

Facilities Design/Bond Promotion Committee

Membership

Larry Beesley

Jon Bly

Jim Bruget

Bonnie Duffy

Todd Egge

Dan Etrheim

Tom Kelley

Lonnie Kirby

Paul Lundberg

Colleen Lunstra

Randy Marso

Jim Meyer

Amy Moss

Amy Mutschelknaus

Gregg Ode

Paul Peterson

Jay Rasmussen

Becky Sonju

Gregg Talcott

Lanette Thompson

Kirsten Walrath-Noem

Matt Wickett

Todd Williams

Merle Horst

David Pappone

Preface

The Board of Education appointed the Facilities Design/Bond Promotion Committee at its meeting of August 13, 2007. The Committee included fifteen members from the community: members representing the City of Brandon and Valley Springs, two Board members and members from the administrative staff of the district. The Committee was charged with the following:

- 1) Review Facility Needs Assessment Committee's recommendations and gauge community support for a bond election, including essential elements that the community will support.
- 2) Gather community input on options and work with the architect to develop a recommendation to the Board regarding each proposed facility, including locations viable for spring 2008 construction, floor plan (size), and firm cost estimates.
- 3) Make recommendation to the Board regarding land purchases.
- 4) Present recommendations to the Board September 24.
- 5) Promote and pass bond election in late fall 2007.

The Committee asked for and received an extension in the time to report to the Board and this report, dated October 9, 2007, is the Committee's recommendation regarding items 1-3 of the charge.

The Committee met weekly and reviewed the Facilities Needs Assessment Committee report to the Board of Education and gathered additional data concerning the need for additional facilities to respond to the continuing growth of the district. The Committee used the district core operating principle as a guide in its deliberations: "Our business is the creation of learning environments that result in success." The Committee also held two public forums and conducted an online survey to gather community input on the options it was considering. The results of the survey are found in Appendix A of this report.

The Committee engaged in many hours of discussion over the approximately eight weeks it was given to arrive at a set of recommendations. After due deliberation, the Committee has concluded that the recommendations it presents in this report are in the best interests of the district and community. The Committee acknowledges that other sets of recommendations it considered also possess merits, but that the solution offered here is preferred.

The Committee wishes to thank those from the community who provided input during the process. It also asks for the community to support the proposed facilities even if the recommendations are not exactly what each individual might have picked on his/her own. The district is growing, and the communities' children deserve safe, comfortable, uncrowded facilities that provide learning environments which give them the best chances for success.

Recommendation

High School

The Committee recommends the construction of a building addition on the south end of the existing high school that would immediately expand the capacity of the high school to 1250 students. The addition would include nine additional regular classrooms that would be used to offer the core classes to the freshman students by creating a Freshman House in the new addition. (Two of the nine classrooms would be built to accommodate additional science labs when needed.) It would also include four science labs for immediate use by both the freshmen and upperclassmen. Estimated square footage of the addition is 27,000 square feet with an estimated cost of \$3,435,000. A preliminary concept design can be found in Appendix C.

Rationale:

- Growing enrollment creates an urgent need for classroom space. The current high school enrollment of 865 puts the building near its current capacity of 900. In two years the high school will grow to 950 if we count just students currently enrolled in the middle school. Even modest enrollment projections indicate that the high school enrollment will be 1100 within five years.
- The growth in student population will impact various academic areas requiring an increase in specialized space for the following departments: art, guidance, physical education, science, and special education.
- Providing a separate learning environment for freshmen will serve many positive purposes:
 - Smaller learning community
 - Age appropriate environment
 - Reduced hallway congestion
- Storage space is an issue, especially for orchestra, physical education and art programs.
- The current number of lockers will not meet our needs beyond 2008-2009.

Elementary

The Committee recommends construction of a new elementary school with a capacity for 600 students on the Assam property located off of Six Mile Road between 10th and Madison. The district already owns this property, and it is the area where the most growth is expected. The new school would use the basic plan from Robert Bennis Elementary which works well. Using the substantially same plan saves an estimated \$200,000 in design costs. Estimated square footage is 78,000 with an estimated cost of \$9,780,000. A preliminary concept design can be found in Appendix C.

Rationale:

- Residential development in the SW quadrant is staged for rapid and substantial growth with over 750 lots already platted and over 500 additional acres, (approximately 1500 lots) are in the final platting stage. More are in the planning pipeline.
- 2250 to 2500 residential lots developed over the next two to five years yields 900 to 1000 new students in the SW alone.
- The City of Brandon is adding about 100 new residential units, not counting apartments, each year. 100 new homes yield 40 additional students. In five years that means up to 200 more students from within the city of Brandon alone.
- The district needs to demonstrate to developers and new residents in the SW that the school district is responsive to their neighborhood.
- Elementary schools are nearing capacity, and another building is needed to avoid overcrowding of classrooms.
- Facility and learning equity for all students should be an ongoing goal.
- Anticipated development/growth at Valley Springs is expected to affect the future location of an east side elementary school. Not building on the east side first gives Valley Springs time to demonstrate the viability of keeping a school in town.
- Also see Appendix B for “Supe’s On” that addresses this issue.

Activity Center

The Committee recommends the construction of an indoor activity center attached to the south end of the commons at the high school and extending toward the football/track facility. The current proposal includes three courts with one being the competition court, space to relocate weight/training rooms, locker rooms that can be used for all indoor activities and for football and track, restrooms, a community room, and increased seating capacity. The total estimated square footage of the facility is 41,000 feet with an estimated cost of \$6,085,000. A preliminary concept design can be found in Appendix C.

Rationale:

- High school physical education needs more gym space as enrollment continues to grow.
- High school teams need more “on campus” classroom and practice facilities.
- More functional seating for athletic contests or community events is desirable.
- Due to increasing student populations:
 - * Need for more adequate and gender equitable locker room facilities
 - * Need for more adequate and functional cardiovascular/strength training facilities
 - * Need for more adequate and functional training room facilities
- Facilities can be used for football and track locker rooms and meeting rooms eliminating the need for separate field house.
- Community will see increased use of school gymnasiums and walking spaces through this proposal.
- Also see “Supe’s On” in Appendix B for more information on community use.

Valley Springs Elementary

The Committee recommends remodeling of the 1973 addition at Valley Springs Elementary including rebuilding interior walls to increase the fire rating, replace the ceilings, replace the carpet as needed, update light fixtures as appropriate, and eliminate the sliding glass door on the north side of the addition. The district has two reports from a certified structural engineer, one regarding the boiler room and another regarding the 1922 building. The boiler room roof needs repair as recommended by the district's structural engineer. The engineer also recommended further inspection of several aspects of the 1922 building that should be completed in the summer of 2008. The Committee anticipates the bulk of these improvements would be made during the summer of 2008. Estimated cost is \$250,000.

HS Student Commons and Kitchen

The Committee recommends the expansion of the high school commons and kitchen to accommodate students up to the capacity of the building with the proposed addition (1250) included above. Additional students beyond the 1250 will be accommodated by schedule changes without the need for additional facilities. Estimated square footage is 6,500 for an addition to the kitchen and commons and 2,000 square feet of remodel to the current servery at an estimated cost of \$1,040,000. A preliminary concept design can be found in Appendix C.

Rationale:

- The current kitchen can serve approximately 100 more students in its current configuration. That capacity will be reached in 2009-2010 as larger classes move into the high school from the middle school.
- Addition of a third serving line will streamline lunch efficiency for students and staff.
- Added storage and preparation space in the kitchen is needed to deal with more than 950 students.

Parking and Driveway

The Committee recommends adding parking adjacent to the HS addition and Indoor Activity Center. The added parking would net an additional 48 parking stalls and would be located on the current band/freshman practice field. The practice field would be relocated to the north, adjacent to the current varsity field. This would be accomplished by relocating the north entrance road. Moving the road east allows the district to join two green spaces into one. The estimated cost is \$530,000. A preliminary concept design can be found in Appendix C.

Other Costs

The Committee recommends that the Board capitalize the costs for furniture, furnishings, equipment, and the cost of issuing the bond. The FF& E is estimated at \$1,535,000, and the cost of issuance is estimated at \$285,000.

Additional Elementary Sites

The Committee recommends the district procure future elementary sites with monies not included in the bond. The Committee believes future development on the west side of the district dictates the district pursuing a site south of the proposed building on the Assam site and one additional site north of the Assam site. Additionally, the Committee recommends the district procure a site for an elementary on the east side of Brandon that would be viable in terms of having access to utilities within 3 to 5 years. The Committee is not recommending asking for funding for site acquisition in the proposed bond referendum and instead recommends the district utilize alternative sources of funding including Capital Outlay and the possible exchange of properties already owned by the district.

Appendix A

Results of Online

Survey

On

Facilities

Appendix B

Supe's On 9-19-07

The Facilities Design/Bond Promotion Committee held two public forums and conducted an online survey to gather input from the community relative to the three projects under consideration: 1) a new elementary on the southwest, 2) an addition to the high school, and 3) an indoor activity center. One of the most controversial topics has to do with the location of the proposed new elementary school.

The Committee spent many hours discussing the various options and whether my readers agree or disagree with the recommendation for a southwest location, I think it is important to share the factors that led the Committee to its choice. So, why build a school in the southwest quadrant of the district?

- The Sioux Falls eastside sewer is now complete and is ready for development in our southwest quadrant.
- There are over 740 lots coming online in Copper Creek and Arbor's Edge with over 75 lots sold in those two areas according to the developers. Mike Van Buskirk projects a build-out for Copper Creek in the next two to three years and notes that this has been the case with other similar developments by their company. A new school does not come online until 2009.
- Hundreds of acres of residential development are in the final planning stages with even more in the early planning stages according to Jeff Schmitt, Asst. City Planner for Sioux Falls.
- Dawley Farms has signed two large retailers, with more on the near horizon, for its commercial development and that will stimulate growth.
- Sioux Falls is building about 1000 new homes a year and hundreds of those will be in our district each year now that the sewer is complete. Brandon also builds a steady 100 homes a year.
- Building a new elementary school anywhere in the district relieves enrollment pressure at Brandon Elementary and Robert Bennis Elementary and that benefits our in-town schools.

Some say we should wait and see how fast the southwest develops:

- If we build on the east side now, the next elementary school could be five years out—what are the consequences of not having a school in the southwest for five years?
- If those who say wait are wrong and the southwest grows rapidly like Harrisburg and Tea, we will be behind the curve, and students will open enroll to Harrisburg or Sioux Falls.
- We just lost 160 acres to Sioux Falls when a developer sought a minor boundary change to take that land out of our district. How many more developers will choose to take land from BV?

- The effect of losing that land is the loss of tax base and students. An increasing tax base is one thing that helps keep our bonded debt tax levy low and decreasing. If millions of dollars of value move to Sioux Falls, it negatively affects our tax rate here in BV.
- We cannot just ignore what will become a major population center in the district unless we are willing to live with the consequences of higher taxes than necessary and the loss of students.
- Even if the area grows slower than we project, these issues will exist since we already have experienced one minor boundary change that will equate to millions of dollars of lost valuation over the next few years.

What about the Valley Springs factor?

- If we were to build on the east side and consolidate the Valley Springs students into the new building, we would likely need to build a second elementary school sooner than we would otherwise if we build it on the southwest because we are giving up existing capacity. This means we accelerate the need for another bond and our taxes are raised sooner.
- The Valley Springs community is working on development that might bring major growth to the community over the next few years. By building on the southwest side first, we give Valley Springs time for this development to take place which might then lead us to keep a school in town. Valley Springs' leaders see this as positive and support the southwest location. (Remember, Brandon was a small town not long ago and the same dynamics that are driving growth in Brandon are rapidly moving east.
- Future investment in Valley Springs buildings can be mostly targeted to the 1973 addition that could easily become the anchor for new construction when Valley Springs grows.
- Another factor that comes into play is that the district does not own a school site between Brandon and Valley Springs. For construction to start in the spring, the architect needs to know the specific site well ahead of time to develop the specifications and design for the building. While the district has had conversations about sites on the east side, the timeline required for land acquisition makes obtaining a viable site on the east difficult to accomplish in time for a spring construction start.
- Utility availability between Brandon and Valley Springs moves the viable locations between the two communities fairly close to Brandon. While it is not impossible to build a school with a septic system, it is certainly not the preferred approach.

The committee had extended discussion on this topic, and it is the consensus that a school on the southwest side is the preferred site for the first elementary school. We respect those with opinions that differ from this recommendation. The committee also knows that regardless of the choice it recommends, there would be those who disagree. My hope is that we can agreeably disagree and continue to have civil discourse related to the needs of our children.

Supe's On 9-25-07

The Facilities Design/Bond Promotion Committee received positive input from the community at the recent public forums and via the online survey responses. The Committee continues to include three major proposals as it moves closer to making a recommendation to the Board of Education. The Committee asked for and received an additional two weeks to finalize its report to the Board that will now be presented at the Tuesday, October 9th meeting of the Board.

Last week I wrote about the myriad of reasons why an elementary school on the southwest side makes sense to the Committee. If you missed it, you can find it online in my "Supe's on the Internet" blog at the school's website or at Brandoninfo.com. This week I would like to address the community use aspects of the proposed indoor activity center. There are important school needs associated with the proposed facility that will be stressed later, but for now let me give a few preliminary ideas about how the community will also benefit.

The preliminary design includes a large health classroom/community room that will have its own access from the outside of the building. This makes that room available for a wide variety of community activities even when the rest of the school building is closed. This room can be used for adult education classes offered either through the school or the city recreation department. It can be used for community meetings, including the possibility of accommodating the school Board or other civic groups. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H, or any of a number of clubs and organizations could use the room. It could be used by senior citizens as a meeting place and could include access to our lunch program for a low-cost weekly meal.

The weight training room could be used for adult education classes to train people in the safe use of weight equipment. I anticipate that we would not go into competition with the several businesses in our community that offer on-going fitness programs. The adult classes might even end up generating customers for those businesses.

The facility can accommodate our early morning walkers when the weather turns to winter. We have several who walk our hallways now, but we could expand access in the new facility.

When we bring our high school practices and games on-site at the high school in the new facility, it will free up gym space and time for other youth or adult activities in the neighborhood schools. This expanded access will be a benefit to our community and allow for more planned activities.

Finally, the expanded seating of the indoor activity center will provide a more comfortable atmosphere to cheer on all the Lynx indoor sports teams. Many say they do not attend the "big" games because they know it will be difficult to get a seat. High school sports are an important part of the fabric of our community and a source of civic

pride. The new venue will give us the space to support and cheer our teams for the foreseeable future.

The indoor activity center will be primarily designed for the education of our children, but the community as a whole can also benefit from this investment. As the process continues forward, there will be much more information available, so look for the details as they develop further.

Appendix C

Preliminary Concept

Drawings

For

Recommended Facilities