the classrooms.

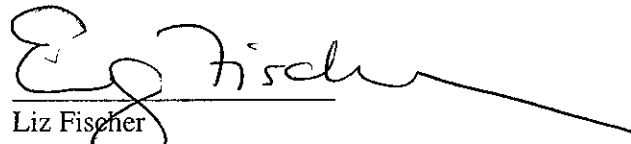
Mr. Meyer thanked everyone for their comments.

It was moved by Mr. Martire and seconded by Mrs. Gottlieb and unanimously carried that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:51 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT



Patrick Meyer
President



Liz Fischer
Secretary