



City/School Liaison Committee Minutes



City/School Liaison Committee Meeting Wednesday, December 17, 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
Steve Emslie, Deputy City Manager
Curtis Williams, Interim Director of Planning
Steven Turner, Senior Planner
Katie Whitley, Administrative Assistant

Palo Alto Unified School District

Camille Townsend, Board Member
Melissa Baten Caswell, Board Member
Bob Golton, District Co-Chief Business Officer

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

Meeting convened at 8:20 a.m.

1. Oral Communications: None

2. Approval of Minutes from September 24, and November 19

Ms. Baten Caswell motioned to approve. Chair Burt seconded. Minutes approved 3-0, Klein absent

Item number 4 (projected enrollment) on the agenda was moved up to number 3

3. Projected Enrollment

Ms. Townsend said she wanted to begin with who did the report, Lapkoff and Gobalet. They also do work with the City and are the demographers PAUSD has been working with for about 20 years. Ms. Townsend said the growth in Palo Alto especially in school age children has been a matter of interest. PAUSD took back the lease from the Garland site anticipating growth across the district.

Ms. Baten Caswell said the concern has been elementary school growth so PAUSD wanted to see what enrollment forecasts were but particularly for elementary. The report details elementary schools and looks at school area by school area based on current boundaries to project out growth in each of the schools by current boundaries. PAUSD felt this would help in planning in what to do from a building perspective as well as potential boundary changing.

Ms. Townsend said Lapkoff and Gobalet would be getting back to the District with middle and high school growth within the current boundaries as well.

Ms. Baten Caswell said the medium forecast predicts the growth by 2013 for elementary at 471 additional students, 413 additional middle school students and 437 additional high school students. The report goes on to show predictions to 2017 for middle and high school but unable to forecast out elementary school students because the children have not been born yet.

Chair Burt said he was surprised a forecasting tool would not anticipate future population trends.

Ms. Baten Caswell said this report does not include forecasting out for unborn children.

Chair Burt said he feels it would be less accurate to not make any prediction than it would be to make predictions based off past birthrate trends.

Mr. Golton said Ms. Lapkoff does not believe birth trends are sufficiently robust to allow projections to be made.

Ms. Baten Caswell said one of things PAUSD is concerned about is the next couple of years for the elementary schools. She said as Ms. Townsend stated earlier, the District is getting Garland back. However, they will not have it back until the year after next.

Chair Burt wanted to follow up on the question of trends for the past 5 years. He said in any projection, the further out you go, the less the visibility. He said if there was a variable that was less certain, there are 2 options of what to do with that. One option is to acknowledge that it has less certainty associated with it and include it as the best professional judgment. The other option is to say because there isn't excellent visibility on it, to exclude it as a factor all together. He said he is having trouble

seeing the rationale in excluding it all together rather than inclusion of it as a less certain variable but inclusion as best professional judgment and patterns.

Ms. Townsend asked Chair Burt what his purpose would be because the District has its own purpose for the report.

Chair Burt said the City and District use the same demographer so there is a shared interest from the City. The City planning is attempting to do a stronger job of having concerns about the impact on schools in its development planning.

Ms. Baten Caswell said she wanted to go through the report that covered the next 5 years and then address further concerns after.

Mr. Golton said he could relay Chair Burt's concerns to Ms. Lapkoff or have the City contract with her to get the specific information Chair Burt would like.

Mr. Golton said the projection was fairly conservative because this year enrollment increased by 200. He said there was another report by Lisa Gelfant that addressed opening Garland and realigning boundaries and addressed the relative space at schools. That information will be available on PAUSD website by the end of the day today. With the addition of Garland, the increased number of student enrollment can be met but Garland won't come online until at the latest November 2010 and at the earliest, June 2010.

Ms. Baten Caswell said if the realignment of boundaries happens, then there will be accommodations for the additional students but that will be a big discussion.

Mr. Golton said in the bond program will allow for the 413 middle school student expansion and in addition the bond program allows the 437 additional high school students. PAUSD is covered out through 2013. The projected growth comes out almost precisely what the bond will cover by 2021.

Mr. Golton said housing sales are down and he believes that has an impact.

Ms. Baten Caswell said Ms. Lapkoff said she is still seeing families with young kids moving into Palo Alto.

Chair Burt said there could be some sample surveys in examining the turn over in single family homes in newer developments.

Ms. Townsend said Ms. Lapkoff said she could look backward to see the turn over would look like given the boomers.

Ms. Baten Caswell said she agreed that going to the developers to conduct a survey would be good.

Chair Burt said at the Finance Committee meeting the Long Range Financial Forecast (LRFF) was discussed and someone from the board of realtors and presented a some numbers of sales and the number of turn-over's has dropped almost 50% this quarter. He said the realtors may be a source of supplemental information that may not be available to a demographer.

Chair Burt asked Mr. Emslie and Mr. Williams to tell the Committee what is happening in the housing market. He said there has been a wave of multi-family homes over the last few years and some in the pipeline that will be completed in the next couple of years. The City has what appears to be a dry pipeline for the next several years. What the gestation time is looked at from when an applicant comes in for a prescreening all the way through construction, they started 5 years ago. There is a good visibility for 5 years.

Ms. Townsend said Ms. Lapkoff made a comment a student yield out of condos she had lower than actually happened because the format of the condos is different. Although they are called condos they are bigger.

Chair Burt said moving forward on the housing element for the future, what ABAG requires a certain number of housing units not size of units. One of the tools the City can be looking at is controlling unit size.

Ms. Baten Caswell said the reports states if the District does not open Garland the projection in capacity gap is about -264. If Garland does open there will be a + 216. In order for that to work the boundaries need to be adjusted.

Chair Burt said there is 1-2 year period where things still in pipeline that would have an impact on elementary school are going to enter the pool of PAUSD students. He asked the question on average if there is a new occupant what is the typical age of children when the family moves in.

Ms. Baten Caswell said she didn't have those numbers.

Mr. Bob Moss said a lot of demographic data had been collected in the past that stated people moving into Palo Alto were older because the cost of housing was greater and it took longer to save the money to move here. He said middle and high school numbers could not be predicted. The second thing that was said was that condos were being under predicted in terms of numbers of children.

Chair Burt said from the time Mr. Moss was referring the average age of new residents and ages of the children in 10-15 years has changed. He said if the same demographer was being used he wanted to make sure the City visibility on housing projects in the pipeline show the spike and the drop in new development going out projects not going in to the pipeline for the next 2-3 years. It will be a significant change to the pattern than what it has been in the past.

Mr. Emslie said the City uses Ms. Lapkoff as well and information is being shared with the District.

Ms. Baten Caswell said based on the report from Ms. Lapkoff, if Garland is opened, the District will be able to handle the attendance shortfall assuming the boundary issue is addressed.

Chair Burt said if in the City studies we should predict further than 5 years.

Mr. Emslie said he would check with Ms. Lapkoff about doing a projection going further than 5 years.

4. Continued Discussion of Stanford Expansion Impact on Housing:

Mr. Emslie introduced Steven Turner, Senior Planner, and Curtis Williams, planning director, to continue and follow up on any questions regarding the Stanford expansion.

Mr. Turner said at the last meeting staff presented an over view of the employment and housing impacts on the projects. He said the consultant said there would be a certain number of new jobs created as well as new households created.

Ms. Baten Caswell said that Ms. Lapkoff did not project any of the information Mr. Turner handed out in her projections.

Mr. Turner said 60% of the hospital would be built in 2015 and completed 100% in 2025. The entire shopping center would be constructed by 2015.

Mr. Emslie said the shopping center plans may be stretched out because of the last three months.

Chair Burt said this has been predominately discussed in terms of indirect on housing for district and City. There is also a property tax. There are downtown projects ready to move forward and because of no financing going through, there is going to be a freeze in building.

Ms. Townsend asked when Lucile Packard Children's Hospital is coming on board. Mr. Williams said 2015.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked if the City has seen an increase in requests for property reassessment.

Chair Burt replied that the City has not because it is the County Assessor that gets those requests. There is a lag in the information being related from the trend and a lag from the time in which you start seeing a decline in property values and reassessment requests.

Mr. Golton said the County Assessor does the property adjustments. To avoid an avalanche of appeals they unilaterally reduce assessments. He said PAUSD meets quarterly with the Assessor as does Mr. Emslie.

Mr. Emslie said the University has a GUP adopted in 2000 which lays out a development plan for the next 25 years. In that GUP Stanford was allowed to build significant numbers of academic space and a lot of that construction has been completed. Stanford also received entitlement to build 3,000 housing units on campus. The GUP established thresholds so that when academic construction reached a certain level, housing had to be built with it. The threshold requires Stanford to build out 2,400 units to be able to use all the non residential academic square footage. There are 600 units not required to be built for any threshold purpose. There are 2 sites close to the hospital on Quarry already designated for housing that only need to go through the County Architectural Review Board. This housing is already in the District.

Chair Burt said the specific housing sites that are in play and in discussion in the GUP are currently designated for medical residence. The City is arguing to accommodate them elsewhere and use them as low income housing. He said Stanford is also projecting some slow down in academic development in response to their portfolio.

Ms. Townsend wanted to know who to call for more details about the Stanford expansion projects. Mr. Williams said to call Mr. Turner, the project manager.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30