

MINUTES OF THE  
BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING  
of the Board of Education  
Riverside School District No. 96  
held on Monday, March 30, 2009  
L. J. Hauser Junior High School LRC  
Riverside, Illinois

Committee chair Linda Bade called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Present: Mrs. Linda Bade, Mrs. Nancy Jensen and Mrs. Hareena Wakely

Absent: None

Also Present: Dr. Jon Lamberson, superintendent; maintenance director Bill Radtke; architects Mark Miller and Chris English from CONCEPT 3 Architects; Ames principal, Colleen Lieggi; Hauser Jr. High principal, Leslie Berman; and interested Ames and Hauser Jr. High School parents Nancy Hopkins, Terri Culloden, Stephanie Schulte (Ames PTA co-president) and Mary Lescher.

There were no reports or comments from delegations or individuals.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the proposed summer hardscape and landscape projects at Ames and Hauser Junior High School.

Supt. Lamberson began the meeting with a brief overview of the process the Building Committee has undertaken over the past few years with regard to developing a “master” district-wide hardscape/landscape plan. Over the years the PTA/Os and school faculties have raised funds for various plantings, butterfly gardens, water gardens, natural prairie gardens, memorial gardens, reading/study circles, use of pavers for walkways, etc. for their schools. Most plans were brought to the Building Committee for approval and were left to the discretion of the principal and staff for the location around the school. This practice led to inequity among the schools and inconsistency in design and purpose.

It was the desire of the Building Committee to work on developing a district-wide plan for hardscape and landscape design to improve and beautify the look of the schools’ main entrance and make the necessary improvements to ease congestion and facilitate easier student and parent access. Additionally, any future outdoor enhancements (new trees, gardens, etc.) would be driven by the existing plans and maintain the desired outcome of the original design.

The ideas for this district-wide project have been in the discussion stage for the past two years. Most recently the Building Committee has been working with the architect to develop a design that incorporates the various areas of concern and disrepair for replacement and/or removal. After several revisions and recommended changes, the Committee has now reached the point where they feel that a decision can be made to move forward with the project designs beginning with Hauser Jr. High and Ames Elementary Schools in the summer of 2009.

The proposed scope of work at Hauser Junior High will include the dismantling and repair of the base of the front portico which is dangerously deteriorated. The plans also include widening the sidewalks along Woodside Road for easier student access and a new curved walkway leading to the student entrance. Additional student “gathering” areas made of concrete aggregate and brick pavers are also planned. The existing low brick wall and “outdoor classroom” area will be demolished and replaced with two open stone constructed “study circles” (one larger than the other). The center floor of the study circles will be made of pavers as well. The existing message board in front of Hauser will be moved to a new location, closer to the entryway.

The landscape plan details placement of trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, and perennials along the walkways and in front of the building. All of the Building Committee members discussed at length the issue of whether or not one of the existing (hackberry) trees that is located within the footprint of the proposed new study circles should be removed or to go back and have the architects redesign the plan to preserve the tree. Principal Leslie Berman noted that the fruit that seasonally drops from the tree is very hard and has become a safety issue for students from others who choose to throw them around or at each other. A report was received from Michael Collins, Village Forester, giving the tree an appraised value of \$7,263. Hauser parent Nancy Hopkins noted that the condition of the tree should be evaluated by both an arborist and a forester to get a more accurate appraisal of the tree and its life expectancy. While it was the committee’s preference not to remove any trees on the school property it was agreed by consensus that the amount of time and expense it would take to redesign the project again in order to preserve the tree and seek approval from the Landscape Advisory Commission, the Historical Preservation Commission and the Village Board in order to begin the work, it would be impossible to have the schools ready for the first day in August and therefore recommended the removal of the hackberry tree and proceed with the plan as presented. The architects were asked to add locations for possible tree(s) replacements in the area.

Supt. Lamberson, Mark Miller and Chris English have met with Riverside village manager Katy Rush and a representative from the Public Works Department to discuss the plan for hardscape and landscape additions and renovations specifically to find out if the proposed plan is acceptable and in compliance with Village ordinances and determine what other committees or commissions need to be notified in order to proceed. They were advised to meet with the Village Landscape Advisory Commission and were notified of approval of the design as presented with a few suggestions for materials used on the study circles. Mark Miller and Chris English will be meeting with the Historic Preservation Commission on April 9, 2009 to share the proposed design.

If approval is received from all agencies and commissions, the work will be put out to bid in late April anticipating completion of the hardscape work prior to the start of the new school year. Depending on weather conditions, the plantings may be done in early fall.

The plans for Ames School include expanding the front sidewalk and the elimination of the step up to the front door as well as widening the sidewalk along Southcote Road. The existing butterfly gardens will remain but portions may have to be relocated to accommodate a new study circle which will be large enough to accommodate 23 intermediate level students for a classroom setting. New plantings will include shrubs, ornamental grasses and flowering perennials.

Terri Culloden, a representative from Ames School's landscape committee noted that Ames PTA is conducting a fund-raising effort by selling imprinted paver bricks with the intent of using them as part of the landscape project. Mark Miller and Chris English indicated that the floor of the study circle would be made with paver bricks that could be replaced with the imprinted ones when they become available. The project is expected to raise approximately \$6,000 that could be used to help fund the cost of the study circle.

Supt. Lamberson and the members of the Building Committee stated that their donation toward these projects would be welcomed, but it would not be necessary in order to complete the work. The District has funds budgeted for the hardscape and landscape plans and would prefer not to rely on the generosity of the parents and community to pay for the project.

The architects and members of the Building Committee conducted another site visit around Hauser Junior High School to confirm their agreement and commitment to move forward with the projects as presented.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jensen, supported by Mrs. Wakely, and unanimously approved by the committee to adjourn the Building Committee meeting at 6:45 p.m.

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Judith Novak, Board Secretary

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Linda Bade, Committee Chair