

School Building Committee (2020)
Regular Meeting
Held via ZOOM
Lower Level Conference Room
23 Union Street, Norwich, CT
Wednesday August 15, 2023
6:30 PM

Committee Members Present: Chairman Mark Bettencourt, President Pro Tem Joe DeLucia, Alderwoman Stacy Gould, Cindy Beauregard, Peter Gauthier, Greg Ballasi, Gregory Carabine, Mark Kulos, Christine DiStasio, William Hull (ZOOM) and Shiela Hayes (ZOOM).

Committee Members Absent: None.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Bob Castranova, Matthew Brown (ZOOM), Bob Sierpinski (ZOOM), Pamela Kinder, Mayor Peter Nystrom, Christopher LaRose, Attorney Michael Driscoll, Mike Faenza and Jim Guiliano from CSG.

Citizens Present: Erin Haggan

- I. Call to Order and Quorum:** Chairman Mark Bettencourt called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.
- II. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Mark Kulos made a motion to approve the July 18, 2023 regular meeting with some revisions. Peter Gauthier seconded. Chairman Mark Bettencourt, President Pro Tem Joe DeLucia, Alderwoman Stacy Gould, Cindy Beauregard, Peter Gauthier, Mark Kulos, Christine DiStasio, William Hull and Shiela Hayes voted in favor. Greg Ballasi and Gregory Carabine abstained. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. Report from CSG re: Space allocation, Educational Specifications, Grant Application process, etc.:** Mike Faenza reported that DRA has been brought on board and that CSG met with them as well as the superintendent's office to review the educational specifications. Mike Faenza stated some additional cuts and shifts were made to arrive at a building program that is within the space allocation for the program. Mike Faenza stated the educational specifications were updated to include that new space allocation table and narratives for the individual spaces. Mike continued they removed spaces that are no longer part of the program and created a final draft. Mike Faenza noted that final revisions were not in relation to programming but some spaces were made smaller to accommodate the goal. Mike Faenza stated that certain things were benchmarked with DRA, such as special education spaces, as requested by the superintendent's office. Mike Faenza stated the updated drafts were given to DRA to review. Mike Faenza stated the CSG was scheduled to present the educational specifications to the Board of Education on August 23rd and they let DRA know they would need any updates by that Wednesday, if any, to properly assemble them.

Jim Guliano noted that the space allocation was still about 5,000 square feet over the state standard. Jim Guliano stated CSG pushed the space based on the budget to try and accommodate the space requirements the program had, but kept it within the budget. Jim Guliano stated that a space waiver would be required. Chairman Bettencourt stated there was discussion in regards to finding a legislative waiver to accommodate additional square footage. Mike Faenza stated CSG were still using the updated educational specifications numbers from Cropper GIS for Pre-K enrollment for the space program. Mark Kulos stated there may be a need for another

demographic study prior to working on the other two elementary schools as the cohort moves forward from preschool through the other grades it would likely affect classroom space for the remainder of the project. Mike Faenza agreed and said that it would provide a better idea of what is needed for Pre-K space moving forward. Discussion ensued. Jim Guiliano stated it would be a good idea at that time to look at birth rates as well and that a demographic study should be done early the following year prior to starting on Moriarty. Mike Faenza noted that the state would prefer updated enrollment numbers as well.

Mike Faenza stated CSG would present the educational specifications to the BOE at the August 23rd meeting and would field any questions with members of the School Building Committee that are in attendance. Mike Faenza stated the specifications would be distributed to the committee once CSG received any revisions from DRA. Mike Faenza stated he reached out to the city Planning & Zoning Department to discuss upcoming permitting fees and what would be required for the projects. Mike Faenza stated he spoke with Norwich Public Utilities to get an idea of where utilities are located on the abutting streets for determining utility entrances. Mike Faenza stated that permitting fees were trending higher than expected but there was still additional information that needed to be provided to NPU. Mike Faenza stated it appeared Greeneville would be a more cost effective site as it is an enterprise zone. Christopher LaRose noted that the sewer connection fee was tied to the property and the baseline for costs would be based on the highest use of services in the past. Christopher LaRose added a way to get the cost as low as possible would be to find the maximum population that had been in the schools.

Mike Faenza stated CSG needed to acquire a rough estimate for electrical and gas work. Chris LaRose responded that the electrical would be a big piece due to the transformers required and increased costs post-COVID. Chris LaRose stated that inflation made it difficult to price things a year out and due to supply delays they had not received a new transformer in two years even though they have been on order. Discussion ensued.

Mark Kulos asked Christopher LaRose if there was any subsidization for geothermal or solar panels. Christopher LaRose stated there would be. Christopher LaRose stated that solar was currently not being subsidized but would be in the future under a new program that is in formation.

Alderwoman Stacy Gould left the meeting at 6:57 PM.

Mike Faenza stated CSG was working with DRA to get the architect contract finalized. Bob Castronova stated he was double-checking the contract to protect the city's interest and to ensure there is correct verbiage. Mike Faenza stated that DRA was able to acquire surveying costs that were in excess of the allowance so they are looking to see if another company can be used to get the cost more in line.

Peter Gauthier asked if CSG would be on track to getting information to OSCG&R in time. Mike Faenza responded they should be on track with the timeline provided to the state.

Christine DiStasio asked if the age of the space parameters provided were known as they were put in place long ago and should allow for a space waiver. Mike Faenza stated the parameters were the same space standard utilized in any community.

Erin Haggan asked what the recreational spaces would look like in the schools and if the cafeterias would be separate from the gymnasiums. Jim Guiliano responded they would be and once programming began they would reach out to various city agencies for input.

IV. Invoices:

- **CSG- Greeneville - \$16,169.95**

Peter Gauthier made a motion to approve CSG Invoice #5 for \$16,169.95 For Professional Services Rendered for July 1, 2023 - July 31, 2023 in regards to the Greeneville Elementary School project. Christine Distasio seconded. Chairman Mark Bettencourt, President Pro Tem Joe DeLucia, Cindy Beauregard, Peter Gauthier, Greg Ballassi, Gregory Carabine, Mark Kulos, Christine DiStasio, William Hull and Shiela Hayes voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

All but Stacy because she left

- **Stanton – \$15,879.33**

Mark Kulos made a motion to approve CSG Invoice #5 for \$15,879.33 For Professional Services Rendered for July 1, 2023 - July 31, 2023 in regards to the Stanton Elementary School project. Christine Distasio seconded. Chairman Mark Bettencourt, President Pro Tem Joe DeLucia, Cindy Beauregard, Peter Gauthier, Greg Ballassi, Gregory Carabine, Mark Kulos, Christine DiStasio, William Hull and Shiela Hayes voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Discussion draft RFP/Q for Construction Manager for Stanton/Greeneville:

Chairman Mark Bettencourt stated he distributed the draft RFP electronically earlier that day for review. Chairman Bettencourt stated the RFP could be voted on the following month if the committee would like to do that based on the current time table. Mike Faenza stated he would like to have a construction manager on board by the end of October. Mike Faenza stated there was some additional time since the design time frame could not be accelerated by much as the architect would not have sufficient information for the construction manager to work with. Mike Faenza stated that staff would need to be interviewed by the architectural team to discuss where things would be throughout the buildings for construction management feedback. Gregory Carabine agreed that there was no reason to have a construction manager on site with nothing to show them. Mike Faenza stated a typical schedule would be to have the construction manager on board two-to-three months after the schematic design starts. Bob Castronova suggested aiming for December 1st. Mike Faenza stated it would be prudent to set a November 1st date to avoid any delays from the holiday season. Discussion ensued. A decision was made for the committee to submit any comments to Mike Faenza by the 28th of August and to hold a special meeting August 30th via ZOOM to vote on the RFP.

Peter Gauthier discussed the previous interview process when hiring DRA and suggested the committee request additional evidence to show the success rate of previous projects handled by the potential construction manager. Chairman Bettencourt noted the difficulty in doing so while keeping fairness among potential vendors and avoiding any liability conflicts. Mike Faenza stated even if evidence was provided there would not be a way to understand the data in context to one another due to the changing variables between districts and projects. Discussion ensued. Chairman Bettencourt suggested putting such items and comments within the RFP. Mike Faenza went through the components of the current draft RFP. Mike Faenza stated the construction manager would be brought on before the drawings were complete and would not be able to provide a pool of contractors that would be used on the project, only perhaps some they had worked with previously.

VI. Meeting schedule – next steps: Special Meeting via ZOOM Wednesday August 30, 2023 at 6:30 PM.

Gregory Carabine asked when the RFP criteria would be evaluated. Mike Faenza recommended members begin to take the criteria into consideration and have feedback ready to discuss at the special meeting. Gregory Carabine asked if CSG could provide a draft set of evaluation criteria to be used as a template so the process could be expedited. Mike Faenza responded he would distribute the template to members. Discussion ensued regarding aspects of evaluation. Mike Faenza noted that candidates would be limited by bonding capabilities. Mike Faenza added they were soliciting bids both as a single school project or for both schools. Gregory Carabine stated it would make more sense to have a single construction manager for both projects. Mike Faenza responded that from a reimbursement standpoint there had to be two bids for the individual schools.

VII. Anything else to be brought before the committee: President Pro Tem Joe DeLucia stated he would like the committee to investigate and consider the use of a project labor agreement for the first two schools in progress. President Pro Tem DeLucia continued it would be valuable for the committee to hear from the New London County Building Trades Council, the Connecticut Building Trades Council and the Carpenter's Union to hear what a project labor agreement is and what it means to the committee. President Pro Tem DeLucia stated the groups could explain how the agreements impact a community and how citizens can be engaged. Chairman Bettencourt stated President Pro Tem DeLucia shared a draft agreement that he would distribute to members. Gregory Carabine asked what cost would be involved in such an agreement. Chairman Bettencourt stated there would not be any labor associated costs but some administrative costs. Chairman Bettencourt stated a project labor agreement was included in the master plan developed by DRA and that wage rates would not change. Chairman Bettencourt stated an agreement could affect how bids come in and that the prevailing wage was union level. President Pro Tem DeLucia stated the Building Trade Council reached out and he felt it was an important discussion to have. Gregory Carabine asked if it would be an informational session. President Pro Tem responded it would and the committee could choose to bring forth a motion following it or not. Sheila Hayes asked when an agreement would need to be put in place if it was decided to utilize one. President Pro Tem stated prior to the projects being awarded as trade contractors would need to be aware of the agreement. Discussion ensued regarding the project timeline.

VIII. Adjournment: Gregory Ballasi made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 PM. Sheila Hayes seconded. The chairman called the roll of members present and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted, Katherine Rose