

MINUTES
Town of Brookfield
High School Renovation Review Committee Meeting
April 23, 2012 – 5:00 P.M.
Town Hall – Room 209

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 5:06 P.M. by Co-Chairman George Walker.

Present: Committee Members: Rob Gianazza, Ron Jaffe and Kerry Swift; Raymond Bolek, Former Controller, Town of Brookfield (arrived at 6:13 P.M.).

Absent: Paul Checco

2. **Review of Minutes:**

o **April 9, 2012 H.S. Renovation Review Committee Meeting:** A motion was made by Ron Jaffe to approve the April 9, 2012 H.S. Renovation Review Committee Meeting. The motion was seconded by Rob Gianazza and passed unanimously, 4-0.

3. **Public Comment:** None.

4. **Project review/discussions:**

Co-Chairman Walker reported that Raymond Bolek is scheduled to meet with the Committee this evening. Six interviews, including Mr. Bolek, will have been held so far. The next two meetings (May 14 and May 29) will be designated for completion of the interviews. Co-Chairman Jaffe stated that if anyone is unable to attend either of those meetings, they can be contacted via telephone to obtain their input.

Co-Chairman Jaffe spoke with Tony Bivona and Jay Wahlberg who indicated that they would be willing to meet with the Committee. Mr. Wahlberg referenced the length of the project and the close-out procedures taking too long. He said that the longer it takes to close out a project generally the more it costs.

Co-Chairman Jaffe spoke with Jerry Murphy who stated that since he inherited the project he inherited many of the issues. He said that Mr. Bolek told him from the beginning that the project was under funded by \$500,000. Mr. Murphy also said that JCJ infuriated him. They repeatedly wanted to go back to the Town for more money which delayed the process. Morganti was the biggest mistake. He said the MBC was superb with a better outcome than neighboring towns with similar projects. He is not sure whether a Construction Manager should be used in the future. Even though the cost of construction went up 17% during the project, he feels the result was a superior product compared to other projects in other Towns. The sewer issue was hugely problematic but worked out to the Town's benefit. Mr. Murphy said that the three biggest negatives were under funding, the 17% cost increase and Morganti.

The Committee discussed the issues related to the sewer line and the septic system. Vice Chairman Gianazza stated that originally the plan was to upgrade the existing septic system. However, it was discovered that the old system was abandoned under the parking lot and that the fields across the street could not handle the septic system. The original estimate was too low. A sewer line was then proposed.

Co-Chairman Jaffe stated the agreement was that the WPCA would use the money from the septic to offset some of the costs and they would pay the remainder. The Town was to be billed at the end of the project by the WPCA. There were some questions about whether this could have been included in the project. Co-Chairman Jaffe stated that when Mr. Wahlberg had been asked whether there was enough money in the project to pay the WPCA, he had answered yes. Co-Chairman Jaffe said that had the MBC been asked, their response would have been no because that was money encumbered. Had the Controller spoken with the MBC prior to responding, the answer would have been very different. Also, Mr. Murphy should have included the MBC in the decision about the water line and relied on them to make sure everyone was communicated with and onboard. Vice Chairman Gianazza stated that a lot of things should have been under Mr. Murphy's control. He should have either delegated or communicated better.

Co-Chairman Walker said that he left several messages for Brian Lerner to contact him. He also spoke with Tim Gunn from Morganti. At first Mr. Gunn was agreeable to meet with the Committee. After speaking with his staff, he contacted Co-Chairman Walker and said that they would not meet with the Committee. Mr. Gunn was not kind to Brookfield. Co-Chairman Walker stated that he didn't think his conversation with Mr. Gunn was helpful or constructive. Mr. Gunn was not willing to take responsibility; it was everybody else's fault.

The issue of the field was discussed by the Committee. Co-Chairman Jaffe stated that a protest had been organized on the field to force Morganti to redo the field. Part of the threat was that the protestors would go public and ruin Morganti's business. Co-Chairman Jaffe brought up addressing this issue differently so that the outcome would have been better. Vice Chairman Gianazza stated that no one on the MBC wanted to accept the field; however, they were over ridden by Mr. Murphy.

Co-Chairman Walker asked the Committee to start writing up bullet points from the information that has been gathered. Vice Chairman Gianazza wanted to remind the Committee that in addition to focusing on what has gone wrong with the project, it is important to focus on what went well and what could have gone better.

Co-Chairman Walker asked if there was any particular area that anyone on the Committee wanted to focus on. Vice Chairman Gianazza brought up focusing on a historical point of view, such as the Consensus Committee and how the project originated. He said it was a major plus that there was a good design that had been put together by many people from the Community. One of the areas where that success was deviated from was when the principal tried to change the plan after it had been determined. Also, there had been a breakdown in communication. Some of the staff members didn't know who was in charge and who they should speak with. One of the positives is the addition of the two athletic fields. However, there was a problem with one of the fields due to mismanagement. Also, the connection to the sewer system was successful.

Co-Chairman Jaffe stated that when the Committee first talked about how they would organize the information, two different ways were discussed. Mr. Checco talked about basic areas of focus such as pre-bond, pre-construction, construction and post-construction. Co-Chairman Jaffe had talked about focusing on the approval process, the accounting, decision-making, communication and management. Co-Chairman Walker said that this should be discussed at the next meeting or two. The Committee talked about who they were going to try to schedule for the next two meetings.

Co-Chairman Jaffe cited the Town of Brookfield Ordinance, 13-5, Powers and Duties of the MBC, C-“To negotiate and recommend to the Board of Selectmen the approval and execution of architect, construction and other contracts for municipal building construction projects which are within its jurisdiction and for which necessary funds have been appropriated.” Co-Chairman Walker stated that this ordinance had been violated.

The Committee took a break from 6:00 P.M. – 6:13 P.M.

5:20 P.M. – Raymond Bolek – Former Controller, Town of Brookfield – Mr. Bolek's discussion started at 6:15 P.M.

Co-Chairman Walker explained to Mr. Bolek the goal of the Committee. Mr. Bolek stated that money was not the short fall of the project. He said there were too many people involved. The first thing that needs to be decided is how many people will be on the Committee. Limit the number to 6-7 people. Those individuals who want to and have provided suggestions should be interviewed at length.

Mr. Bolek stated that there should be a 12-15 year capital plan. He recommended having a chart showing where the Town wants to maintain the debt level. It should be an absolute number.

He recommended actively seeking state and governmental funding as well as funding from private industry. He said that the Town should establish a pool of professionals who are familiar with the Town and the discipline of the finances of the Town.

Mr. Bolek stated the High School project was probably the worst financial project he had to deal with.

Co-Chairman Walker asked Mr. Bolek if there had been sufficient money to complete the project without asking for additional monies. Mr. Bolek stated that too much money was wasted during the course of the project. He recommended that the effects of the project on water, sewers and septic should be examined and investigated. He said that the ball fields were a disaster.

Mr. Bolek stated that there were too many people providing input. It is important to have upfront evaluation and to have the project prepared by the project engineers. He said there was no main force from Morganti to keep the project on track. He stated that there has to be a lead person directly reporting to the Owner. When Co-Chairman Walker asked Mr. Bolek if politics from the politicians played a role in the project, he responded that there were too many people involved and the project fell apart.

Mr. Bolek stated that the change order system was not handled well. He said the change orders should be signed by the MBC and the First Selectman should be the final sign-off. Vice Chairman Gianazza stated that a lot of the change orders were generated by asbuilts. There were too many change orders required because the issues were not thought through. Mr. Bolek agreed that too many change orders were generated.

Mr. Bolek stated that the inspection team should include the local officials, such as the building inspector and the fire marshal.

Mr. Bolek stated that the architect or the engineer should be responsible for State reimbursements. He also said that there were too many subcontractors involved in the project.

The Committee thanked Mr. Bolek for speaking with them.

5:40 P.M. – To Be Announced - No one scheduled for this time slot.

6:00 P.M. – To Be Announced - No one scheduled for this time slot.

5. Continuing discussion on the project: None.

6. Adjourn Meeting: A motion was made by Rob Gianazza to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 P.M. The motion was seconded by Ron Jaffe and passed unanimously, 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry Swift
Secretary