

Future Forecast Committee
Council Chambers
May 31, 2016
9:00 a.m.

Present: J. Erardi R. Morey
J. Davila A. Uberti
T. Einhorn L. Rodrigue
R. Harriman-Stites J. Vouros
K. Holden L. Weidenhamer
C. Moretti G. Faiella (absent)
R. Bienkowski
T. Vadas
3 Public

Dr. Erardi spoke about the June 6 Community Forum, which will focus on the work of this committee and hear comments from the public.

Dr. Rodrigue requested more time to meet with her subcommittee regarding no school closure. She spoke about potential space at the high school for seventh and eighth grade with A-wing as the only area that could be utilized for additional students because it has its own entrance and science labs available. She researched the 8-12 models in the state. Some are in private schools but very few exist. The 7-12 model is more popular. The thinking is that less transition is better for students. With the additional grade levels traffic would have to be looked at as well as lunch schedules.

Mrs. Uberti spoke about the revised options regarding closing the middle school. The question is how to educate students at this level. Closing the middle school was taken off as an option because of the amount of space. For grades seven and eight at Reed more information is needed to determine whether they can be there such as passing between classes.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said that regarding the high school gym space we should consider the community's use of the middle school gyms. Taking them off line by closing the middle school would impact the community.

Dr. Erardi shared that the new Sandy Hook School has a middle school sized gym for community use.

Mr. Vouros asked that if the 8-12 model was considered where would the eighth grade be placed and interaction with the high school students has to be a huge consideration before any decision is made to move them there.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said the 5-7 option at Reed needs the same amount of consideration as the eighth grade at the high school.

Mrs. Uberti said we also have to look at the impact of splitting the seventh and eighth grade.

Dr. Rodrigue added that the best transition year is seventh grade.

Mr. Morey stated that if all schools stay open the only way to sell it is to make it economically sound. To keep a school open there would need to be some relief for the tax payers.

Mr. Vouros said if there are no significant savings in taxes and if it is not educationally sound to close a school it should not be a consideration.

Mr. Bienkowski presented the analytics on re-purposing a school, closing a school and closing a school and not re-purposing it. None of the options includes staffing other than custodial.

Dr. Erardi feels at some point in the presentation there needs to be staffing costs.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites asked what the re-purposing was for.

Mrs. Vadas said it would be for the town with possible office use of 25% of the building.

Mr. Bienkowski said that unless the town completely disposed of the building they would be responsible for the costs.

Dr. Rodrigue suggested re-purposing for education such as a magnet program. Students from other districts can attend with the high school as a satellite campus.

Dr. Erardi said that regarding the option of moving the Board of Education office to the middle school there would be state implications because our space was grant funded.

Mr. Bienkowski said if we moved we would have to pay back the state.

Dr. Wiedenhamer asked that if we closed a school partially and re-purposed part of it but let the town use it, would there be any repayment to the state?

Mr. Bienkowski said re-use for education would maintain the grant.

Dr. Erardi asked the committee to bring summary thoughts to the June 7 meeting. The June 21 Board meeting is not starting until 8:00 p.m. so the committee presentation will probably be at the July 19 meeting. We also need to discuss the survey results.

Submitted by: Kathy June