

Town Council Meeting

Public Input 3/12/2012

RE: Bus Garage on Fern Road

The bus garage has been an eyesore and blight on Fern, Scottron and Sheffield Rd neighborhood for years. Action by the town on this is long overdue.

I contacted a reputable Connecticut based scrap and transport company, Connecticut Scrap of North Franklin CT, to inquire what it would cost to have the structure dismantled and removed. The attached proposal documents a profit to the town of \$1,000.

The lack of payment of taxes should give the town the right to seize property to on the lot to pay for back-taxes. Notice should be sent to the current owner apprizing them of this situation with a specific deadline for them to pay their taxes. After which, the town should exercise its right to collect taxes and dismantle the structure.

I urge Council to take action that would result in dismantling and removing the building. Acquisition of the land is a secondary concern. If the town is concerned about owning the land, just getting the building dismantled and removed would satisfy the neighborhood greatly.

Respectfully,

Omar Kouatly

98 Fern Rd, Storrs.



Katey Waddington

Connecticut Scrap/D.W. Transport
140 Route 32
North Franklin, CT 06254

March 12, 2012

Omar Kouatly

98 Fern Street
Storrs, CT 06268

Dear Omar Kouatly:

OBJECTIVE

Dismantle and removal of vacant steel structure located at 76 Fern Street in Storrs, Connecticut.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. Demo & Disposal
 - A. D.W will dismantle and dispose of the steel structure located on 76 Fern Street in Storrs, Connecticut. Foundations to be removed to ground level and material properly disposed of. D.W. Transport has all the equipment, insurance and permits necessary to perform the above mentioned project. D.W. Transport will charge no fee so long as we are responsible for the scrap metal recycling from the structure.

2. Scrap Metal Recycling
 - A. C.T.S will pay a flat rate of \$1,000.00 for the scrap metal material from the steel structure.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

An asbestos test is needed as well as letters of disconnect.

CLOSING

We appreciate the opportunity to service your demolition, disposal and recycling needs. If you would like to accept this proposal, please email confirmation or sign below and fax to 860.848.2669.

Sincerely,

Katey Waddington
Marketing/Sales

Mansfield, Connecticut Town Council Meeting March 12, 2012
Public comment by David Freudmann, 22 Eastwood Rd.,
Storrs, CT 06268, 860-429-0763, davidf235@yahoo.com
Topic: budget, soil tests, Minimum Budget Requirement

1. At the Feb. 27 Special Meeting, the Council asked management, specifically Town Manager Matthew Hart and Director of Finance Cherie Trahan, to "prepare a document showing...a zero increase budget with suggestions on how to get there." (packet of 3/12/12, pg.1) I submit that staff is being stressed at the height of budget season, just a fortnight ahead of the release of the Town Manager's Proposed Budget for 2012/2013. The Town Council, not staff, should prioritize needs and make the hard choices that are required to reach a "zero increase budget". These are, after all, political choices. I recommend an executive session of the Council and management to make those choices.
2. Toward the end of the Special Meeting of March 7, you authorized Mr. Hart to spend up to \$40,000 (\$20,000 per location) to test the soil at the sites of the Goodwin and Vinton elementary schools. The object is to learn whether they can sustain the greater septic requirements of larger schools. As you were prepared to choose two sites and send a large bonding proposal to referendum, I assumed you had that information long ago. Furthermore, in response to a query I made of a member of the Council, it seems that no one has asked the University of Connecticut if it would object to connecting a larger Goodwin school to the UConn sewer system, seeing as the Four Corners Water and Sewer project will make a sewer hookup feasible. Should not UConn be asked that before spending up to \$20,000 to test the soil there?
3. re schools: At present, the state's Minimum Budget Requirement penalizes municipalities if they reduce spending on the public schools. On a hopeful note, it appears the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities is trying to get relief from this onerous, costly and wasteful requirement. (pages 58 and 82 of 3/12/12 packet) You can count on those with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo to oppose this initiative. It might be worthwhile for town leaders to remind our state delegation that taking control of the budget is near impossible if you are not allowed to cut costs.

DF

Patricia A. Suprenant

441 Gurleyville Road
Storrs, CT 06268

March 9, 2012

Town Council
Town of Mansfield

To Whom It May Concern:

Watching residents at the Special Town Council Hearing last Monday it was obvious to me that something was missing from the debate over two new schools versus renovating the three existing elementary schools. Despite the endless committee meetings, reams of paperwork and apparently meaningless numbers put forth over the past six years, this debate widens rather than narrowing toward the right conclusion for Mansfield's children.

I ask you the following:

Where is the detailed, extensive feasibility and condition study for each of the existing school properties that would frame the discussion for residents with regard to building condition, building costs, and the subsequent impact on academic programing?

It doesn't exist.

Where is the detailed analysis citing the priority of one school over the other in this debate?

It doesn't exist.

Where is the support for two new schools in Mansfield's 2006 Plan of Conservation?

It doesn't exist.

Where is the need for the construction of two new schools as cited in Mansfield's 2020 Vision?

It doesn't exist.

Where is it written that Mansfield must renovate or construct all these schools all at once?

It doesn't exist.

Where is the effort at consensus building in this process?

It doesn't exist.

And, where does it cost \$95 million dollars to renovate three schools at a cost of \$887psf (\$95M/107K)?

It doesn't exist.

It is clear that Option E was always the preferred alternative and was not the product of quantifiable, logical, and definable research. Furthermore, the architect used in the project proposal should not benefit from the outcome.

In my due diligence and research of CT State Statute Sec. 282 it is clear that in a project of this scale the State of Connecticut would most likely support through a "*notwithstanding*" exception anything that Mansfield residents want whether it is a Renovate "*like new*" of the existing schools or new construction.

I believe it is premature to bring this before the voter in November and ask that you rescind the preliminary motion to do so as stated.

Sincerely


Patricia A. Suprenant

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT



William D. Hammon, Facilities Management Director

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING
FOUR SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD
MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06268-2599
(860) 429-3326 TELEPHONE
(860) 487-4443 FACSIMILE
EMAIL: HAMMONWD@MANSFIELDCT.ORG

Submitted by Alison Hilding
3/12/12

August 20, 2010

**Anticipated Repair Costs
Within Five Years**

leaking?
R

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
1. Gym dividing door	\$ 35,000
2. Fuel oil line at Southeast School	15,000
3. One boiler at any location	100,000
4. Door replacements	20,000
5. Large floor tile replacement	15,000
6. One refrigerator/freezer	20,000
7. One office air conditioning unit	5,000
8. Installation of bulkheads for confined space entrance	50,000
9. Septic system repair at one of town schools	35,000
10. Carpets in Southeast School portables	20,000
11. Various counters and shelving in classrooms	20,000
12. Cafeteria tables at elementary schools already failing	(per school) 25,000
13. Playground at Vinton School	100,000

?

?

not in order of priority

why of pop going down
do you need portable? continued to need portables

maximum length of time these items
should be left to go into 20 years.

(over)



TOWN OF MANSFIELD

Proposed School Building Project

What is the "School Building Project?"

Since 2005, members of the Mansfield Board of Education and the Mansfield Town Council have extensively reviewed, analyzed and discussed various options for either renovating and/or constructing new schools in Mansfield. The three current elementary schools were constructed in 1956 (Vinton) and 1957 (Goodwin, Southeast). Our elementary schools are approximately 55 years old and have not had major renovations since 1990-1991. The Mansfield Middle School was constructed in 1969 and has not had major renovations since 1998-1999. The existing schools have critical needs.

What is being preliminary recommended for the School Building Project?

After careful review and consideration, the Town Council at their February 21, 2012 special meeting selected a preliminary recommendation to build two new elementary schools, each housing 375 students. The new elementary schools would be located on two of three possible sites: existing Vinton site; existing Southeast site; or parcels adjacent to the existing Goodwin site. Site selection from the three locations would be determined prior to the referendum. It is anticipated that construction on the two elementary schools would be completed and open for September 2015. It is also being recommended that the Mansfield Middle School be renovated, with improvements being completed by September 2016.

What are some of the advantages to the preliminary recommendation?

New construction promotes sustainability and efficient use of resources. Modern and efficient energy management systems will reduce energy costs. Students will have access to state of the art library and media centers. Classroom size will be more uniform and students will have enhanced instructional programs. Teachers will have improved ability to collaborate and staff specialists will be shared more easily and equitably. Portable classrooms currently in use will be replaced with permanent construction.

Preliminary Recommendation Quick Facts:

- ✓ 2 new elementary schools would replace the existing 3 elementary schools, opening in September 2015. The current schools are 55 years old.
- ✓ New elementary schools would be located on two of the following sites: existing Vinton site; existing Southeast site; or parcels adjacent to the existing Goodwin site.
- ✓ Mansfield Middle School would be renovated, completed in September 2016.
- ✓ Preliminary total costs to Mansfield taxpayers is estimated at \$34,873,177.

How much will the School Building Project cost and how will it impact my taxes?

Preliminary estimates for the construction of two new elementary schools is \$52,618,688. The state would reimburse Mansfield for 45% of the cost, bringing Mansfield's share of construction costs for the elementary schools to \$29,015,271. Projected annual operational savings by reducing the number of elementary schools from three to two is \$865,000. Renovations to the Middle School are estimated at \$11,180,299. For renovations, the state reimbursement rate is 21.5% which is less than if Mansfield was to "build to new." Mansfield's share of renovation costs for the Middle School is estimated at \$5,857,906. Mansfield's total estimated share for the new elementary schools and the Middle School renovations is \$34,873,177. It is important to note that until design and site selection is finalized, all estimates are preliminary. For a Mansfield taxpayer who owns a median valued single family home a sample tax impact of this project averages to \$391 per year, or a grand total of \$8,988 over the course of the debt service. Debt service would be paid off in 23 years.

What other options were considered?

Various other options were considered such as building one new elementary school, renovating/expanding two existing elementary schools, and renovating all three elementary schools (Option A scenarios). Option A scenarios, referred to as "baseline," "baseline plus solar panels," and "enhanced," range in scope. All Option A scenarios include roof replacements, energy improvements and other renovations. Enhanced Option A includes baseline renovations plus solar panels and media centers. Depending on the Option A scenario, the estimated cost to renovate all three existing elementary schools ranges from \$25,452,048 to \$35,517,211. The state reimbursement rate

Mary F.

We, Denise Keane, Chris Paulhus and myself, Meredith Lindsey, would like to respond to and rebut the memorandum by Mr. Rick Lawrence, dated March 7th, 2012 regarding the minority position power point presentation that we presented at the March 5th public hearing. In his memorandum, Mr. Lawrence insinuated that we presented inaccurate data.

We requested the town manager provide us with a list of the inaccurate information that was supposedly contained in our presentation. Mr. Hart responded with two areas of concern: the use of the word "renovation" and the dollar amount used for the projected 2014 median assessed home value.

In the direct mail piece titled "Town of Mansfield Proposed School Building Project" sent to Mansfield residents, it states under the heading "*What other options were considered? Various other options were considered such as building one new elementary school, renovating/expanding two existing elementary schools, and renovating all three elementary schools. (Option A scenarios).*" Our power point presentation mirrored the town's own description of Option A scenarios. The fact that our presentation was taken to task for using the word renovation while the town used it to describe Option A scenarios in the mailing to Mansfield residents is ludicrous!

Regarding the concern of the projected 2014 assessed value inaccuracy, Mr. Hart states "*I also note that the presentation states that a home assessed at \$168,500 in 2010 will be reassessed at approximately \$214,542 in 2014. The public may have thought that this estimate was provided by staff or the consulting team, which I do not believe was the case.*" We strongly suggest that Mr Hart and our fellow councilors refer back to his email dated February 3, 2012, which contained information for the February 14, 2012, workshop. The two new 20 Year Cost Projections, revised January 23, 2012, use a median home assessment value of \$221,600. The town manager actually provided an estimate higher than the one used in the our power point presentation.

Of more importance than the \$7000 difference in projected 2014 median home assessment values is the fact that this information does not appear anywhere in the public record. It was provided to the council by an e-mail which stated it would be included in the packet, but the cost projections included in the public record used the 2010 assessment value of \$168,500 and are not the same ones the council received by e-mail from Mr. Hart on February 3, 2012. No mention is made in the minutes of the February 14th workshop that the cost projections the council received from Mr. Hart on February 3rd were inaccurate. Why then are they not in the public record? This omission violates the principle of open and transparent government and erodes public trust.

We trust this addresses the concerns raised by Mr. Hart regarding our presentation. As to Mr. Lawrence's memorandum, we find it difficult to believe that he was in attendance at the public hearing given his various inaccuracies and distortions regarding the information we presented. One can only hope that he is more accurate with details in the performance of his architectural responsibilities.

In conclusion, we stand behind the accuracy of our presentation. We believe Mansfield residents value their three neighborhood schools and understand the financial ramifications of the project.

Denise Keane
Meredith Lindsey
Chris Paulhus

March 12, 2012

- Attachments:
1. Memorandum from R. Lawrence dated 3/7/12
 2. E-mail from M. Hart dated 3/8/12
 3. Notice of Proposed School Building Project
 4. E-mail to Council from M. Hart dated 2/3/12 and Cost Projections attachments
 5. Minutes from 2/14/12 School Bldg workshop
 6. Copy of Minority position PowerPoint