



City/School Liaison Committee Minutes



City/School Liaison Committee Meeting Wednesday, June 25, 2008

8:15 AM to 9:30 AM
City of Palo Alto Civic Center
Council Conference Room
250 Hamilton Ave
Palo Alto

In Attendance:

City of Palo Alto

Pat Burt, Council Member, Chair of Committee
Larry Klein, Mayor
Kelly Morariu, Deputy City Manager
Diane Jennings, Library Director
Deniz Tunc, Administrative Assistant

Palo Alto Unified School District

Camille Townsend, Board Member
Melissa Baten Caswell, Board Member
Bob Golton, District Co-Chief Business Officer
Allison McCormack, President of Palo Alto Library Foundation

Handouts: **All handouts can be viewed in the City Manager's office at 250 Hamilton Ave**

Meeting convened at 8:17 a.m.

1. Oral Communications:

Mayor Klein invited colleagues to the introduction of the new City Manager at 10 a.m. in the Council Chambers on Thursday, June 26, 2008.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 28, 2008

Board Member Townsend moved to approve; Chair Burt seconded. Minutes were approved 4-0.

3. Library Bond Measure

Kelly Morariu asserted that she and Diane Jennings have an update on the bond measure. She distributed a handout of recent cost estimates.

Diane Jennings said these cost estimates were presented to City Council a few weeks ago. These estimates were reviewed by a committee of local developers and construction experts. She overviewed that construction costs were sound, but escalation costs and project development costs could be reduced. There are three proposed projects: 1) replace both Mitchell Park library and the community center with one large facility, 2) create a small addition of four study group rooms and create one program room for community meetings at the Main Library, and 3) a complete renovation of the Main Library.

Board Member Townsend asked if the Main Library is historic.

Ms. Jennings answered that it was built by a relatively well known architect and that the renovation would not change the feel of the historic architecture.

Ms. Jennings also said the downtown library would not be expanded, but it would be brought up to current codes, where it currently houses centralized collection support staff. That staff would be most efficient if they were housed in a larger facility at Mitchell Park Library. The space at the downtown library will then be converted to a meeting room.

Ms. Jennings continued that on July 7, Council will be presented with all this information to move forward.

Ms. Jennings introduced the aspect of LEED (Leadership and Energy and Environmental Design) green building standards. She said Council will discuss whether to implement LEED Silver or LEED Gold standards. Some elements that determine the various levels of LEED standards include how demolition is done and if that building is reused, what kind of systems are used to reduce energy use, how the parking lot is built (permeable or not), etc. Council will discuss whether to move these projects up to Gold standard.

Bob Golton asked if the amount will be paid back in 14-years and asked if capital money would be converted to operating money.

Ms. Jennings answered yes.

Chair Burt said LEED Gold returns would be dependent on particular building on investment, while the Silver standards would have a rapid return on investment. In essence, LEED Silver would net a savings in almost all circumstances.

Mr. Golton said the PAUSD has a good relationship with Utilities staff to accomplish these goals successfully.

Chair Burt clarified that most work would be done by the Public Works department.

Mr. Golton said that in general, people's interests are directly proportional to a variety of things. One of the big questions that were asked of the pool of architects in the earlier processes of this project was where they stand on issues of sustainability.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked if the \$1.3 million in costs (estimated in May 2008) for LEED Gold is in addition to the \$77 million of Total Escalated Project Cost.

Ms. Morariu, Mayor Klein and Ms. Jennings all concurred yes.

Chair Burt said Council has seen extensive presentation on LEED paybacks.

Ms. Jennings said the project cost is \$77 million, but not all of that can be put on the bond measure. Funding for furniture is included under equipment and technology costs (\$4.3 million), but would not be eligible for the construction bond. The Temporary Facilities listed on the handout is in reference to place a portable in South Palo Alto.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked what size portable would be needed.

Ms. Jennings answered enough to house Mitchell Park, as well as the collection support staff (technical services) if the downtown library closes. She did not recall the exact square footage.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked if the Jewish Community Center space is part of the city or school district.

Chair Burt said he believes it's both.

Mayor Klein stated that City Council's policy is that any commercial building being built over 10,000 sq. ft. has to be built to LEED standards. He continued that LEED's programs are externally certified and goes through a very rigorous process.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked about residential building standards.

Mayor Klein answered they will be effective July 1, 2008.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked if the city will help residential customers in this process.

Ms. Morariu answered the Development Center is going through a training process – multiple staff members will be able to assist people through the process.

Mayor Klein added that all these processes are being directed to improve energy use and that these implementations are stricter than the state's Title 24 standards.

Chair Burt said Title 24 has been around for a long time – on the horizon is the impact of AB32, the state climate protection legislation (not yet regulatory standards). He said that over the next five years, this will translate into even more stringent standards that might trump what Palo Alto is doing.

Mr. Golton asked who the “sustainability person” in the City is.

Ms. Morariu answered the Sustainability Team, working out of the City Manager’s office. She said the team is going to Council on July 14 to present the cost-benefit analysis of the climate protection plan.

Board Member Townsend asked about collections for the bond measure for equipment and furniture.

Ms. Jennings answered libraries are over capacity in collection. The Library Bond Commission study shows that the Mitchell Park collection should be doubled. The Mitchell Park Foundation hopes to raise \$5 million over the next five years for this collection and furniture and equipment.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked how the school district is impacted when certain rules regarding building development are implemented in Palo Alto.

Ms. Morariu answered that there is no impact.

Chair Burt said if there is a commercial project with extensive expansion, the process goes through ARB (Architectural Review Board), Planning & Transportation Committee, Planning, etc. and Palo Alto has aggressive entities in this process.

Mayor Klein said Palo Alto is a leader, but it is not alone. Other cities around the country are high up in their environmental standings.

Chair Burt stated that there is a desire for alternative energy on school sites - natural inclination is toward photovoltaic (solar) power. In Palo Alto, electricity rates are below PG&E rates, while gas rates are higher than what PG&E charges. It is important to recognize that in the last several years, utilization of alternative energy that is thermal-solar heating may be more cost effective than photovoltaic power.

Mr. Golton said that in 2004 the board adopted a policy, similar to LEED standards, for schools. However these standards are not as stringent as LEED’s.

Ms. Morariu added the LEED payback information that the building department has been working on will be forwarded to the PAUSD.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked when the Library Foundation Campaign kicks-off.

Allison McCormack answered the Palo Alto Library Foundation is interviewing consultants and there is a five (5) year plan to raise \$5 million, which will cover everything except a temporary facility.

Board Member Baten Caswell asked if the kick-off would be in November.

Ms. McCormack answered within two months of that time.

Board Member Townsend asked what other foundations are involved with the campaign.

Ms. McCormack answered Friends of the Palo Alto Library and the Recreation Foundation.

Board Member Baten Caswell stated the Art Center is putting together a \$6 million campaign.

Ms. Morariu added Lytton Plaza is partnering with the City to raise \$300,000.

Board Member Baten Caswell stated the schools are raising \$2+ million.

Ms. McCormack asserted that the Palo Alto Library Foundation's campaign is a capital campaign – it will begin, end and have naming opportunities.

Chair Burt said these public/private partnerships try to achieve certain goals, which are very encouraging – many of the great elements of our community have been achieved through benefactors, which leads to (when it is a targeted specific area, as opposed to something general) certain major donors that donate for projects that are close to their heart.

Board Member Townsend asked Ms. McCormack what is her sense of the community, in terms of what people are getting excited about.

Ms. McCormack stated that 1) there is a generational shift – younger people have not started to make large donations (there is a need to identify these people and cultivate them), and 2) foundations are playing less of a role in fundraising. For example, HP is sending more money overseas rather than spending it here at home. These are just some factors that are changing the fundraising aspect.

Ms. McCormack invited people to the launch of the library bond campaign on Friday, June 27, at 10:30 a.m. at Mitchell Park.

Chair Burt suggested the utilization of a communication resource, such as the school eNews to relay information regarding the kick-off campaign. This resource reaches a high percentage of the community on a frequent basis.

Ms. Morariu said poll results will be presented to Council on July 7, and thereafter will get feedback on the possibility of implementing LEED Gold standards. Afterwards, Council will decide whether to put the bond measure on the November ballot on July 21.

Ms. McCormack stated there is a need for volunteers to do more mailings for the bond.

Board Member Townsend asked if the campaign is targeting parents or baby boomers specifically.

Ms. McCormack answered that the campaign will target any gathering of people at any time.

Mayor Klein said that there is a hope to significantly outreach to various ethnic communities, such as the Chinese-American community.

Ms. McCormack said that her organization will ask for the PTA's endorsement. She encouraged people to visit <http://www.betterlibrariesforpaloalto.com> for more information.

Board Member Townsend asked how results of the poll turned out.

Chair Burt confirmed the results would be released on July 7.

4. Future Meetings and Agendas

Board Member Baten Caswell suggested the Town and Country construction project should be discussed at a future meeting.

Board Member Townsend suggested discussing places to go for teenagers at a future meeting because it seems to be a pressing issue.

Mayor Klein questioned whether this is really a problem or if its teenagers being teenagers – Palo Alto might have to get a private organization involved. Inclusion of non-profit organizations should be included in this discussion.

Ms. Morariu suggested bringing in the Chair of the Youth Advisory Council to the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned 9:35 a.m.