

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

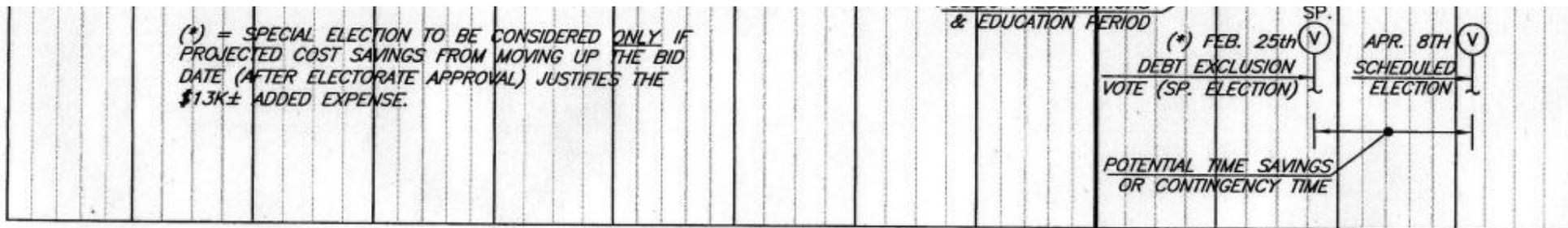
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- [FUTURE MEETING DATES](#)
- [TENTATIVE TIMELINE](#)
- [PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS \(Q&A'S GENERAL INFORMATION\)](#)
- [APPROVED MINUTES](#)

Tuesday, Oct. 1st at 7:30 - H.S. Guidance C.R.
Tuesday, Oct. 8th at 7:30 - H.S. Guidance C.R.
Weds., Oct. 16th at 7:30 - Location - TBA
Weds., Oct. 30th at 7:30 - Location - TBA
Weds., Nov. 6th at 7:30 - Location - TBA

Options Review - Public Information Sessions



Questions and Answers Regarding RMHS Schematic Design



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READING SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE APPROVED MINUTES



- [RSBC Meeting - Oct. 30, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Oct. 16, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Oct. 8, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Oct. 1, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Sept. 18, 2002 \(includes schematics\)](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Sept. 4, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Aug 21, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Aug. 7, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - July 10, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - June 26, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - May 30, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - May 21, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - May 2, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Apr. 24, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - April 4, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Feb. 26, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Feb. 19, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Feb. 12, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Feb. 05, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Jan. 29, 2002](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Nov. 7, 2001](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Nov. 1, 2001](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Oct. 23, 2001](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - June 26, 2001](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - April 11, 2001](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - March 22, 2001](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Oct. 30, 2000](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - Sep. 20, 2000](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - June 27, 2000](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - June 6, 2000](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - May 23, 2000](#)
- [RSBC Meeting - May 16, 2000](#)

Reading School Building Committee
Questions and Answers Regarding RMHS Schematic Design

On April 2nd, Reading voters will be asked for their consent to exclude a new debt of \$450,000 from the normal property tax limits in order to pay for a schematic design of a renovation to Reading Memorial High School. Producing this design was the recommendation of the School Building Committee (SBC) to Town Meeting on November 13, 2001 as a means to obtain more specific information about the needed renovations and how they will affect the Town. By a vote of 118 to 12, Town Meeting accepted this recommendation, subject to the approval of the debt exclusion by the general electorate. This handout is an intended to answer some of the more common questions about this schematic design.

Question: What are the problems with Reading's high school? Why do they cost so much to fix?

Answer: The high school is a large, sprawling building of outmoded design that has never had a comprehensive renovation in its 48-year history (33 years for its Bldg. A addition in the rear of the complex). Consequently, its physical plant systems are wearing out and its ability to adapt to changing education requirements is also deteriorating.

Examples of the physical plant systems needing repair are:

- the plumbing (not just the fixtures, but the distribution network)
- the electrical system (not just lights, but the building's power network)
- the heating and ventilation systems (replace the inefficient windows and many unit ventilators, repair worn out piping, upgrade boiler efficiency, improve air circulation)
- the communication system (non-existent or non-functional in many areas).

System upgrades trigger building code-compliance requirements and the high school's mechanical systems were designed to what are today antiquated building codes; thus, they cannot be merely patched, they must be completely overhauled and brought up to present Code standards. Other required Code updates are:

- the installation of a fire protection system (sprinklers) for the entire building
- making all areas handicap-accessible
- installing seismic hazard protection (against falling masonry walls)
- removing all hazardous materials (asbestos, PCB's, etc.).

Most importantly, the building must continue to serve its purpose: education of our high school students. Without a renovation, the faculty must continue to teach our students using outdated facilities with diminishing effectiveness as the curricula become more stringent and enrollments increase. At a minimum, the School Building Committee (SBC) has concluded that the following are vital improvements that must be done:

- update the entire facility for new technology (computer network / Internet)
- create four new science labs (to maintain accreditation)
- improve circulation between buildings
- correct gender inequality issues in the athletic facilities.

All this must be done before addressing the teaching facilities in general, such as dedicating space for the music and drama departments, creating computer workstations and a dedicated language lab and replacing obsolete equipment. On top of facility reorganization comes restoration of the building's deteriorating finishes - such as walls, floors and ceilings - and there are quite a lot of them (there are 340,000 square feet in the building).

Each undertaking in renovating this space has a cost associated with it. Total reimbursable renovation costs in the range of \$100 to \$200 per square foot are quite common for Massachusetts's high schools. Hence, big school buildings have big costs associated with fixing their problems and Reading Memorial High School is no exception.

Question: How much will it cost?

Answer: Simply put, we don't know for certain. A major reason for producing a schematic design is to be able to answer this basic question with an acceptable level of confidence, which is in large part why the SBC has recommended it. The reason for this uncertainty is that there are too many unknowns at this point to make a reliable prediction about probable cost. Examples of the unknowns are how to best upgrade the educational program without building new additions, how to maximize State reimbursements under the new regulations and how to accommodate major reconstruction in the (still occupied) building while maintaining quality education and safety for the students.

The SBC feels strongly that costs for such a large project should be predicted with as much accuracy as possible. By using the specific information produced in a schematic design phase, a cost estimate could be based on itemized pieces of preliminary design rather than on a broad diagrammatic description - an "idea" for a design.

This latter method of estimating is the only extent to which a feasibility study can go and was used in the initial high school feasibility studies. These studies (based on old state guidelines) produced several options that covered a wide range of total project costs, depending on how the "unknowns" were answered. Given the old basis on which they were produced and the variation of their estimates, choosing one of these options to commit to – even as a "ballpark" number – would be guessing. For comparison's sake, however, one could look at other communities' high school projects to get an idea of the cost spectrum:

- Lexington High School - \$28.6M / 328,500 sq. ft. (\$87.17/ sq. ft.)
- Newburyport High School - \$34.2M / 190,000 sq. ft. (\$180.26/ sq. ft.)
- Westborough High School - \$42.5M / 283,000 sq. ft. (\$150.18/ sq. ft.)
- Framingham High School - \$54.0M / 390,000 sq. ft. (\$138.46/ sq. ft.)

Thus, finding out how much the project will cost as accurately as possible is of primary importance. To the SBC (and hopefully to the voting public), the \$450K cost for a schematic design seems a reasonable price to pay to gain more specific knowledge for pricing such a significant project and help answer this important basic question.

As to the cost of the schematic design itself, under a "worst case" scenario (no State reimbursement because the resulting project is not accepted by the Town), the cost of borrowing the \$450K will depend on how long it is borrowed for, which is a decision made at the time of sale of the debt. If borrowed for three years, the cost will be a maximum of \$21.47 per year to the average Reading property (\$320K assessment). If borrowed for ten years, this cost would be \$8.68 per year (max.). These amounts would diminish as the debt is amortized.

Question: What's the point of doing a schematic design?

Answer: The most direct answer to this question is to let the community know just what they're voting for when the request for funding the project's full design and construction is made.

The high school renovation will be of a size and scope several times larger than any Town project yet undertaken and the effects on the residents will be far-reaching, both in terms of cost and on the use of the building itself. Just "What to do?" to the high school has yet to be decided, owing to changes in the State's guidelines over the past year.

Feasibility studies answer questions like this, but there are other crucial questions they don't answer, like "How to do it?" and "What will it look like?" The "How" question is particularly important since it involves performing full-scale construction in a building being shared with students and faculty performing full-scale high school education. This is a logistical balancing act known as "Phasing" – how to schedule major renovation work around teaching within the same environment, done in distinct phases - and it has tremendous influence on project costs, project timing and the students' well being. Phasing plans are not produced at the feasibility level, whereas they are at the schematic and they go a long way in answering not only "How?" but "How much?" (since time is money in construction).

Where feasibility studies produce block diagrams and verbal descriptions of what can be done, a schematic plan will produce actual drawings and specifications that inform the community of just what it will look like, what is going into it and what they'd be paying for. In addition, parents who will have their children attending the high school during the renovation will know what to expect.

Providing a schematic plan is also the first step of actual design of the renovations; it is not another study. If accepted by the Town as the basis for full design and construction, it will qualify as a reimbursable fee by the state's School Building Assistance bureau (SBA) and put the project well along on its design schedule. If it's rejected, valuable information will still have been produced to base an alternate scheme on (particularly regarding physical plant issues), avoiding having to start from scratch. Either way, the SBC believes it will be money well spent to move the project forward.

Question: What happens after the schematic design is completed?

Answer: The first use of the schematic design will be for the SBC to present it to Town Meeting for that body's review and to ask for approval to put it before the general electorate in the spring of 2003 as the solution to the high school's problems. It is during this process that the general public will begin looking at what is going to be done to RMHS and how it will happen, hopefully contacting their Town Meeting members with their comments and questions. The particulars of the project will be thoroughly explored by Town Meeting, if its past reviews of school projects are any indication, and it is hoped that approval will be given (or modifications will be requested that will lead to approval).

Once Town Meeting has so acted, the schematic design will be presented to the public at large through several public presentations for their review and approval by way of the ballot box, repeating the process followed for funding the schematic phase. Approval at that time will mean that Reading voters will allow full funding of its SBA-mandated share of the finished design and construction cost of the project (by way of a debt exclusion) that was outlined in the schematic design.

That will be the final step in the review/approval process begun at last November's Town Meeting. This process is a very deliberate one that advances in step-by-step fashion, each new step building on the previous ones. It will ensure that all Reading residents who have a say in the decision to update RMHS will have ample opportunity to learn (in a calm and timely manner) just what the plan is, why it's being proposed and how it will be executed.

Hopefully, then, the only outstanding question to answer will be "When?" This question and its answer will be entirely in the hands of the voters. Should approval be given in the spring of 2003, the earliest the project might be completed would be the fall of 2006.

During the month of March, the School Building Committee will be holding public information meetings at various locations around Reading to allow interested residents to come and have their questions answered about this project. The schedule of these meetings is:

- ***March 5th: Parker Middle School at 7:30 p.m.***
- ***March 11th: Coolidge Middle School at 7:30 p.m.***
- ***March 20th: Reading Senior Center at 7:30 p.m.***
- ***March 30th: Reading Memorial High School - Open House from 9 a.m to 1 p.m.***

Please feel free to come and talk to School Building Committee members and high school administration personnel at any of these meetings. The Open House on March 30th will be of particular interest to people unfamiliar with the high school. We hope to see you there.

- Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on October 30, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Paula Perry (PP)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Ray Porter (RP)
Rich Radville (RR)
Michael Scarpitto (MS) p/t

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Staff)
Dr. Harry Harutunian, (Staff) p/t
Gary Hart (Staff)
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)

RG gave a synopsis of a meeting held with the SBA the previous day.

- He said they did not dissuade Reading from any of the three options, although they were less comfortable with Option 3 due to the amount of new construction and they felt they would have to see it fleshed out more and reasons given for its desirability before moving forward with it. They understood the problems associated with Option 1 and did not seem troubled with Option 2's small addition. They acknowledged that they are concerned with the state budget and the effect on it that might result from the November elections. They felt that they would have a handle on the budget situation better by July.
- Sid Bowen, who also attended the meeting with the SBA, noted that their answers to questions seemed contradictory at times (to similar questions asked earlier or on other FAI projects). He felt that their variability reflected their uncertainty of just where the SBA program stood at the moment.
- AM brought up an amendment to Chapter 70B just voted by the Department of Education that recommended to the legislature a 10% rollback in reimbursement rates. He wondered if the SBA had said anything about it at the meeting. RG commented that the DOE's action was a recommendation, not a *de facto* policy change, and that it was one of the factors that the SBA noted would be sorted out after the next election.

RG reported that he had looked at the notes taken by SBA officials during meetings with Reading officials which were distributed to the Committee by Mrs. Linda Phillips at the last meeting (10/16/02).

- He said he had found no contradictions between their content and what he and others had reported to the full Committee about those meetings and asked if any Committee members had found any contradictions. None had.
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- Concerning the reimbursability of the Field House (which was a specific concern of Mrs. Phillips), RG said he and Sid Bowen and Dr Harutunian had contacted the SBA officials cited by Mrs. Phillips and had obtained a letter from those officials (Jeff Wulfson, Associate Commissioner, DOE and Christine Lynch, Administrator, SBA) which clarified their position, which he distributed and read aloud (copy attached). They said that the Field House would be reimbursable if it was part of an overall project that resolved the educational and structural issues at the high school and if the land it was on was under the control of the School Committee.

RG asked if any Committee members had gotten any impressions of the public's concerns at the public meetings that were held in the preceding weeks.

- TT said that while he had only attended the public session at Parker Middle School and had come away with the impression that if all the options were similar in cost, people seemed to be concerned with the affect of the construction process on the students. He thought that Option 3 seemed to satisfy those people's concerns the best due to its shorter, less disruptive phasing schedule.
- RG said that he did not feel a "groundswell" of support for any particular option.
- PP said she had gotten questions concerning the options from many people, many of whom favored Option 3. She felt that the high school was generating a lot of discussion throughout the Town, which was desirable.
- JS said that he noticed many people at the public forums focussing on the site plans and their treatments of the grounds around the high school. He thought the Committee should pay close attention to the pros and cons of the site development in each option. AM concurred, saying that some thought should be given to the "outdoor" phasing required for the site.
- DL noted that one constituency not yet approached by the Committee was the present RMHS student body. He noted that the school newspaper had sent a reporter to the Coolidge presentation. Frank Orlando said that meetings were being set up at RMHS to present the options to student groups and the staff.

Sid Bowen then discussed FAI's approach to programming that was used in the Option development.

- He explained that a quantitative analysis is done to satisfy the State's requirements concerning the academic program's ability to meet educational goals. What is also done is to identify separate academic groups such as

social studies, math, etc. He passed out a bubble diagram listing the different academic groups identified (copy attached).

- The groups are then organized within the school to foster useful interaction between them, creating “adjacencies” to place departments next to each other that share common educational themes, such as Math next to Science and Social Studies next to English. Mr. Bowen passed out an adjacency diagram to the Committee (copy attached).
- One adjacency that is prevalent in RMHS, he said, was the large number of groups that require direct access to the outside (such as RISE and athletics). This presents difficulties in trying to integrate those groups into the main body of the school. In addition, creating an understandable circulation pattern among the groups would also be a vital goal in setting up the RMHS program.
- It was acknowledged that the administration needed to have a presence at the main building entrance and the Media Center needed to be in a prominent place. Similar prominence was needed for the Auditorium.
- Discussing the Media Center, Mr. Bowen noted that emerging technology would diminish the need for its prominence and it should be thought of (for planning purposes) as being flexible to adapt to other (future) uses.
- When looking at programming for the existing building, it became apparent that many of the existing spaces had little programming value due to their locations and make-up. Examples were the Civil Defense area under the Auditorium (unfinished space) and the lower levels of the Industrial Arts wing (“Echo Corridor”).
- Regarding the quantitative planning, Mr. Bowen said that space needs were conservatively calculated for an enrollment of around 1,320 students, rounding classroom numbers up when fractional amounts were found. This allowed for assimilation of extra students if the enrollments proved to be low.
- BC asked if the number of classrooms for Social Studies and English increased or diminished. Frank Orlando answered that the actual number decreased, but with the present number of classrooms, many of them were underutilized.
- RG asked AM if he was comfortable with the quantitative analyses presented by Mr. Bowen. AM expressed curiosity at the different conclusions arrived at by Mr. Bowen and Mr. Zimmerman, who did the analysis for the Strekalovsky & Hoit feasibility study. In the previous analysis, it was reported that the scheduling of classes was already challenging for 1,100 students (calculated without additions) while FAI’s options could house 1,320. Mr. Bowen explained that the previous study had assigned each teacher a classroom, thus curtailing the ability to use the total amount of classrooms as efficiently as possible for scheduling purposes. He expressed confidence in the 1,320 number, noting that an increase of 100 or so students could be accommodated in any option designed for that number.
- AM said that he wasn’t comfortable with the 1,320 number being used as a target because he felt that future populations (beyond the 10-12 year

projections) might exceed the high range of MISER's projections. He felt that a renovation or new building intended to last for 20-30 years should be able to accommodate such excess.

- TT asked if the data on actual classrooms used for specific subjects matched the mathematical averaging used to calculate the number of required classrooms. Frank Orlando replied that actual scheduling of classroom use and class size was a complex combination of available space and available staff, with the staffing limitations being more of a determinant than the space limitations. A general discussion ensued discussing the space desires of faculty, the efficient layout of classrooms and new teaching methods that use technology to cut down space requirements.
- PP asked Mr. Orlando how many students opt for private school each year, noting that a change in that amount might affect the target enrollment. He replied that typically 8%-9% of the eighth graders are lost as they move up to ninth grade. He noted that that amount has been as low as 4%-4½% and that in some years students have returned to public school from private school in significant numbers.
- A general discussion took place concerning the maximum number of students to be accommodated, focussing on expandability, reimbursement and what spaces are to be included/excluded in calculating this number. FAI offered to come back to the Committee with a more definitive summary of how many students the three options could handle.

RG asked Sid Bowen if FAI needed any more information from the Committee (other than a choice of an option) in order to send a needs assessment to the SBA by December 1, 2002. Mr. Bowen replied that they were prepared for that submission and required only a choice and an enrollment figure (which was discussed at this meeting).

RG reminded the Committee that after the next public input session (on Nov. 2nd at RMHS), the SBC must deliberate on what the choice should be. He said that although he must make a report of progress to the Subsequent Town Meeting on Nov. 12th, he did not want Committee members to feel pressured to make a decision before then, noting that he thought it might take more than one more meeting to come to a decision.

Observer Jackie Mandell asked if the SBA would restrict the amount of square footage that could be renovated by their formulae that calculate maximum square footage. She was answered that the formulae use allowable square footage to calculate the maximum cost that they would reimburse and that cost is what is restricted (for State participation), not specific square feet.

Observer Linda Phillips asked if the costs of the upgrades to the athletic fields were included in the cost estimates for the options. Mr. Bowen answered that they were and that they could be removed from the budget if the Committee or Town Meeting chose to do so.

Observer Jackie Mandell presented a letter addressed to the Committee containing her recommendations for reconsideration of demolition of the Industrial Arts wing of the high school (*copy* attached). She read her letter aloud for the SBC.

RG tentatively scheduled an SBC meeting for Nov. 13th in the RMHS Guidance Center.

Observer Linda Phillips reiterated an earlier concern of hers that the architect and the SBC were pursuing a feasibility study for RMHS and not a schematic design. She presented copies of documents in which the words "feasibility" and "study" were used in reference to the high school project (copies attached), which she put forward as evidence supporting her claim. RG responded that the use of those terms reflected descriptions of the initial processes undertaken in the production of the schematic design and not an ulterior contract for a feasibility study. Arguments to the contrary were semantic in nature, he said, and did not change the Committee's and the architect's agreement to produce a schematic design for RMHS, as charged.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. TT so moved and was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on October 16, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Alex McRae (AM)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Paula Perry (PP) p/t

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Staff)
Dr. Harry Harutunian (Staff)
Gary Hart (Staff)
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)

RG asked if FAI had anything to report on reducing the phasing times for any on the options (primarily Options 1 and 2).

- Sid Bowen said that his office was in the process of investigating the costs and procedures involved with using temporary modular classrooms to act as swing space to aid the phasing schemes but had not completed them as yet. At issue is not determining the cost of renting the modulators, but how to service them with power and heat and where to put them on the site. Exploring the value of the possible acceleration of the phasing schedules that modulators might allow would not be worth reviewing if the associated costs were not known. FAI hoped to present modular information at a later meeting.
- Another idea for improving the phasing aspects of the high school renovation was voiced at the previous night's Open Meeting at Parker Middle School, which was to employ an off-site venue as swing space (rent temporary space in another existing building to house a significant portion of the student population). The Addison- Wesley (A-W) property was mentioned as a possible site. Dr. Harutunian said there would be several obstacles to such a venue in his view. One would be the bussing required to transport students to the A-W site. Another would be the cost of rental. Another would be the need for the students to use elevators for changing floors. And still another would be the fit-up costs to customize the space for classroom use. He

thought that an adjacent community might have rental educational space to use that might do away with some of those concerns.

- AM thought that any ideas regarding off-site rental should be proven practical before pursuing them.
- Frank Orlando thought that the A-W scheme was a creative idea that indicated willingness on the part of the community to try and help the phasing situation. However, he felt the logistics of such a venture would be too difficult to arrange successfully and did not recommend pursuing it.
- RR brought up a suggestion by a member of the Board of Selectmen to use added shifts to compress the time needed to complete the phases. Mr. Bowen said that in past projects, they have specified second shift work to be done, sending workers into non-isolated areas after the students have left for the day. The crews had to do as much work as they could in those second shifts and clean up before leaving to allow the areas to be used during the day. However, compelling overtime for work in the isolated areas was not something that FAI had ever done. RR thought the Selectmen's idea was to specify double shifts in order to reduce the calendar time spent on the project. Mr. Bowen said he would look into such a scheme to see if it had merit.
- Dr. Harutunian asked if there was any contingency time built into the phasing schemes developed thusfar or were they dependent on deadlines being met on time. Mr. Bowen replied that the phasing schemes were constructed with the over-riding requirement that the educational program would not be affected if deadlines were not met on time. This meant that there was no reliance on season-dependent procedures or scheduling of phases that used narrow time windows (like spring and winter vacations). Hence, he felt that the only way to "tighten" the phasing would be to make more of the building available to the contractor at any one time (by finding more swing space).
- JS asked if double sessions could be used to compress the amount of school space needed and thereby give more of the school over to the contractor during the phases. Dr. Harutunian and Mr. Orlando replied that due to the DOE regulations for time spent in learning, double sessions would not be feasible, making the second session run well into the evening to satisfy the reg's.
- Observer Kendra Cooper related a novel phasing scheme used at Newburyport High School. The school was vacated for renovation by sending the high school students to the nearby middle school and sending the middle school students to a vacant elementary school in the adjacent town of Salisbury. Salisbury charged Newburyport only one dollar in rent and had Newburyport pay the cost of operating and maintaining the building. This arrangement was in force for two years.
- TT asked FAI if they were looking at creating temporary classrooms in the field house as swing space. Mr. Bowen replied that to do so would mean the suspension of interscholastic athletics for one to two years. Therefore, they were looking into renting modular classrooms as a way to create more swing space.

- TT commented that it thought it would be difficult to use off-site space (such as at A-W) as swing space and he did not think an almost rent-free situation like Newburyport experienced could be found near Reading. Dr. Harutunian then commented that the Town of Stoneham was going to have a large elementary school vacant in the future. He also noted a similar school-rental situation that occurred in Salem (using a vacant school in Beverly). He doubted that the rent would be as low as Newburyport paid, however, and pointed out the costs of bussing needed to transfer students across town boundaries. TT also noted the costs and the political element of uprooting a student population to a remote location.
- AM wondered if there would be any problems with relocating just the ninth grade to another location. Frank Orlando and Dr. Harutunian said that there were too many programs that the freshmen participated in that overlapped with the upperclassmen to make such a separation work. Also, administrative staff for the freshmen would have to be duplicated off-site and would likely be cost-prohibitive. AM then asked if extending the school day by one period would benefit the phasing. Dr. Harutunian said that such a plan would require renegotiations of teachers' contracts.
- JS initiated a general discussion about what costs would be reimbursable by the State by asking if the costs of bussing, equipping and running an off-site facility would be reimbursable (administrative costs would not be, "moving" costs might be). Other topics included the payment of costs over the maximum cap allowed by the State, whether that cap was enough to build an adequate new high school (FAI thought it wasn't) and how the State would view reimbursements for renovations over new construction.
- Observer Jackie Mandell put forward an idea of using the industrial arts wing as temporary swing space which could be later used for other non-high school purposes. A general discussion ensued on the value of spending money for building temporary classrooms and having non-programmatic space left over. The costs of building acceptable space in that wing were noted as being higher than elsewhere and it was thought that any renovations not destined for program usage by the high school would not be regarded as reimbursable by the State. FAI said that they could investigate such an idea further.

RG asked FAI and the Committee members for their impressions of the comments fielded at the public meeting in Parker Middle School the night before.

- Sid Bowen said Robert Peirce had drawn up a summary of the comments made at the meeting (**copy** attached). He said that some of the comments they had not considered and would be addressing them in the future. Many of the issues that were raised had been addressed already.
- TT said that he did not see any dominant opinion from the attendees about which option was favored. He noted that parents who were concerned about the effects of the phasing on their children seemed to initially gravitate towards Option 3 (shortest phasing). RG noticed some couples splitting on favoring Options 2 and 3.

- JS observed that most people noticed that the choices between the renovation options (1 & 2) and the reno./addition option (3) were a choice between the most space and least phasing, which was an astute observation after so brief an introduction to the options.
- RG noticed that with few exceptions the attending group seemed to accept the close cost estimates. RR added that he felt that since the options all aimed at providing comprehensive upgrades to the school both physically and programmatically, arriving at similar costs through different methods of approach did not seem unreasonable.
- AM commented that he was encouraged by the spirit exhibited by the attendees to help bring suggestions for the options to the Committee's attention. He also noted that the three options do differ in costs more significantly if one looked at the costs to Reading after reimbursement of the cap amount and that these to-Reading costs should be made clear.
- JS asked Dr. Harutunian if the School Committee hadn't voted to reject any scheme for the high school that wasn't 100% reimbursable. He responded that the SC had taken two votes on the matter, both specific to options presented in the Strekalovsky & Hoit feasibility study. The first vote was not to approve a scheme that only addressed administrative and physical needs and did not address educational program (S&H Opt. A). The second was not to approve the construction of a new high school (S&H Opt. D). Both rejections were due to the fact that the SBA guidelines in force at the time of the votes would have prohibited these projects from receiving reimbursement.
- RG was reminded that a joint meeting with the School Committee had been scheduled for November 7, 2002 and so informed the Committee members.
- Observer Linda Phillips asked what were the plans for the Field House and what would be the cost of renovating it would be without state reimbursement. She said she had a conversation with Jeff Wulfson of the SBA in which he told her the Field House was not reimbursable. Sid Bowen responded that all the options renovated the Field House and that the costs associated with it were included in the overall renovation costs, not itemized out for separate funding.
- Mrs. Phillips then passed out copies of notes made by SBA personnel from meetings held with Reading representative (copies attached) which she claimed contradicted statements to the Committee by Mr. Graham and Mr. Bowen concerning the reimbursability of the Field House (she said she obtained the notes with Jackie Mandell). She claimed Mr. Wolfson saw no need for transfer of care, custody and control of the Field House to the School Committee for the sake of SBA reimbursement because he told Mrs. Phillips that the Field House was not to be considered for state funding. She demanded an explanation of the discrepancy. Mr. Graham responded that her assertions were contrary to his recollection of the meetings that he and others had with the SBA personnel in question and that he would research the notes and report back to the Committee on the subject.
- AM passed out copies of an article from the Boston Globe about the artificial track and playing surface installed at Belmont High School's football stadium

(copy attached), noting that similar materials are being considered for Reading's fields. RG and Dr. Harutunian remarked that they had traveled to Belmont with the Athletic Director and a member of the School Committee to see the new installation and picked up some informational materials that they would try to distribute to Committee members.

AM requested the production of educational specifications and have a discussion of them before choosing an option, mainly to determine a target enrollment around which the ed. specs would be based. JS asked FAI if any of the options would change materially as a result of pinning down the enrollment number. Sid Bowen replied that unless that number was well beyond the working assumption (of 1,320 students), there would be no significant revisions to the options that would change them from their present forms. JS thought that determining or not determining the enrollment number would not affect the decision-making process.

AM also wondered if enough options had been created; specifically, if another option involving renovation/addition was possible between Options 2 and 3. Mr. Bowen discouraged further sub-division of the options, noting that his firm had looked at intermediate options between 2 and 3 and found that they did not create more valuable options and seemed to cause confusion. He said that creating a continuum of options would obscure any clear direction to follow for any of them. AM offered an idea that had surfaced via public input about saving the existing auditorium in Option 3 rather than build a new one as an example of looking "between" options. Mr. Bowen replied that they had looked at such an idea early on and found that planning circulation and phasing around the preservation of the existing auditorium produced poorer results than any of the others and would ultimately cost as much as building a new auditorium.

Observer Linda Phillips asked if a feasibility study were being produced by FAI and when would such a study be available. She referred to procedures recommended by the Inspector General. Observer Jackie Mandell interrupted by referring to a letter written by FAI in which Sid Bowen wrote that his firm was in the process of undertaking a feasibility study for the physical and programmatic revitalization of RMHS. RG answered that as instructed by Town Meeting and affirmed by the voters of Reading (via a debt exclusion election), the SBC was engaged in producing a schematic design for Town Meeting and the voters' review. He said that Mr. Bowen might have referred to the feasibility stage of producing that schematic design in his correspondence. He cautioned the observers not to continue to interrupt and be discourteous.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. RR so moved and was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:05 pm).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on October 8, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Rich Radville (RR)
Paula Perry (PP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Ray Porter (RP)
Bill Carroll (BC)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Staff)
Dr. Harry Harutunian (Staff) p/t
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Robert Peirce (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)

RG asked the representatives from FAI to update the Committee on the enrollment projections introduced at the last meeting (10-01-02), the three options presented and on the expected presentations for the upcoming public input meetings.

- Regarding enrollments, Sid Bowen said that FAI had been going over the MISER projections and had been discussing certain technical aspects of them with AM. They still planned on using target enrollment numbers in the 1,320 to 1,350 ranges. One concern mentioned by AM was the effect of the change in eligibility dates for starting kindergarten that occurred some years ago (restricting the eligibility of children to start kindergarten to those who reach their fifth birthdays by August 31st rather than December 31st). MISER was asked to study that effect, but it was expected that it would not be significant enough to alter the target enrollment enough to require revisions to the designs in the options.
- Regarding the options, FAI passed out summaries of the attributes of each option that were intended to serve as handout materials for the upcoming public meetings (**copy** attached). He went over the handout's preamble that explained the search for three options to satisfy the Mass. Dept. of Education's requirements for funding as a "capital project" under the SBA program. He stated that while the SBA now allowed repair projects that did not address educational program updates, the charge FAI took from the Committee was to include programmatic changes. One requirement for SBA funding is that the School Committee must endorse the program of the finished school and FAI was proceeding under the assumption that such an

endorsement would be forthcoming (it had been crafted in coordination with the staff and administration).

- Mr. Bowen read through the handout. He noted that there was no difference between the options in terms of educational program provided. There were differences in the phasing plans. However, the phasing for each scheme was predicated on the allowance of enough overlap time between phases to avoid major hold-ups in the construction schedule and to minimize the impact to the education process. The risk of delays in the completion of phases was highest in the renovation schemes (Opt.'s 1 and 2) while the least risk was found in the major addition scheme (Opt. 3). Hence, the overall times for the renovation options were seen to be the longest while the addition scheme, which used the new addition for swing space, was the shortest.
- Copies of site plans and phasing plans for all three options were passed out to Committee members as well as more developed plans for Option 3 (copies attached). Robert Peirce went over updates to the site plans of all three options. He noted that the access roads to the neighborhoods had been eliminated in response to comments made by Committee members.
- Option 1 had expanded the parking behind the Supt.'s office and the Field House. Synthetic football and soccer/practice fields were included. A connecting road between the upper Oakland Road parking lots to the lots behind the Supt.'s office created a completed loop around the campus. A handicap-accessible pathway linked the lower parking with Bldg. C.
- Option 2's site plan was very similar to Option 1's, with the only significant difference being a small entry plaza occupying the site of the demolished Industrial Arts wing.
- Option 3 employed increased parking areas in the present locations of the auditorium and cafeteria and in the current practice field north of the Field House (this lot would service field-related events). A synthetic practice field would be placed in an area now occupied by trees and the northern edge of the wooded section north of the tennis courts. The parking areas would not be connected to form a complete loop around the building, although they could be if deemed necessary.
- RR commented that while he did not have any alternatives in mind, he thought that creating a connecting road to Birch Meadow Drive across from the YMCA would be detrimental to the traffic congestion that is already a problem at that location. Sid Bowen responded that he understood the concern with that access road, but thought that perhaps it could be made a one-way drive to allow one access road in and another out of the campus, thus directing traffic through the high school grounds. He pointed out that with Birch Meadow School, Coolidge Middle School, the YMCA and the high school all in close proximity to each other, traffic was inevitable and would not likely be reduced in the future. Controlling its flow seemed to be the best approach and would be the subject of the traffic engineers' work. Option 3 tried to get as much off-street parking as possible in order to absorb the cars on-site rather than send them onto the neighboring streets.

- Frank Orlando recommended to FAI that they look into ways to funnel traffic away from the junction of Birch Meadow Drive and Oakland Road, since that location often becomes a bottleneck. FAI noted that until a scheme is chosen, the traffic studies and analysis needed to do that sort of design would not be done.
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked if the school-owned property located on the southern side of Oakland Road could be used for parking. Mr. Peirce answered that uses for that property were investigated and it was found that no cost-effective use could be found for it due to its steep topography and composition (mainly ledge outcrops).
- RP asked if other access roads in and out of the site were being considered (as they once were), pointing out a connection to Hartshorn Street to the west as one example and to Whittier Road to the northeast as another. Mr. Bowen responded that they could consider it but they needed direction from the Committee, acknowledging that such a change would affect neighborhoods that previously had little traffic impact from high school traffic. RP thought such investigations should be made. RG thought that such possibilities should be pointed out to the general public.
- A general discussion ensued focussing on parking, with FAI stressing the advantages of off-street parking. Comments focussed on the value of adding angled parking on Oakland Road, terracing parking lots, restricting left-hand turns at intersections, making certain streets one-way, and past concepts for traffic control around the Birch Meadow complex. Many of the questions raised could only be answered with further traffic studies that would be done after a preferred scheme was chosen.
- Robert Peirce went over the expanded plans for Option 3, explaining the layouts of the new spaces between the existing 1969 portions of the existing building and the Field House. The new auditorium constructed to the south of the existing Lecture Hall / Media Center structures would have the art and music programs clustered around it on two floors. It would have a separate entrance and lobby to the south (where new parking areas would be). The mezzanine level over the present Media Center would be filled in to create business classrooms. Circulation for the new arrangement would be focussed along the central axis of the new connecting addition. There would be a large floor-to-floor height between the lowest level (essentially the level of the present Field House floor) and the next one (the level of the present Lecture Hall) which could accommodate a tall cafeteria space.
- PP asked how much square footage would be lost with Option 3 (from Options 1 and 2) and where it would come from. Mr. Peirce said a chart showing the lost spaces was being prepared.
- RP expressed reservations about focussing on Option 3 at the possible expense of the other options. He said he had contacted SBA Director Christine Lynch about Option 3 and was told that while Option 3 was not discouraged, the SBA had not had enough time to look at it closely to render further judgement (due to a pressing amount of other projects demanding their attention). In light of the uncertainty of that judgement, he felt that time should be invested in further developing and modifying the renovation options

(1 and 2), particularly in terms of reducing the phasing times. He wondered if putting the options before the public without such further development would be prudent. He asked for comments.

- Sid Bowen responded that in his discussions with Director Lynch, he thought the uncertainty she was stressing was whether or not any project submitted by Reading would be accepted this year, whichever option it was notwithstanding. He said the current state of the DOE budget was in flux and as a result, the number and category of school building projects expected to be accepted this year was not knowable, according to Ms. Lynch. Consequently, he perceived her reticence to take a position on any option stemmed from a desire not to promise something the SBA might not be able to deliver or would have to renege later on. The SBA has consistently expressed a desire to be kept informed of the directions the RMHS project was going to ensure that those directions satisfied DOE requirements and they have been updated regularly, according to Mr. Bowen. But until one option is chosen and developed sufficiently for SBA review, acceptance of any undeveloped option could not be known with assurance, he said. As to whether or not the public should be shown un-assured options, Mr. Bowen felt that they should be presented for feedback with an honest description of the SBA's involvement to date and the uncertainties under which they currently operate.
- AM said that at the present time, Option 3 was just being better understood and he thought the Committee had an obligation to perform due diligence on their review of all three options. RR stated that in his view, no option was being favored over any other and that each had its own issues to be digested compared and discussed.
- RP reiterated his desire to see more work done on improving the phasing of Option 1. RG reminded the Committee that Option 3 was conceived in the first place as a way to satisfy the expressed desire to keep the phasing time to around 30 months. Its latest development was performed to bring it up to the level of the other options, since it was only tentatively presented initially (FAI did not know how the Committee would react to it). Mr. Bowen said the main reason for the long phasing of Option 1 was due to the creation of temporary classrooms within the building. Perhaps some other means could be explored to take their place (such as temporary modulars).

Observer Jackie Mandell asked about the timing of submitting options to the SBA for consideration. She asked if it was possible that the SBA would not know if Reading's high school project was accepted for reimbursement until February 2003 even if the preferred project was discussed initially with them by December 1 (as they require). Mr. Bowen said that such a scenario was possible given the uncertain progress of the SBA in handling all the work it needs to do.

JS posed the question that if FAI was charged with reducing the phasing times of Options 1 and 2 by 3 months (say), what could be done to do it? Mr. Bowen replied that they would research the answer to that question and would reply at a later time, but the answer might well be that there is nothing realistic that could be done to achieve that goal. AM suggested that perhaps the renovation process itself could be intensified (in ways FAI had described for other school projects) to shorten the time frame. Mr. Bowen replied that they could go all the way to the extreme phasing solution of providing all the

swing space in the form of temporary modulars and look at all scenarios in between the present one and the extreme one as a way of answering these questions. He cautioned about being optimistic about the results, however. RG cautioned FAI to be rigidly honest in their answers, remarking that many problems have arisen in other districts' school projects because the governing committee was told something they wanted to hear rather than what they needed to know (in terms of phasing).

JS told the Committee of a suggestion put to him by a citizen who was getting familiar with the options which was to put the existing auditorium up for sale if Option 3 was pursued rather than demolish it. Sid Bowen remarked that the same question had surfaced in his office during the development of Option 3. While such a thing was possible, he said, it was rarely practicable due to the lack of a willing buyer or tenant. Saving it for some other community use was also more theory than practice due to the daunting task of finding community funding for care and maintenance of the abandoned space.

RG asked if FAI was going to present the needs of the high school in terms of the existing conditions (for the upcoming public meetings). Robert Peirce said they could present the executive summary results as shown in the updated existing conditions report (copies distributed to Committee members). He said the summary listed needs in terms of "must do", "should do" and "would like to do" categories. He showed updated phasing boards, remarking that the estimated time per phase had been listed and that the straight sum of those times exceeded the listed total time given for each option due to overlap of the phases.

A general discussion took place on the content and conduct of the public meetings scheduled to begin October 15th at Parker Middle School. It was agreed that the SBC would describe the process by which the project had come to the options being considered and that FAI would then discuss the options themselves. Both the SBC and FAI would answer questions. It was agreed that topics such as site access, SBA involvement, space losses, etc. were to be part of the presentations.

Observer Jackie Mandell asked if any of the options assumed that each teacher had a dedicated classroom and if the staff had been apprised of the options under consideration. BC said that the staff had been receiving updates about the options and noted the differences in allotted spaces between them. Dr. Harutunian and Sid Bowen explained that the State did not regard dedicated classrooms for all teachers as a necessity and would not evaluate the square footage deemed reimbursable on the basis of one classroom per teacher. Schools built with this criterion in mind would exceed the caps set by the State for reimbursement and the differences would have to be paid entirely by the districts building them.

DL asked if the utilization of the buildings created by the three options could be quantified to better judge their relative values. Mr. Bowen said it would be difficult to do so since any space provided in any option would be used for a purpose that has value. Comparison with a wholly new high school would reveal that a new space for the target population would total around 250,000 sq. ft., which would be programmed for maximum utilization.

Sid Bowen said that the cap for Reading's high school was nearly \$50M based on last year's reimbursement numbers and would apply to any of the three options. This led RG to confirm with Mr. Bowen that all three options answer the programmatic, physical and educational problems of RMHS.

Observer Jackie Mandell wondered if the rental space now available in the present high school was to be lost and could that income be made up in the new options. Mr. Bowen replied that the State would not reimburse new or renovated space used solely for rent (non-educational use) but space created for peak enrollments could be used for such a purpose in non-peak years.

Observer Linda Phillips asked if extra reimbursable space could be provided for kindergarten or pre-K needs in the future. She was answered that the School Committee could only decide such a need, since the SBC does not determine educational program. The School Committee has not identified such a need.

Observer Jackie Mandell commented that the Industrial Arts wing had the capacity for up to 10 classrooms (using the RISE provisions of Option 1 as an example) and thought such space should be held for future use. She also commented that the REAP program utilized high school students in an early education program. She felt that such programmatic use of rental spaces might justify reimbursement for them. Frank Orlando and Dr. Harutunian responded that the number of high school students involved in such programs was quite small and that the program also involved work at the elementary schools.

RR reported that the two Town newspapers had expressed willingness to print the (color) plans that will be shown in the public meetings in their publications. Sid Bowen said his office could transmit the plans to the papers in whatever form was convenient for them. RR also suggested that the plans be put on display in a public place, like the Reading Public Library. Placing them on the Town's website was also deemed desirable. The Committee agreed and directed FAI to coordinate with those Town agencies to make the materials available. General discussions then took place concerning the effectiveness of video coverage of SBC meetings and presentations (generally positive).

Observer Linda Phillips wondered what was found in the existing conditions report that suggested the need for demolishing any part of the existing school and building replacement space. She was informed that the driving factor in producing the demo/replacement options was to improve the phasing of the project.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the September 4, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL so moved and was seconded by PP. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:10 pm).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on October 1, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Ray Porter (RP)
Paula Perry (PP)
Alex McRae (AM)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Rich Radville (RR)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Staff)
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Robert Peirce (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Dr. Harry Harutunian (Supt., Reading Public Schools), p/t

RG opened the meeting by stating that he had received a letter from the Reading Symphony Orchestra outlining their concerns with renovating the high school, which were presented to the Committee in person at the last meeting (refer to the minutes of the September 18, 2002 SBC meeting). He also received a letter from Alison DaSilva, Chair of the Reading Cultural Council, who could not attend the previous meeting, describing that body's hopes and wishes regarding their future use of the renovated facilities at RMHS. RG read the letter to the Committee (copy attached).

RG then briefed the Committee of a visit made to the offices of the School Building Assistance bureau the previous week by himself, Sid Bowen (FAI) and Dr. Harutunian (Superintendent) to meet with Director Christine Lynch.

- The main topic of discussion was the acceptability of the recently proposed Option 3 as a reimbursable solution to the problems of the high school (Option 3 retains the field house and the 1969 addition while adding major new space between them). While neither approving nor disapproving of the option, she said she was not averse to the Committee looking into it further. When reminded of her October 1, 2001 letter, in which she seemed to discourage the creation of new space, she responded that those comments were based on reviewing feasibility studies that had additions to the original building footprint (with a net gain in square footage). She recognized that Option 3 removed and reconstructed space (with a net loss in square footage), which was a different approach from the one used in the feasibility studies and she would not discourage it. She said she would need to see more development of Option 3 in order to further evaluate its reimbursability, however.

- Sid Bowen agreed with RG's assessment of Ms. Lynch's reaction to Option 3, noting that the SBA liked to be kept informed of the development of a likely project, but would not render an opinion on it until a more comprehensive assessment of the needs for the project was presented to them.
- RG then spoke of the SBA's interest in having the field house property under the direct control and management of the School Committee, pointing out that that was a distinct criterion for acceptance of any modifications to the field house by the SBA (for funding). Bracket & Lucas (Town Counsel) had performed a study of the field house ownership to determine which Town agency controlled the various parcels of property in question. Dr. Harutunian had, in response to a request by the Town Engineer for a comprehensive survey of the area, asked the School Committee to vote to ask the School Building Committee to contract for such a survey as part of the schematic design process (they did so by a vote of 5-1). RG had questioned the need for such a survey in order to satisfy the SBA and found that they did not require one when applying for reimbursement. Hence, he did not feel the SBC should spend any funds available to it for that purpose (accurately determining lots and boundaries would be an internal matter for the Town). He noted that the School Committee was sponsoring an article in the upcoming Subsequent Town Meeting to transfer control of all educational property to their committee. Dr. Harutunian was scheduled to speak to the SBC later in the meeting.

FAI then presented the results of enrollment projects done by MISER (Mass. Institute for Social and Economic Research), passing out copies of forecasts and graphs to Committee members (copies attached).

- Robert Peirce explained the handouts. The first was a narrative of MISER's approach and methodology. Following were six packages of tabulated data (four pages each). The first page of each package summarized historic and projected enrollments by grade. The second page was a graph of the first page's data. The third page was a repeat of the first page's data and the fourth tabulated the data into elementary, middle and high school groupings.
- The six packages were actually three groups of pairs of projections, the pairs being summaries of all school-age children actually expected to be in the school system (designated "Local") and of all school-age children who are expected to reside in Reading (designated "Total"). The reason for looking at both summaries was to assess the degree of public school enrollment (Local) when compared with the maximum number of Reading children available (Total). The difference between the two indicated non-public school students.
- The three groups separated projections into three categories of assumptions of population growth when making enrollment forecasts. The assumptions ranged from conservative (Low growth), average (Baseline growth) and aggressive (High growth).
- FAI graphed out the three groups of data for Local high school (9-12) students (copy attached), including a similar plot of a December 2001 projection made by NESDEC. Mr. Peirce noted that the basic patterns of growth were similar in all forecasts, with the numbers varying with the assumptions. The differences between assumptions became more

pronounced the farther one went from the present due, he explained, to the compounding effects of the (conservative, average, aggressive) approaches. The NESDEC results consistently fell between MISER's Baseline and Low numbers. Mr. Peirce noted that thusfar, FAI had been using a target enrollment of 1,320 students (MISER's projected Baseline maximum enrollment was 1,330 in 2012-2013).

- Sid Bowen clarified that the differences between the Baseline projections and the Low and High projections were to assume one standard deviation below and above (respectively) the Baseline variables as the projections progressed through time. He also related his discussions with MISER and the developers of the two large housing developments now scheduled to go forward in the near future (Longwood and Spence Farms). According to MISER, the increases in student population should follow similar trends that occurred after similar developments in the '80's and '90's. They felt that High projections would cover any unusual influx of students resulting from those new homes being built. He noted that anything within the Low to High ranges would be acceptable to the SBA and it was up to the Committee to decide the final programming number.
- AM requested if the data for the enrollment figures that MISER used that were lower than NESDEC's figures could be clarified.
- A general discussion ensued concerning particular procedures, trends and records used in the projections. RG suggested that Committee members digest the data received separately and discuss them at a later meeting.

Sid Bowen then revisited the three options presented thus far to the Committee, reiterating the hallmarks of each one. He focussed on Option 3 (build new space between the field house and the 1969 additions, demolishing the 1952 building) and the work done on it by his team since the last meeting (presenting an Option 3B, whereas the initial version was labeled Option 3A).

- Two suggestions made by the Committee were incorporated into the revised third option; to separate the auditorium from the field house and to re-use more of the existing building. The auditorium was now located to the south of the media center/lecture hall building (Bldg. B), taking advantage of the natural slope of the terrain there. In so doing, Building B was retained along with Building C, thus re-using significantly more of the existing campus than was initially proposed (in Option 3A).
- He explained that the educational program envisioned for Option 3 clustered the visual and performing arts around the new auditorium (in existing Bldg. B) while keeping the math and science programs in Bldg. C. The new space connecting the field house and Bldg. C contained areas for the cafeteria, kitchen, administration, PE lockers, the RISE program and mechanical space on the first (lower) floor, level with the field house floor. The English department and a new media center would be on the second (ground) floor while the Social Studies department would occupy the third (upper) floor.
- Regarding revised phasing projections for Option 3B, Mr. Bowen said that the construction of the new auditorium would intrude on the area now occupied by Bldg. A3 and would therefore add approximately two more months to the

estimated 30-month schedule produced for Option 3A (32 months for Option 3B). He felt a proper phasing scheme could manage the demolition and construction in the Bldg. A3 area.

FAI then passed out updated cost estimates for Options 1, 2 and 3B (copy attached).

- Sid Bowen pointed out that at the moment, SBA listed Reading's base reimbursement rate as 53.11% and incentive percentage points could be added for use of a construction manager (2%) and for renovation. Points were theoretically available for good district-wide maintenance, but it was felt that this incentive was still ill defined at SBA and would most likely not be awarded to any project yet. Based on the amount of renovation performed in each option, the renovation incentive would be expected to vary between a maximum of 5% for Option 1 (total renovation) to pro-rated incentives less than 5% for partial renovations (estimated as 4.7% for Option 2 and 2.94% for Option 3B).
- Mr. Bowen discussed the inclusion of contingency amounts in the estimates, explaining the need for construction, Owner and consultants' fee overages that could crop up in the course of a normal project (amounts were based on FAI's experience). The estimator's contingency of 10% was the most appreciable amount and reflected the degree of uncertainty in the prices for school construction in the current market.
- A brief discussion took place concerning the advantages and pitfalls of operating and maintaining new square footage vs. renovated existing square footage, touching on such aspects as energy efficiency, custodial hours required, complexity of new systems and the need for programmed maintenance. Mr. Bowen said the chief advantage to Option 3B over the other two was the obvious phasing advantage, in his view.
- JS asked about the maximum amount Reading would qualify for in reimbursement from the state and how that compared with the cost estimates. AM also asked how those maximums were calculated. Mr. Bowen said that using the 2002 reimbursement rate, he thought the estimates made would be \$2-3M over the limit calculated. The limit is calculated by multiplying the expected number of students by an allowable amount of square feet per student (155 sq. ft./student in 2002), add in additional square footage for things like special education, computer space and programs like RISE (estimated to be an additional 25%) and multiply that time the allowable dollars per square foot set by SBA (\$191/sq. ft. in 2002). Given all that, he said that Reading's maximum would be just under \$50M for 1,350 students. The State's factors are expected to change for 2003.
- JS asked if there were any disadvantages for Option 3B for building to a lower square footage in terms of reimbursement. Mr. Bowen replied that there weren't any. RG and FinCom's Andrew Grimes asked about 3B's programmatic disadvantages. Mr. Bowen replied that the loss of a second gym and the lack of flexibility from not having additional space for storage, etc. were the main ones. He mentioned that the community could opt to salvage the present auditorium and its surrounding areas for some other community use if it chose to do so (and found separate funding for it).

However, such an endeavor was beyond the scope of the schematic design assigned to FAI.

- RG asked Frank Orlando and Dr. Harutunian if they saw any pros and cons with any of the options. Mr. Orlando replied that from an educational standpoint, Option 3 was preferable due to its reduced disruption on the students, staff and parents at RMHS. Also, the 32-month time frame was desirable in order to get the project over and done with as soon as possible. Dr. Harutunian echoed those comments, adding that there would be benefits to the use of the site as well (parking, traffic flow, fields, etc.). He cited problems encountered at other school districts with occupied renovations as examples of what could go wrong with options like 1 and 2.
- JS asked if the levels of renovation (in terms of cost) had been assigned to the various re-used spaces to be in all of the options. Mr. Peirce said they had, but had not yet been discussed with the Committee. He also said the per square foot costs used for new construction were mid-range. Mr. Bowen explained that delineation of how much renovation to do to what spaces was usually a task performed with the Committee at a later stage of design. Right now, the focus was on establishing likely overall costs.

RG asked if the Committee felt that there was enough information produced thus far to take before the community at large. The consensus was that there was enough.

Observer Linda Phillips asked if all the items listed under Additional Project Costs in the distributed estimates would be reimbursable. She particularly noted costs for surveying and demolition, remarking that she had read that the SBA would not reimburse such items. She was assured that those items were reimbursable and that what the SBA excludes from reimbursement are the costs of surveying and demolition of property newly obtained for the purpose of building a new school on it (i.e., costs of land acquisition).

Andrew Grimes recommended that some materials be produced for public discussion that would outline the pros and cons of each option for easy comparison. FAI responded that they would list the hallmarks of each option for distribution, but did not feel comfortable labeling any as pros or cons, noting that such determinations were at the discretion of the community itself.

Dr. Harutunian asked the Committee if they would meet with the School Committee to go over the options sometime in the near future. RG responded that that would be possible at any mutually convenient time. He also reminded the Superintendent that the SC had voted not to support a new building (from a previous feasibility study), which should be reconciled with the new construction portion of Option 3.

Dr. Harutunian addressed the Committee about obtaining a detailed survey of the high school property and surrounding fields for the purpose of facilitating the transfer of legal control and management of that property from the Board of Selectmen to the School Committee.

- He said that attorney John Gannon of the firm of Bracket and Lucas (Town Counsel) had researched the deeds for several parcels of land on the property, chiefly those involving the field house. He noted that several of them were deeded to the BOS under general caveats that did not exclude

educational use for those parcels. This meant that there were no legal impediments to any such transfer that would require special legislation at the State level. Hence, Town Meeting could authorize the transfer of control either by outright deeding or by long-term leasing. He noted that the SBA had reminded the Town's representatives that such control (in either form) was a necessity for any renovation work on those parcels to be reimbursable.

- A meeting with Town Engineer Joe Delaney produced the Public Works Division's recommendation for a comprehensive survey of the affected areas. Also, the School Committee was sponsoring a warrant article at November's Town Meeting that would ask for approval of the transfer of control and management of all Town property used for educational purposes to the SC (including the high school property in question).
- Dr. Harutunian had initially sent a letter to Committee members requesting that they consider contracting for this survey as part of the Schematic Design study. He asked that the Committee delay consideration of that request until he had had a meeting with the BOS chair, the SC chair, the Town Manager and the Public Works Division to determine how necessary such a survey would be to the transfer process. RG said the Committee would wait.
- JS noted that the costs a survey would have to come out of the contingency money set aside for the Schematic Design. He asked FAI if they foresaw any need for those contingency funds coming up, since the survey would most likely consume most of the balance of those funds. Sid Bowen replied that as far as the SBA was concerned, as long as the transfer of control was clear and unambiguous, the specific areas involved need not be delineated (for their sake). Such a survey was not needed to complete the Schematic Design and he recommended that the balance of the contingency money be held in reserve for possible future use.

Observer Jackie Mandell asked for clarification of the effects of Option 3's loss of the present gymnasium in the 1952 building (only the field house remains in Option 3), noting that at one time, more athletic space was contemplated (in a feasibility study). She also pointed out the heavy use of that (lost) gym by the community. FAI and various Committee members noted it as a loss, with the resultant facilities being designed to satisfy the educational program requirements. This loss would have to be taken into account when evaluating Option 3's relative value.

Ms. Mandell continued, noting that there was no option that just fixed the high school's systems up (repairs rather than renovations), citing several other school districts that had opted to repair rather than renovate. RG replied that those districts had reacted to their appropriating authority's decision to only fix the schools (made for reasons of finance) and stated that Reading's appropriating authority (Town Meeting and, for this project, the general electorate) could make the same decision. He felt, however, that it was the SBC's responsibility to make recommendations to the appropriating authority to bring the high school up to a level that not only fixes the school's systems but upgrades the educational program as well (substandard program being seen as a problem to fix, too). Dr. Harutunian added that the districts cited had substantially younger schools than Reading and could afford to wait for comprehensive renovations. Ms. Mandell continued to voice her discomfort with the development of the options now under consideration.

RG reminded everyone of the upcoming meetings for public input (Oct. 15th at Parker Middle School at 7:30 pm, Oct. 23rd at Coolidge Middle School at 7:30 pm, Oct. 26th at the Senior Center at 10:00 am, and Nov. 2nd at RMHS at 9:00 am).

AM asked that the programming efforts for the science department be certain to include enough science labs. He recalled the concerns of the science teachers voiced to the Committee several months ago and wanted to remind the design team of them. FAI said they would address those concerns.

JS passed out a revised timeline for the Schematic Design (**copy** attached), noting that the only revisions were to change the date for FAI's presentation of options to the Committee from Set. 26th to Oct. 8th and the date for selecting a preferred option from Oct. 22nd to Nov. 6th (the revisions were bubbled on the handout).

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the August 21, 2002 RSBC meeting. PP so moved and was seconded by RR. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. RR so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:40 pm).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of Meeting Held September 18, 2002,
at RMHS, Guidance Center

Committee Members Present:

Russ Graham (RG), Chair
Bill Carroll (BC), Faculty Rep.
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Alex McRae (AM)
Paula Perry (PP)
Ray Porter (RP)
Rich Radville (RR)
Michael Scarpitto (MS), Administrative Rep.

School Department Representatives Present:

Dr. Harry Harutunian, Superintendent, Reading Public Schools
Gary Hart, Assistant Principal, RMHS
William Endslow, RMHS Drama
David Bunten, RMHS Band & Music

Appointed Liaisons from Other Boards Present:

Richard Schubert, Board of Selectmen (BOS)
Andrew Grimes, Finance Committee (FinCom)

Community Arts Representatives Present (partial list):

Dorothy DellaCroce, Executive Director, Creative Arts for Kids Inc.
Mary Ryan, President, Colonial Chorus Players
Eugene Nigro, President, Reading Symphony Orchestra
David Lee, and Sandra Michaud, VP, Reading Band Parents

FAI (Flansburgh Associates, Inc., Architect) Representatives Present:

Sid Bowen, FAI Managing Principal
Robert Peirce, FAI Project Manager
Larry Tomlinson, FAI Project Architect

Materials Distributed (by others):

"Lockerless Schools", John Russo
"Creative Arts", Dorothy DellaCroce
"Building Project Music", David Bunten

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

The first portion of the meeting was to receive input from various community arts groups:

(1) Mary Ryan (Colonial Chorus):

- Comfortable (seats), higher tech performance space needed for outside groups
- Larger space than available at Parker (est. 400, less 100 obstructed view)
- Balcony not currently practical to use at either RMHS or Parker
- Consecutive weekends at RMHS, twice a year, difficult due to schedule conflicts
- Bigger stage with more wing space is desired
- Rehearsal space might also be of value, though less critical
- Smaller summer productions currently accommodated in a church basement
- Current light board is inadequate, and difficult to maintain

(2) Dotty DellaCroce (Creative Arts):

- Gallery space with good lighting, open to the public
- Performance venue for concerts (church basement acoustics are poor)
- 1000 seats or better, especially for children's programs

(3) Dave Bunten & others (Band Parents):

- Band program of 130 kids has outgrown the existing music room
- Auditorium is a big barn, in need of acoustic upgrades; wall baffles, seat padding
- Border lights currently inaccessible
- No fly system for backdrops, scenery props, etc.
- Storage in area below auditorium could free up other space, if mildew eliminated
- Inadequate storage for color guard uniforms, and new percussion instruments
- Need changing rooms
- Electronic music storage currently not lockable
- RG asked if facility impedes: Rehearsals conflict with Drama & Reading Symph.
- Practice rooms should be acoustically isolated

(4) Bill Endslow (Drama Club)

- Newly renovated auditorium at Newton South HS would be fabulous here
- Only can use auditorium 3-4 weeks per year, need rehearsal space
- Lecture hall is merely a black box theatre; should gut the raked floor there?
- Need dressing rooms, and transient storage
- Current storage is remote, entire RMHS tower
- Need air quality improvements below stage storage
- Limited lighting is provided, same lights day; other lighting boards must be rented
- Programmable light board would be ideal
- Climate control

(5) Gene Nigro (Reading Symphony)

- Now in their 70th season
- Need stage deep & wide enough for all 55 players, conductor, and choral group
- Need to be able to hear well, and record CDs
- Ventilation and other utility noises distract environment
- Need outlets for lights on music stands
- Lighting board bulbs need to be accessible
- Instrument storage needed

(6) Rick Schubert (BOS)

- Other community uses also important
- Local government needs meeting spaces larger than available at Police Sta.
- Lecture Hall provides a good mid-sized space
- Reception area(s) would be nice to have

RG encouraged that everything should be put on the table now, regardless of perceived likelihood of incorporation into the final plans for RMHS. There are so many things that, combined, define us as a community

Superintendent Harry Harutunian articulated an aspiration for an “Arts Center”, with its own entrance, as part of a community school, secure from the rest of the building.

There was a 5 minute recess; meeting resumed at 8:45pm.

The second portion of the meeting was to hear new options, phasing plans, and cost estimates from the architect. FAI presented three options they had been developing.

Option 1 (Similar to Option 1, 9/4/02)

Existing building renovation with no new or demolished space. Very briefly, the cafeteria would be relocated to lower level in existing Industrial Arts area, with a new Arts wing located in the vacated space adjacent to the auditorium. Art rooms each with 400 ft² storage. A wide 20'x120' corridor galley space, visible from the courtyard, could be used by the public. Storage under the stage would be reactivated, adding paving, lighting and ventilation. TV studio moved to former District SPED office. District SPED would be located in current REAP space: REAP gone. RISE program and offices would be expanded in the C building. Two corridors in the C building would be consolidated to one, with new prep space in the front of science labs. The raked floor in the Lecture Hall would be difficult and expensive to remove. Media Center would expand to the existing orange locker space, on a single floor. A new elevator would be added near the current Old Gym, which will be renovated to house the PE program. Male and female lockers would be provided for both gyms. The Field House would become strictly an athletic facility and team lockers.

Site upgrades would include two synthetic fields (not “astro-turf”) similar to new fields at Belmont High. 10 year life expectancy, guaranteed for 7 years. Cost would be triple that of a sod field, but would pay back in 4 years. Sand and strands provide good drainage and durability for constant use. Football games & practices, as well as regulation soccer, etc., could all be held the same field. Retention areas for storm runoff may have to be created, and may limit how far fields can be extended. North bleachers near wetlands could not be reconstructed, and would

be torn down. Home bleachers reconstructed. Press Box tower can't be touched, due to accessibility issues. Castine Field must remain service as a flood plain. New access road to or from ABL Drive and/or Hartshorn could be provided. Parking area would be expanded into current Band/T-ball field area.

RG and RR expressed concern about creating new access to Hartshorn neighborhoods.

WC and MS asked about accessibility of bathroom facilities from outdoors. FAI answered that bathrooms would be added to the lobby of the Field House.

AM asked if the location of the new cafeteria, accessible only from the far end of the lower level, might exacerbate existing circulation problems. FAI answered that the corridors should be sufficiently wide, but the cafeteria is somewhat remote.

PP asked about the size of the cafeteria. Space would be comparable to present area.

RR asked about science lab space. 12 lab spaces are planned, unchanged from the present, though prep areas would be expanded. Not every teacher will have their own CR. There may be an additional CR nearby, but not a lab.

Dave Bunten asked about truck access to the Arts Courtyard. Access will be from a corridor to the south of the Arts wing, not from the courtyard

PP asked if SBA counted storage space as part of the building gross area. Yes, but the building already exists. SBA reimbursement cap is based on student capacity, not area.

Option 2 (Similar to Option 3, 9/4/02)

Existing building renovation with new central cafeteria, and north wing demolished. Very briefly, a new multi-level cafeteria would be located in an open area between the Lecture Hall and the Old Gym. This would become a new center of the school. Another cross-circulation connection could be provided on the same lower level. Otherwise, Option 2 is very similar to Option 1, except that the existing 34,000 ft² Industrial Arts wing would be torn down for a net reduction of 12,000 ft² building area. A new 2400 ft² boiler plant could be provided in the tower, or elsewhere. A new kitchen and central receiving facilities would be located in the existing locker room area. Gym lockers would be re-located to the existing lower corridor and weight room. A single elevator near the cafeteria would serve for access to gym lockers. RISE program space would be less than provided for Option 1. Construction time could be reduced by roughly 6 months, and cost would also be slightly less due to the shorter construction period and demolition of the otherwise most expensive space to renovate. There would also be less, more compact space to heat and for custodians to clean.

A member of the audience asked if all demolition costs were accounted for. Yes.

AM asked if there were any special structural concerns associated with tying the new cafeteria to adjacent existing buildings, each set on separate foundations. Ideally, the cafeteria will have its own structure, so extensive seismic upgrades would not be needed elsewhere.

Option 3 (New Option, emerged at the 9th hour)

A New/Reno/Demo option provides for maximum reduction of construction phasing period. This option addresses the question of how much could be knocked down and replaced, to save time, without significantly increasing the cost, which is estimated to be only slightly higher than option 1. Very briefly, the entire 1952 portion of the building would be demolished, and a new, more efficient structure would be erected to connect the existing C-building with the Field House. Total building area would be reduced by 85,000 ft² to roughly 270,000 ft², including the Field House. Second Gym, many corridors, and some storage space would be lost. Only a concept at this point, details of this option will be brought up to the level of the other options, if the SBC is interested in further pursuit.

At 10:30 pm, Larry Tomlinson presented the phasing issues for each option.

During construction of options 1 & 2, all PE would occur in the field house. Temporary classrooms (CRs) would be created in the Old Gym, gym lockers, and balcony of the auditorium. Increased lunch periods would allow part of the cafeteria to be used for CRs. A cluster (for synergy) of ~25 CRs with one-of-a-kind systems would suffice. Option 1 would require 42-44 months in all, for 7 phases in 6 periods of time, with the Old Gym attacked by construction three times, for CRs, a library, and then back to a gym.

With new cafeteria added in phase 1, option 2 would require only one floor of temporary CRs, saving cost. Art and Music would not get their final spaces until the last phase. Option 2 would require 36-38 months in all, with the last phase being the demolition of the Industrial Arts wing. Triton was estimated at 36 months, but was completed in 32.

Preliminary cost estimates for the 3 options were provided (FAI summaries appended). All costs, including architect, engineers, surveys, legal, construction manager, furniture & equipment, and contingencies were included. FAI stated they believed SBA would reimburse a percentage up to about \$50M of the project, based on an enrollment of 1320-1350.

RR moved to approve the Minutes of Aug. 2, 2002, seconded by BC. No corrections were offered. Motion passed 7-0-2.

RR moved to adjourn, 2nd by WC. Motion passed 9-0-0. Meeting adjourned, ~midnight.

Minutes prepared by:

Alexander D. McRae
Reading School Building Committee

MEETING

9/18/02

Wed.

David Butler

Bill McLaughlin

Dorothy Della Croce Creative Arts

Jackie Van Horn Colonial Chorus Players
Margyellen Keeney Colonial Chorus Players

Tom COFFIN COLONIAL CHORUS PLAYERS

Ellen Mounster

Mary Ryan Colonial Chorus Players

Jack Ryan Colonial Chorus Players

Paul McCreeby " " "

Sharon Taitz Colonial Chorus Players

DONALD J. GOUTNI - R.M.H.S. DRAMA/ARTS

DAVE PROCTOR - R.M.H.S. DRAMA/ARTS

Dave Lee R.M.H.S. Band

Sid Bauer FAI

Greg Hart AP/RMHS

L Phillips Resider

ROBERT PEIRCE FAI

Laurence V. Tomlinson F.A.I.

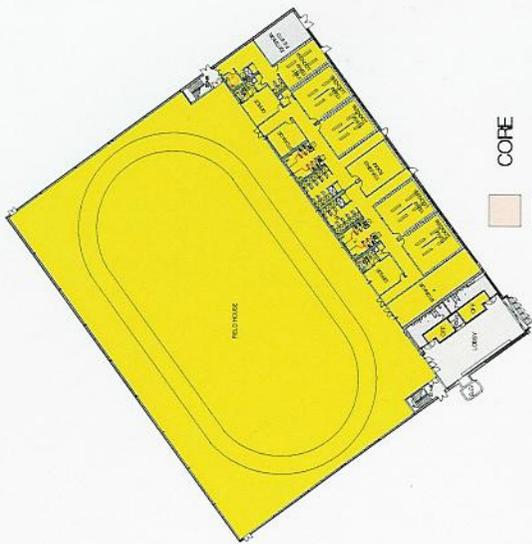
Rick Martin PSST

John T. Luss S. Committee

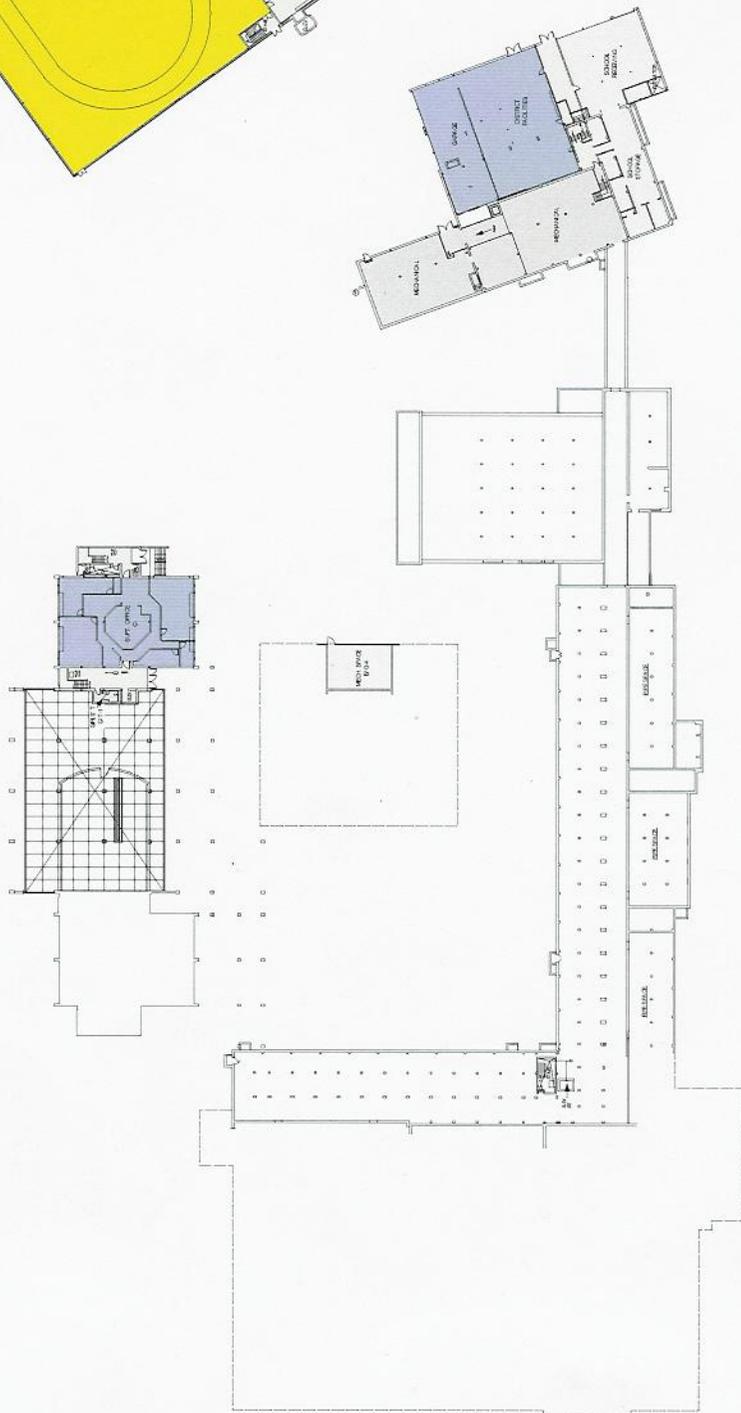
Rick Schubert Selectman

Rich Haggerty Chronicle

Raymond R. Legio Reading Symphony Orch.



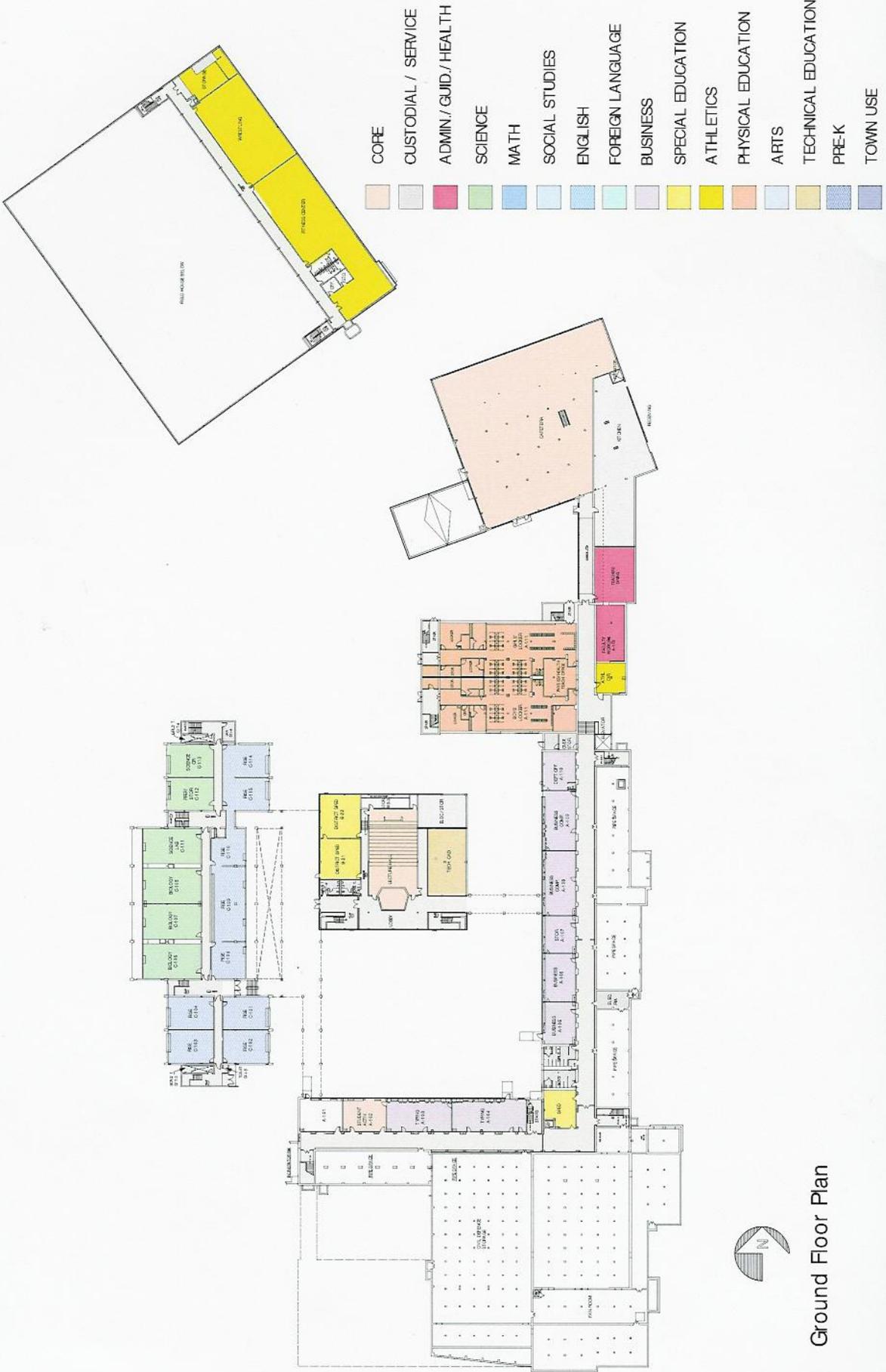
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- BUSINESS
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- ATHLETICS
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- ARTS
- TECHNICAL EDUCATION
- PRE-K
- TOWN USE



Lower Floor Plan

Reading Memorial High School
 Option 1
 September 18, 2002

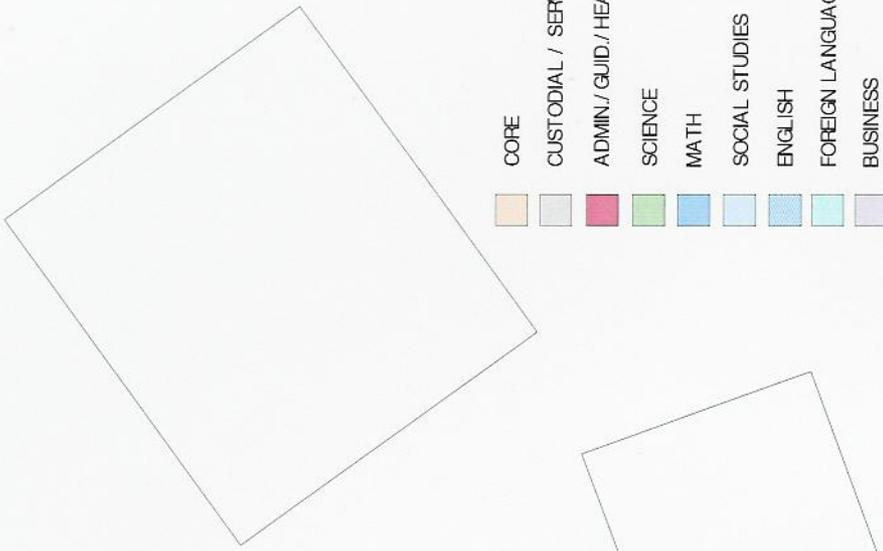
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 Boston, Massachusetts 02114



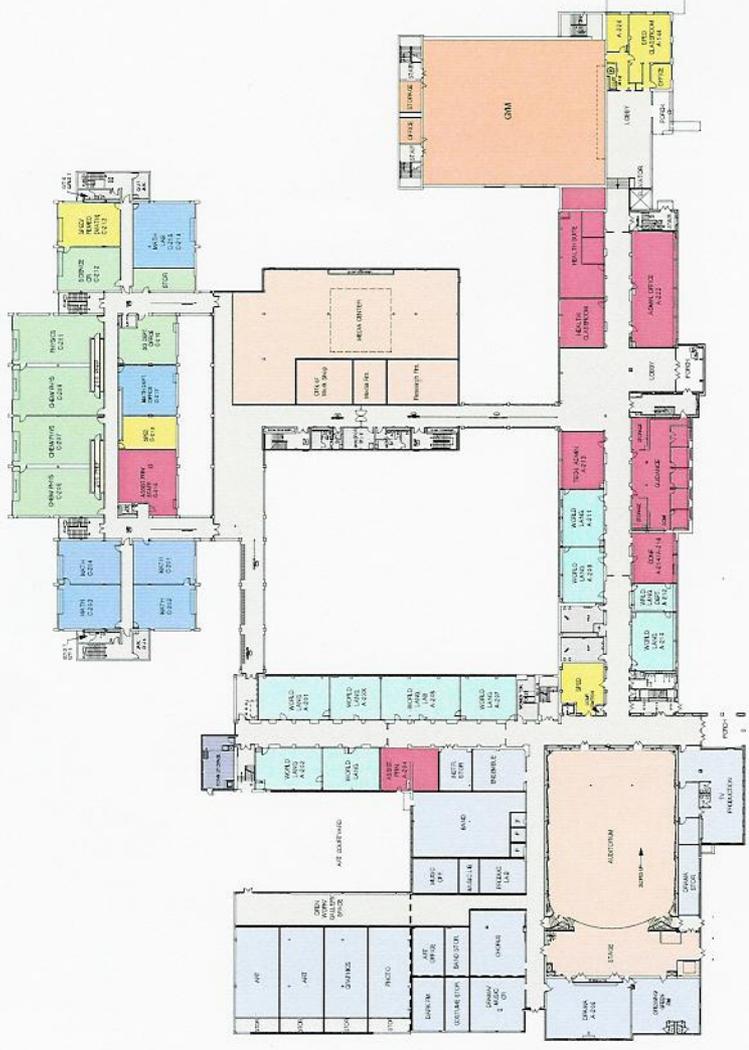
Ground Floor Plan

Reading Memorial High School
 Option 1
 September 18, 2002

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- PRE-K
- TOWN USE

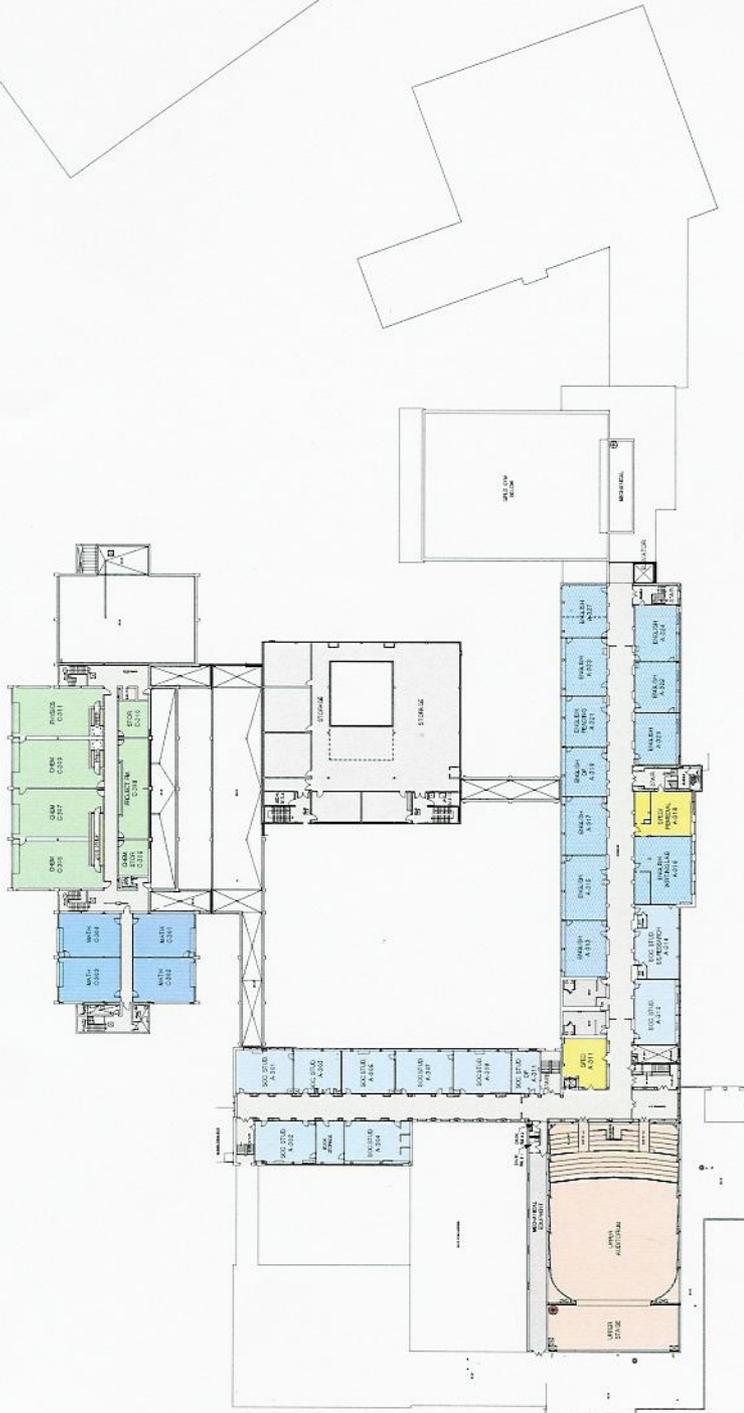


First Floor Plan

Reading Memorial High School
 Option 1
 September 18, 2002

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- ATHLETICS
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- ARTS
- TECHNICAL EDUCATION
- PRE-K
- TOWN USE



Second Floor Plan

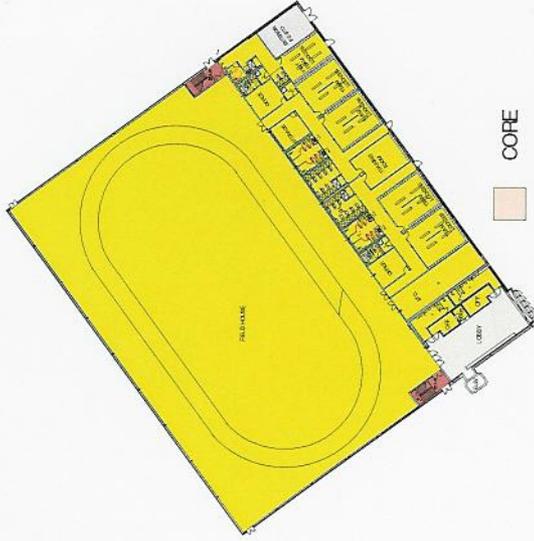
Reading Memorial High School
 Option 1
 September 18, 2002

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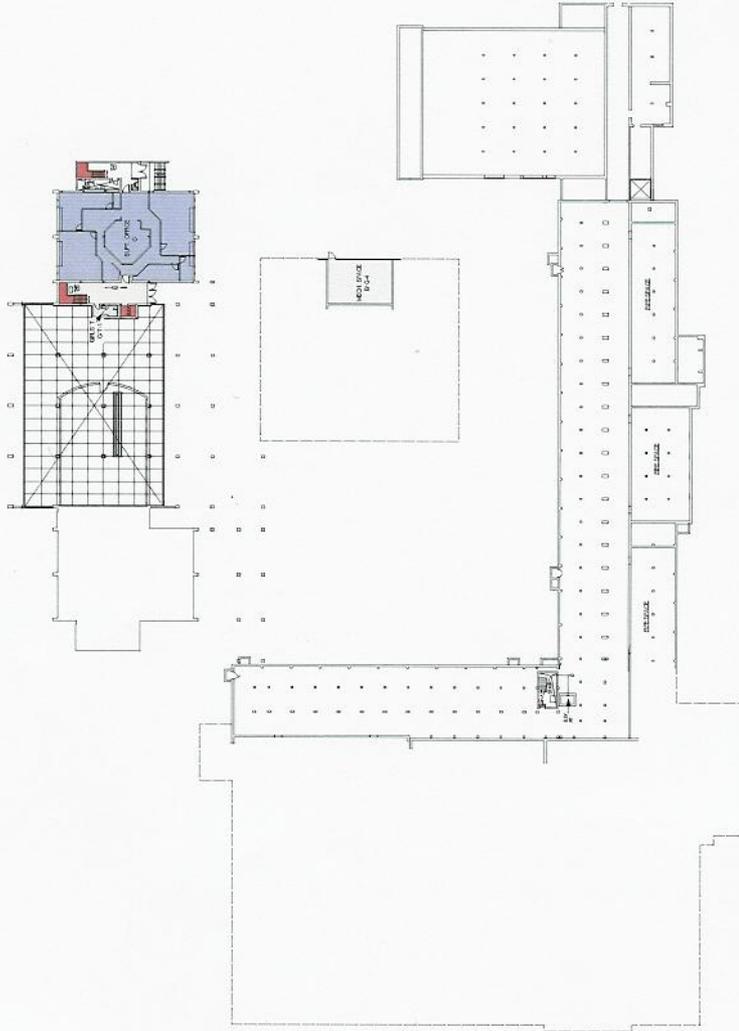


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Reading Memorial High School
Site Plan - Option 1
September 18, 2002



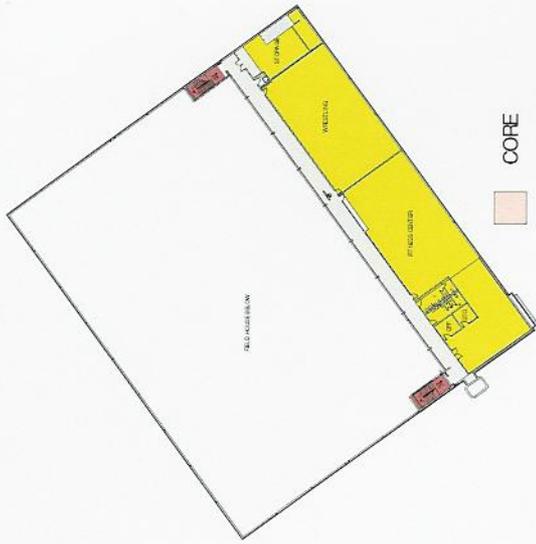
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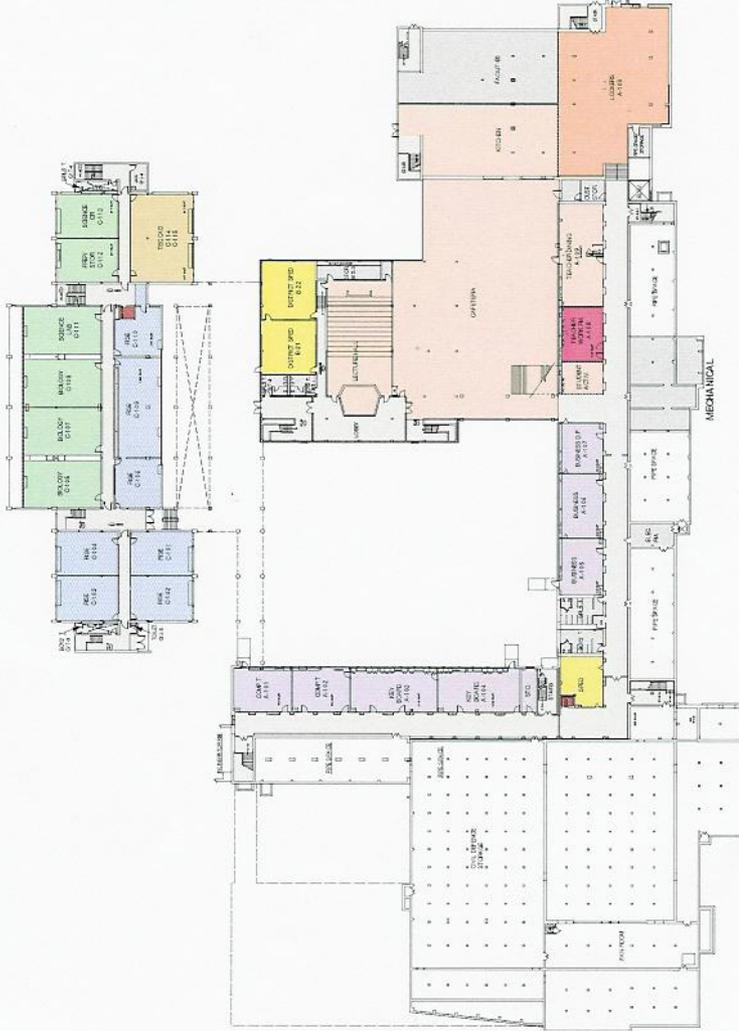
Lower Floor Plan

Reading Memorial High School
 Option 2
 September 18, 2002

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 Boston, Massachusetts 02114



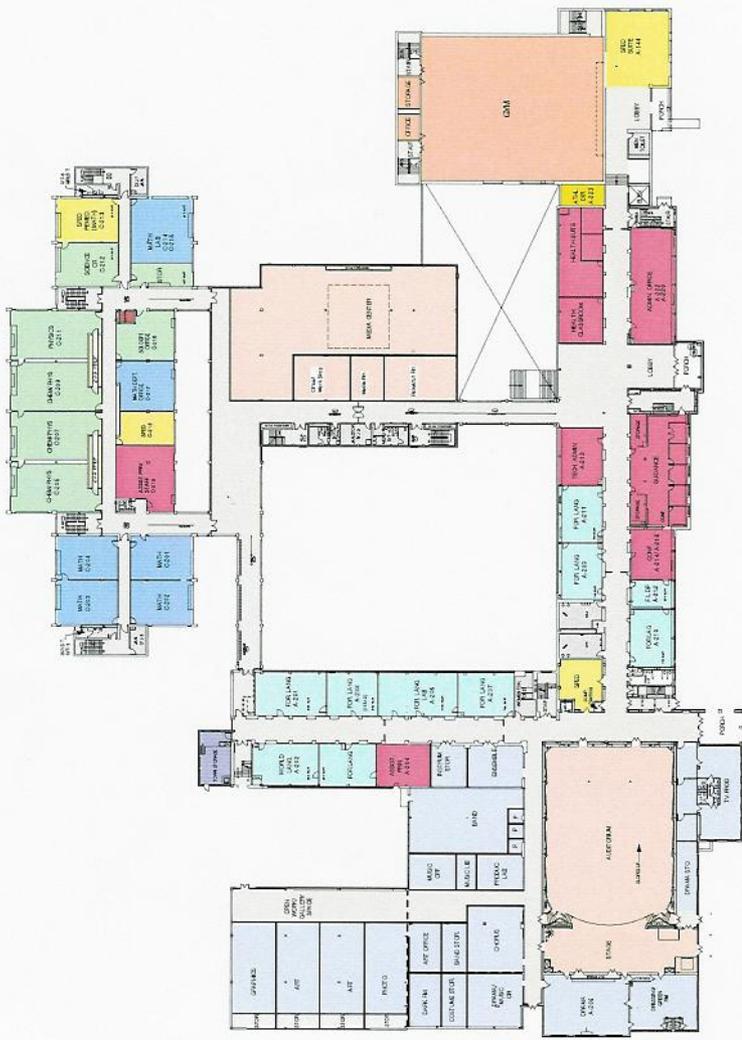
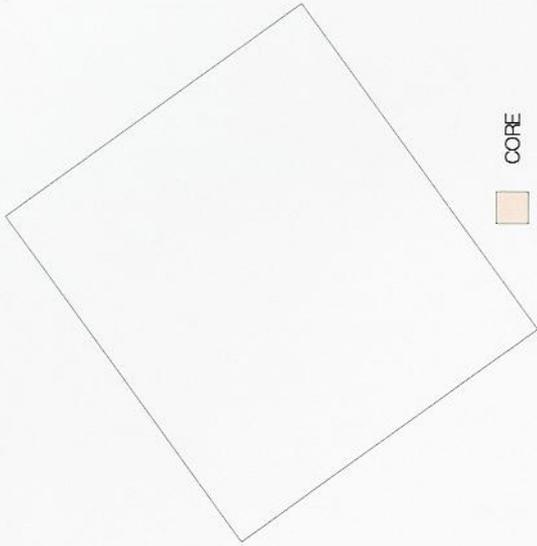
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- TOWN USE



Ground Floor Plan

Reading Memorial High School
 Option 2
 September 18, 2002

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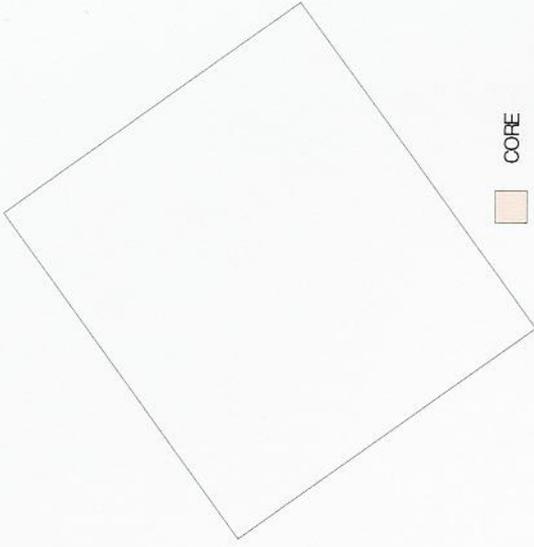
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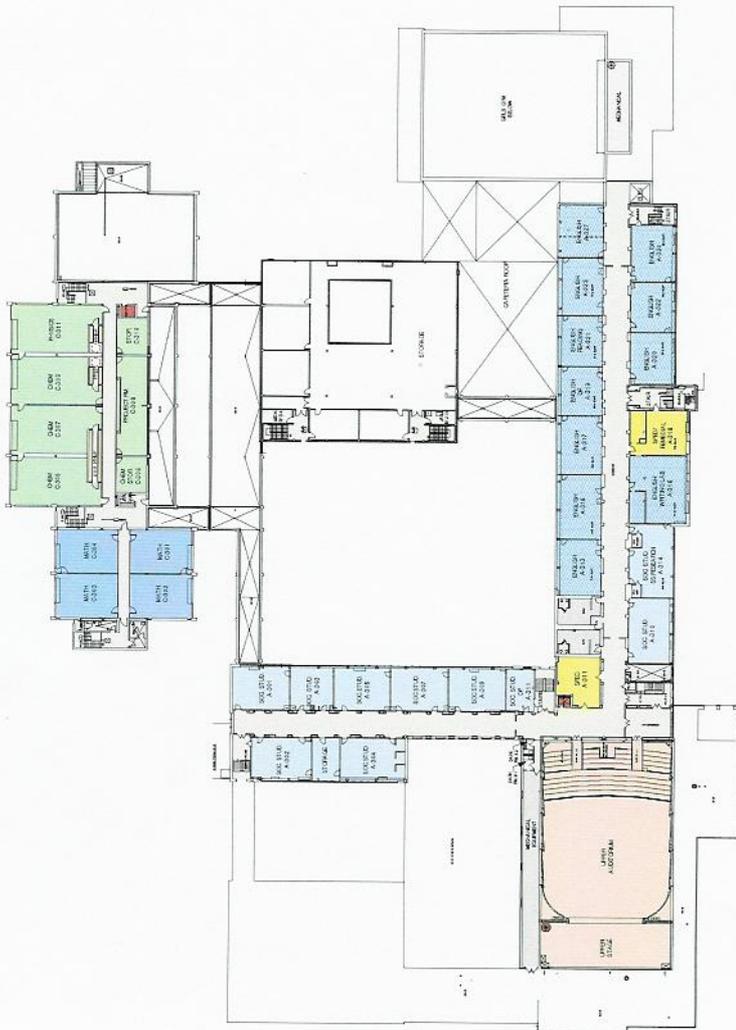
First Floor Plan

Reading Memorial High School
 Option 2
 September 18, 2002

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Second Floor Plan

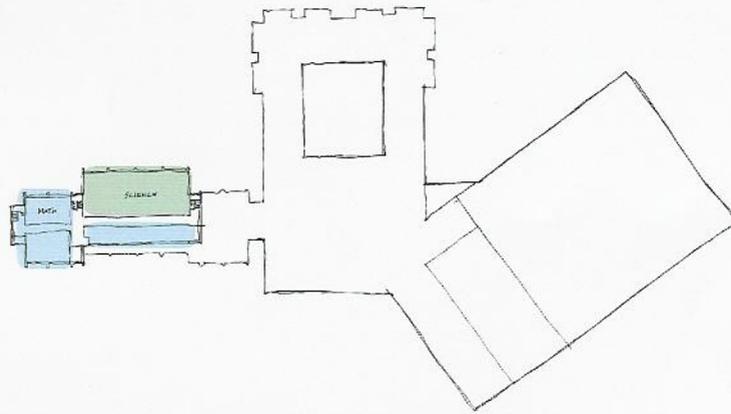
Reading Memorial High School
 Option 2
 September 18, 2002

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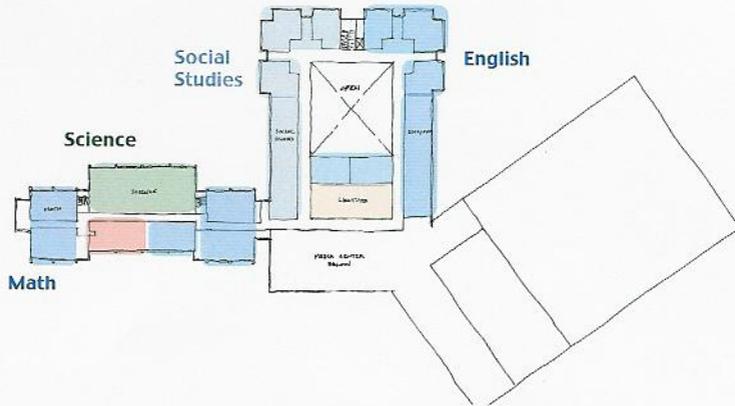


Reading Memorial High School
Site Plan - Option 2
September 18, 2002

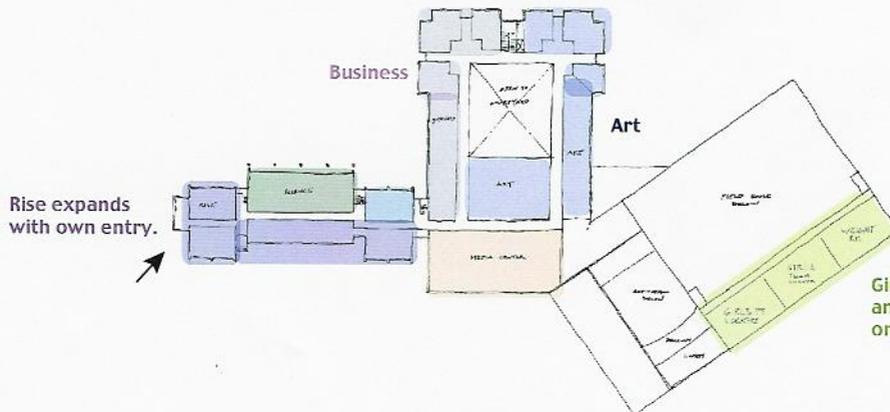
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Second Floor

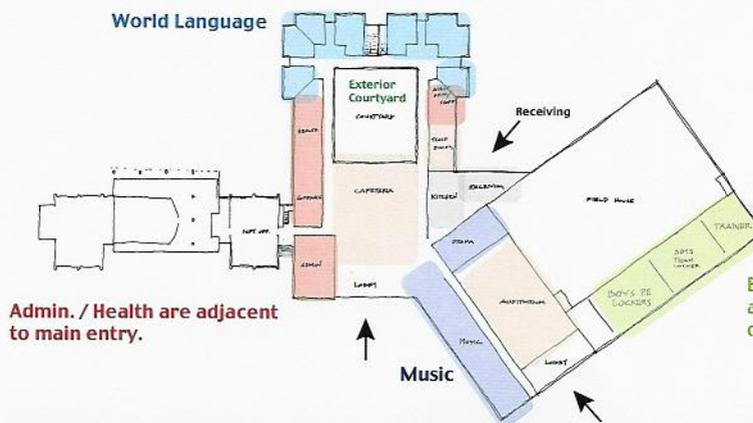


First Floor



Girl's P.E. lockers, Team lockers and Weight Room are located on the second level of the F.H.

Ground Floor



Admin. / Health are adjacent to main entry.

Boy's P.E. and Team lockers are located on the first level of the Field House.

Lower Floor

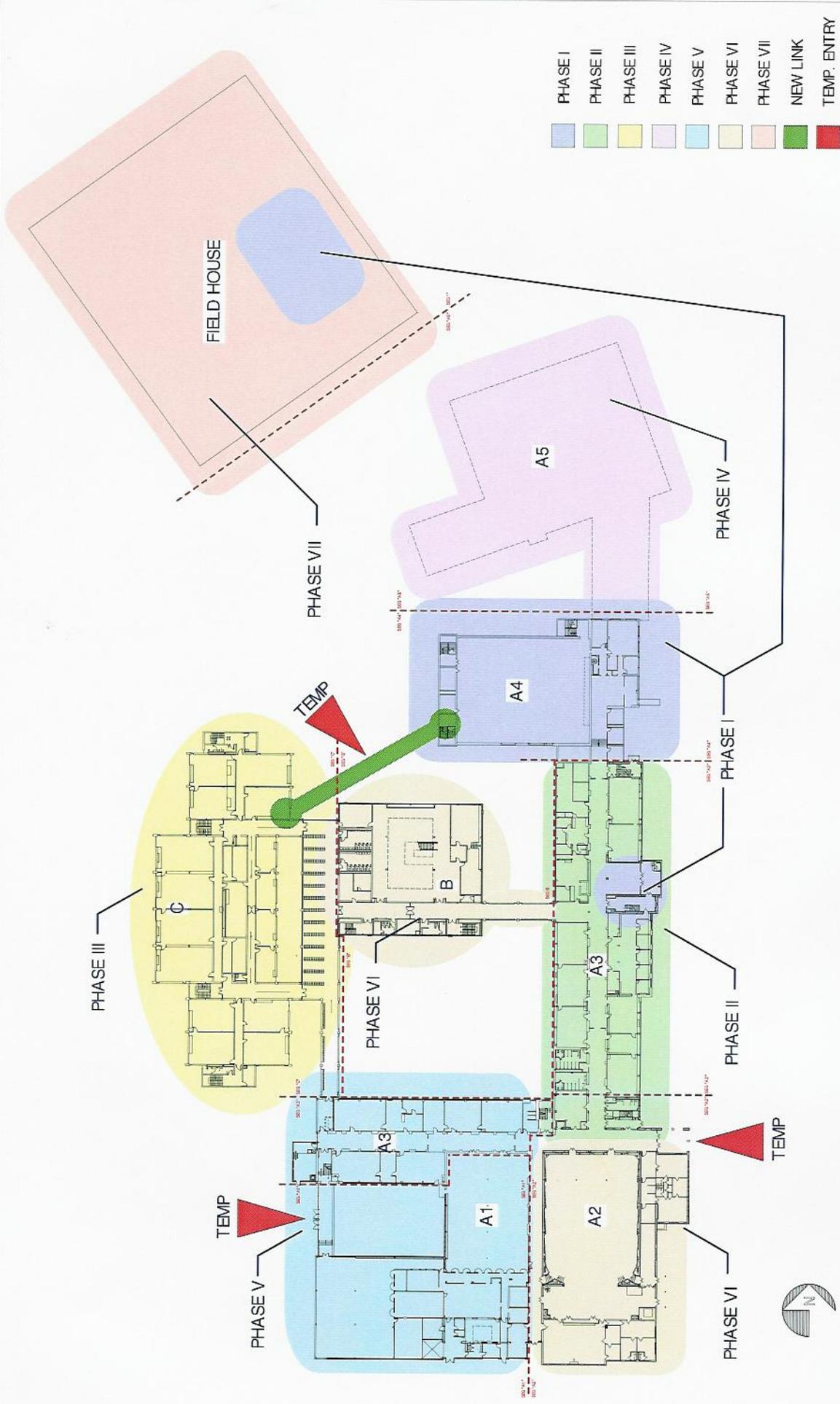


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Reading Memorial High School
Site Plan - Option 3
September 18, 2002

Phasing Parameters

- Move Reap off campus
- Move PE and Locker Rooms / Offices out of old gymnasium - vacate space for temporary classroom use.
- Modify balcony of Auditorium into two classrooms, lecture type
- Build new power "plant" and trunk pipe system throughout in Phase I.
- Build swing space as pre-phase
- Operational - increase lunch periods during construction



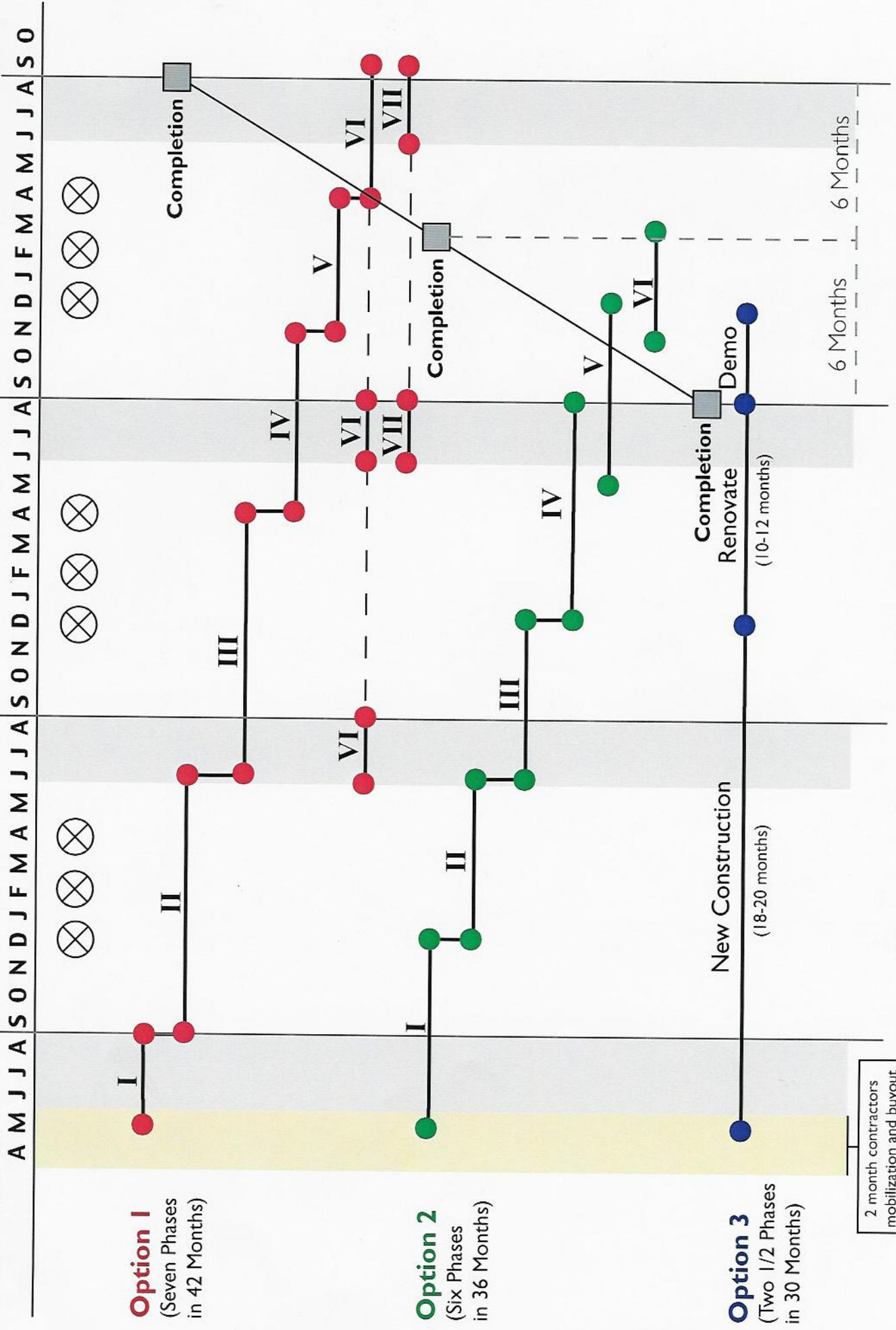
Reading Memorial High School
 Construction Phasing Study: OPTION 1
 September 18, 2002

FLANSBURGH ASSOCIATES
 77 North Washington Street
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OPTIONS CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULES - Reading Memorial High School

DRAFT - 9/18/02



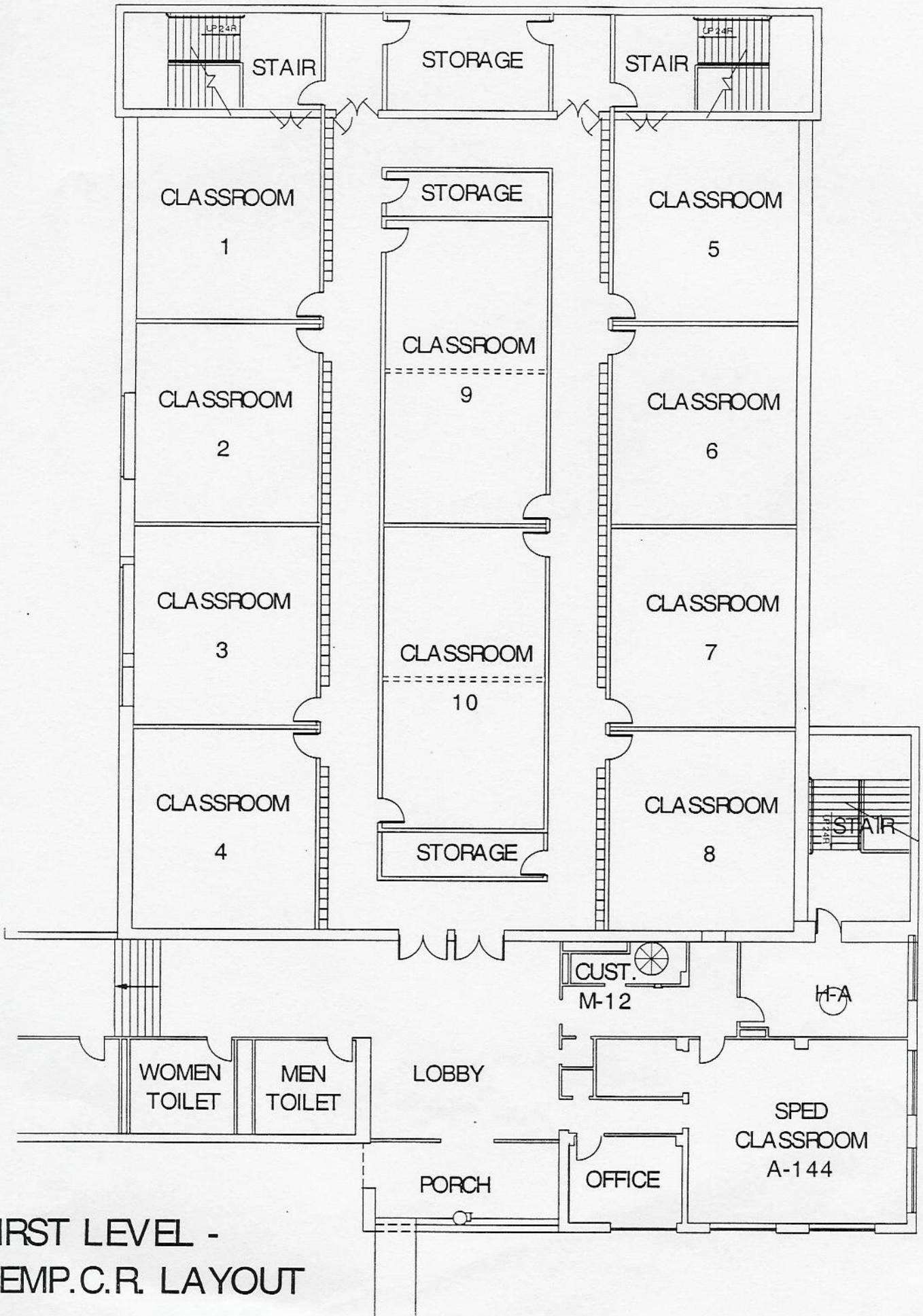
2 month contractors mobilization and buyout

Summer Vacation

⊗ Indicates one-week vacations for moves or float phase work

Preliminary Estimated Costs

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Construction Cost	\$35 - 38,000,000	\$36 - 39,000,000	\$40 - 43,000,000
Project Cost	\$49 - 53,000,000	\$48 - 52,000,000	\$51 - 54,000,000



FIRST LEVEL -
TEMP.C.R. LAYOUT

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on September 4, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Town Hall Conference Room)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Ray Porter (RP)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Alex McRae (AM)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Paula Perry (PP) p/t

Featured Guests:

Peter Hechenbleikner (Town Manager) p/t
Ted McIntire (Public Works Director) p/t
Harry Harutuian (Superintendent) p/t
Frank Orlando (Staff)
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Robert Peirce (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)

RG began by introducing Town Manager Peter Hechenbleikner, who had come to present ideas and suggestions for the RMHS project that would benefit the Town's Public Works division and other Town departments. Their input had been solicited by the SBC.

- Mr. Hechenbleikner passed out copies of a memo outlining the input garnered from brainstorming sessions within the Town departments (**copy attached**). He then went over the outline in detail and said he would answer any questions regarding its content (*the Town Manager's recitation of the outline is not transcribed here; refer to the attached copy*).
- RG asked Sid Bowen (FAI) if any of the items listed in the memo were seen as being unworkable or impossible. Mr. Bowen replied that he heard nothing that shouldn't be on the table for discussion and said that while not everything mentioned could be dealt with, at least they would be addressed.
- JS asked Mr. Hechenbleikner if the Town Departments had prioritized the items on his memo, cautioning against adding too many to the project that would incrementally increase the overall costs (i.e., cost "creep"). He replied that he hadn't, but mentioned that many of the items would be done as a matter of course, such as fire protection upgrades. As a generalization, he thought that improving existing site facilities would have priority over adding new ones. RG asked FAI to provide the Town Manager with a copy of the

draft of the existing conditions report for his review and information regarding current facilities assessments.

- AM made the comments that the Town Manager's memo was quite constructive and was a good example of the kind of participation from non-school agencies and personnel that was desired by the Committee. He asked if the Town Manager would endorse transferring ownership of the Field House land from the Board of Selectmen to the School Committee. Mr. Hechenbleikner replied that while not endorsing such a transfer, should such a transfer be required to make the RMHS project acceptable and fundable by the SBA, he assumed that such a transfer would be done. He recommended that the Committee should make that assumption as well. Dr. Harutunian echoed this recommendation, saying that the steps necessary to affect the transfer were being researched in order to have a clear idea of how to go about it when and if it is needed.
- Mr. Hechenbleikner then passed out copies of three schedules that summarized all the major proposed debt and capital exclusion projects and their costs for the Town for the next ten years (copy attached). He prepared the schedules as background information for the Town's Ten-Year Capital Improvement Program. Schedule 1 listed the actual capital or debt exclusions themselves and when they would be needed. Schedule 2 tabulated the annual costs to the Town of financing these exclusions and Schedule 3 estimated how those annual costs would be paid by property tax increases on the average Reading property (assessed at a value of \$320K). The schedules assume passage of all the capital and debt exclusion votes in order to predict the maximum effect to the average taxpayer and the Town. Other specific assumptions were described in the notes at the bottoms of the schedules. Mr. Hechenbleikner stressed that the data used for the schedules was based on the costs presently listed in the Ten Year Capital Improvement plan (the current version of that plan carried the RMHS project at a cost of \$59.5M). The Town Manager then went over the schedules in detail (*the Town Manager's recitation of the schedules is not transcribed here; refer to the attached copy*).
- Observer Linda Phillips pointed out that some of the assumptions made regarding the financing of the project in the schedules use old information, such as the SBA reimbursement rate of 66% (now a base rate of around 54% plus incentive points) and the wait of five years for commencement of reimbursements (the State recently approved waits of up to seven years, with longer waits being considered). RP echoed her comments, saying he thought the projections should use as up-to-date information as possible. The Town manager said the effect of waiting longer for reimbursements was to prolong the interest-only payments (from BANS) and push the maximum yearly payments out for as long as the additional waiting period. As far as changing the assumptions, he said the schedules (like the Capital Improvement Plan) would be updated regularly.
- After receiving thanks from the Committee for coming, the Town Manager and Public Works Director departed.

RG reminded Committee members to finish their comments on the Existing Conditions report. He then asked Robert Peirce and Sid Bowen of FAI to begin their report to the Committee on their progress.

- Mr. Bowen began by saying that they were going to begin showing strategies for solving some of the programmatic problems that they have discovered at the high school. These would not be actual options *per se*, but would reflect directions FAI felt the project could go in and they were presenting them to get initial reactions from the Committee.
- Mr. Pierce then spoke about the methodologies that were used to shape the programmatic solutions. He said that initial enrollment projection work indicated that the maximum number of students would be in the 1300 – 1400 range, which was in line with recent projections by NESDEC and MISER. While this work had not yet been completed, the range was sufficient to allow preliminary planning.
- He listed a number of broad primary issues that FAI felt should be addressed in configuring the educational program:
 - Providing adequate space for the performing arts was one. Music (band), chorus, art and drama presently share inadequate space.
 - Consolidating academic programs together in well-organized areas was another. Some programs, such as art, social studies, field ecology and physical education are currently too spread out. The media center now relies on a mezzanine level that is difficult to access and monitor.
 - The need to foster adjacencies for programs with similar needs was identified, pairing such programs as performing arts and visual arts, social studies and English, health and Phys. Ed., administrative offices and Special Education offices.
 - Title IX and handicap accessibility issues needed to be addressed as well.
 - TT asked if relocating the assistant principals' offices and somehow including use of the Lecture Hall in more of the academic programs were seen to be other issues needing attention. Mr. Peirce said that the offices were generally located where they should be in the school's layout. The Lecture Hall was noted to be poorly used and in a difficult location. Mr. Bowen said that a need for a small lecture hall was becoming evident in the organization of the educational program, but it remained to be seen if the present Lecture Hall would fill this need or would be better used in some other capacity.
- Sid Bowen then introduced preliminary ideas for solutions. He noted that the big spaces drive the initial reconfigurations of schools like RMHS, with the smaller spaces being somewhat subordinate in their layouts. He said also that the present building had more space than was needed to house the educational programs envisioned for the future.

- The first option (Option 1) made no changes at all to the present footprint of the building but reorganized the space within the footprints to best satisfy the needs of the various educational programs. He started with arts and music, pointing out that the areas around the present auditorium (including the cafeteria, kitchen, Sp. Ed. office, etc.) would lend themselves to being an arts wing. Consolidating the spaces for those programs achieved the desire for fostering adjacencies and allowed the addition of a cable TV studio and a new location for the RISE program (in the current Commons area). The RISE area would have a separate entrance and the current link between the Commons and the main building corridor would be removed, opening up the courtyard there for access by the arts program and maintenance personnel/equipment.
- Also included in the Option 1 would be the relocation of the administrative office across the hall from its present location and the creation of health offices in its old location, near the current Gym (possibly for some use as a community health office). The Media Center would expand at the first floor into the space now occupied by the "Orange" lockers, transferring its present mezzanine-level operations there (the mezz. level would be sealed off from the Media Center and used for mechanical and storage areas). Mr. Bowen acknowledged, however, that such a move would complicate the circulation patterns on the first floor and that in retrospect, this aspect of Option 1 had to be revised (these were only preliminary ideas, he emphasized).
- Other hallmarks of Option 1 would be the relocation of the cafeteria and kitchen to the northern wing now housing the Arts and Industrial Arts programs, taking advantage of the space available and the separate delivery area now in place there. Also, the Phys. Ed. program would be wholly located in the 1952 building in this option, reworking the present girls locker room into both girls and boys lockers and upgrading the existing gym for PE use (excluding any athletic team usage of these updated facilities). The Field House would be revised to include both girls' and boys' team locker and training facilities, as well as a weight room, aerobics and wrestling rooms on the second floor. Mr. Bowen mentioned that he had contacted the SBA about these Field House revisions and was told that they would indeed be considered reimbursable.
- The second option (Option 2) presented was similar to Option 1 in that it made no change to the footprint of the building, it coalesced the performing and visual arts departments around the present auditorium, and it revamped the Media Center to a first floor operation. What was different was the transfer of all girls' and boys' Phys. Ed. programs and facilities out of the main building and into the Field House (combined with team facilities). This left the Field House with less space for enhanced health/fitness programs than Option 1, but allowed the transfer of the cafeteria into the existing gym in the main building. It also left the current girls' locker room available for transfer of the kitchen and boiler room functions. This meant having to deliver food service to the cafeteria by vertical lift (i.e., dumbwaiter).

- Also in Option 2 was the giving over of the present Art and Industrial Arts wing to non-high school uses. The RISE program would be housed on the Ground Floor (with a separate entrance) and the lower floor would be used for facility management and mechanical purposes. The RISE area thus created was acknowledged to be much larger than currently required.
- The third option (Option 3) would demolish the Art and Industrial Arts wing altogether. The performing and visual arts would be grouped around the auditorium as in the other two options and RISE would be located in the same vicinity, as it was in Option 1. Also in replication of an Option 1 idea, the P.E. facilities would be segregated from the team athletic facilities by housing them in the main building, away from the Field House. Also, the Media Center revisions contained in Options 1 and 2 would be utilized in Option 3.
- Option 3 would seek to enclose the Ground Floor area between the existing Lecture Hall (Building B) and the main building (Building A) for use as the cafeteria while revising the Lecture Hall area to cafeteria and kitchen (with delivery access from the road separating Bldg. B from Bldg. C). Mr. Bowen said that this option essentially “tightened up” the building footprint to remove the space (approximately 25K sq. ft.) that was not needed by the reorganized educational program. Upon questioning from WC, he said the facilities plant now contained in the wing proposed for demolition would be re-housed in the currently unused tower at the front of the building (although this aspect of the option had not been fully explored as yet).
- TT asked about funding possibilities from the SBA for the renovation of the Art and Industrial Arts wing in Option 2 and for the demolition of it in Option 3. Mr. Bowen replied that the State would require justification for reimbursing a non-high school use area in any renovation, but he thought that the district requirement of having RISE at the school would bolster the argument for reimbursement. As to any perceived benefit to removing space (in the form of incentive points), he said that he believed SBA would agree to pay for the demolition, but he foresaw no “reward” for decreasing the overall footprint of the building.
- RG asked Frank Orlando (Principal, RMHS) if he and his staff had gone over the three options with FAI. Mr. Orlando replied that they had and had identified only one major problem, which was the circulation complication caused by expanding the Media Center on the first floor (which FAI acknowledged needed more study). Other minor problems were identified and discussed with FAI, but on the whole, he felt that each option as presented addressed the educational program adequately.
- TT remarked that Option 1’s location of a new cafeteria in a large space well removed from the auditorium allowed the opportunity of using it as a second public access / community assembly room.
- JS asked if during the process of reconfiguring the large spaces to create an option was any thought given to locating the music department in the old gym or girls’ locker areas in order to have closer access for the high

school band to the athletic fields (as was at one time mentioned by the head of the music department). Mr. Bowen said that such a scheme was considered early on, but that proximity to the indoor performing area (i.e., the auditorium) was seen to be of greater programmatic benefit overall. He said that it might be possible to capture some space nearer to the athletic fields for band storage.

- PP said that she thought Option 3 would possibly have some advantages over the others due to the use of the scheduled-to-be-demolished wing as swing space for phasing. Mr. Bowen said that in a building like RMHS, the desire to create swing space (from the Field House, for example) was certainly desirable in order to lessen the number of moves needed to renovate the spaces that would remain.
- RG asked if the high school staff was going to be appraised of the different options for their feedback. Frank Orlando said they would be.
- RG asked if any Committee members saw any ideas in the options presented that appeared to be unacceptable. JS expressed reservations about demolishing 25K-sq. ft. of space that might be conceivably needed sometime in the future. Mr. Bowen acknowledged those reservations, saying that most towns are reticent to give up built space. He felt the idea was novel enough to consider, however, in an effort to create the most efficient amount of space to fit the program.
- On a positive note, JS commented that he felt the idea of concentrating the PE program in the existing school solved many problems and he thought the concentration of the performing and visual arts around the auditorium was a good idea. Messrs. Bowen and Orlando noted that creating a non-PE field house opened up several possibilities for expanded community uses and parking re-design.
- Observer Pete Dahl asked if the reduction of space and reorganizations contained in Option 3 might make the high school more secure. Mr. Bowen said that the Option 3 revisions in and of themselves did not create a more secure environment. Heightened security was a function of heightened management of the facility and management issues had not been addressed as yet.
- RR expressed reservations for Option 2's combination of both the PE and athletic team programs in the field house. He praised the concentration of the arts programs by the auditorium and relocating the cafeteria and kitchen, noting that such a scheme facilitated kitchen reconstruction. He asked if the cafeteria layout as envisioned in Option 1 (in the present Art and Industrial Arts wing) was overly large and might be able to divert space for community room purposes. Mr. Bowen replied that the cafeteria could probably not be downsized from what was presented. He offered, however, that if community space was desired, the kitchen could be located on the lower level (with vertical food service) in order to accommodate that space and provide a separate entrance for it.
- RP asked if any phasing plans for the three options had been investigated yet. Mr. Bowen replied that they would be developing phasing schemes

as the options evolved, but none had been considered with any conviction yet.

- WC expressed his appreciation of Option 1's (wide) separation of the cafeteria and auditorium areas, saying that under such a scheme, two large public events could occur simultaneously without encumbering each other. He said that the technical problems associated with Option 3 had him wondering about its viability (boilers in the tower).
- Observer Linda Phillips asked if the design of the cafeteria around serving two lunches per day was normal for a high school the size of RMHS, noting that she has heard complaints about the long waits for food service. Mr. Bowen replied that it was not unusual to schedule two lunches for a student body the size of RMHS and to design accordingly. He mentioned that one concept now being incorporated into such designs was to have multiple server locations offering varieties of food to disperse the long lines. Mr. Orlando added that structuring the school day around three lunch servings could lengthen the school day and restructure department schedules, which would be a major undertaking.
- JS asked if FAI had given any thought to improving circulation patterns on the upper floors between Bldg. A, B and C. Mr. Bowen replied that they did not feel a new corridor on the roof connecting the separate areas was advisable. They would be studying the matter and thought that if any additional links were needed, they would be located at the southwest portion of Bldg. A connecting to the south of Bldg. C.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the June 26, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL so moved and was seconded by TT. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were 10 in favor, none opposed and one abstention (10-0-1), and so the motion passed.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the July 10, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL so moved and was seconded by RR. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by BC. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on August 21, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Town Hall Conference Room/Selectmen's Room)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Ray Porter (RP)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Rich Radville (RR)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Alex McRae (AM)
Bill Carroll (BC)

Featured Guest:

Robert Peirce (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)

Joint Meeting with Reading Board of Selectmen (p/t)

(The Committee convened in the Town Hall Conference Room initially, then joined the Board of Selectmen in their conference room and finished in that conference room after the BOS had adjourned)

RG started by going over the upcoming meeting schedule. It was decided to tentatively schedule SBC meetings for September 4th, October 1st, 16th, and 30th, beginning at 7:30pm at locations to be determined.

[The Committee then joined the Board of Selectmen for a joint meeting. Refer to the BOS minutes of August 21, 2002 for a record of those combined deliberations. These minutes resume after the joint meeting was dissolved.]

RG said that completed drafts of the design team's Existing Conditions Report had been distributed to Committee members the previous evening. He acknowledged that there had not been enough time for the members to review it. He then called on Robert Peirce of FAI to give a synopsis of the report.

- Mr. Peirce began with the site assessment, specifically parking. He said the parking areas around the school were not interconnected, forcing traffic to use a public way (Oakland Road) as a connector. The lower parking areas had overlapping uses and lacks organization. The major site issue identified as problematic was accessibility, since the varying grades around the school offered no clear means of access from one part of the school to another.
- Site utilities could be documented from available existing drawings and Town agency information.

- Wetlands had been seen to be on site and should be documented. A perennial river was present running through the site.

- Mr. Peirce then described the building section of the report.
 - The organization of the school was presented first. He noted that the only level that has connections to all parts of the building was the first floor. At other levels, parts were isolated from other parts, such as the upper levels of the science wing.
 - The exterior envelope (walls, windows, roofs) were presented next, with the low insulating values of the walls being a noticeable feature. FAI plans to recommend replacement of the glass block windows. The roofs have been replaced in pieces (with some original pieces needing to be replaced). The insulation value of the roofs (including the replaced portions) was regarded as poor and some of the replaced roof details were not seen to be adequate, requiring some remediation.
 - The interior of the school was discussed next in the report. While the finishes were noted to have been well maintained, the floors in several areas were past their usable life spans. The ceilings in general were in tough shape. Lighting was seen to be poor. Acoustics needed to be addressed, particularly in the Auditorium.
 - Regarding doors and hardware, the doors were not seen to be in too bad a shape, but the hardware was. Most hardware did not meet the requirements for handicap accessibility.
 - Casework and equipment were discussed in the report, noting where certain areas seemed to be in decent shape (new science labs) and some in poor condition or non-handicap accessible (art rooms).
 - Handicap accessibility was found to be a major issue, with non-conforming ramps, no ramps or elevators (to the locker rooms, for example), doors, hardware, fixtures, etc. being the range of items to be addressed.
 - A Building Code review was included in the report, focussing on the requirements of its Chapter 34. It is noted that the Code only really requires bringing an existing building up to the provisions imposed on new construction for matters involving life safety.
 - A synopsis of the structural condition was included, with some recommendations and conclusions concerning cracking of non-structural items and seismic upgrade requirements being presented.
 - Mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) concerns were included, as was presented earlier (refer to the minutes of the 8/07/02 meeting).
 - Technology in RMHS was discussed in the report, assessing the current infrastructure and needs, including video and telephone systems.

- Kitchen requirements were observed and recommendations are made for possible upgrades.
- The presence of hazardous materials was discussed, with more possible sites for hazmats being identified than what were included in previous studies.
- Existing conditions plans and schedules of finishes and casework were included in the report.
- TT asked Mr. Peirce if discreet costs for necessary upgrades, such as those for accessibility issues, Code compliance issues, MEP issues, etc., could be culled out of the overall cost estimate to demonstrate the non-elective aspects of a high school renovation to the community. Mr. Peirce responded that - to a point - they could do that, but he cautioned that FAI typically broke down the scope of renovations into four categories; basic, major, extensive and re-builds. Some areas might receive different scopes of work, which would be dependent on the options chosen by the Committee. The more involved categories might include satisfaction of the non-elective issues (must-do's) as a consequence of their re-working of the space. Hence it would be difficult to pull out the necessary cost items as stand-alone requirements if those items wouldn't even exist without the complete re-working. TT asked if even under those conditions that the non-elective upgrades would at least be identifiable as such, to which Mr. Peirce answered they would be.
- RG asked Frank Orlando to go over the draft of the Existing Conditions report with the Director of Maintenance for his comments.
- RR and Robert Peirce suggested that Committee members collate their comments on the draft report with one individual for submission to FAI. RR volunteered to be that individual (no objections were raised). RR further suggested that the finished report be placed on the Town's website, which Mr. Peirce indicated would be possible.
- JS cautioned the Committee to read the draft report carefully and that the Committee discuss it at a later meeting before accepting it as the final version. AM added that future investigations might require amending the report with updated information, a point to which Mr. Peirce agreed.
- RG asked Mr. Peirce if in the next few weeks, FAI would start developing representative cost estimates for some of the needed work identified thusfar. Mr. Peirce said that the next few weeks would be devoted to determining educational program requirements and the development of alternatives to pursue for project options. He said once some alternatives were discussed with the Committee and some direction received from it, representative cost estimates could be made.
- Mr. Peirce then asked the Committee to proceed as soon as possible with establishing desired community uses for the high school. RG responded that the non-school (Town) staff desires would be presented at the next SBC meeting (9/4/02). JS asked RG if the list of past RMHS users supplied by Frank Orlando had been gone over for possible interested parties in the high

school's renovation. RG responded that he would be discussing that list with the Town Manager in the next few days.

- Observer Jackie Mandell pointed out some areas of the report that had some inconsistent nomenclature and labeling, which apparently were due to word processing errors. It was felt that these items would be cleared up during the editing process.

WC passed out some diagrams that showed different types of HVAC systems for reference purposes (copies attached).

RG announced that Reading Municipal Light Department had offered to coordinate an energy audit of the high school to help in the planning of the upgraded service. He said he would contact them shortly.

Observer Linda Phillips asked if an individual had been designated from the Committee to act as its representative to FAI. RG responded that by virtue of him being authorized to sign the contract, that representative would be the chair of the SBC (which is how he signed it). She also asked if the Town had copies of the consultants' insurance forms. Robert Peirce said he would look into that. She also asked if seismic upgrades to the building, being determined by the value of the renovations as a percentage of the assessed value of it, had been determined as being necessary yet. Mr. Peirce replied that this was a Code issue and that it would be addressed when cost estimates had been done for the various options.

RG stated that members of the SBC would be going out to the Open Houses of the various schools to update the attendees of the status of the schematic design project. He also recommended having an open meeting for all interested parties to hear their concerns about the high school near the beginning of October.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:20 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on August 7, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Alex McRae (AM)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Staff)
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Robert Peirce (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Jane Wolfe (TMP Consulting Engineers)
Roger Wardwell (TMP Consulting Engineers)

RG began by saying the Committee should take up the subject of the contract with Flansburgh Associates, Inc. for producing the schematic design for RMHS.

- RG said that the architect and members of the SBC had revised the original draft of the contract in accordance with many of the comments made on that document by Committee members and had produced a revised draft. This draft had been sent to SBC members prior to the meeting and had been reviewed by Town Counsel (who had no further revisions to make).
- RG asked Sid Bowen to summarize the substantive revisions made to the contract. Mr. Bowen said that the biggest change was to delete specific costs of various consultants (a range of costs was given initially) as additional fees above the base fee paid to the architect. The RFQ required that the architect hire those consultants. Consequently, the consultant costs were identified and added to the architect's base with the understanding that the consultants were to be directed by the architect, not the SBC. Hence, only one fee (\$418K) was stipulated in the revised contract. RG noted that this amount was less than the \$425K amount published in the RFQ (and less than the \$450K approved by the Town) in order to hold some monies for contingency testing and/or research. Mr. Bowen added that a desired goal of the schematic design process was to produce information about RMHS that could be used for alternate schemes should the Town reject the preferred option outright. The contingency money could be used to augment the database produced with additional facility assessments and investigations.
- RG called for any comments on the revised draft from Committee members.

- AM felt that the revised draft was much improved over the first one, but wondered if the scope of work was sufficiently described to avoid large cost items that might appear from overlooked areas. He specifically asked if the contract offered enough protection for the Committee against errors and omission in the areas of hazardous material review and geotechnical engineering, two areas specifically excluded from the architect's liability coverage. Sid Bowen answered that it was the nature of renovations to have unforeseen costs appear as the project goes forward, due to the fact that all necessary "fixes" to all components of the building could not be known until all those components were uncovered. The amounts given in the contract for work that was needed to identify what systems should be fixed were a best estimate.
- AM clarified that he wanted to know was if it was reasonable to require the Committee to have to pursue subcontractors for unbudgeted costs due to their errors and omissions when the contract for such work originated with the architect. Mr. Bowen said that usually, separate contracts are made between hazmat and geotechnical consultants and the Owners which do not involve the architects. In the case of this schematic design study, the Committee made it clear that they wanted all consultants to be hired by FAI directly. Consequently, FAI has required those consultants to carry the same amount of liability insurance that they do, thus ensuring adequate coverage. TT added that the contract allows the Committee to pursue those consultants directly for errors in the content of their work provided they have liability coverage equal to FAI's. If they do not have that level of coverage, the contract then transfers liability back to the architect, who is regardless responsible for the coordination of those (and all) consultants.
- AM asked that the revisions made in the scope of work (The appended RFQ) be briefly explained. Mr. Bowen remarked that section A-2-d was revised to avoid broad descriptions of building components and investigations and specify those items that would be sufficient to satisfy the intent of assessing the condition of the existing building. Similar fine-tuning was done in section A-2-f. Other examples were given.
- AM suggested amending section 9.5 to correct a typo and list the year for completing the Basic Services as 2003 (not 2002) and also revising the incorrectly labeled Section 9.3.4 to 9.2.4 (another typo). No objections were raised.
- JS asked if the 45-day grace period for payment of the architect after invoicing (before interest charges were levied) specified in Section 8.5 was reasonable. TT answered that that amount was recommended by the Town Accountant as being a comfortable period for processing payments through his office.
- With no other comments being offered concerning the contract, RG called for a motion of acceptance. TT moved that, "The School Building Committee authorize the Chair of the School Building Committee (on behalf of the School Building Committee) to sign this contract with Flansburgh Associates." WC seconded the motion.

- RG called for further discussion.
 - AM asked that his amendments be made part of the motion, which was accepted by the motioner and second.
 - RG remarked that RP was not in attendance but had indicated to him earlier that had he been present, he would not have voted to accept the contract. His reasons concerned his previous motion during the voting for choosing the architect that called for further reference checks of FAI.
 - Observer Jackie Mandell asked if the new draft of the appended RFQ adequately required the establishment of existing floor-to-floor heights. Mr. Bowen said it did and that the earlier draft had been changed to eliminate redundancies. She also questioned whether having the architect begin work on the project and then negotiate a contract was contrary to the requirements of the RFQ. TT responded that it was typical for architects to begin prior to signing a contract in order to meet schedules. He reiterated FAI's earlier statement that the architect assumes the risk in such an arrangement (should no contract be agreed to, the Committee is not obligated to pay for the work performed during negotiations).
- With no further discussion being offered, RG called for a vote on the amended motion. The results were seven in favor, none opposed or abstaining (7-0-0) and the motion passed.

RG announced that the next meeting of the SBC (August 21, 2003) would begin with a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen to appraise them of the Committee's progress to date. After that meeting, the SBC would continue its deliberations in a separate working session.

Robert Peirce of FAI began the design team's assessment to date of the existing conditions of the RMHS mechanical systems, based on the draft Preliminary Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Existing Conditions Report dated 08/02/02 which was distributed earlier to Committee members (copy attached).

- Roger Wordwell and Jane Wolfe of TMP Consulting Engineers gave summaries of the contents of the various sections of the draft including,
 - Fire protection: there are no existing systems to assess.
 - Plumbing: the existing plumbing systems in the original (1952) portions of the building are at or beyond their useful life. Any systems that are chosen to remain will require increasing maintenance each year. Examples: pipes are corroded, valves are unreliable or inoperable, fixtures are antiquated, and the central hot water system is wholly unacceptable. The 1969 portions are not as bad, but will require steady maintenance to make them last longer.
 - WC noted that a great deal of work would be required to bring the plumbing up to present day Code standards, which would increase the amount of fixtures "per person" and would likely trigger re-piping to provide sufficient flow capacities for the added fixtures. Sid Bowen

remarked that an added objective of the existing conditions assessment is to provide a list of system deficiencies that could be prioritized for correction should the overall project not be approved (such as plumbing issues). AM voiced his appreciation of that objective and asked if drawings would accompany a later version of the report. Mr. Peirce said there would be drawings. TT recommended that capital cost estimates associated with system replacement choices be supplemented with estimated operating costs in order to help the Committee better evaluate their worth.

- JS asked if any of the plumbing could be salvaged, particularly the sanitary lines in the 1969 addition. Mr. Wardwell responded that although the piping shown on the existing drawings has the ability to last longer in theory, reports of problems with those lines indicates the need to replace them. Reportedly, the quality of Reading's water supply prior to the building of the water treatment plant was very harsh and as a result, iron waste lines were known to degrade quickly. Similar piping was installed for the storm drain system, but no real problems have been reported with it; hence it is assumed the storm lines can be salvaged. Both systems use buried pipes, however, and cannot be visually inspected.
- HVAC Systems: The heating plant itself is in fairly good condition owing to the replacement of two boilers and their ancillary equipment in 1995 and 1998. The boilers serve two different heating systems; low-pressure steam for the 1952 buildings and forced hot water for the 1969 additions. Many unit ventilators (UV's) in the 1952 section were replaced when the boiler work was done, but the 1969 UV's were not. The hot water circulating pumps that were installed with the 1969 addition have reached the end of their serviceable lives. The hot water distribution piping is 40 years old with much of the main feeders underground and unobservable (presumed to be in poor condition). Ventilation equipment that was original to the 1952 and 1969 buildings (fans, UV's, H&V units, etc.) is at the end of its serviceable life and require replacement. Some interior spaces have no ventilation at all (such as corridors). The school has a contract for full-time heating system maintenance with an outside vendor. This vendor's work will be increasingly necessary as the system ages without repair or replacement.
- TT asked if TMP would be identifying the major decisions that the Committee would have to make regarding repairs and upgrades of the HVAC system. Ms. Wolfe responded that they would and the first such decision was whether to add air conditioning to the building and to what degree. This decision would then allow TMP to tailor HVAC systems to the schematic design options.
- Mr. Bowen pointed out that the decision about air conditioning must also be made in the context of producing cost estimates that could be useful should the overall schematic design not go forward. He illustrated this point by pointing out that supplementary heating coils in the classrooms were 50 years old, but going to a fully air conditioned school would make any work on them unnecessary. If, however the full project (with air conditioning) was rejected, the cost of replacing

those coils would be unknown because no scheme was developed that re-employed them.

- MS said that he thought that the actual costs resulting from the inefficiency of the antiquated heating system should be investigated and presented to illustrate the need for its replacement. WC cautioned that adding ventilation would also add heating requirements. To this point, Mr. Bowen added that realistically, the need to heat and then exhaust fresh ventilating air (due to required fresh air exchanges) would match or exceed any savings realized from improving the insulating efficiency of the building. In his experience, operating costs generally rise after full-scale renovations.
- TT still hoped that after multiple permutations of combining various HVAC systems with each other, two or three schemes would present themselves that would produce the most cost-effective improvement to the educational environment at RMHS.
- AM inquired if the design team was laying the groundwork for assigning costs to the choices for HVAC upgrades. Robert Peirce said they were and were moving from assembling piecemeal requirements for individual spaces and zones to composing "system strategies" that would put together HVAC systems that would satisfy the piecemeal requirements and produce the best solution to the needs and goals of the school.
- To help this strategizing, Mr. Peirce said that two immediate school-wide questions needed to be answered; 1) is RMHS intended to serve as an emergency shelter for the Town and, 2) what are the Committee and School Department's desires regarding air conditioning at the school? As to emergency shelter, Mr. Peirce contacted the Reading Fire Department and found that the high school is indeed intended to serve as one (although presently it can only be a Priority II shelter due to its lack of air conditioning and handicap access). The need for a decision on air conditioning (AC) is because the differences between AC and non-AC HVAC systems are pronounced and produce very different design criteria (and choices to make) when one system is chosen.
- TT made the point that comfortable air quality and temperatures are crucial to maintain in a sustained learning environment, to which Mr. Peirce added that good acoustics are also important. He noted that unit ventilators are acoustically inferior to (central) air conditioning.
- RG asked Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS) to what extent the school was used over the summer. Mr. Orlando replied that teacher curriculum and administrative work was on going through the summer months and the Recreation Department conducted several town-wide programs in certain sections of it. It is not used as heavily as it is during regular school months, he said. Individual AC units are presently installed in offices that are continually occupied. WC asked Mr. Peirce if FAI could survey the school's summer usage and identify

those areas that were used the most. Mr. Peirce replied that they would.

- Sid Bowen advised that the decision to air-condition or not should take into consideration the fact that 50 or so new unit ventilators had been installed 5-8 years ago and that if AC is to be used school-wide in a the renovation, those units would have to be abandoned. TT remarked that the School Committee acknowledged such a possibility when it authorized the purchase of those new UV's. WC also noted that when discussing AC for the school, possible re-installation of heating pipes might be necessary to be able to handle both heating and cooling water volume (cooling lines must be larger).
- RG asked the design team if other school districts were adopting air conditioning in their renovations, perhaps in recognition of eventually going to a 12-month school year. Jane Wolfe cited two of her projects of similar scope that were split on the decision to air-condition their schools (one did, one didn't) and some that included it as an add-alternate in the bid documents. Mr. Bowen recalled projects that had air-conditioned only certain spaces (offices, auditorium, library, etc.) while not providing it for classrooms. One had out-and-out rejected AC on the basis of cost.
- Jane Wolfe said that air-conditioned systems allowed choices from a variety of equipment and explained some of the possibilities. RG asked if TMP could compile costs for a range of systems that incorporated AC in varying amounts. Ms. Wolfe replied with her own request that the Committee prioritize the spaces that would need AC the most (auditorium, computer rooms, library, etc.), to which RG relied that such priorities would be discussed.
- TT asked that the health issues associated with various systems be presented with the system choices so that they may be taken into account when deliberating the merits of each system. Ms. Wolfe remarked that ventilation and the replenishing of fresh air had the most effect on users' health.
- Sid Bowen initiated a discussion about creating healthy learning environments through control of not only fresh air and temperature, but also sound (noise), upon which the choice of ventilation system played a large part. TT contributed comments about the choice of materials in classrooms affecting acoustics as well as air quality issues, such as carpeting. Mr. Bowen pointed out that carpeting has advantages but only if it is maintained well, which is often left undone due to facility budget constraints.
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked Mr. Bowen if AC would be reimbursable by the SBA. He answered it would be. She also asked if the design team was aware of the Peat Marwick recommendations for Town-wide building maintenance. TT explained the Peat Marwick study and their recommendations that serve as a guideline for building maintenance in Reading. This precipitated a discussion about the relative importance of maintenance to renovated (and new) schools,

with the result being an acknowledgement that committing to build a school project carries with it a need to commit to its on-going maintenance in order to sustain the educational benefits realized by the project.

- Observer Kendra Cooper raised a point about new building systems requiring the hiring of skilled technicians to use and maintain them, which would be an operating expense. Ms. Wolfe responded that their specifications for the new systems include mandatory training of a Town-designated individual to comprehend their workings and requirements. She also mentioned that certain proprietary systems could work with those systems' building management subsidiary that could monitor the systems off-site on a contract basis and perform corrective work as needed. Ms. Cooper suggested that increased operating expenses be estimated as part of the design team's work (Ms. Wolfe said such information would be provided). She also cited examples from other school renovation projects of acoustical problems arising with new ventilation systems in large spaces, with the equipment operating too loudly when used for public gatherings. Ms. Wolfe responded that TMP designs central ventilating systems to operate at low to medium airflows to minimize the systems' ambient noise levels.
- Robert Peirce and Sid Bowen commented on the efficacy of providing training for an on-site building manager only to lose the knowledge gained in the training when that manager leaves. Mr. Bowen said that outsourcing such tasks to contracted facilities management companies could reduce the risks taken with training an individual.
- AM thought it was of value to identify and declare the added operating expenses of the replacement building systems as valid criteria for judging the relative worth of each system. Sid Bowen agreed, citing an example of a high school building committee that insisted on a high-maintenance solar hot water system for its renovation and had trouble when the individual hired to maintain it was laid off in a budget squeeze (instead of teaching personnel). Observers Jackie Mandell and John Russo voiced their agreement concerning the identification of added operating expenses for the options presented.

TT asked if FAI was going to let the Committee know what decisions its needs from them and when they need them. Robert Peirce said that they needed decisions quickly on AC, but acknowledged that FAI had some more background work to do with the school department first. More immediately, FAI had put together a list of additional testing suggested by the members of the design team that the Committee should consider, which was passed out (copy attached).

- Mr. Pierce began by stating that the tests on the list were of two types: those that should be done to determine the scope of necessary work and those that should be done to improve the comprehensiveness of the existing conditions report (shown in *italics* on the list). He addressed each numbered test individually.

- Test 1 was to perform infrared testing of certain locations on the existing roof, particularly on the field house. Moisture was noticed on the undersides of the roof deck at these locations, which indicates water penetration. The extent of this penetration cannot be known without an infrared scan (uses infrared readings to identify boundaries of wet/cool and dry/warm decking below the roof surface) and the extent of possible repairs will have overall cost significance. Should the results warrant it, selective demolition may be called for to physically observe the degree of damage the water penetration may have caused to the roof decks.
- TT informed the Committee that such a scan was used to diagnose roof problems at the Joshua Eaton School, which led to a successful repair project being undertaken a few months ago. RG inquired of TT if the School Committee was moving forward with the transfer of ownership of the field house to them from the Board of Selectmen. TT responded that Town Counsel was investigating this subject, but it was hoped that the transfer could move forward without obstacles.
- Test 2 was an on-site assessment of the local water supply network's ability to support the addition of a fire suppression system to the school (sprinklers). An independent contractor would do this, since it is outside the scope of any Town department (water or fire).
- Test 3 would seek to test the existing domestic water supply piping through excision of test specimens for measurement and evaluation. This test would not be necessary if the full renovation project were to proceed, since such piping would be totally replaced (hence it is only needed to better complete the existing conditions information).
- Test 4 would be similar to Test 3 but applied to the storm drainage piping. Roger Wardwell explained that the corrosion that might have resulted from acid rain affected the vertical lines more seriously than the horizontal ones mainly because those lines were always covered by finished wall surfaces. Leaks in the vertical pipes were therefore more damaging (the horizontal lines occurred in the crawlspace areas and were not so damaging and accessible for repair). He said that TMP would recommend replacement of the vertical lines due to their age in any renovation scheme, so testing them would only supplement the existing building information.
- Test 5 would be the same as Test 3 for the sanitary lines, but those lines would be scheduled for replacement in the full project. Hence, testing them would only be for completeness of the existing building assessment.
- Test 6 would test the condition of the water service entry pipes, meter and valves, which would be replaced in a full renovation. Again, the impetus for doing the test would be for completeness of the assessment.
- Test 7 includes indoor air quality testing, which the Committee had already acknowledged needing, so its inclusion on the list is a reminder.

- Test 8 checks the condition of the hot water system valving and pumps, which is believed to already be covered under the contract for the heating maintenance vendor (already paid for).
- Test 9 is similar to Test 3 for the low-pressure steam lines, which would be replaced in a full renovation. Again, the impetus for doing the test would be for completeness of the assessment.
- Tests 10, 11 and 12 (testing the emergency generator, the normal building electrical distribution system, and the electrical panels, respectively) fell into the same category of Test 3. The tests would only be of use if the full project did not go forward and could be used for alternate project planning.
- A discussion ensued among several members concerning the need to have more complete system information right away or to wait until it was known if the full project would not go forward. If the project failed, the contingency money (\$32K minus any spent for testing beforehand) could be used for some of the italicized tests to improve the knowledge base of the systems' existing conditions. Consequently, a general consensus was arrived at that tests of systems that were scheduled to be replaced in the full renovation need not be done right away. This left Tests 1, 2 and 7 as tests to be done to help establish the schematic design scope of work.
- Robert Peirce remarked that for the purposes of the design team's progress, only the first part of Test 1 (est. cost \$2,500 - \$4,000) and Test 2 (est. cost \$1,400) would be needed to be done right away and he asked for formal approval to authorize the tests. He said that the costs would not be more than the range listed. The costs for Test 7 (IAQ) could be better established for later approval.
- TT then moved that the SBC approve a maximum of \$4,000 to do the Infrared Scan of the Existing Roofs (first part of Test 1) and to authorize a maximum of \$1,400 to do the Water Flow Test (Test 2) as per FAI's August 7, 2002 list of tests. JS seconded the motion. RG called for further discussion. With none appearing, a vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (7-0-0) and thus, the motion passed.

RG asked TT to discuss air conditioning of RMHS with the School Committee so that the decision could be made quickly as to its extent in the project.

RG reported that the Town Manager (TM) had asked the Committee for a projected schedule of needed funds should the renovation project be approved (how much in which fiscal years). He did so in order to update the 10-year Capital Plan and compile an aggregate effect on property taxes from all contemplated capital projects that require debt exclusions, of which the high school project would be the largest. Since the TM required this information right away, RG asked JS to make an assumption of what amounts would be needed and when based on the timeline he had produced for the construction phase of the project. He asked Sid Bowen to review JS's results.

- JS explained that his assumptions were based on the stated desire of the School Administration for a construction period of 30 months and on the approval of the project by the community at large in April of 2003. This would

lead to final design and bidding of the project, with construction beginning in the spring or early summer of 2004.

- With fiscal years ending on June 30th, JS fitted his estimates into four separate fiscal years (FY04 through FY07), assigning \$3M for architect's fee and 5% of project costs in the first one, and 45%, 40% and 10% of those costs in successive FY's, respectively. The TM used a total cost of \$59M to apportion to the fiscal years, since that is what is now being carried in the Capital Plan. He passed out copies of his mark-up of the timeline to Committee members (copy attached) for their review.

AM questioned Sid Bowen about SBA reimbursement rates for Reading and the status of so-called incentive points (like maintenance) for school districts applying for assistance. Mr. Bowen said that due to the volatility of the SBA's policies, what should be counted on at the moment was only the base rate plus any points for renovation (around 55%). AM asked if there was any indication of how large a project the State would support. Mr. Bowen responded that based on current guidelines, the indications were that the current footprint of the high school was of a size acceptable to the State for consideration. What was not clear at the moment was the disposition of the Field House in terms of reimbursement.

AM asked if FAI would identify the cost level above which the State would not contribute in its preparation of options. Mr. Bowen said that each option's cost would reflect the expected participation of the State and any overage that would have to be paid by Reading alone.

AM wondered if the Capital Plan being developed by the TM from the assumptions given would be accurate, given the unknowns in terms of reimbursement and total cost. RG responded that the Capital Plan only reflects the knowledge of the projected projects at the time it is updated, and at present, no more accurate information is available. It would be updated again before it is to be approved by Town Meeting.

Observer Jackie Mandell asked if space previously identified in feasibility reports as excess square footage as well as the Field House space would not be considered reimbursable. She asked if that was the case, why would transfer of ownership of the Field House from the BOS to the SC be necessary? Sid Bowen replied that until a project was developed and brought before the SBA for discussion/negotiation, definitive answers to what was and what was not reimbursable could not be made. RG noted that the need (or lack thereof) to transfer ownership of the Field House should its renovations not be reimbursable by the State was a question to be answered by Town Meeting.

The subject of approving or amending minutes was deferred until a later date.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. TT so moved and was seconded by MS. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on July 10, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Reading Police Station Community Room)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Paula Perry (PP)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Ray Porter (RP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Alex McRae (AM)

Featured Guests:

Robert Peirce (Project Manager – Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)
Rick Shubert (Liaison to Board of Selectmen)
Andrew Grimes (Liaison to Finance Comm.)
Frank Orlando (staff)

RG welcomed Robert Peirce from FAI who came to update the Committee on the progress of the RMHS design team.

Before that, however, RG told the Committee that the draft contract with FAI that was earlier mailed to Committee members was being revised. He expected another draft to be ready by the next meeting (on July 24, 2002), which he noted would be a joint meeting with the School Committee to discuss programming issues.

Finally, RG reported that he had received a list of extra-curricular users of RMHS facilities from past years from the high school staff and would be formalizing a way to solicit their input for the project.

Mr. Peirce began by passing out a work plan developed by FAI for the upcoming months (**copy** attached), which included scheduled tasks to be completed in the course of developing a schematic design. His first comments concerned schedules:

- Mr. Peirce pointed out the Summary Schedule and the Meeting Schedule first, noting that the times specified for various milestones in the project's development had been shortened from what had been suggested in the RFQ. He said that Dr. Harutunian had suggested the acceleration in order to be able to show some significant progress for an event which was to take place in late October (neither Mr. Peirce or Mr. Orlando could recall precisely what that event was). The presentation of options would be moved up to September 2, 2002 (from September 26th) and the time allotted for deciding on the final option would be shortened from approximately four weeks to two, reaching that decision on September 16, 2002 (rather than on October 22nd).

In this way, enough time would be available to make progress for the late October event.

- He went over a meeting schedule that was tailored to meet the accelerated schedule, noting that the July 24th meeting was to discuss programming. Following that (two weeks later), a review of the existing conditions and environment of the school would comprise the subject matter of another meeting. In successive weeks, alternates and their costs would be presented, followed by selection of the preferred option and thereafter presentations and reviews of the schematic design.
- RR voiced his concern that accelerating the schedule as proposed would not allow sufficient time for public participation in the review of the options. During the campaign to approve funding for the schematic design, the community was told that such participation was going to be sought. During the four weeks of the option review period, several public meetings were going to be held to achieve that end. Cutting that time to two weeks and scheduling that time over the summer did not serve that purpose, in his view. He wondered what event could justify such a change in plans.
- According to Mr. Orlando and Mr. Peirce, the event involved a large community gathering – possibly involving a veteran’s support group - before which a presentation of information about a proposed schematic design might be advantageous from the standpoint of educating the public. TT inquired of Mr. Orlando about various other reasons that might be the reason for Dr. Harutunian’s actions, possibly concerning the staff’s schedule. With none being obvious, he suggested that FAI revise their schedule to include the longer proposal and review periods for the next meeting (July 24th).
- JS felt that accelerating the schedule cut out valuable time to discuss the school’s needs with the (wholly assembled) faculty and to observe the staff and student body functioning under fully occupied conditions (the senior class was gone by the time FAI began their work in June). Placing the deadline for the presentation of options at the end of September in the RFQ was intended to allow enough time for these tasks, he said. In the absence of compelling evidence to justify an accelerated timeframe, he recommended sticking to the original schedule.
- RR added that staying with the original schedule gave more time for development of the educational program. He emphasized that the creation of the options should be done in as thoughtful a manner possible and should not be rushed. He also recommended sticking with the original time allotted.
- PP concurred with the previous members and reminded FAI that the SBC should be the entity that oversees the project’s schedule. RG agreed and recommended that Committee members be contacted with any contemplated schedule changes prior to discussing them in their meetings.

Mr. Peirce then went through the specific tasks his firm had outlined for the project.

- The first task (Task 1) was to assess the work needed to be done and organize it into a work plan, which was well underway. FAI and their consultants had been through the building and had gathered the existing

documents (which were being transferred to electronic (CAD) files as required). Meetings had been held with school staff (science in particular) and Department Heads, as well as with Mr. Orlando and Dr. Harutunian.

- Task 2 identified several specific targets for assessment of existing conditions (listed in the handout), that was produced from FAI's standard approach to existing building assessment and by adhering to the requirements of the RFQ. Mr. Peirce explained that currently, the design team was assessing various building systems, millwork and equipment. He also said a code analysis was being done. The product of these assessments would be a report that not only described what was found in the school but would also identify what systems, etc. needed to be addressed in any renovation. RR suggested that FAI produce a list of explorations that would require limited demolition and repair, noting that the RFQ allowed the expenses incurred for such explorations were be paid for by the Town directly, not by FAI.
- Task 3 would focus on health and safety issues of the current high school, including an assessment of hazardous materials and the review of indoor air quality and life safety systems. AM asked if the hazardous material assessment would be updated from current reports. Mr. Peirce responded that it would be. AM and WC discussed testing for indoor air quality with Mr. Peirce, pointing out the need to check it at some point when the students were back in school.
- Task 4 would tackle school program analysis, beginning with understanding the present use of the school and getting enrollment projections (out twelve years). The process of assessing future needs would be done via discussions with the administration and staff. From this information, tabulations of needed spaces as well as desired performance criteria would be developed. In answer to a specific request in the RFQ, the existing capacity of the school would be calculated according to the same criteria.
- Task 5 would develop schematic design options, starting with program alternatives and forecasting what each would mean in terms of construction. Plan alternatives could then be developed, folding in building improvements, as they are needed. The alternatives would generate scopes of work (in descriptive form), including preliminary costs and phasing requirements.
- Task 6 would entail the presentation of the options to the SBC and to various community groups, with the result of a single option being chosen by the Committee. This preferred option would then be further refined as a schematic design (Task 7). WC and JS asked Mr. Peirce to explain the process of decision-making that this task involved for the Committee's benefit, which he did. RP asked if there would be phasing options presented as sub-options for the Committee's review during this task, to which Mr. Peirce answered affirmatively.
- Task 7 would finish the schematic design, including presentation drawings and a formal cost estimate. TT asked if the use of a Construction Manager would be recommended in the schematic design. Mr. Peirce answered yes, with the CM's involvement being needed near the middle of the production of construction documents (after the schematic design phase). He pointed out

the CM's ability to delineate the Town's obligations to the Contractor and how to plan for them in the document production.

RG initiated a discussion of the expected cost estimates for the sub-options. It was noted that the degree of accuracy for these preliminary schemes would be less than that for a formal estimate performed independently on a set of schematic design documents (as is expected to be done on the fully-developed preferred option). The reason for this is the lack of development of the sub-options. Nonetheless, the estimates would be helpful in assessing relative costs.

RG and RR said that they felt the tasks fairly represented the tasks outlined in the RFQ.

RG asked Mr. Peirce to develop an update on program assessment for the July 24th joint meeting with the School Committee. He also asked the other Committee members to develop questions for the SC as well.

Rick Shubert (Liaison from the Board of Selectmen) asked how phasing decisions are made, given the involvement of non-school users of the facilities affected by it (i.e., the Field House and the fields). A general discussion ensued about phasing in general and the criteria for acceptable phasing, such as providing adequate safety, maintaining education standards and cost effectiveness. WC noted that issues driving phasing decisions might not be obvious, such as maintaining dissimilar heating systems throughout crucial phases.

RG asked that any Committee member who had comments on the draft of the contract pending with FAI should submit them to the Chair as soon as possible.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the May 21, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL so moved and was seconded by RR. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were 8 in favor, none opposed and one abstention (8-0-1). Thus, the motion passed, accepting the minutes.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the May 30, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL so moved and was seconded by RR. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. AM recommended correcting a typo in the second paragraph on page 3, changing the word "sold" to "solid". He also corrected the fifth paragraph on page 6 to reflect the fact that MS was not present to hear TDPC's presentation (not HMFH's). Finally, AM suggested that the interviewed architects be listed at the front of the minutes as "Featured Guests". RG and AM further suggested that school administration personnel be listed as "Staff" when noted as being "Featured Guests". RG asked if DL and RR had any objections to the amendments; they had none. With no other amendments appearing, a vote was taken on the amended minutes and the results were 8 in favor, none opposed and one abstention (8-0-1). Thus, the motion passed, accepting the amended minutes.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 8:40 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on June 26, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Alex McRae (AM)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Ray Porter (RP)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)
Rick Shubert (Liaison - Board of Selectmen)
Sid Bowen (Flansburgh Associates, Inc.)

RG began by welcoming Sid Bowen from FAI and relating that he was present to report on the work his firm had done since being chosen by the Committee to do the schematic design for RMHS (at the May 30, 2002 SBC meeting). After noting that the Committee will be meeting often over the next few months to go over FAI's work, RG said that Mr. Bowen had some comments regarding recent public comments made about his firm's performance and litigation history.

- Mr. Bowen said that some of the comments were somewhat dated, involving schools that had been completed many years ago. Others raised concerns about legitimate issues which FAI is concerned about, particularly in light of Massachusetts' public construction law (Chapter 149). He gave as an example two identical schools built in Everett in which one has severe leaking problems and the other doesn't. Both schools were built with the same plans, specifications and used the same general contractor. Two reviewing engineering groups had found some serious lapses in flashing installation at roof/masonry intersections at the problem school. It appeared that poor preparation and installation practices had been performed by the masonry sub-contractor. FAI felt that the sub-contractor had a responsibility to do the work properly and competently. Failure to do so, they reasoned, resulted in difficult and costly repairs. Similar construction lapses have occurred at other FAI projects (such as in Salem).
- The Chapter 149 law requires that in the absence of compelling evidence of incompetence, the low bidders for public work (including sub-contractor work submitted as filed sub-bids) must be accepted by the soliciting public agency. This restrains the amount of control the agencies (and their architects) have over construction and points out the value of the use of construction managers for public projects. CM's know the value and the timing of proper inspection of construction work and serve large projects well.

- As to the FAI projects which experienced problems, he said that they have learned from them the necessity (and subsequent costs) of adequate inspection of construction. In correcting the problems, he noted that the FAI details used might not have been all they should have been, and if so, they are insured to cover their share of the correction costs. As time goes on, he said, further clarification of the causes of the problems will be made.
- JS asked if the flashing problems noted by Mr. Bowen could occur with any re-roofing of RMHS. Mr. Bowen answered that the typical locations for flashing problems were at the junctions of new additions to existing buildings and not at replacement roofs.
- RG added that he had spoken to school official in Everett concerning FAI's performance and found that due to the ongoing litigation, not much could be related about it. The official did say that they had no problem with the schematic design performance of FAI. RG reminded everyone that the task now being asked of FAI by the SBC was to provide a schematic design, not administer construction. Should the project go forward, another round of designer selection will be required, at which time the construction problems now associated with FAI might well be clarified. In any case, he concluded, the existence of a lawsuit against any party does not of itself constitute guilt. He pointed out the lawsuits against the Town of Reading regarding the new elementary school and their subsequent favorable rulings for the Town as evidence of this point. He said that the Committee is committed to the success of the RMHS project and accepts the responsibility for the choice of the architect.
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked if an outside review of FAI's Everett projects was being conducted by a Chicago firm. Mr. Bowen said yes; the City of Everett hired the firm. They had proposed a number of issues that may be the cause of the leakage problem (including design issues). Their proposals, as well as those of other outside reviewers, were under discussion by all parties in the litigation.
- JS asked if Mr. Bowen saw any value to involving a construction manager in the production of RMHS' schematic design, given the restrictions of the site and the discouragement of additions by the SBA (to use as swing space during phasing). Mr. Bowen answered that for the schematic design phase, he felt the involvement of a CM was premature. CM's prove their worth in bringing a contractor's experience to design development, completion of contract documents and overseeing construction, focussing on buildability and cost control. He would certainly recommend the use of a CM should the project continue past the schematic phase.
- RG asked Mr. Bowen about the status of the contract between FAI and the Town. Mr. Bowen said they were almost finished with a first draft. They were fine tuning the range of options for consultants' work (such as surveying, civil and environmental engineering, etc.).
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked Mr. Bowen if proceeding with a high school project by way of separate solicitations for architects for feasibility study, a schematic design and full design and construction was common in his firm's

experience. He answered that while it is not the usual procedure (that being only two solicitations for feasibility study and full design), it was not unheard of and he cited the example of the Town of Dover as being one town who had done the same thing as Reading had. Mrs. Mandell further asked if the prospect of being asked to take another architect's schematic design to completion would be attractive to a firm like his (as would be the case for other firms should the Town vote to proceed with FAI's schematic design, requiring another round of architect solicitation). Mr. Bowen replied that his firm would definitely be attracted to such a project. He further pointed out that the architect that produced the actual contract documents for the project's completion would assume the liability of the project; the schematic design architect (if different) would not.

- Observer Gary Phillips asked the Committee why they voted for FAI when, in his opinion, they had several shortcomings in their production work. He cited publicized construction problems in other Towns (including Andover High School) and their handling of the new elementary school as examples on which he based his opinion. RG responded that Mr. Bowen addressed some of Mr. Phillips' concerns earlier in the meeting. Other concerns, such as work at Andover High School, led RG four years ago to discuss that situation with Andover's town manager, two Andover selectmen and the (then) chair of the Andover School Building Committee. All said they would hire FAI again. As to the Committee members, they were polled during the interview process and gave their reasons for choosing FAI. RG reminded Mr. Phillips that the responsibility for the choice of FAI rests with the Committee, due to their authorization by Town Meeting and the voters. While Mr. Phillips was entitled to his opinion that FAI was not the best choice, the Committee disagreed as evidenced by its vote and stood behind its choice.

RG asked Sid Bowen to give a report of his firm's work thusfar.

- Mr. Bowen said he had meetings with department heads and faculty on June 5th and 13th and passed out summary notes of them (copy attached). While general turnout was low due to final exams, the meetings with the department heads went well. Those meetings allowed concentration on finding out how the building failed each department in the teaching of their subjects and how they did or did not interact with their colleagues. He invited the Committee to review the meeting notes and bring any new or contradictory information to his attention so that he could include it in FAI's program assessment.
- The impression received by FAI was that the faculty did not have entrenched, preconceived notions of what their spaces must be (as might be expected since two feasibility studies had preceded this work). This suggested flexibility in formulating options, according to Mr. Bowen, which he thought, was a positive sign.
- He discussed the on-going schedule, stating that in the past two weeks, FAI had made a good start on programming and that such research would continue through the summer months with administration personnel. With the students gone, the attention of the design team would broaden to include site assessment (i.e. the building's physical plant condition). The objective, he

said, was to document as many exceptions to the original drawings as could be observed, thus producing as comprehensive a record of the existing conditions as possible. Architectural investigations had been concentrating on the exterior of the building; they were beginning to move to the interior. Mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) engineers had begun that week, with structural to begin the following week. Other disciplines, such as civil, site, landscape, HazMat removal, etc., were waiting for a signed contract between Reading and FAI before proceeding.

- Mr. Bowen asked for the Committee's help in soliciting input from potential user groups outside of the school department that might have a bearing on designing the building's renovation, such as theater groups, recreation, teaching programs, etc. RG replied that he thought the Board of Selectmen should be sounded out on this subject early on. He also thought that contacting various arts groups would generate interest in the project. He asked if Mr. Orlando had any contacts that he could use to solicit this input. Mr. Orlando said his staff could produce a list of the organizations that had used the auditorium in years past and suggested that these entities be contacted for their views. Mr. Bowen pointed out the dual benefit of doing so in that it would not only add design input for the architects, it would foster support for the project as well.
- PP pointed out that the Committee should also seek out groups that had avoided using the high school in years past in order to ask them what they would want in a renovation that would make the school attractive to them. RG gave the example of the Reading Symphony Orchestra as one of these groups. He also added that it would be desirable if some outside user groups might be willing to raise additional funds for facility enhancements that would benefit them directly (such as theater groups contributing lighting or rigging for the renovated auditorium).
- Mr. Bowen commented that it may not be possible to accommodate every group's wishes and gave as an example Everett High School's auditorium, which had to compromise between re-design as a music space or a theater space (music became predominant due to its better adaptability to theater than visa-versa). He stressed, however, that the earlier everyone's wishes were known, the better it would be from a design standpoint. In response to a question from AM, he said he hoped to receive such input in the next few weeks, but he acknowledged the difficulty in soliciting input over the summer months.
- Observer Linda Phillips asked if now was the time to consider ways to enhance state reimbursability through innovative community uses. She mentioned opening a branch of the Town Library in RMHS and perhaps a health center that capitalized on the presently dormant hospital fund that has long existed for the creation of a hospital in Reading. Mr. Bowen said that now was the time to bring such ideas to the fore, but cautioned that his experience was not encouraging regarding the successful inclusion of such facilities in high school projects. Mr. Orlando added that he felt the inadequacies of the present school library would be rectified as a part of the renovation project.

RG opened a discussion about how to get information concerning the progress and development of the project out to a wide public audience.

- RG himself thought that the two newspapers could be contacted to run regular reports in their papers. AM thought this might be done in the form of press releases. PP wondered if the SBC could make use of the regularly issued bills from the water/sewer department and/or the Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD) and “piggy-back” announcements about the project in those mailings. Selectman Rick Shubert thought such a process could be worked out with the other involved boards and agreed that a wide audience should be targeted for such a significant project.
- RG thought that the first order of business was to establish a schedule of regular SBC meetings over the next few months to observe FAI’s progress and involve the community as much as possible in the process. It was tentatively agreed to meet every other Wednesday evening beginning on July 10th at 7:30 p.m. (typically) at venues that would be announced, as spaces became available.
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked if that in light of discussions at the state level that would extend probable reimbursement times from five years to ten years or more, was there any chance to slow down the schedule and not “rush” it. Mr. Bowen answered that he did not think the schedule was inappropriate and attempted to focus people’s attention on the project, which was a necessary step. RG noted that Town Meeting’s instructions were to bring a schematic design back to them for consideration in the fall. JS took issue with the notion that the schematic design was being rushed, noting that prior to this, no definitive action at all was planned for RMHS. The schematic design, he related, was planned to proceed in an organized, deliberate manner to expose the problems of the high school and put forward a solution to them for everyone’s consideration. He felt all the architects interviewed agreed that the schedule was reasonable for such a goal. RG added that due to other pressing Town financial matters, getting a firm idea of what the high school project may cost in the future was a good reason for pressing forward with the schematic design. PP added that the same work would have to be done whenever it was begun and she saw no reason not to do it now.
- Observer Linda Phillips asked for clarification on the SBC’s timeline target dates. She asked why so much time was left between Town Meeting approval and the actual debt exclusion vote on April 8, 2003 and why the design process did not take advantage of that block of time. JS answered that that block was intended to be contingency time (“wiggle room”) for use either as extra design time or as time in which to hold an early special election to get the project to the SBA quicker. This might save some months on the bidding and construction time (and save money). Mrs. Phillips said she would feel more comfortable assigning more time to the option development phase. Mr. Bowen replied that sometimes the presentation of options led to the discovery of another one, in which case the contingency time would be needed. Hence, the deadline for the presentation of options could serve as a catalyst for (more) option development, which the SBC timeline could accommodate.

- RG asked Mr. Orlando when he could get a list of all RMHS users ready (not just the auditorium users). Mr. Orlando answered that the list could be assembled in a day or so. RG asked that he proceed with the list and get it to RG when completed. RG also said that protocol demanded that the School Committee be sounded out on uses for the high school, as well as the Board of Selectmen. After then hearing from potential user groups, the general public would be invited to air their views to the Committee. Mr. Orlando suggested using the high school web sites and RCTV community service bulletins to solicit interest.

Mr. Orlando reiterated the staff discussions with FAI that Mr. Bowen had presented earlier. RG asked if the faculty had exhibited realistic expectations regarding what might be possible in a renovation project. Mr. Bowen said he was struck by how moderate the expectations were of the staff they interviewed. He attributed part of this moderation to the fact that many of the faculty had spent most of their careers in RMHS and were not aware of what other schools were doing, or what beneficial changes a renovation could create for them. When asked by RG if the staff were willing to look at other schools to see what was possible, Mr. Orlando said that a substantial number of the staff were in transition due to retirement. Those that remain were being urged to get out to see similar operations off-site and broaden their frames of reference, in coordination with FAI.

RG remarked that he thought the Town in general had developed expectations of doing "something" at the high school and that if the consensus was that the "something" was deemed reasonable, the Town would never be closer to acting on it than it was right now.

PP asked Mr. Orlando if the recent (private) technology drive for RMHS was being coordinated with the technology assessment undertaken as part of the schematic design. Mr. Orlando answered that the two groups were using the same technology consultant (Edvance Technology Design, Inc.) and were indeed talking to each other. Mr. Bowen cautioned, however, that Edvance was concerned that there might not be enough technology staff to properly make constructive use of the updated hardware and software and maintain it, once designed and supplied.

Observer Jackie Mandell asked Mr. Bowen and Mr. Orlando if (relatively) recent upgrades to technology wiring and science labs could be salvaged in the schematic design plans. Mr. Orlando said that the wiring put in was thought to be compatible with contemplated technology upgrades according to the technology consultant. Regarding the science labs, the piping and casework that made up the bulk of the recent renovations might be re-usable, according to Mr. Bowen, but until the scope of the science area renovations was known, it was hard to say if the previous furnishings and equipment would remain.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the May 2, 2002 RSBC meeting. PP so moved and was seconded by DL. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

Observer Linda Phillips called the Committee's attention to the Inspector General's recommendations that communities develop contracts with designers that are written to serve the towns' best interests instead of the designers'. The IG discouraged the use of standard AIA (Am. Inst. of Architects) contract forms and favored contracts customized

by communities' Town Counsels for repeated use by the communities they advised. RG stated that Reading's Town Counsel would be reviewing the draft of the contract with FAI as would experienced SBC members (including Tim Twomey whose was an authority on construction contracts, according to RR) to ensure that the Town's best interests were served.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:15 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on May 30, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room in RMHS)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Paula Perry (PP)
Alex McRae (AM)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Ray Porter (RP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Michael Scarpitto (MS) p/t

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Staff)
Frank Orlando (Staff)
Cheryl O'Brien (Staff)
Representatives from The Design Partnership of Cambridge, Inc. (TDPC)
Representatives from HMFH Architects, Inc. (HMFH)
Representatives from Flansburgh Associates, Inc. (FAI)

RG began by saying that the purpose of the meeting was to conduct interviews with the three architectural firms that were chosen by the Committee for further consideration in producing a schematic design for the renovation of Reading Memorial High School (chosen at the 5/21/02 SBC meeting). First, however, he informed the Committee that Selectman Rick Shubert had been appointed by the Board of Selectmen to act as liaison between the BOS and the SBC during the RMHS project.

RG said that the order of the interviews would be to hear The Design Partnership of Cambridge at 7:00, HMFH Architects, Inc. at 8:00 and Flansburgh Associates, Inc. at 9:00.

TDPC arrived and gave their presentation, led by David Finney, AIA, President.

[Note: the presentations have not been transcribed as the Committee took no action during them. Questions by SBC members after the presentations are transcribed, as are the answers.]

- RR asked how (specifically) would the faculty and administration be approached to extract programmatic needs information. TDPC answered that they would reconstruct the master schedule for the high school and interview as many of the faculty and administration as they could. They would project space needs and go over the possibilities with the staff and put together options. They would present the options to the staff and start the

- process over, refining the options in an iterative fashion until the most successful options remain.
- Frank Orlando asked if any ideas would be brought in from outside RMHS, and TPDC answered affirmatively and gave examples of doing so on past projects of theirs.
 - PP asked if TPDC had any ideas regarding involving the community in the renovation design process. They answered that they would put information about the process out in many different media (Internet, print, etc.) and focus on groups who had a specific interest in the building (arts groups, athletic groups, etc.). They stressed doing this at all stages of the design process.
 - RG asked if they had experience producing options for communities that were concerned about solving problems like Reading's, but only if the solution could be viewed as "reasonable" (with varying definitions of what that would be). TPDC said they did have experience there and noted that showing what the alternatives would be was the way to demonstrate "reasonableness", particularly in regards to costs and benefits.
 - TT thanked TPDC for their efforts in preparing for the interview. He asked what role they saw themselves playing as architects to embellish the project beyond just solutions to the many functional problems of the school, such as aesthetically, visually, etc. that might energize the project. TPDC answered that they hadn't yet considered that role, given the functional concerns. They thought that creating major changes to previously overlooked areas might be what they would strive for and gave examples of such transformations from past projects.
 - AM asked if TPDC thought that the goals outlined in the RFQ were either too ambitious or too shortsighted. They answered that they thought the RFQ was far-sighted as far as goals and criteria without tying the architect's hands to any preconceived solutions. This would allow full exploration of multiple approaches to a solution and would increase the chances of finding the best one.
 - With no further questions being asked, RG thanked TPDC for coming and for all their hard work in preparing for the interview.

HMFH arrived and gave their presentation, led by George Metzger, AIA, Principal.

- RR repeated his previous question (to TDPC) and asked how (specifically) would the faculty and administration be approached to extract programmatic needs information. HMFH answered that they use the school's present master schedule as a starting point to see how the spaces are presently used, analyzing it for efficiency and comparing it to State guidelines. They would then interview the faculty and staff in small groups to determine what the separate needs of each educator was. They then pool that information into a presentation back to larger groups of staff to begin to assemble a school-wide aggregate of needs which could be molded into options with further rounds of (small group) interviews and (large group) reports.

- TT repeated his previous question (after thanking HMFH for their efforts) and asked what role they saw themselves playing as architects to embellish the project beyond just solutions to the many functional problems of the school, such as aesthetically, visually, etc. that might energize the project and engage the larger, non-school community. HMFH answered that they recognized the value of a community's high school beyond providing education as a community resource. They felt that part of the complexity of high school design was incorporating attractive and useful design elements that served the expanded community, giving examples of recreation facilities and performance spaces (auditoriums) as such elements. They would interview interested outside parties if they came forward to hear what they would like to have in a renovated high school. They gave an example of a regional high school they designed in the mid-west that became the focus of the three separate communities it served, drawing those communities together as the building was planned and constructed.
- RG noted in HMFH's response to the RFQ that they mentioned the possibility of showing the SBA that not restricting the renovation to the existing building footprint (via additions) might be more cost-effective than staying within it. He asked if they could give some examples of doing so in their past experience. They responded by describing Natick High School as a project that was initially sent to the SBA as a complex, no-addition scheme and was later revised to include a major addition that greatly simplified the construction and phasing, cost no more than the original scheme and improved the educational value of the finished product. They said the SBA accepted the new scheme for review (not approved as yet) and stated that they were not averse to additions to large buildings if they had educational value and reduced the financial risk of the State's reimbursement. HMFH had contacted the SBA about their discouragement of additions to RMHS and were told that if a solid case could be made for them (based on educational benefit and cost), they would review it.
- AM asked if HMFH felt that the goals presented in the RFQ and the tentative schedule attached to it were realistic and achievable. They answered that they thought the goals were realistic and do-able within the schedule presented. They cautioned, however, that they foresaw intensive work being required over the coming summer interviewing the faculty and administration to define the programmatic goals. This would be in order to define options in the early fall. Their mechanical consultant also stressed the need to research existing mechanical conditions over the summer, since maintaining and refurbishing the mechanical services was such a critical component of the phasing program.
- With no further questions being asked, RG thanked HMFH for coming and for all their hard work in preparing for the interview.

FAI arrived and gave their presentation, led by David Soleau, AIA, President.

- Frank Orlando asked a question about how FAI would engage the staff and determine what they felt the educational issues were. They answered that they would use interviews and discussion groups to bring the faculty into the process and continually revisit them when choices are being made to get their views. They said that it would take a measure of leadership to form a

consensus among the staff about what programmatic items are crucial and what must be cut, because incorporating every staff member's vision of RMHS' future would not be affordable.

- TT asked if Sid Bowen (Principal, FAI) would perform the same role he played when directing the elementary school project some years ago on Fai's RMHS design team. Mr. Soleau replied that he would be the managing principal for the project with the same responsibilities he had in the previous project.
- PP thanked FAI for their work in preparation for the interview and asked if they had any ideas regarding how to involve the community in the renovation design process. They answered that they would establish a web page to keep the public informed of what is going on with the renovation design. They would write frequent press releases and use cable television as means of communication with the community. They would attend community meetings (large and small) as needed to provide information.
- AM asked if FAI thought that anything was overlooked or overstressed in the RFQ regarding goals and to comment on the schedule as tentatively presented. FAI thought that perhaps the level of investigation sought to ascertain the condition of mechanical systems might not be necessary at the schematic design level for the reason that their condition and code-compliance can be reliably predicted by their age and type. Full exposition of them would not change their treatment in the final analysis, so confirming what is already known about them might be a waste of time and money at the schematic stage. They also thought that the project could be readied for full submission to SBA in the summer of 2003 (after approval by the Town in a debt-exclusion election) with little additional effort. This would be desirable to advance a formal dialogue with the State about the project and to place Reading on the reimbursement list as soon as possible.
- With no further questions being asked, RG thanked FAI for coming and for all their hard work in preparing for the interview.

RG asked DL to report on the sub-committee's final rankings of the candidates that showed the three interviewees as the most favorable ones (DL served as Chair of that sub-committee). DL reiterated that due to his non-numerical scoring of the candidates, a straight numerical averaging of combined scores from the three sub-committee members was not possible. DL had placed his top eight choices in an order of preference. The sub-committee had therefore taken the rank orders of each member (first through eighth) and averaged them to come to a final ranking. In descending order, this ranking became as follows;

1. HMFH Architects, Inc.
2. Flansburgh Associates, Inc.
3. The Design Partnership of Cambridge
4. The Office of Michael Rosenfeld
5. Drummey Rosane Anderson
6. Strelakovsky & Hoit
7. Kaestle Boos
8. Symmes Maini McKee Associates

RG then asked if after hearing the interviews with the top three, would the sub-committee members keep those respective rankings. He also asked the other Committee members for their rankings as well.

- DL said that he would change the order of the three candidates to FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third. He gave his reasoning for this re-ordering, saying that he looked for the candidates to address the specific topics mentioned in the interview letter (see 5/21/02 minutes). While all the presentations were quite good, he felt that FAI had zeroed in the best on the substance of the topics they were requested to address, followed by TPDC and HMFH. He felt comfortable that they would challenge the Committee on their expectations and desired schedule if they felt they were overly ambitious.
- JS recused himself from further deliberations on architect selection and did not offer any comments on ranking or selection.
- RR said that he had changed his ranking upon listening to the three interviews. He said that while HMFH is known for their excellent work, they failed to demonstrate their capabilities in their presentation and interview. TDPC made a very fine technical analysis of the situation at RMHS, he said, and had the experience to bring their technical skills to bear on the high school project. But he felt that FAI had the same skills and had addressed the educational issues involved more thoughtfully than had TDPC, leading him to believe that they would work better with the staff to achieve a solution that would improve the educational program at RMHS more effectively than the others. He also ranked the three interviewees as FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third.
- TT commented that he felt HMFH was a better firm than their presentation showed and was disappointed at their performance in the interview. He felt TDPC performed better than he had expected. He noted that TDPC had focussed on solving the technical issues involved. He felt that all the firms interviewed had the technical expertise to solve the physical problems of the school. However, he thought that FAI, by taking so much of their allotted time to talk about improving the learning environment, had shown that they understood the value of the renovations to Reading's educational system. He rated the three firms FAI, TDPC and HMFH (1st, 2nd, and 3rd).
- RP began by suggesting that it would be beneficial to interview other candidates in the "second tier" of ranked firms. Regarding the three interviewees, he leaned towards TDPC due to their grasp of the problems of RMHS and their suggestions for re-using existing spaces like the girl's gym and the rear of the cafeteria for phasing. He felt that HMFH did not perform in their interview to the same level of expertise that they demonstrated in their written response to the RFQ. He ranked the interviewees as TDPC first, FAI second and HMFH third.
- AM enumerated various pros and cons of each interviewee. He noted that HMFH had the weakest presentation of the three yet had the best written response, in his view. He felt FAI and TDPC had both given fine presentations, with FAI having strong personalities and a positive approach to the project while TDPC offered straightforward development of various

choices for the Committee based on solid groundwork researching the problems of RMHS. He wondered if there would be any problems with a firm like FAI that could have up to three Reading school projects going at the same time if they were selected. He also wondered if it was right to judge HMFH as less desirable simply because their presentation was not as impressive as the other two. He concluded that he would be happy with any of the three interviewees and ranked them essentially equal to each other.

- RG began by stating that he thought judging HMFH's presentation was a valid criteria for acceptance or rejection since they would be called on many times to put together presentations for other bodies in town if selected and must be able to perform satisfactorily. He noted that TDPC and FAI had presented themselves very well in contrast and was struck with the fact that TDPC had put together a preliminary phasing plan as part of their talk. He thought that this went perhaps too far on too little information. Regarding FAI, he commented that their concentration on the educational benefits that could be derived from a renovation seemed to fit the desired goals of the community best. He ranked the candidates FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third.
- PP agreed with previous comments by RG in saying that the presentations were valid points for judgement and that TPDC had surprised her with a tentative phasing plan so early in the process. Their phasing work-up had, however, impressed upon her the complexity of producing a phasing plan. FAI's ability to work successfully with Reading school staffs and their competence in developing and presenting their work for community viewing was very important to her. She ranked the firms FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third, noting that she had no desire to interview more candidates since she felt she had heard from the "cream of the crop".
- BC expressed disappointment with HMFH's presentation but reacted favorably to both TDPC and FAI. Both of those firms brought the personnel that would be doing the fieldwork and he liked them both. While he said that he was impressed with the results that TDPC had brought to the Parker Middle School project, FAI's focus on the educational improvements possible impressed him more and so he rated the firms FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third.
- MS declined to rate the candidates since he could not be present to hear TDPC's presentation.
- Dr. Harutunian said that he expected the interview process would be an opportunity for architects to demonstrate how they might apply their creativity to describe approaches to the high school's problems. He felt he did not see that in HMFH's presentation and noted their lack of specificity to Reading's project. He felt he did see that in TDPC and FAI. Regarding TDPC, he thought their interview went better than he had expected. As far as FAI was concerned, he thought they demonstrated a thorough knowledge of what Reading needs and expects with its school projects. He rated the firms FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third.
- Frank Orlando expressed his appreciation of past projects that he is personally familiar with that were done by both FAI and TDPC. Yet he

quickly ranked the firms as FAI first, TDPC second and HMFH third and said he did so in direct proportion to the attention they paid before the interviews to the educational program of the high school. He felt FAI had done the most to seek out the concerns and operations of the high school staff of the three interviewees and had translated that knowledge into a succinct presentation for the Committee. They listened to Mr. Orlando's phasing concerns and appeared to understand them when formulating ideas that went into their talk. Consequently, TDPC had shown some concern about the ed. program while HMFH had not shown very much in their preparations. Hence, his rankings.

- RG said that FAI asked him before they responded to the RFQ if they should not participate due to the events that have occurred on their previous Reading project, the new elementary school at Dividence Road. RG told them that he felt the Committee's charge was to pick the best firm from those available to do the work and if FAI thought they could do it, they should not avoid participating. Further, to the point raised about FAI handling up to three Reading projects at once, RG asked RR, TT and Dr. Harutunian if the multiple projects would be of concern. All said that FAI was large enough to handle the work and had done so in several other communities. Their description of their upcoming workload also showed no overload of projects.
- When asked, AM declined to order his rankings of the candidates, stating that his tallying of pros and cons had shown a statistical "dead heat" and reiterated his belief that any of the three interviewees would be acceptable in his view. He added that he did not feel TDPC had gone too far in presenting a conceptual phasing plan; that it was stated as conjecture and he had taken it as such. RR concurred with AM.

RG noted that the aggregate ranking of the three interviewees differed from the sub-committee's ranking (among Committee members, six ranked them FAI / TDPC / HMFH, one ranked them TDPC / FAI / HMFH, one ranked them equally and two declined to participate). Given the preponderance of favor for FAI, he called for a formal motion, stating that he would take no comments from non-Committee members.

- RR responded, saying that he'd "like to move that the School Building Committee award the contract for the schematic design of Reading Memorial High School to Flansburgh Associates." DL seconded the motion.
- RP asked if he could amend the motion to check more references for FAI before voting. JS said that in his work as a sub-committee member, he had checked four references for FAI and found no negative comments to report to the Committee. RG asked if RP had any specific references in regards to his amendment. RP said he recalled news articles regarding controversial projects that FAI had worked on and thought that some references that were not listed in FAI's brochure should be checked, but he did not have anything specific "right now."
- JS commented that one of his reference checks was to the former chair of the Andover School Building Committee and he was told a great deal about the circumstances that surrounded the Andover High School project, which was considered controversial at the time of its construction (over four years ago). The former chair explained that the project had a very constricted schedule and was given to FAI to complete after being produced under another firm's

feasibility study. Although not blameless in some of the errors and omissions that occurred on that project, FAI did perform well in seeing that the final building was done to Andover's satisfaction and the former chair said he would recommend them to the RSBC for Reading's high school project without hesitation. He noted that there were a number of various other entities involved in the controversy, including his committee, the general contractor, sub-contractors and consultants and did not involve only FAI. JS commented that after talking with the former chair (and speaking from his own experience), he thought additional reference checks of controversial projects would likely reveal similar multi-entity involvement in the problems that created the controversies.

- RG asked RP for clarification of his amendment and its effect on the main motion (to appoint FAI as architect for the project). RP sought to make the motion conditional on the satisfactory checking of additional (un-specified) references that had experienced controversies involving FAI. RG called for a second to the amendment, received none, and the amendment did not make it to the table.
- RG called for any additional comments regarding the main motion. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the result was seven in favor, one opposed and two abstaining. Hence, the motion passed.

A general discussion ensued regarding notification of FAI, TDPC and HMFH as to their status and to the production of a schedule to follow for following FAI's progress. It was decided to allow FAI to begin discussions with the staff and administration immediately and the SBC would call a meeting after that process had been established and was on-going.

Observer Linda Phillips read a list of items concerning FAI;

- The managing principal of FAI, Sidney Bowen, was not a registered architect in Massachusetts,
- FAI had been investigated for accessibility problems in a number of schools,
- FAI had been sued during the Andover High School and apparently agreed to some culpability for a mistake, paying for it,
- In Westwood, FAI and Sidney Bowen were named in a breach of contract suit,
- FAI is involved in a pending lawsuit in Salem,
- Mrs. Phillips felt the schools FAI did not list as references were more revealing than the ones they did list (in Everett, Easton, Lynn, Belmont). She said Mashpee had disqualified FAI because they withheld information concerning Belmont. There was significant water leak damage to an FAI school in Salem.
- She noted that FAI had submitted an older form of the required state designer form than the one used by other respondents,
- She said she had concerns about FAI using its marketing expertise to promote the project to the Town, since she thought that was an improper use of taxpayer funds.

RG thanked Mrs. Phillips for her opinions.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. TT so moved and was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 11:10 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on May 21, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Ray Porter (RP)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Rich Radville (RR)
Alex McRae (AM)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Paula Perry (PP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Bill Carroll (BC)

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent)
Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)
Cheryl O'Brien (Asst. Principal – RMHS)

RG opened the meeting by stating that the main purpose of it was to hear the recommendations of the architect evaluation sub-committee for likely candidates for the job of preparing a schematic design for the renovation of Reading Memorial High School. This sub-committee reviewed all sixteen sets of qualifications submitted in answer to the Committee's RFQ and was directed to rank them and present the top ranking firms to the main Committee for further consideration. The sub-committee members were DL, RR and JS.

- Sub-committee chairperson DL began by stating that the sub-committee met on May 6th and May 13th, with the latter date being the session in which the individual reviews were presented and discussed. The result was clear agreement on the top three candidates, those being Flansburgh Associates, The Design Partnership of Cambridge and HMFH Architects. There was sufficient disagreement on the recommendation of a fourth candidate to merit a memo to the Committee at large (copy attached), asking that the submittals of the next four candidates be studied prior to this meeting.
- DL explained that this came about because each of the candidates which ranked fourth, fifth and sixth had two out of the three sub-committee members placing them highly while the third member marked them much lower. This two-to-one scenario occurred in different combinations for each of these three candidates – Drummey Rosane Anderson, Tappe Associates and Strekalovsky and Hoit - such that each sub-committee member served as "odd man out". DL went on to say that a second round of reviews that adjusted the relative scores of the three in question resulted in the same combinations of two-to-one, but the overall re-ranking placed these three on a par with the seventh-ranked candidate, the Office of Michael Rosenfeld. Hence, it became obvious that the sub-committee could not fairly differentiate

between the four firms in this second tier in order to make a clear fourth recommendation and it was decided to present this task to the main Committee (by the attached memo).

- In the interim between the May 13th sub-committee meeting and this (main) meeting, the sub-committee checked references for all seven of the top-ranked firms. The sub-committee met just prior to the current meeting (at 6:30 p.m.) and discussed their findings. The references gave no reasons to disqualify any of the seven candidates, it was found. Therefore, the recommendations of the top three firms (FAI, TDPC and HMFH) remained a clear conclusion of the sub-committee, while the following four candidates did not have a clear recommendation, but should be considered by the Committee at large.
- RR added that in the course of reference checking, he found that all past clients contacted were enthusiastic about the performance of the architects. He felt that the “pool” of seven candidates was an excellent selection to choose from.
- JS also noted the reference-checking process and said that he had gained some insights about what the Committee should expect about such a project as the RMHS renovation (phasing, use of construction managers, etc.). He said that after the selection process was over, he could discuss these insights with the other members of the Committee.
- TT asked the sub-committee if there was a significant separation between the top three recommended candidates and the following four. DL answered that there was a consistent gap between the two sets of candidates, which was confirmed by RR and JS.
- TT wondered that in light of this, would the Committee consider restricting the number of interviewed candidates to only three and not four (as was expected). JS cautioned about having too few candidates should one or more of them drop out.
- TT questioned how to resolve the choice of a fourth candidate, should four be desired; should the choice be made by the Committee as a whole or should the sub-committee be directed to reconvene and come back with a recommendation for a fourth? RR responded that picking a fourth simply to have a fourth (from a list of relatively equal candidates) might become an arbitrary decision. He did not feel that any of the candidates, once chosen to be interviewed, would be likely to drop out. He based this opinion on the workloads submitted by many of the candidates and the current “market” for design architects (low demand). DL concurred.
- Dr. Harutunian suggested reserving judgement on whether or not to pick more than the top three candidates and hold the second tier of candidates on a standby basis. Then if the Committee were to interview the top three and not be entirely satisfied with the choices they presented, it could call in any or all of the second tier candidates for interviews to broaden the selection. He also doubted that any candidates would drop out.

- RG asked the sub-committee members to articulate the particular strengths of the top three candidates that set them apart from the second tier candidates. DL responded that he felt the top three had composed their responses to pertain to Reading's particular needs rather than assemble bits and pieces of previous proposals to other towns. He said they were well experienced in high school renovations and the phasing for them. They applied themselves to trying to get this particular project rather than treat it as just another job application. RR responded that the volume and depth of experience with high school renovation projects presented by the top three put them ahead of the others, in his view. He also felt the experience of the designated individuals as well as the consultants listed put the three firms above the others. He agreed with DL that the specific attention paid to Reading's problems contributed to their elevated status. JS answered that the three firms had deep experience with high school renovations comparable in size to Reading's, not just partial reno's or projects much smaller than RMHS. They demonstrated how Reading's high school played to their strengths, mainly substantial experience of the firms, the individuals and the consultants with comparable projects. These demonstrations tied in well with the sub-committee's criteria for evaluating experience with high school renovations, which is why they scored so highly.
- RG then asked if any non-sub-committee members had made a decision about which of the four firms in the second tier should be interviewed.
- AM noted that the two firms who had done feasibility studies for the high school were in the second tier (Strekalovsky & Hoit and DRA) and may deserve further attention on the basis of their prior experience. He said that he was interested in hearing more from The Office of Michael Rosenfeld (OMR).
- BC said he favored S&H and DRA, based on their work in Reading and Newton.
- TT felt that two of the four firms in the second tier were comparable to the top three in terms of quality of design. However, only one of them had zeroed in on Reading specifically and also had personnel with demonstrable high school renovation experience and this was OMR. He said he found their proposal "quirky" and individualistic, but if he had to recommend a fourth interviewee, it would be them.
- PP said she had expected more information and enthusiasm from S&H and DRA, since they had worked on the high school previously, but did not find it. She was not sufficiently impressed enough with the other two firms to recommend them over any of the others, so she felt that the top three were enough to interview.
- MS agreed that the top three should be sufficient, but he mentioned that if another (second tier) candidate were to be called up to replace one of them, he would recommend S&H, based on their work on Coolidge Middle School.
- RP said he had reviewed the proposals and tried to follow the ranking criteria set forth in the evaluation sheets used by the sub-committee and found it difficult to do. He felt DL had had similar problems (DL had chosen not to

assign separate scores for the criteria but had ranked the candidates outright). He wondered if the RFQ could have called for responses that were more structured to the evaluation criteria. He said that he found DRA to have had the most experience with high school renovations among the four firms in the second tier. Regarding the existence of a second tier, he said he had expected the sub-committee to come back with numerical rankings that would have given a relative order to the respondents and would make the choice of a fourth candidate more straightforward. DL replied that it was his non-numerical ranking that made a straight numerical average of the three sub-committee members impossible. He said his understanding of the sub-committee's instructions was to bring back a recommendation of four top candidates. His method of ranking was designed to achieve this end and it did agree well with the numerical rankings of RR and JS for the top three.

- RG asked for Mr. Orlando and Dr. Harutunian's opinion on the firms in the second tier. Mr. Orlando said that if he had to choose from the second tier, he would want to interview all of them. Since that was not realistic, he said he favored sticking to interviewing the top three firms. Dr. Hautunian said that there was no rule requiring that a fourth candidate be chosen and that he found no fault with the top three. He suggested interviewing only them.
- JS drew the Committee's attention to the timing of the interview process. He noted that he felt it was crucial to get the winning firm on board as soon as possible to allow them access to the high school staff before the summer break. He felt that taking more time to deliberate would rob the candidates of needed preparation time, which was already tightly compressed (nine days). Dr. Harutunian cautioned against hurrying the decision-making process in order to meet a schedule. He wondered if nine days were enough to be able to properly prepare for interviews. RR felt that it made it tough for the architects. TT agreed, but said that they were all aware of the desired schedule and that if they wanted the job, they could pull a presentation together. RR agreed that it was possible. TT recommended that the top three firms be interviewed in nine days (on May 30th).
- AM wondered if the firms would be over-occupied with this year's submissions to the SBA to adequately prepare for interviews. RR replied that the SBA submissions involved production staff, which typically is not involved with interviews for designing projects.
- Discussion ensued about how to notify both the top three and the remaining thirteen candidates about their status, if the Committee adopted the three-only slate of interviewees. It was agreed that the top three would be notified by telephone and all would receive faxed notifications of their status. The non-interviewees would be told that they would still be under consideration if the chosen firms were not satisfactory.
- Observer Linda Phillips asked if the rankings of the firms by the sub-committee would be recorded and if the non-numerical rankings were acceptable legally. Dr. Harutunian answered that the sub-committee's work did not constitute a legally binding selection process and could have been done in executive session since the discussion of the firms involved individual and corporate reputations (it was done in open meetings). The selections done by the full Committee, however, must be ranked and recorded to satisfy

the law. JS noted that the sub-committee's individual scores and averaged rankings would be presented in its own minutes, which would be publicly posted.

- RG called for a formal motion to accept the recommendations of the sub-committee regarding candidates to interview. TT moved that the Committee interview the three candidates that the sub-committee put forward as their first tier choices; Design Partnership of Cambridge, Flansburgh Associates and HMFH Architects, which PP seconded. RP moved to amend the motion by adding DRA to the list of interviewees. No second was made and the amendment did not make it to the table. With no further discussion being offered, a vote was taken and the result was eight in favor, one opposed and one abstention and the motion carried (8-1-1).

Observer Jackie Mandell passed out copies of a compilation of school projects put together by the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) in April of 2001 that listed salient data about the projects, such as size and type and cost information (copy attached). She pointed out that she favored DRA and that DRA had many renovation projects on the BSA list. She noted that Flansburgh Associates did not have as many and that some of their schools listed has had problems with cost and time over-runs. She also asked about an amendment being issued to the applicants and asked what it was for. Dr. Harutunian answered that the amendment allowed the use of a shortened version of the required Designer Selection Board state form and it was issued after requests from some of the applicants.

The date and location of the interviews was set for the evening of May 30th in the Superintendent's Conference Room. RG would notify the three approved candidates and schedule the order of the interviews. DL would notify the thirteen other respondents and follow up with written notification for all sixteen of their status.

Discussion then centered on what the interviewees should be told to prepare for during their interviews.

- RR suggested having them discuss their relevant experience in phasing large high school projects comparable to RMHS.
- TT said he didn't want them to simply repeat the information contained in their response brochures. He also wanted the candidates to clearly identify the individuals that would be doing the work and what their roles would be vis-à-vis Reading's high school project.
- JS cautioned about requesting too many specific tasks of the candidates given the traditional limit of 45 minutes per interview, with only 20-25 minutes allotted to the architect's presentation itself (the remainder being left to questions and answers).
- RP suggested that the candidates be asked to be prepared to present background of any high school renovation project of theirs that went over time and budget limits or had any adverse health issues. TT took issue with that approach, saying it that all the candidates were likely to have had problems in the past and that demanding explanations of them did not promote the Committee's intent to establish a good working relationship with the winning architect. JS related an instance during the elementary school feasibility

study interviews wherein one of the candidates was asked extemporaneously about a well-known local school project that had problems and had answered graciously and effectively, which apparently told the Committee more about them than if they had prepared an explanation. RR felt that asking interviewees to be prepared to answer for troubled projects might send a message that Reading was going to be adversarial in its relationship with the winner and might scare off desirable candidates. RP still felt that such an approach was in the Town's best interests. Dr. Harutunian said that checking with the SBA about an architect's past performance would circumvent potentially embarrassing and/or adversarial approaches to finding out about a firm's past performances. RG felt that the pursuit of such information would be best handled during the interview process rather than by prior arrangements. Observer Jackie Mandell suggested that the Committee could check with the SBA about projects that were not listed in the brochures and call the interviewees to ask why they weren't listed (she related an instance of another town rejecting one of the finalists due to an omission of a troubled project from their RFQ response). RG said the Committee had chosen not to do that.

- AM thought that the candidates should be asked to comment on the tentative schedule worked up by the Committee for the production of the schematic design.
- Frank Orlando asked that the finalists be asked to explain their expected method of approach to engaging the faculty and administration in determining the major educational issues for the renovated high school.
- JS suggested that the posing the question of how to approach phasing with little or no swing space would be a good way to evaluate the finalists through their answers.
- RP asked if the sub-committee members had checked references that were not listed in the candidates' brochures. The members said they had only checked listed references and had concentrated on those whose projects were most like RMHS. Dr. Harutunian suggested contacting the superintendent and principal of the schools that were given as references for their views on the candidates since they were the end-users of the design process initiated and guided by those architects.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the April 4, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL so moved and was seconded by BC. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

RG called for a motion to accept the minutes of the April 24, 2002 RSBC meeting. RR so moved and was seconded by PP. He called for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

RG, Dr. Harutunian and RR made note of the positive aspects of high school renovation projects such as were displayed in the brochures. They remarked how encouraging it was for RMHS to see how other communities had rejuvenated their high schools with their projects.

RG related that he had been speaking to several PTO's about the high school project and had noted significant interest in the high school project. He had encouraged the PTO members to get involved and stay informed about the ongoing process.

RR asked to place in the record acknowledgement of the obvious effort made by the candidates who were not selected to be interviewed to thoroughly present their qualifications to the Committee. He noted that the level of quality of the presentations of the non-continuing thirteen respondents was very high and took significant work and expense to produce. He felt that they had tried very hard and that their efforts should not go unrecognized [*so noted*].

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on May 2, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Ray Porter (RP)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Rich Radville (RR)
Alex McRae (AM)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Paula Perry (PP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Warren Cochrane (WC)

Featured Guests:

Andrew Grimes (Liaison to Finance Comm.)
Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)
Cheryl O'Brien (Asst. Principal – RMHS)

RG began by informing the Committee that sixteen (16) responses to the Request for Qualifications were received from architectural firms interested in performing the schematic design for Reading Memorial High School. Copies of each response were distributed to each Committee member. The subcommittee elected at the previous meeting (April 24, 2002) was directed to evaluate the responses and return to the Committee at large with recommendations for likely candidates.

RG introduced Andrew Grimes, sent by the Finance Committee to serve as their liaison to the School Building Committee during the development of the schematic design.

RG announced that the missing architectural and structural plans for the existing 1969 addition to the high school had been found, but no as-built drawings (for any RMHS building).

RG called for discussion on what the number of recommended candidates should be.

- It was pointed out that the subcommittee would bring back a ranking order of the respondents and the candidates would be taken from the top of that order down to the number of candidates that the Committee desired to interview (assuming the ranking was acceptable).
- The number fluctuated between four and six in the discussions, with some members suggesting waiting to see how closely ranked the top firms were to each other before choosing a final list. Others cautioned against having too many candidates, saying that the lower the odds were of winning the commission, the lower would be the interest level of the candidates. The

demands of conducting multiple interviews in two evenings with a final choice having to be made after the last one was also mentioned as a reason for limiting the number of candidates. A consensus was reached on four candidates as the tentative target number of recommendations to be made by the subcommittee.

PP informed the committee that the Town's website creator would post SBC material for public viewing. Material would include meeting minutes, questions and answer handouts, timelines, the RFQ and any other items approved by the Committee.

Observer Linda Phillips asked if the RFQ had been sent out to any architectural firms prior to the posting in the Central Register. She was informed that the RFQ was sent only to the Central Register unless a request was made for it after its appearance on that list.

Observer Jackie Mandell noted that the previous architect evaluation form used for the elementary school feasibility study was specific in evaluating elementary school experience in particular. The present evaluation form did not specify high school experience and she wondered if a more general range of experience was being reviewed. TT said that he thought candidates should be rated on high school experience but need not have high schools as their predominant school type as a condition for being considered. JS asked the Committee if the consensus was that the subcommittee should favor high school experience in its evaluations (as was his assumption as a member of the subcommittee). It was agreed that that was the consensus.

RG brought up the subject of community outreach and involvement, relating that three PTO's had requested appearances by members of the SBC to update them on the status of the project. Use of the Town's website was encouraged, with WC suggesting cross-indexing the SBC site with the architect's site to better acquaint the public with the process and the people involved. Engaging a broad range of the community prior to the summer months was deemed desirable in order to stimulate interest in the generation of options that are due in the early fall (according to the present timeline).

The originally scheduled date for the subcommittee's presentation to the Committee at large was shifted from May 20th to May 21st in order not to conflict with a scheduled School Committee meeting on the 20th.

At the request of observer Linda Phillips, RG read the names of the firms that had responded to the RFQ. They were:

- ARCADD
- The Design Partnership of Cambridge
- Dore and Whittier, Inc.
- HMFH Architects, Inc.
- Flansburgh Associates, Inc.
- Stekalovsky and Hoit, Inc.
- Mount Vernon Group
- H.L. Turner Group, Inc.
- McManus/Peterman Architects, Inc.
- Drummey Rosane Anderson
- Alderman and MacNeish

- Symmes Maini & McKee Associates
- HKT Architects, Inc.
- Kaestle Boos Associates
- Tappe Associates, Inc.
- The Office of Michael Rosenfeld, Inc.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. RR so moved and was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 8:15 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on April 24, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Warren Cochrane (WC)
Bill Carroll (BC)
Alex McRae (AM)
Rich Radville (RR)
Paula Perry (PP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Ray Porter (RP)

RG introduced two newly appointed members of the School Building Committee; *Bill Carroll*, who will be the teacher representative on the board, and *Warren Cochrane*, who will be a citizen-at-large. Mr. Carroll has 27 years experience reaching in the Reading school system while Mr. Cochrane is a mechanical engineer with HVAC experience and has served on various task forces for the Town in the past.

RG reported that he had met with the Board of Selectmen and the CPDC to ask that they participate in the upcoming deliberations on RMHS. He also asked the Finance Committee to appoint a liaison member to the SBC, which they have done.

RG reported that there were at least 17 attendees at the Vendors' Conference for the schematic design project that was held earlier in the day (a copy of the attendance sheet is attached to these minutes). He also said that over 36 inquiries about the RFQ had been logged at the Superintendent's office.

RG said that the major task for the Committee at this meeting was to appoint a sub-committee to review the responses to the RFQ and rate them according to a scoring form that has been used on past projects. Another task was to update that form for the RMHS project (copy attached).

- RG explained that there were three volunteers for the sub-committee; Dennis Lacroix (DL), Rich Radville (RR) and Jeff Struble (JS). He asked for other volunteers or nominations and received none.
- RR then explained his draft of the scoring form (he had updated the last form used for the elementary school feasibility study). The first items dealt with basic requirements for the architect, such as professional registration in Massachusetts, insurance coverage, etc. Failure to qualify under any of these items would render the applicant ineligible for consideration. The remainder of the scoring items were for assessment of the applicants' qualifications.
- RR pointed out a suggestion from JS to remove an assessment of the applicants' workload from the form. It was felt that it would be impossible to

judge this from the written responses since such a criteria was not expressly stipulated in the RFQ and that workloads can change quickly over time. It was suggested that this criteria could be discussed with the selected candidates during their interviews with the Committee. Comments from Committee members stressed that knowing an applicant's track record of performing work on time would be helpful. RR and JS recalled that in their past service on such sub-committees, this question was asked during the check of references for the selected candidates. This was deemed to be the procedure to use for this sub-committee and the criteria was removed from the scoring sheet.

- The relative weighting of the criteria on the scoring form was discussed. Comments regarding the importance of consultants' experience and phasing were made, with the importance of having experience with complex phased projects being stressed. Experience with SBAB projects was also stressed, with AM wondering if the weight given to this particular criteria should be increased. Others on the Committee agreed that such experience was crucial, but thought that its weight (10 out of 120 points) was appropriate, given the perfunctory nature of dealing with the SBAB on Mass. School projects and the relative "new-ness" of the current SBA regulations (too new for any firm to have substantial experience). It was agreed that Committee members could pursue this subject during interviews.
- With no further discussion offered on the sub-committee and the scoring sheet, RG called for a formal motion to appoint DL, RR and JS to the architect evaluation sub-committee, which was made by AM and seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative.

RG asked for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee for the minutes of the February 19, 2002 RSBC meeting. With none appearing, PP made a motion to accept them, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the results were 6 in favor and 3 abstentions, with the motion passing and the minutes accepted.

RG asked for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee for the minutes of the February 26, 2002 RSBC meeting. With none appearing, PP made a motion to accept them, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the results were 6 in favor and 3 abstentions, with the motion passing and the minutes accepted.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. JS so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 8:10 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on April 4, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Ray Porter (RP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Alex McRae (AM)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Paula Perry (PP)
Rich Radville (RR)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)

RG began by stating that the results of the April 2nd, 2002 election concerning funding for the schematic design for RMHS (Question 1) were in the affirmative and he thanked the Committee for its efforts to achieve this end. He also thanked Matt Wilson (who was present) for his leadership of the Building Pride advocacy group that worked for passage of Question 1, expressing appreciation of that group's efforts. He also thanked Frank Orlando (principal, RMHS) for his contribution and support.

RG said that the first order of business for the Committee was to solicit and select an architectural firm for the schematic design. Thereafter, he continued, he hoped this endeavor would become less of an SBC project and more of a community project, inviting other boards and the public to stay close to the Committee's proceedings.

RG called on RR to present the final draft of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) that he prepared over the previous weeks for discussion, which was passed out (copy attached).

- RR said that the only substantive changes from the previous drafts were the addition of verbiage from Town Counsel to satisfy various legal requirements (such as proper insurance, adding standard state forms, etc.) and also the addition of a section describing the criteria that will be used for selection of the architect (added at the suggestion of Town Counsel). This latter change was found on page 13 under "Section IV. Selection of the Firm."
- RR further added that he had edited an old architectural firm evaluation sheet from a past school project (copy attached) to reflect the criteria that the architects and their consultants be experienced with complex phased projects as a desirable qualification. This form would be used by the sub-committee formed to evaluate the respondents for the purpose of creating a short list of preferred candidates for the job (as had been done on previous projects).
- The other aspects added by Town Counsel that deserved the Committee's deliberations were the Notice of Events (schedule, on page 2) and the final fee to be published (page 14). On this latter subject, RR discussed items to be withheld from the advertised fee as contingency monies.

- One was the cost of advertising the RFQ itself. Another was the cost of an unanticipated specialist or consultant (which might be needed as the design developed). Another was the cost of repairing floor, wall and ceiling finishes that might be damaged during exploration of the existing building and its systems. RR suggested withholding \$20K for these purposes (a fee of \$430K).
- TT suggested withholding \$25K, saying that a contingency amount around 5% would be prudent (leaving \$425K as the fee).
- RP said he had a number of comments on the latest draft. The first involved adding a requirement that the schematic design team produce estimates of "life cycle costing" for different mechanical systems to be used in the renovation. This concept means to produce preliminary designs of various systems and compare their varying costs with their expected payback periods (in terms of savings in operating and maintenance costs) in order to evaluate their cost-effectiveness. This suggestion was made at one of the SBC presentations in March. RR responded that while the idea had merit, it shouldn't be utilized at this stage of design due to the (large) scope of work it involved. He suggested pursuing it at a later stage. JS concurred with RR, referring to a discussion he had had with a school architect in which the reliability of the savings projections was questioned and the diversion of funds from a fixed fee to perform such multiple analyses was not recommended (for a schematic design).
- AM and RP commented that the numbering system used was incorrect and/or inconsistent in many places and needed re-organization for clarity of reference. RR said he would direct the typist to clean it up.
- RP asked if the means of electronic production of site-based plans from the existing drawings should be specified. RR answered that such means are at the discretion of the architect and only the final product is specified. Further discussion brought out the point that the prospective architects were going to be shown the existing documents before submitting and told that what was not already available would be their responsibility to explore and discover in order to produce the required plans.
- RP raised the point about restricting design proposals to only those that maximize State reimbursement. He thought that recent news stories concerning the State's cutbacks in school building funding indicated a lack of surety in obtaining funds from the State in the future. He felt that locking in solutions to State DOE reimbursement guidelines might sacrifice flexibility in the options produced. TT made the point that adhering to State DOE guidelines acts as a "brake" on more extravagant designs that could be crafted in answer to the problems presented an architect. PP felt that the Town expected the options would maximize state reimbursements, as was the goal of past projects. RP wondered if a part of the project might be privately funded with the rest being state funded, producing an option that might be desirable. Restricting options to only those in which the state is completely involved might prohibit a private/state scheme. RG felt that producing a scheme that went beyond the requirements of the DOE would be difficult to explain to the community. AM felt that maximizing state funding

was a cornerstone of the Committee's rationale for asking for a schematic design and was likely accepted as such by the electorate.

- A general discussion ensued concerning various clarifications and explanations of technical items in the RFQ, including setting the number of copies of each candidate's proposal at fifteen.
- RP brought up the possibility of requiring the incorporation of renewable "green technology" in the schematic design, noting that certain grant monies might be available for doing so (in the final project). TT felt that this technology had yet to live up to expectations and that it might be worth looking into during further design phases, but that making it a requirement during the schematic phase would be premature.
- RP related that he had contacted RMLD about existing energy audits of RMHS that may have been done. He was told that one was done in 1993 and that a (2/3) subsidized audit could be done on all energy use and HVAC systems. TT wondered if such an audit would be useful if done on the current systems when it was expected that those systems were going to change. RP pointed out that the previous audit had suggestions for revisions to the systems, too. The Committee thought that the previous audit should be included with the documents made available to prospective architects in the RFQ itself to inform them of the assistance that is available from the RMLD. RP submitted his copy to RG for that purpose.
- The Committee came to a consensus that the advertised fee should be \$425,000 (leaving \$25,000 for contingency items).

RG called on JS to go over the timeline he had prepared for the coming year dealing with the production of the schematic design (copy attached).

- JS explained that he identified benchmark dates to be used as targets for the architect's work and the Committee's work (see timeline) and attempted to space them out over the coming year to finish producing a solution to take to a Special Town Meeting at the beginning of 2003. This would allow the use of the regularly scheduled municipal election on April 8, 2003 for a debt exclusion question to fund the entire project if Town Meeting approved of the Committee's recommendations. He said that he had (in discussions with RR) left a reasonable period of time in the early fall (2002) for Committee discussion of the multiple options that would be developed by the architect and that he hoped the community would participate during this review period to make their wishes known to the Committee.
- A general discussion ensued concerning logistics of producing the design options and having public input and going to Town Meeting (twice). Subjects such as allowing enough time for the architects to do their work, holding open the option for a special election in February, 2003 (for the full debt exclusion), checking the option(s) with the SBA and reporting to other boards (particularly the School Committee) were discussed. No substantive changes to the schedule shown in the timeline were made, however.
- RG noted that the SBC would attempt to involve other boards such as the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee, the Community Planning and

Development Commission as well as school PTO's, arts groups, etc. in an outreach program to keep the community informed. He asked if the Committee accepted the draft of the timeline for general distribution. No objections were made.

- As a result of the timeline's acceptance, the Notice of Events in the RFQ was revised and updated with the landmark dates given in the timeline.
- An observer asked for clarification of the need for peer reviews during the design process. She was told that a peer review would only be needed if the architects who performed the schematic design were to be selected to continue with the final design and construction. Since no feasibility option was chosen for further development, no peer review of the feasibility studies would be required. It was noted that a peer review does not approve or disapprove of a project's design. It only looks for completeness and acceptability according to State requirements of the work. Any discrepancies noted are resolved through revision and/or discussion with the original designer so that the work may be safely and legally used by the Owner (the Town, in this case).
- RG then called for a motion to accept the RFQ as amended to be submitted for advertisement on April 5, 2002, which was made by JS and seconded by TT. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative.

An observer asked if anyone on the SBC had researched whether or not the Committee as awarding authority of the RFQ could enter into contracts or authorize payments. JS advised that the chair should speak with the Town Accountant, as was recommended to him by the Town Treasurer when he spoke with her about the subject.

RG asked for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee for the minutes of the February 12, 2002 RSBC meeting. With none appearing, RR made a motion to accept them, which was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

The Committee scheduled a meeting for April 24, 2002 to hear about the Vendor Conference scheduled for that afternoon and to form a sub-committee to review the proposals submitted by respondents to the RFQ and rank them according to a standardized evaluation form (to be finalized at that meeting). A meeting on May 2, 2002 to distribute the responses to the sub-committee was also scheduled. Both meetings were tentatively set for 7:30 p.m. in the RMHS Guidance Center.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on February 26, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Ray Porter (RP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Alex McRae (AM)
Paula Perry (PP)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Rich Radville (RR)

RG began by informing the Committee of the schedule for the upcoming informational presentations to be given by the SBC in March. The schedule was as follows:

- March 5th at the Parker Middle School at 7:30 p.m.
- March 11th at the Coolidge Middle School at 7:30 p.m.
- March 20th at the Reading Senior Center at 7:30 p.m.
- March 30th at RMHS, with an Open House between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

RG related that there were three warrant articles that were to be put before Town Meeting in April by petition that affected the SBC. He did not pass out copies, but read them one by one (*Author's note: copies of the articles are attached to these minutes*).

- The first article seeks to expand the proposed renovation for the Barrows Elementary School to "include the maximum number of classroom space possible (*sic*)" above the current scheme for adding only 6 classrooms (replacing the portables and the current classrooms which will be dedicated to art and music). The article seeks to "authorize the Town to establish associated costs" that will result from this additional scope of work before Dec. 31, 2002 so that Town Meeting can appropriate the additional funds needed before that date.
- The second article seeks to replace the current School Building Committee with a new "Municipal Building Committee" with the specific purpose of addressing the needs of Reading Memorial High School (refer to the copy of the article for the proposed make-up of this committee).
- The third article seeks to appropriate \$20K "for the purpose of developing at least two options and their associated costs, for the renovation of Reading Memorial High School," which would be presented to Town Meeting before Dec. 31, 2002 "for a vote". The article also directs that this money be expended by the "Building Committee" and to see if "the Town will vote to

authorize the Building Committee to enter into all contracts and agreements as may be necessary to carry out this article.”

RG noted that RP had also submitted an article for the upcoming Town Meeting and asked him if he would explain it to the Committee.

- RP began by saying he had drafted an article concerning financial disclosure by committee and board members that would affect all Town boards, not just the SBC. He read the article as follows;

“To see if the Town will vote to amend Reading General Bylaws in Section 4.4 by adding Section 4.4.6 which will read as follows, ‘It is hereby established a (financial) disclosure requirement for all members of elected and appointed multiple-member boards, commissions and committees. Each member shall submit annually a signed statement to be maintained by the Town Clerk as a condition of new or continued participation on that multiple-member board. This statement shall state that neither the member nor their spouse have an employer business interest or investment that may pose a potential conflict with their objective participation on the multiple-member body on which they serve.’ The effective date of the Bylaw should be July 2, 2003. Failure of the appointed member of the multiple-member body to comply by July 1st of that and each succeeding year shall be (viewed?) as cause which may result in the removal of that individual from the multiple-member body.”

- RR asked RP why he was bringing this article forward because (as RR understands it) it is conflict with State law and he wondered if RP had any specific issues that concerned him, particularly with any members of the SBC. RP answered that, as a federal employee, he must make a similar disclosure statement about potential financial conflicts of interest. He termed the State’s policy a “self-policing” one in this regard and said it was rather vague. He said Reading has no policy at all. He said that due to some things he had observed with the Committee and with the RMLD (currently undergoing investigation for possible financial improprieties), he felt initiating such a disclosure requirement would be a “process improvement.”
- RR asked what specifically had he observed with the SBC that caused him concern. RP responded that he felt there were (in his opinion) “private agendas” going on with some of the Committee members. He cited as examples the way meetings are held and/or cancelled, lack of prior agenda distribution, not following the operating procedures outlined by the Town Manager for other boards, and generally not having sufficient structure to the Committee’s mode of operation.
- RG then asked what those reasons had to do with his article about conflict. RP said he didn’t know, but he gave further examples about his belief that private agendas were being implemented, such as not notifying the entire Committee about the visit from representatives of the SBA. He said that when he expressed interest in attending such a meeting but was not given the chance to attend, he felt that the response he received (that the SBA would not appreciate having the board “tagging along”) was inappropriate.

- RG repeated his question, asking what those examples had to do with the subject matter of his proposed article. RP repeated that he could not answer that but continued to give more examples, such as how the SBC's article for Town Meeting (Article 7, 11/13/01 Town Meeting) was not written by the Committee. When RG attempted to ask how what RP was talking about related to the substance of his proposed article, RP said it all had substance and that RG could judge whether he felt it had substance but he strongly felt that some people on the Committee had private agendas that did not relate to the processes under which the SBC should operate (in his opinion).
- He cited being summoned to a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and the School Committee to discuss a possible special election for a debt exclusion for schematic design fees (on December 4, 2001 – refer to the BOS minutes from that date) as an example of Committee process being directed by a few members rather than the whole Committee (no prior discussion of such a meeting having taken place). RG responded that the purpose of that joint meeting was to discuss the possibility of a special election among all four committees and that prior discussion would have been fruitless since the SBC has no authority to call such an election on its own. Only the BOS could make such a call and having the other committees there who had any involvement on the subject to serve as advisors was the justification for summoning the SBC, the SC and FinCom.
- RG said that further discussion on this subject should take place on the floor of Town Meeting. RR made the statement that he felt that all the examples cited by RP were discussed at previous SBC meetings, at which time answers were given to his questions. He thought RP was confusing getting an answer he didn't like with not getting an answer. He said further that he saw no connection between those examples and RP's proposed article regarding financial disclosure.
- An observer asked to speak on the matter, but RG said he would not accept outside comments. When RP asked why he would not entertain such comments, RG responded that his article was not really the business of the Committee and that presentation of (all of) the proposed articles was only done as a point of information.
- Upon receiving this response from RG, RP asked to make a motion to discuss having a new Chair for the Committee. His motion was as follows;
 - “Move that we discuss having another potential Chair for the Committee; that we have a vice-chair, quorum and operating procedures.”
- RG called for a second to the motion. No second was made, so the motion did not make it to the table.
- AM wondered if the second proposed article (replacing the SBC with a Municipal Bldg. Comm.) should be taken up for discussion and have the SBC take a position on it. He noted that should the election question pass, the schematic design was to go forward under the direction of the present

Committee and the replacement of that Committee would be confusing. Further, he said that he thought voters could be dissuaded from voting for the schematic design funding if they thought this article was likely to pass at Town Meeting. RG responded that in his view, there would be no point to taking a position of the proposed article before the results of the election question were known because those results would certainly affect his judgement of the value of the article. Should the schematic design question not pass on April 2nd, he thought the Committee should have a deep, philosophical discussion about what direction to go in, including the disposition of the present SBC itself. Hence, he felt to some extent, the election outcome would decide whether or not a position should be taken on the proposed article. JS asked if the philosophical discussion should take place before the April 2nd vote since it was likely that the Committee would be asked what would happen if the vote failed. RG thought that the only proper answer to that question would be "We don't know" and that a pre-discussion would require the input of several other entities (SC, administration, etc.), which seemed unlikely to happen before April 2nd.

- RP asked if the length of time for paying off the debt assumed by the schematic design debt exclusion had been determined (if it is not included in the larger debt assumed by the full design project that might be voted on next year). JS answered that he had spoken with the Town Treasurer and had found that the length of time for debt amortization was a function of when the debt was "sold" and how well the Town's operating budget could handle it. Shorter times meant larger yearly payments and longer times meant smaller payments. That decision of how long a repayment period would be made (by the Treasurer in conjunction with the Board of Selectmen) would depend on obtaining the best terms for the Town at the time of sale of the debt.

RG called for a motion for acceptance of the minutes of the February 12, 2002 RSBC meeting. RR made the motion, which was seconded by TT. RG asked if there were any additions, deletions or changes desired by the Committee. It was noted that several members had not received copies of the draft of those minutes (distributed at the previous meeting on 2/19/02) and would like a chance to review them before voting. RR then withdrew his motion and action on these minutes was postponed to a later meeting.

RG then called on JS to update the Committee on the RMHS Question and Answer pamphlet that he had been working on. JS passed out copies of his final draft (copy attached).

- JS said he incorporated the comments made at the last meeting into this draft and had added a preamble and a (first pass at a) schedule of informational meetings to be held in March as a post script. He showed an example of how the pamphlet could be printed and folded into the form of a mailer if it was to be used for that purpose.
- JS explained how he had changed the first question's answers (about what's wrong with the high school) to agree with the Committee's comments and to better describe the high school's present condition and needs.

- The second question's answer (about costs) was updated with a simple declaration that the costs are unknown at this time and that a major purpose of pursuing a schematic design was in order to answer this question with some confidence. He added examples of other towns' project costs to show the range of costs now being incurred for high school projects.
- The revisions to the third question's answers (about the purpose of a schematic design) expanded the definition of the term "phasing" and its value to the project and added a comment about the value of a schematic design should the full project be rejected at the polls. He pointed out a caution added about ignoring phasing "at our peril", which the Committee removed.
- The fourth question's answer (concerning post-schematic design activities) was left largely alone since there were not many comments on it. JS added a phrase describing the process of producing a solution to the high school's problems as proceeding in a "calm and timely manner".
- RR made the suggestion that time at which the schematic design is presented to Town Meeting be left unspecified in case circumstances arise during its production that cause that time to shift.
- RG recommended that the statement that any funds expended on the schematic design would be money well spent should be tempered with the phrase "we believe", or words to that effect.
- TT recommended that reference to "antiquated building codes" be modified to read, "what are today antiquated building codes" to avoid giving the impression that the building was improperly designed to begin with.
- Discussion ensued about the preamble and its contents, with the consensus being that it should be omitted and left to the users of the document to decide how to preface the Q&A (if used in a flyer or as a handout).
- MS began a discussion about how to show the range of costs for projects such as these, wondering if the document should show examples that corresponded to the costs of the options from the feasibility studies. AM felt that the SBA's review of the options put the probable costs in the lower range of those options and including the higher range might be misleading. Various members and an observer discussed the pros and cons of listing the range stated, with some noting that the range was historically accurate while others thought it unrealistic given the SBA's comments on the options. Some argued that an estimate should be given while others felt that that would be prejudging a major result of doing the schematic design in the first place. A consensus was reached to leave out the numerical range and simply state that the cost estimates done heretofore had covered a wide range.

RG then asked RR to give an update on the production of the RFQ document.

- RR reported that he had made the Committee's revisions from the last meeting and had sent the revision to Town Counsel through the

Superintendent's office. He had discussed it with Town Counsel and noted that she was updating it for proper legal language and presentation. The Superintendent's office was going to assemble the final draft of the document and get it back to RR for the Committee's final review. He would have a copy of the final draft available for the informational meetings in March.

RG reviewed the presentation format for the informational meetings (refer to the 2/19/02 minutes). JS expressed his wish that the meetings be more informal and less like a lecture. RG and PP said that people would come expecting to be given information about the subject and that the emphasis should be on presenting it for them. It was agreed that a balance should be struck between presenting the information and answering questions from the attendees.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. TT so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:00 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on February 19, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Town Hall Conference Room)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Paula Perry (PP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Alex McRae (AM)

RG opened with asking for any additions, deletions or corrections desired by the Committee for the minutes of the February 5, 2002 RSBC meeting. RR said that the word "casework" used in the first bulleted paragraph on page one should be changed to "case law", explaining that this was the actual phrase used by Town Counsel in the recommendations that were being described there. With no further discussion occurring, RG called for a motion accepting the minutes as amended. RR made the motion, which was seconded by TT. A vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

RG called on JS to report on the progress of the question and answer information packet being developed as a possible mailing.

- JS began by noting that he had not received any new questions in the past week, so he went ahead and developed answers to the questions he had already produced (refer to the minutes from 2/5/02) and passed them out (copy attached).
- AM proposed that another question to considering answering was what will happen if the vote for schematic design funds fails. This prompted a general discussion on what could happen to the high school physically (repairs would have to be made, possibly under emergency conditions) and how partial upgrades would be reimbursed by the State (lower priorities for bits and pieces of a general upgrade) and what the SBC's role would actually be (if any). After discussing several hypothetical consequences, it was generally agreed that a concise answer to this question was most likely not possible to produce, so the Committee should be prepared to explain what *could* happen if the debt exclusion did not pass (since what *will* happen is not knowable).
- JS began to go over his handout's answers, noting that their length was due to the expectation that the average reader of the handout would need some explanation of the basic issues with the high school, which he included.
 - Regarding the question of what is wrong with the high school, JS said he included specific examples of physical plant issues and Code-mandated

corrections. He also listed the Committee's items regarding educational program issues (Technology, science labs, circulation and Title IX). Following that came space reorganization and updating finishes. Citing the size of the school and the multiple tasks needed to upgrade the space within it, aggregate costs would be therefore become large. He cited a common cost range of \$100-\$200/sq. ft. for Mass. Schools and a figure of \$180/sq. ft. maximum that the State could approve. AM questioned the applicability of the \$180 number to renovations, noting that this was for new schools. JS said he thought there was no separately published number for renovations, but he would check it out. TT offered suggestions for composition of the answer to make it easier to read and understand. General discussion ensued about organization, with suggestions being made to group the main issues into categories of mechanical systems, programmatic issues, aesthetic upgrades and code-compliance. Content of the answer appeared to be satisfactory to the Committee. RG requested that the high school principal review these answers (a copy was faxed to Frank Orlando later in the week).

- Concerning the answer to the question of how much will the project cost, TT felt the answer should show the costs of other communities' high school renovations as a matter of comparison (since the Committee can not specify an estimated cost for RMHS). JS explained that he included cost ranges from the feasibility studies and mentioned the estimating done by RR and JS for "must do" items to demonstrate the scope of the problem with estimates. He also explained that he included a demonstration of the possible error that could result from an inaccurate estimate to give readers an appreciation of the magnitude of cost estimating errors (i.e., in the millions of dollars). RG thought that the point should be made that a major reason for undertaking a schematic design was to answer this very question being asked. The consensus was to make this point at the outset of the answer (in the handout). The cost of the schematic design itself was to be included, but to be made separate from the explanation of the entire project cost (RG directed JS to check with the Town Treasurer on accuracy of this cost). RR recommended deleting references to the "must do" estimates because it pre-judged the result (estimates in the lower region of the range). AM remarked that the higher estimates were for options that included substantial additions, which the SBA discourages. JS said he would try to re-work this answer to accommodate the comments made by the Committee.
- As to what is the point of doing a schematic design, JS said that the answer is contained in the first sentence of the handout's text for this question; to let the voters know what they're voting for (AM suggested the word "community" instead of voters, which was agreed to). He included the topic of phasing in this answer, stressing the importance of it on many levels (costing, timing, planning, etc.) and that phasing is not included in feasibility studies. The Committee suggested including a clear definition of what is meant by "phasing" so that the term would be understood. RR suggested explaining what parents could expect from knowing what will happen under different phases of construction as a benefit of developing a phasing plan.

- The question of what happens after completing the schematic design was answered, JS said, by a recitation of the steps needed to take the design through Town Meeting and on to the electorate, much the same as the idea for a schematic plan has been handled this year. The Committee had few comments on this answer, mostly on suggestions for organization and presentation.
- JS said he would not add any more questions to the handout (due to length) and would update it for the next meeting (2/26/02).
- An observer asked for clarifications about the involvement of the SBA (School Building Assistance bureau) in the schematic design production, wondering how they're approval would be obtained and how reimbursement of the cost of the schematics would affect future budgets. Members of the Committee responded that the RFQ contains specific requirements for producing solutions that are reimbursable by the SBA and that in the course of refining those options, the SBA would be consulted for their opinions on them. The goal would be to produce a fully developed schematic design that been pre-reviewed by the State. Should approval of the full project (later) occur, the reimbursements from the state would be added to the general budget for use in debt service, as all such reimbursements have been used.
- A general discussion then took place concerning the SBA's attitude toward options in the Strelakovsky & Hoit feasibility report. Back then, Option A was deemed unreimbursable at the time the report was produced, but could new opinions from the State concerning the desirability of renovations might make this (lowest cost) option viable, it was wondered? Probably not, it was decided, because Option A did little to upgrade the school's educational program, which is a major goal of the SBA. Another question arose concerning the acceptability of Option C.2 over C.3 (which was the most discussed option). Since all the C-options included significant additions, it was thought that C.2 would require convincing justification for its (smaller scale) additions just as C.3 would and therefore would not be intrinsically more acceptable to the State.
- RR passed out revisions to the RFQ document (copy attached) that was discussed at the last two meetings, having added material suggested by Committee members.
 - A "preamble" was added to state the goal of the schematic design at the outset of the RFQ.
 - The required enrollment projections were set for a minimum of 10 years with further projections to 12 years.
 - Regarding safety provisions, the RFQ would require a hazardous material review, checking that past reviews are brought up to date with current regulations as well as air quality evaluations and circulation (foot traffic) evaluations.
 - Add more specific language about seismic hazard review and corrections.

- Require preparation of a minimum of three design solutions for Committee review and selection, taking the selected solution on to schematic design.
 - Delineation of deliverables and reimbursable costs between the Town and the chosen architect.
 - Inclusion of a statement of ownership of the produced plans and documents (to become the property of the Town of Reading), regardless of whether or not the producing architect continues on with the work.
 - Include a structural and a demographic consultant in the list of required specialists.
 - RR said he would finish his draft and send it to Town Counsel and the Superintendent for their input.
- An observer raised the question of whether the amount of money being offered would draw enough applicants, particularly in light of the fact that no options were being presented for development and that the ultimate cost of the project could (therefore) not be predicted. It was explained that the amount was deemed sufficient due to the expectation that the SBA's discouragement of additions would keep the ultimate cost down. Also, the desirability of the chance to demonstrate a firm's ability to handle that (ultimate) project should attract applicants even though the amount offered did not have a knowable numeric correlation to the ultimate cost.
- AM asked if the RFQ should include the requirement that the architect be familiar with the new SBA regulations. RG thought that the candidates' familiarity would be found out during the interview process. AM further wondered if the word "addressed" should be used in describing instructions in the RFQ for circulation investigations. The Committee felt comfortable with the word, noting that "addressed" did not necessarily mean to correct the situation (which might not be acceptable to the SBA).
- An observer suggested requiring that energy and water conservation programs run by the State and the local utilities be consulted by the architect ("Green Technology"). The Committee was favorable to the idea, but it was thought that it need not be included in the RFQ; rather, it should be a subject to be included in the dialogue with the architect once the design process began.
- AM suggested that the requirement for upgrading the high school's technology be included as a distinct criterion. The Committee accepted this suggestion and included it in the RFQ. He also wondered if a definitive deadline by which to complete the work should be included in the RFQ. It was pointed out that setting such a deadline was a part of the contract negotiations undertaken after the architect was selected.
- TT pointed out that he had concerns regarding the timing of the architect selection process, noting that after the architect was selected, there would only be a few weeks left in which the high school staff would be available for consultation (due to summer vacation). This prompted a discussion about the use of the summer months for assessing existing conditions at the high

school and getting input from department heads as soon as possible. This is in order to start working on possible solutions over the summer, getting ready for the fall when the solutions would be gone over by the Committee and a preferred scheme would be developed as a schematic design.

RG spoke about the upcoming presentations for the public. He stated that he would begin with an overview of the problems and asked RR to speak about the differences between schematic designs and feasibility studies. Also, RR was to explain the RFQ and its production. RG asked JS to give a presentation about the questions and answers already gone over by the Committee and perhaps any others that seemed appropriate. The plan would be then to open up the meetings to questions from the attendees.

An observer asked if there was a back-up plan should the request for a schematic design fail at the polls. The Committee thought that discussions among several committees (SBC, SC, etc.) would be necessary to identify a direction to go in with the high school should the electorate turn down the schematic design proposal. Thus, no specific back-up plan had been developed as yet.

JS reminded the Committee that should the solution developed into a schematic design prohibit the keeping of non-educational spaces like the Superintendent's offices in the renovation (in order to be reimbursed by the State), the Town should be made aware of the cost of relocating the (necessary) offices to another venue. This cost would not appear in the overall project cost because it was not the architect's responsibility to solve those problems. They would be the Town's responsibility, however. TT explained that the SBA's admonition against keeping non-educational space in a plan submitted for reimbursement was a reaction to seeing options that had significant additions. They argued that justifying payment for new space when existing space was available (but being used for non-educational purposes) would be difficult. Hence, they indicated that the non-educational areas should be considered for educational uses first before contemplating a need for additional space.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. JS so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:05 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on February 12, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the RMHS Guidance Career Center)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Paula Perry (PP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Alex McRae (AM)
Ray Porter (RP)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Principal, RMHS)

RG called for a motion for acceptance of the minutes of the January 29, 2002 RSBC meeting. DL made the motion, which was seconded by RR. RG asked if there were any additions, deletions or changes desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

RG noted that Kendra Cooper, working as a volunteer for RCTV (local cable television), has had problems with recording the audio content of the SBC meetings in the Superintendent's Conference Room (she distributed copies of a memo to the superintendent to the board members describing the situation; copy attached). Apparently, it is easier to record in the RMHS Career Guidance Center (the location of this meeting) and so, RG said that the next two meetings (Feb. 19th and 25th) would be held there.

RG directed discussion to the draft RFQ prepared by RR and distributed to Committee members at the last meeting (refer to the 2/5/02 minutes with a copy appended to them).

- RR began by saying that Town Counsel would be submitting input concerning the RFQ soon, but had not done so as yet. He had added language requiring a code analysis and would add revisions to the language concerning seismic upgrades as well as specific requirements for copies of plans. DL asked if the RFQ would contain a definition section. TT responded that the RFQ is written for architects who should have familiarity with the terms used, so such a section would not be necessary. RG asked RR if he would prepare explanations of what an RFQ is and what are the differences between a feasibility study and a schematic design for those who are not architects and will be curious to know (during the March public presentations). RR agreed.
- JS suggested changing the language referencing upgrades to structural systems to meet current seismic codes to refer directly to the specific requirements in the building code concerning seismic provisions for existing

buildings (Section 3408). TT noted that complying with that section would be contained in the need to comply with all applicable laws, of which the building code is one (CMR 780). AM cautioned against being too narrow in defining applicable sections of the code, preferring a reference to all applicable sections.

- AM advocated for requiring a forecast of projected enrollment for a minimum of twelve years from the present instead of ten. He based this on his experience with following the enrollment projections through the years, noting that he expects the peak enrollment to occur beyond ten years out and that the renovation should be planned to handle peak enrollments. Various members discussed the reasons for ten-year projections, ranging from the diminished accuracy of projections longer than ten years to the requirements of the SBA for projections used for reimbursable projects. The difficulties with longer-range projections were acknowledged and it was agreed that the RFQ should mention the desirability of knowing what could happen to the school population beyond ten years as accurately as possible (in addition to a minimum ten-year projection).
- AM further suggested direct reference to the letter from the SBA that was received in response to their review of the feasibility study options (refer to the minutes of 10/23/01). After discussion, this was thought to be unnecessary since the specific items included in the description of the desired schematic design were in many ways crafted by the Committee in response to that letter. The SBA might also change its views in the course of the next few years, so it was thought unwise to index the plan to a relatively recent opinion.
- JS suggested that the RFQ contain requirements for the architect's participation in presentations before Town Meeting and the SBA. Also, language outlining the responsibilities for protection/repair of existing finishes (such as ceilings and walls) after on-site investigations by the design team should be included.
- RR reported that he had contacted the Director of Public Works about existing plans and documents for the high school. The Director was "99% certain" that these materials were available in the archives of the DPW. It was agreed that all such materials should be gathered for the architect's use.
- RP mentioned the enrollment projections made in the DRA feasibility study from 1996 as having been reasonably accurate over time and that their methodologies should be considered when forecasting enrollments for the schematic design. Also, he asked the Committee to consider revising the language that required the design team to conduct an educational program review through "interaction" with the SBC to read "under the direction of" the SBC. RR felt the word "interaction" was appropriate since the review would involve such a process, but he suggested modifying the phrase to read "interaction and direction from" the SBC, which was satisfactory to the Committee.
- RP raised a question concerning the degree of specificity in the RFQ, wondering how specific it should be when including previously discussed

criteria reviewed by the Committee (as well as the RMHS administration). RR said he would review the administration's criteria and add any items that were not already covered. The discussion continued on the subject of specifying cost estimates for various items to demonstrate the expected scope of the project to voters (such as Title IX corrections). Comments included being too restrictive with a cost estimate for a specific solution that may not be the best one and pre-judging a major result of the schematic design (to produce accurate cost estimates). It was mentioned that this subject was discussed at the last meeting (2/05/02) when going over questions to include in the informational flyer.

- Observer Jackie Mandell asked if the RFQ was requiring the architect to re-do the programmatic investigations and assessments already performed during the feasibility study phases. Members of the Committee answered that that previous work was referenced in the RFQ and is to be made available to the architect. Any further assessments performed would be to update that programmatic information, acquaint the (new) architect with the staff and the school and to allow for the creation of new programmatic solutions that may improve upon the ones put forward in the feasibility studies.
- Ms. Mandell asked if the enrollment projections called for would be additional to the ones now obtained through Reading's subscription to NESDEC on a regular basis (she passed out copies of NESDEC's 12/13/01 projections, copy attached). Members of the Committee answered that the RFQ put the responsibility for obtaining the projections on the architect, who usually have professionals like NESDEC on their team. Requiring the choice of that professional to be NESDEC was seen as being too restrictive, although it was thought that the RFQ could mention the Town's membership in NESDEC as a point of information (not as an endorsement). During the discussion it was clarified that the RFQ did not put forward any design option that used past enrollment projections in its makeup. The SBC has never endorsed or rejected any option formulated in the feasibility studies,
- PP passed out copies of her simplification of the RFQ for possible distribution during the March informational presentations (copy attached). This material was to be digested individually by Committee members and discussed at the next meeting (2/19/02).
- JS posed a question concerning the possibility of being too specific in the charges to the architect in the RFQ. He wondered if the inclusion of relatively precise criteria to be used in the production of schematic plans might hamper the architect's normal procedures in crafting schematic design solutions. Various members of the board responded that the RFQ as drafted was indeed more specific than would normally be expected, but that it contained language that required exploration of other criteria to meet the needs of the school.
- Observer Linda Phillips asked if the SBC would be responsible for entering into the contract with the architect selected and paying their bills. RG answered that he doubted that the Committee had contract or requisition-signing authority and would defer to the advice of Town Counsel. She asked

if the SBC would be responsible for seeing that the terms of the contract are followed. RG answered that it would. She asked if the full Committee would be interacting with the architect at all times of contact. RG responded that that would not be necessary; smaller groups might work with the architect and report back to the full body.

RG asked for the observers watching to submit any questions they want answered about the proposed schematic design to the SBC. The object was to provide a list of questions that the Committee could use to prepare the informational flyer and the presentations that will be given in March.

- PP said that she had received questions regarding the difference between a schematic design and a feasibility study and whether or not the cost of the schematic design was reimbursable.
- Frank Orlando was asked to gather questions from high school parents.
- RP said that he had heard questions mostly about probable cost.
- Jackie Mandell wondered about the relationship between the \$450K amount for schematics and the final project cost. It was noted that amount of work required to produce schematics for projects in a wide range of final costs would be similar.

RG went over the status of the formation of an advocacy group (looking for leaders) and the upcoming tours of the high school (updated by Mr. Orlando).

The disposition of the computer equipment now being sought by a parents' group for the high school was discussed, particularly in regards to how it would be affected by the high school renovation. It was acknowledged that the funds for the equipment now being raised would not be reimbursed by the State since it was not included in the project. Coordination of the equipment purchases with the design phase of the technology renovations might be possible, however. Leasing of the equipment is also being investigated.

RG asked if the Committee would be interested in discussing the project with RMHS students and student groups to get their viewpoints and support. The Committee expressed interest and Mr. Orlando said he would ask for interested students.

Withholding a portion of the \$450K for contingencies was discussed and thought to be a prudent measure to include in the contract with the architect.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:10 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on February 5, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room at RMHS)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Rich Radville (RR)
Paula Perry (PP)
Alex McRae (AM)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Ray Porter (RP) – p/t
Michael Scarpitto (MS)

RG called for a motion for acceptance of the minutes of the November 1, 2001 RSBC meeting. RR made the motion, which was seconded by DL. RG asked if there were any additions, deletions or changes desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

RG called for a motion for acceptance of the minutes of the November 7, 2001 RSBC meeting. RR made the motion, which was seconded by DL. RG asked if there were any additions, deletions or changes desired by the Committee. With none appearing, a vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

RG noted that several members had been working on various tasks relative to the upcoming override vote for schematic design funds for RMHS. He called on RR to discuss his progress on researching the legal requirements for hiring an architect after the schematic design phase and on drafting a scope of work for the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the schematic design architect solicitation.

- RR related that he had had discussions with Dr. Harutunian and Town Counsel regarding the need to re-solicit for architectural services for the remainder of the project once the schematic design is finished and the Town had decided to go ahead with it. Town Counsel, in turn, had contacted the individual at the Attorney General's office who had told an observer that a second solicitation was required (refer to the 01-29-02 RSBC minutes). The result was the recommendation from Town Counsel that a second bid for architectural services should be undertaken, with the original (schematic) architect being eligible to apply for the work. Should that architect be chosen, their schematic work should undergo a peer review before proceeding with the balance of the design work. This opinion is based on current case law regarding this issue despite the fact that the law does not require a second solicitation.
- RR then passed out copies of his draft for the RFQ (copy attached to these minutes). He explained that the Committee had hoped to give the architect

as much direction as possible within the RFQ so he divided the scope of work into different parts.

- Part A concentrated on the assessment of the present building through past studies, existing drawings and on-site investigations and identifying issues that need to be addressed. Basic services like preparation of base drawings were also included here.
- Part B contained directions for educational assessments, including enrollment studies, staff interviews and setting of educational goals.
- Part C listed required specialists to be brought in on the design team (such as kitchen/food prep. consultants, engineers, technology specialists, etc.).
- Part D listed the schematic design criteria that had been decided upon by the Committee in its deliberations over the past months, including maximizing State funding, updating code compliance, Title IX compliance, etc. The restriction to the footprint of the present building was contained in this section, as was the directive to work with the SBC to produce a final, best option for presentation to Town Meeting and the Town.
- Part E instructed the architect to develop a phasing plan or plans for SBC review, done in conjunction with the high school administration. The goal of a 30-month project schedule was included as a target. The chosen plan would then require documentation for presentation purposes.
- Part F contained language requiring that a professional cost estimator familiar with school projects make a comprehensive cost estimate for the schematic design.
- Part G had yet to be drafted, but will include language explaining the architect's eligibility for application to finish the project via a second solicitation. It will also contain a clear declaration of ownership of all the schematic design documents and materials by the Town of Reading no matter what the outcome of the second solicitation.
- RG suggested that the Committee take time reviewing RR's draft individually before discussing it as a group (at the next week's meeting). RR made the comment that further research needed to be done would be to locate and collect all existing plans, documents, etc. of the present building to allow the architects to judge the degree of on-site exploration and discovery needed before deciding to apply for the job. RG asked RR to contact the Director of Public Works for his input as to what existing information exists and where it can be obtained.
- RP brought up the subject of including costs for seismic upgrades, relating that he had spoken with someone at the State board of building regulations about it. After describing the scope of renovations planned thus far for the building, the state official said that it appeared that the building would not need to be brought up to current seismic resistance standards for new construction. JS clarified the inclusion of seismic improvement costs in the

“must-do” list. He explained with Section 3408.5 of the current building code that the scope of the project (as well as the expected occupancy increase) triggered the need to correct seismic hazards, not reinforce the building’s lateral system to comply with seismic standards for new construction. The chief seismic hazard was masonry walls without lateral supports at their tops, which could tip over in a seismic event. Correction of this hazard was mandatory (must-do) and entailed adding side-to-side supports at the tops of large amounts of walls. The cost of such a correction is not small and should be acknowledged as such when putting together a “must-do” cost list, which is what RR and JS did for Town Meeting and will include in the RFQ.

- RP asked for clarification of the ability of a second architect to take over the work done by the first architect without obstacles. RR responded that the RFQ would have specific language requiring that the first architect waive all claims to their work if they are not chosen for continuance and that that work becomes the property of the Town. Thus, any contract made with the first architect would include this provision, having been explicitly stated in the RFQ. A general discussion ensued about how the second architect would assume full responsibility for the finished design, including any carry-over from the first architect and will conduct their own review of that work for their own protection. RP further asked if the eligibility of the first architect for the final phases would discourage other architects from competitively bidding for those phases. TT responded that in Massachusetts, designer service selection must be based on qualifications alone, not on competitive bidding.
- RG asked if there was a way to structure the RFQ to allow construction of a schematic design that could be used for an alternate scaled-back project if the original schematic design was not accepted by the voters (voting for full design and construction fees via the second override election). RR responded that he didn’t think so, since asking for an alternate design was essentially asking for two designs. Preparing a comprehensive renovation was quite different from preparing a minimum list of repairs that must be done, he explained. Other members added their thoughts that they hoped that the schematic design produced could have some residual uses for future alternate plans if such plans become necessary. However, it was understood that the single design produced in the schematic phase would most likely not be able to stand on its own in a truncated version as a solution to the RMHS problems; some re-design would be required.
- TT commented that the RFQ should specify amounts of materials to be produced for Town uses (documents, electronic files, etc.), including presentations. He suggested holding some of the \$450K for contingencies that might arise, such as geotechnical investigations, saying that such an idea should be checked with Town Counsel. He also asked RR if he would coordinate the legal requirements of the RFQ with Town Counsel, which RR said he had already initiated. RG asked that the Town Manager be included in those discussions.

RG relayed the invitation of the Board of Selectmen to the SBC to attend their meeting in Town Hall later that evening where an initiative to place an override question of the April 2nd ballot for road improvements was scheduled to be discussed. The BOS apparently

felt that the SBC should have the opportunity to give their thoughts on that matter since it involves another request to the taxpayers for added revenue for a specific purpose and may have an impact on the results of the SBC's override initiative.

JS passed out copies of sample questions to be answered that he drew up in response to the idea of producing an informational flyer to be produced in a Q & A format (copy attached). He briefly described the questions as an attempt to predict the most likely ones the Committee can expect from people who haven't been following the Committee's deliberations. He noted that the mailer will have to be concise in its content to be effective and the questions and answers contained in it will have to be short and to the point. These questions and any others that come up were deemed to be the subject of later discussion after individual review.

- RG commented that a question he has often been asked is when the project would be completed.
- AM commented that in regards to the question of how much will the project cost, he felt that a range of probable costs should be presented. This generated a discussion of whether or not to give actual cost projections or to state that such predictions would be little more than guessing without the specific information sought through the schematic design, giving no cost range. Comments included doubt that any qualifications expressed while giving a cost projection would be remembered as well as the belief that such a basic question deserved an answer, no matter how uncertain that answer would be. TT suggested giving examples of what similar projects have cost other communities as an attempt to illustrate probable cost ranges. It was felt that going beyond the information discussed in committee would not be prudent, as an error in a cost projection (either way) would not be acceptable to the general public under any circumstances.

Dr. Harutunian (Supt. – Reading Public Schools) made a brief appearance and was asked to reserve time for evening meetings by the SBC with interested voters at both middle schools, the Library, the Senior Center and the high school. The high school meeting was to be an open house held between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on the Saturday before the April 2nd election (March 30th) if possible.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. TT so moved, noting that the Committee would reconvene at the BOS meeting in Town Hall at 9:30 p.m. This was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:10 p.m.).

(Author's note: many members of the Committee did attend the BOS meeting, but were not called back into session. Refer to the minutes of the BOS for February 5, 2002 for further deliberations)

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on January 29, 2002, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room at RMHS)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Ray Porter (RP)
Alex McRae (AM)
Paula Perry (PP)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Rich Radville (RR)

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent – Reading Public Schools)

(Agenda provided: copy attached to these minutes)

A. Call to Order

- RG called the meeting to order and pointed out that until the community votes on the override for the schematic design funds for the high school, the SBC was in a "holding pattern" in regards to working on that project. He called for discussion on ways the Committee should attempt to educate the voting public during this period.

B. Review Status of Action on Override

- RR said that the Committee should be working during this period assembling a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) which defined the expected scope of work for the schematic design. This would be used for soliciting an architectural firm as soon as possible should the override pass and funding became available. He volunteered to begin drafting one for the Committee's review. RG recalled that the last RFQ was produced between Dr. Harutunian, the Town Manager, the business manager for the town's DPW and Town Counsel, noting that the business manager had experience with writing many RFQ's for the Town. Several members thought that putting the Committee's previous items of consensus into the RFQ document would be a valuable use of the time before the override election and could be used during the public education activities to demonstrate the intent of the schematic design. Dr. Harutunian said he would work with the Attorney General's office and Town Counsel to help draft the "legalese" portion of the RFQ, coordinate with RR and bring it to the SBC for its review.

- RG asked Dr. Harutunian to confer with the Town Manager concerning the legal requirements for public solicitation of architectural firms for the schematic design phase. At issue is whether or not the firm solicited for the schematics can be allowed to continue on with the remainder of the architectural services needed to complete the project without out a new round of solicitation (another RFQ) for those services. Dr. Harutunian relayed his discussions with Town Counsel from some time ago in which he was told that design services beyond the feasibility phase did not need separate solicitations for schematic and final services. JS reminded the Committee that this subject was discussed at the last meeting (11/07/01) and it was mentioned that the need for additional solicitations after the schematic phase depended on how the RFQ for the schematics was written (refer to the 11/07/01 minutes). The consensus was then to get a definitive ruling from Town Counsel. After remarks from observer Linda Phillips concerning her discussions with the Attorney General's office, the consensus was to ask Dr. Harutunian to ask the Town Manager and Town Counsel to contact the individual at the AG's office identified by Ms. Phillips and obtain the ruling.
- A discussion of timing of the RFQ's production and the education period led to the decision to use the month of February for putting together the RFQ and using March for public education.
- RG opened the subject of an informational mailing being produced and disseminated to the general electorate for discussion. A question and answer format was put forward as a likely approach for such a mailing and Dr. Harutunian suggested that the Committee members forward likely questions to him for compilation. He said he would then review them with the chairs of the SBC and the School Committee and distill them down to four or five pertinent questions with accurate answers. RG wondered if the questions shouldn't come from individuals who are removed from the Committee's deliberations in order to gauge the degree of familiarity of the public with the project and then tailor the Q & A's to best inform them of what they need and want to know. Dr. Harutunian said he could canvas the budget parents' group for their questions.
- Discussion ensued about the particulars of the education period, touching on subjects like how many public meetings to have, where to have them, what manner of presentation to use, how to publicize them, and how effective they might be. It was thought that some of the locations of the meetings should be in non-school venues and that weekly meetings or appearances would be useful. Locations mentioned were both of the middle schools, the Senior Center, the library and the high school itself. An open house-style meeting in the high school close to the election date was suggested. The Committee discussed the uniqueness of this election due to the facts of it being an override election and that it was not for a project but for the planning of a project. Possible comparisons between feasibility plans and schematic plans were mentioned as a part of the Committee's informational presentation. RR offered to put together a package of diagrams modeled after Option B.1 as a demonstration of the products (and limitations) of a feasibility study.

- RG asked if any advocacy group could be formed within the community to promote passage of the override, since such an undertaking would not be in the SBC's purview (as advisers to Town Meeting). Such tasks as raising funds for a town-wide mailing would have to be done by such a group. Dr. Harutunian and PP would try and canvas parents' groups for interest in this area.
- JS volunteered to undertake the assembly of the Q&A flyer, noting that he felt the informational mailing should be prepared by the SBC since it sponsored the article that led to the override election. PP and TT agreed, with acknowledgement that the school administration needed to include accurate information concerning the specific problems and needs of the high school. TT also said that the differences between a feasibility study and schematic design should be spelled out, pointing out the benefits of the enhanced information gained by advancing to the schematic level. Dr. Harutunian said he would canvas the audience to the next night's forum on the school budget for questions regarding the RMHS override election and send the information to JS to begin the process of developing the flyer.
- RP asked if the Committee had come to a point of closure on what items to include in the RFQ, expressing his belief that such items should be identified for the community at large. He also mentioned a recent newspaper article (passing out copies; attached) describing proposed cutbacks in State funding for new school projects. He expressed concern that the effect of such cutbacks could be to make any high school project more expensive as the time waiting for State reimbursement lengthened. He felt that prioritizing a list of items to be included in the project (from "must do" through "would like to do") should be done through coordination with the high school administration; that list should then be put before the public as a "menu" to choose from in order to gauge how much the Town was willing to pay for, given the expected delay in reimbursements. He referenced the list of basic costs assembled by RR for the 11/13/01 Town Meeting as an example of items that might be put in the RFQ.
- Several members answered that the list of items for the RFQ had been discussed by the Committee over past meetings and should be considered accepted for inclusion. The cost list presented at Town Meeting was not an option itself; rather, it demonstrated the fundamental "must do" items culled from the feasibility studies and from Committee deliberations that form the bare minimum upgrades required before considering educational upgrades. RR explained that he will assemble those minimum requirements with the educational program items already discussed by the Committee into a scope of work to be requested in the RFQ and bring a draft of it back to the Committee for review.
- RG spoke to the issue of the State's cutbacks, reminding the Committee that the SBA program has been faithful to its participants (the towns) over its history and he felt that the local legislators from affected communities (including Reading) would try hard to maintain the State's commitment to it. He also commented that a schematic design would produce a valuable tool for crafting alternative solutions for Town consideration should any initial

(total) solution fail to pass its override attempt. RP and AM voiced their views that a schematic design would be valuable for producing an integrated phasing plan and identify costs associated with code compliance.

- Several members discussed the genesis of an advocacy group, with the consensus being that volunteers must come forward from the community to form such a group. The form of the future public meetings was also briefly discussed, with ideas for less formal presentations being voiced. The informal tours and conversations coupled with formal presentations used at the Coolidge Middle School during that project's public information campaign were given as examples.
- A tentative schedule for meeting during the month of February was set up, with Tuesday nights (Feb. 5, 12, 19, and 26) being reserved for SBC meetings (in the Supt.'s conference room at 7:30 p.m., except for the 12th, which must be at another location).

RG asked for any additions, deletions or corrections to the minutes of the October 23, 2001 RSBC meeting. AM asked that the second paragraph on page 4 be amended to change the phrase "average voter" to "people removed from this Committee", which he said was a more accurate recording of his words and meaning. With no objections being noted to the correction, RG called for a motion to accept the minutes as amended, which was made by RR and seconded by PP. A vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

C. Adjourn

- With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. TT so moved and was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:20 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on November 7, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room at RMHS)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Ray Porter (RP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Paula Perry (PP)
Alex McRae (AM)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Rich Radville (RR)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)
Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent – Reading Public Schools)

RG began by reiterating the Committee's objective of directing the architect solicited for production of a schematic design to restrict space usage to the present footprint of the building as far as possible without jeopardizing student safety or code compliance.

TT questioned Frank Orlando on the possibility of accepting undersized classrooms from an educational standpoint as well as from a view towards ensuring reimbursability from the State. Mr. Orlando answered that if undersized classrooms were to be included in the renovation plan, it might mitigate the loss of classrooms that up-sizing would cause if all work was to be restricted to the existing building footprint (i.e., creating two conforming classrooms from three non-conforming ones with no replacement space made available via additions). RG and TT noted that Option B.2 left some undersized classrooms and expected to gain educational space by removing non-educational users from the building. TT said that he believed the State would not approve of a plan that designed non-educational space into it, but should there exist unused space after the renovation (during times of less than maximum enrollments), such space could be used for non-ed. purposes until they are needed.

RG called on RR and JS to present their findings on "must do" costs.

- RR began by explaining that he and JS had developed their cost information separately but used similar methodologies. Both had gone back to the feasibility reports and pulling out itemized costs for specific tasks that the Committee had decided were necessary to any scheme for renovating RMHS.
- RR said that he had primarily used the (older) DRA study and had upgraded their numbers with an inflation factor to bring them up to date. He also said

that he had added in estimates for minimum basic finishes such as new ceilings and floors and paint that would be regarded as necessary for a finished project. He based his estimates on current market averages for these items. He took issue with some of the estimates made by DRA, particularly the HVAC price which he felt was too low, in his experience. He added in the cost of re-wiring for new technology, which the Committee had deemed essential to any option. He included new roofing where needed and new toilets as required by Code. He based his numbers on construction costs only, not inclusive of the "soft" costs associated with construction projects (such as furnishings, fees, contingencies, etc.). The total he arrived at was about \$16M. His spread sheet was in error in some places, so he did not pass out copies (*author's note: the final spread sheet produced after corrections and after adding in items later deemed "must do" by the Committee is attached to these minutes, which was handed out at the Nov. 13th Town Meeting. See later discussion for added "must do" items*).

- JS said that he had gleaned cost information from both the DRA and the S&H feasibility studies. He relied on the estimates made by the consultants at the end of the later report for a separate tally to compare with the older one. He also noted that the DRA HVAC estimate seemed low. He had included an estimate of \$2M for upgrade of seismic hazards, which he felt would be made compulsory to any scheme by the building code, and had come up with an estimate of around \$14M, exclusive of any work on finishes. He said that adding in RR's estimates for finishes, his total was close to \$17M. RG asked if a reasonable estimate of "must do" costs as researched by RR and JS would lie between \$16M and \$18M. Both replied affirmatively.
- TT asked if that estimate included provisions for solving the Title IX issues. Both replied that it did not, since just how to solve those issues was not apparent in light of the recent SBA letter discouraging additions. TT thought that some estimated costs should be included as a "must do" item, as did RP. TT cautioned that a distinction should be made between what is a "must do" item to upgrade facilities and what is a "must do" item to upgrade the educational program, since both will be necessary but only the former was could be quantified. He didn't want voters to get the impression that the list of "must do" costs being tabulated by the Committee included programmatic changes yet.
- Similarly, PP and Mr. Orlando said that monies for new science labs should be appended to the estimate since the high school's continued accreditation depended on such labs. RG added that it made no sense to hard-wire the school for technology and then not equip it, recommending that the cost of that equipment be included. AM raised the point that State participation was obviously a "must do" item and to do so, the project must be acceptable to them on an educational basis. This could label crucial programmatic changes as "must do".
- After much discussion among many members concerning the definition of "must do" and what should be included under this label, it was decided to add to the "must do" costs estimated line items for Title IX upgrades, new science labs, teacher workstations, computer hardware and fieldhouse finishes (done

on a per-square-foot and unit price basis – see attached spread sheet and author’s note above). It was decided to emphasize to Town Meeting that this total cost was only a base line upon which the project would start; it would, of necessity, grow as the educational program issues were addressed. Beyond these items, the Committee felt that its ability to quantify additional costs and make recommendations to Town Meeting required the services of an experienced architect.

- RP wondered if a full schematic design was necessary to come up with a scheme for solving all the issues raised by the Committee. RG said that a schematic design would answer many of the questions that the public will have about the project in much more detail than a conceptual design could. He thought such detailed answers would be necessary to accurately describe the impact the project would have on the voters and is inevitable, in any event. RR added that a schematic design would increase the Committee’s level of confidence in its predictions of the impact the project would have on the town. A schematic design would display the solutions to everyone’s satisfaction and could be estimated more precisely than the current estimates.
- TT stated that a schematic design would produce a thoroughly thought out solution which could be presented as the actual one rather than a demonstration of what the solution might be, which would be subject to significant change. JS justified the need for a schematic design by noting that the production of a phasing plan under such a design would identify costs due to time extensions. This is such a large variable, he thought, that its omission from any further studies would make accurate cost estimates all but impossible. Phasing, he explained, could only be done with confidence if actual construction times for each phase could be predicted and making such predictions without specific design information was unreliable, particularly under current market conditions. Specific information would be one product of a schematic design, which – while not being comprehensive – would aid the overall planning of the project much more than a general overview.
- AM suggested that RP’s question pointed out the need to explain the pursuit of a schematic design to voters who may not have been following the deliberations of the past few months. He said there may even be opportunities realized by the Committee in producing the explanations to find fresh reasons for it, such as uncovering heretofore unseen ways to save money while developing advanced design solutions.
- RR broached the subject of justifying the amount of \$500K for the schematic design when that figure was chosen under the assumption that the overall project was to be on the order of \$50M or more. With the SBA’s letter discouraging additions and the base costs produced by RR and JS, it appeared that the overall project would fall short of that range. He asked if the Committee, in light of these events should consider asking for a lower amount. RR noted that Option B.2 was the one that came closest to the SBA’s suggestions. He then set about calculating a likely construction cost figure on which to estimate a likely schematic design fee, adding in some estimates for items missing from Option B.2 and the “must do” items that had

been identified by the Committee. A figure of \$29.6M was produced with JS concurring. With the expectation that the architect's fee would be close to 10% of this amount and that schematic design would command 15% of that total fee, a cost of \$444K was calculated for the cost of a schematic design. TT cautioned that reducing the schematic design fee could lead to problems if the final project was significantly different from the one produced in the schematic phase because the lower fee did not buy sufficient means to predict it and present it to the public. He did not object to a fee of \$450K *per se*, but he felt the Committee should weigh the \$50K reduction carefully before adopting it. General discussion ensued on the pros and cons of such a reduction, with the consensus being that the reduction was reasonable.

- RG asked AM if he had gathered updated enrollment information. AM replied that he had gone over the latest enrollment estimates produced by NESDEC and noted that there appeared to be a slight decrease in K and 1st grade projections which lowered the projected maximum enrollment from around 1500 to more than 1400. He felt that the degree of uncertainty in the projections (i.e., what trends are developing, if any) was high enough to impose the requirement of producing an up-to-date projection in the RFQ for the schematic design and extend that projection out for a period of at least twelve years. Dr. Harutunian and Mr. Orlando commented on the possibility of parents opting for private high school education over concern over declining conditions at the high school. They also notice some "missing" children in the first grades who exist in Reading but have not enrolled in the public schools, possibly due to growing class sizes. These may or may not be trends to identify, but the consensus was that a fresh enrollment projection would be warranted to judge their statistical significance.
- A discussion took place on the continuance of the architect selected for the schematic design as the architect for the final design and construction of the project. It was noted that if spelled out in the RFQ, the plans produced by one architect under the schematic design phase would become the property of Reading and could be finished by a different architect, if the Town so desired. It was also noted that soliciting an architect to produce only a schematic design would be different than hiring an architect for the entire project and authorizing only the schematic design phase for completion. The first scenario could require that a wholly separate solicitation process for final architectural services be undertaken, regardless of the desire to continue on with the original architect. The second scenario would allow continuance without a new solicitation, since the desire to procure the full range of services was clearly intended during the soliciting. These points need to be clarified by Town Counsel before the Committee can write the RFQ, specifying its wishes on behalf of the Town.
- RG outlined the intended presentation to be given at Town Meeting on November 13th, starting with the identification of the problem, perhaps with Mr. Orlando enumerating the present conditions and needed work. RG would then report on the SBA guideline changes and the letter from SBA listing their reactions to the proposed plans. He intended to stress the need for the schematic design to answer many of the questions the SBC must answer in order to make recommendations to Town Meeting, such as project costs,

schedules, programs, reimbursement, etc. He asked RR to make a presentation about “must do costs and JS to make presentations concerning other high school projects underway in the state and a projected timeline of the project from this upcoming Town Meeting through construction. Dr. Harutunian suggested presenting a history of the high school’s construction projects and studies for Town Meeting’s information.

- The timeline suggestion provoked discussion on the viability of a 30-month construction schedule with the real possibility of having no new additions in which to shift pupils into during renovations to the existing spaces. Dr. Harutunian said that his wish would be to try and limit the schedule to this time frame in order to lessen the disturbance to children’s high school careers. Ultimately, it was acknowledged that the schematic design was needed to determine the practicality of a 30-month schedule.
- RP informed the Committee of an SBA advisory that was available on their web site that listed changes to the SBA’s policies regarding reimbursements for special conditions, such as community needs, ledge removal, etc. He passed out copies for the members’ use (copy attached). He also wanted to pursue adoption of the latest operating procedures written by the Town Manager (dated August 2001) and passed out copies (copy attached), which RG asked him to defer until a later date. He mentioned that he was researching the requirements for SBC members for financial disclosures relative to the State’s conflict of interest laws and would report his findings to the Committee at a later date.

RG instructed the Committee that no other meetings would be held prior to Town Meeting on November 13th.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by TT. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:15 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on November 1, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Library of the Parker Middle School)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Alex McRae (AM)
Ray Porter (RP)
Paula Perry (PP)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)

RG relayed the information that the Finance Committee had unanimously endorsed the upcoming Article 7 (town meeting warrant article authorizing the request for schematic design fees for RMHS via override election) and that the Board of Selectmen had discussed the article with RG at a recent meeting (no action taken by the BOS). He indicated that the purpose of this meeting was to go over the items previously noted as being necessary and desirable by the Committee as review them in light of the SBA's recent letter regarding reimbursability.

RP asked that before taking up those items that the Committee discuss several questions of his regarding Article 7's production and the Committee's operation in general.

- RP wondered how the language of Article 7 was written (by whom, when, etc.) and whether the entire SBC should have been consulted about its wording and content before being placed on the Town Meeting warrant. RG responded that the Committee's actions regarding Article 7 had been in response to an instructional motion directing it to come before Town Meeting in the fall with a plan for soliciting an architect for the production of a schematic design for the high school. The production of the article and the language therein was done in the same manner as previous articles sponsored by the SBC, written by Town Counsel to satisfy the legal requirements which the Town must operate under.
- DL voiced his understanding that the article as written contained the substance of the deliberations undertaken by the Committee and that the responsibility for writing the "legalese" of the article-proper should fall on the Town Manager / Town Counsel. He felt comfortable with that process.

- RP pointed out a phrase in the warrant that mentioned “one or more” plans being sought by the SBC which he felt contradicted the Committee’s decision to pursue just one plan. RG, DL and others explained that such open-ended provisos were common practice in warrant language to allow Town Meeting the legal right to modify the article as it saw fit, including the possibility of adding more than one plan if it so desired. If the language were absent, such a modification may not be legally binding.
- RP then had questions about the portion of the article that authorized the expenditure of funds by the SBC, wondering if such a task was usual practice. Observer Jackie Mandell also noted this item, stating that the SBC heretofore had handled funds for feasibility studies while the School Committee handled design and construction expenditures. RG and others responded that this scenario was unusual in that the process being overseen was the production of a schematic design rather than a feasibility study, but that the School Committee would oversee final design and construction, as was the normal procedure. There was still some uncertainty as to the legal requirement for another solicitation for an architect to complete the design after schematics, but that would have to be answered by Town Counsel.
- RP still expressed discomfort with the sponsorship of the article by the SBC when he (as an SBC member) had not participated in the crafting of the particulars of it. JS expressed his satisfaction with the process, citing the success of past sponsorships begun in the same way. AM noted that RP’s objections were not about content but on procedure, which may not be the most pressing concern of the Committee at this juncture. PP expressed her understanding that this article did represent a departure from the normal path followed for school projects, but that its size and scope warranted a unique approach to allow the Committee to be able to educate the public adequately. RG emphasized that the expenditure of funds by the SBC was part and parcel of its fulfilling its responsibility to advise Town Meeting about a solution to the problems which exist at RMHS, using the schematic design as a basis for its final recommendations to Town Meeting.
- On the subject of operating procedures, RP wanted to discuss aspects of the March 1995 draft of operating procedures set down by the Town Manager (see minutes from 10/23/01). Specific items included the manner of scheduling/canceling meetings, quorum/ground rules, vice-chair, minutes distribution, advanced agenda distribution, and conflict of interest. This last item drew questions from others on the Committee as to the requirement for such a thing, with the consensus being that an upcoming seminar for Town employees on this very subject would answer them.
- RG mentioned that his review of the Town Manager’s document showed nothing that the SBC did not do. He also noted that the document was intended for boards that answer directly to the Board of Selectmen and by itself was not binding on a special committee of Town Meeting (such as the SBC). RP questioned whether the SBC follows quorum rules, to which RG responded that he felt the SBC did. JS expressed support for the concept of a vice-chair, citing the need to have continuance of relations with State

officials should the chair be incapacitated. It was suggested that the subject be pursued at a later date.

RG turned the Committee's attention to the list of items produced at the June 26, 2001 SBC meeting for possible inclusion in the plan to renovate RMHS, noting that the SBA's letter discouraged any new construction. He began discussion by asking if the Committee should instruct the architect chosen to produce the schematic design to restrict renovations to the existing footprint of the building.

- DL and RR wondered if the SBA letter applied to the new links contemplated to improve circulation. RG said that his impression of the SBA's attitude toward circulation improvement was that they would only be interested in the issue if safety were to be improved. RMHS Principal Frank Orlando cited bottlenecks that exist between Buildings B and C and between C and A as potential hazards. RR felt that such conditions were important enough to correct to keep in the program and could be presented to the State as being necessary additional space.
- Observer Emerson Tucker expressed concern that such an obvious design flaw (in circulation patterns) was not addressed when the high school was first built and could such an oversight happen again. RR answered that circulation may not have been seen as a major design issue back then. With the Committee's insistence, however, it could be made to be an issue in the upcoming renovation.
- Frank Orlando said that he would not like to abandon the idea of adding science classrooms in the bottom of C-Bldg. in order to handle increased enrollments, as the feasibility studies had suggested. RR and RG answered that the SBA's letter seemed to make such an addition unlikely and that new solutions might be forthcoming from the new architect if so directed by the Committee.
- DL commented that his interpretation of the SBA's letter was that additions might be permissible as long as all solutions using existing space were analyzed and found to be educationally deficient. He felt that giving the architect specific directions along those lines would be satisfactory to all concerned.
- AM thought that the production of the instructions to be included in the RFQ to be issued upon the voter's passage of the override would be a valuable demonstration of the Committee's intention to adhere to the State's guidelines regarding additional space. He felt that the Committee should not directly prohibit additions but should follow the SBA's concerns that all possible uses of available space will be exhausted before additions are considered.
- JS agreed with AM, adding that his view of the SBA letter was that the State feels that Reading should attempt to solve its major programmatic issues with available space first before considering additions. If safety, practicality or code concerns warrant additions, he felt the State would see the need for them.

- General discussion among various members concluded that the RFQ should instruct the architect to restrict renovations to the footprint of the building unless no practical and cost-effective solution could be found under that restriction and could be demonstrated as such. Only then would additions be considered.
- Turning to the specific items from the 6/27/01 meeting, the inclusion of a general technological upgrade of the RMHS facilities was deemed necessary by consensus. Discussion touched on the possible decrease in cost of computer equipment, the benefits of using up-to-date technological resources consistently through elementary, middle and high school, and the reimbursability of leasing (rather than buying) equipment.
- Inclusion of links in the proposed plan was covered under the discussion about additions. The solution to Title IX issues was deemed to follow the same approach, namely to attempt to solve the inequality between boys and girls phys. ed. facilities within the existing space(s) and only consider additions if that approach was found to be unworkable. AM mentioned the reorganization of the present girls' locker room into both boys and girls locker rooms that was suggested in the original feasibility study. MS noted that the development of the solutions that used additions were expecting to re-use the existing girls' lockers and gym for other educational program space.
- Providing more space for the music and drama departments was seen to be a primary challenge for the architect, needing to do so within the confines of the existing building footprint. Mr. Orlando pointed out that the time period between the feasibility studies saw a large increase in the number of students involved in these programs and that was the reason the second study addressed their needs much more prominently than did the first.
- RG and AM briefly related their impressions that the SBA will not be very interested in subsidizing renovations designed as "innovative community use" (RG from his discussions with them; AM from research of recent State documents).
- Regarding the enlargement of undersized classrooms, it was thought after general discussion that the SBA would reimburse a plan that left some classrooms with square footages less than the targets set by the DOE. Given the strong recommendation from the SBA to stay within the building footprint, keeping some undersized classrooms may be unavoidable. Mr. Orlando said that scheduling of classes using smaller classrooms for smaller classes would be difficult.
- Updating the mechanical services of RMHS was deemed essential to the project, a "must-do" item, and one that incurs considerable cost even before educational program items are addressed. RG asked RR and JS to develop a list of essential upgrades and their costs with a view to present that information to Town Meeting.

- Shared classrooms were acknowledged to be an almost certain result of restricting the renovations within the existing footprint of the building. Mr. Orlando and MS went through some of the implications of sharing classrooms in course scheduling, noting that their inclusion in the plan could be accommodated.
- Relocating non-high school programs was seen to be inevitable in light of the SBA letter. This means that the cost of relocating facilities that the Town must support (such as RISE and the Superintendent's office) must be included as non-reimbursable expenses that accompany the State-supported renovations.
- Regarding enrollment projections, RG asked AM to get the latest projections from January 2001 and distill them into presentable form for Town Meeting.
- The need for a modern language lab was deemed significant enough to definitely include in the plan, even though its inclusion might take space away from other educational programs.
- Renovations to the Field House were seen to be limited to its present footprint and that plans for expanding it would not be considered by the State. RG related the State's disinterest in this area as being a reversal of the previous SBA administration's position on the Field House.
- Upgrading of science labs were of interest to the SBA and made it clear that they would consider inclusion of such a programmatic enhancement. The Committee held to its previous conviction that they are a "must do" item.
- The development of a phasing plan that continued the education of the students while performing renovations was discussed as being of major importance, not only to ensure that the quality of the education was unchanged but that the duration of the project was as short as could possibly be. In this, the SBA was in complete agreement. It was noted, however, that the omission of additions would make phasing much more difficult due to the lack of "swing space" which additions could provide. RG asked JS to update his timeline to demonstrate the effects of phasing over the next few years.
- RP asked if the list of programmatic improvements assembled by Mr. Orlando at the Committee's request should be discussed. Mr. Orlando said that the preceding discussions had for the most part covered those items, with the possible exception of the need for increased security around the campus, which was briefly mentioned by the SBA during their visit. It was thought that this comment was motivated by a general concern for security measures that developed after the September 11th tragedies but was not articulated by the SBA to any extent.
- AM asked if the SBA had made any comments about any of the options put forward in the second feasibility study by Strelakovsky & Hoit or about enrollment increases during their visit. Mr. Orlando and RG answered that they spent very little time on the proposed options and concentrated instead

on observing the campus itself and asking questions about physical plant and the educational functioning of the school in its present state.

RG suggested that the Committee meet again before Town Meeting to articulate the Committee's recommendations and formalize their presentation. A tentative date of November 7, 2001 was set for this meeting to be held in the Superintendent's conference room at 7:30.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. RP so moved and was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:35 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on October 23, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Jane Darveaux (JD)
Rich Radville (RR)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Alex McRae (AM)
Ray Porter (RP)
Paula Perry (PP)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent – Reading Public Schools)

RG began by recapitulating the need to discuss the RMHS project and its many options with the state School Building Assistance bureau (SBA) in order to ascertain the reimbursability of those options. He stated that the Committee could not realistically go forward with bringing recommendations to Town Meeting without this knowledge. To that end, the time between this meeting and the last one (June 26, 2001) was used by RG and members of the Administration to arrange an on-site meeting with representatives of the SBA. This meeting occurred in September with the SBA touring the high school campus with the high school principal and facilities director and meeting with RG, the Superintendent and the chair of the School Committee afterwards.

The administrator of the SBA, Christine Lynch, was in attendance and produced a letter to the Superintendent, dated October 1, 2001, summarizing the SBA's reactions to some of the ideas contained in the options as discussed at the meeting. RG passed out copies of the letter (copy attached to these minutes) and suggested the Committee go over those reactions point-by-point. He noted that while the letter did not express the SBA's rejection of any ideas, it did point out several areas of concern;

- Relocation of "non instructional" activities... It appeared that the SBA could not justify approving monies for additions to the high school while areas deemed non-educational such as the Administration offices, REAP, non-school maintenance, etc. were allowed to remain in the building.
- Expansion of Library: The SBA felt that only if accreditation or access issues had to be corrected with a space expansion would such an undertaking be considered.

- Expansion of Cafeteria: Citing the fact that most high schools in the Commonwealth now have three lunch seatings, the SBA did not feel that expansion of the existing cafeteria for the purpose of allowing only two lunch seatings would be justifiable.
- Relocation of girls' lockers: Apparently in reference to the prospect of enhancing the field house facilities if girls' lockers are added there to comply with Title IX issues, the SBA would want to see if those issues could be addressed by reconfiguration of existing space before contemplating field house enhancements.
- Reconfiguration of the "old gym" into a small auditorium: The letter stated that since the present RMHS auditorium is rather large and accommodating compared with most other high schools in the state, the SBA could not justify the cost of producing additional auditorium space. It would rather review options that used the old gym for other academic programs.
- Additions to field house: Plans to reconfigure existing space for the athletic programs should be pursued before the SBA would consider adding field house space.
- Parking: Parking and traffic access were recognized as being limited and plans to alleviate these problems would be considered by the SBA.
- Security Issues: Although not explicitly discussed at the meeting, the SBA apparently feels that securing both the main high school building and the field house while maintaining access should be addressed.
- Additional Information Needed: the letter reiterated the need for several items to be submitted for formal review by them, such as several state forms, enrollment projections and the establishment of a school building committee.
- As a final comment, The SBA noted that RMHS currently exceeds square footage maximums allowed by their regulations. Although in general, structural and programmatic renovations to such a school could be provided through SBA assistance, it appeared that such assistance could not be forthcoming to enlarge existing spaces such as the cafeteria, field house and auditorium that already exceed the State allowance.
- RG said that his thoughts on the SBA's responses were that that agency must become more conservative in their apportionment of State dollars. This is due, in his opinion, to reduced state budgets and the trend state-wide for towns to apply for middle and high school projects, which are more expensive per project than elementary schools (meaning fewer projects approved for a given level of funding). As to the level of funding, RG passed out a recent newspaper article forecasting cuts in the level of state assistance for school projects (copy attached). Further, the SBA must cope with administering new regulations with a new (and undersized) staff, perhaps prompting the agency to proceed cautiously as these new reg's are implemented.
- TT voiced his agreement with RG's assessment of the SBA's response. He said that he felt the agency gave them a fair hearing and left them with the understanding that

Reading would have to make its case if it wanted to pursue items that were not on the SBA's initial approvable list.

- Dr. Harutunian added that potential benefits exist in the form of added reimbursement percentage points being awarded for past partial school renovation projects that have gone unfunded. Presumably, these past renovations are considered a form of maintenance and are considered part of the incentive portion of the formula by which Towns derive their (new) reimbursement rates.
- RR questioned the SBA's reference to expanding the library, noting that none of the options considered added library space (some do reconfigure it to other programmatic uses). TT answered that he thought they added that reference due to the requests for added library facilities that have accompanied so many other renovations in the State. RR wondered if the language contained in the SBA's letter didn't "close the door" on certain items (such as the small auditorium). Both TT and Dr. Harutunian felt that the language was intended to convey the SBA's wish that Reading satisfy its programmatic needs within the existing building footprint.
- Following questions from PP and JS, they gave examples of what might be expected from SBA in how to approach using existing space to satisfy needs (such as providing both boys' and girls' locker facilities in one of the present segregated locker spaces and seeing if that complies with current ed. specs). JD asked if the roofing over of the present courtyard space near the cafeteria would be acceptable, since it didn't expand the footprint. Dr. Harutunian answered that while not exactly an addition, the roofing over of the space for cafeteria use (two lunches instead of three) could be seen as unjustifiable in light of other high school lunch programs.
- RG thought that the SBA's response was helpful in that it put questions of justifiability to the Committee that the average citizen would do upon hearing of the options for the first time. AM concurred, stating that their letter was timely in clarifying the "gray areas" that the new regulations had created.

Turning to the upcoming request of Town Meeting and the Town to allow \$500K to be raised and spent on a schematic design for the high school, RG asked the Committee to consider the possibility of including in the instructions to the architect a classification of individual facets of the project as "must do", "should do" and "optional". He based this classification scheme on the original (1996) feasibility study that followed this system to prioritize the various recommendations contained therein.

- RP asked how the article for the schematic design fees that appears on the warrant for the Subsequent Town Meeting in November (Article 7) appeared without the direct involvement of the Committee as a whole. He further wondered why there was no specific dollar amount mentioned in the copy of the article he had seen. RG responded that he had produced the warrant article in consultation with the Town Manager and Town Counsel in order to produce the article before the warrant closed. This was done in direct response to the instructional motion passed at the 2001 Annual Town Meeting requesting the SBC to come to the fall Town Meeting to request design fees for a recommended solution to the high school's problems. As to the dollar amount, RG said that omitting such numbers was a common

practice when such numbers were not known at the time the warrant closed. A number would be put before Town Meeting before the November appearance of the SBC.

- AM commented that the original instructional motion had specified that the Committee come before the next Town Meeting “or shortly thereafter,” allowing the SBC some latitude in the time it needed to make its recommendation. He did not feel that the Committee had met often enough to adequately cover all the material it needed to cover, especially in light of the SBA’s recent letter. To that point, RG thought that the letter may have made it impossible for the SBC to identify a single plan without the aid of an architect to adjust the plan’s components to align with the guidelines articulated by the SBA and present them to the SBC for its review and recommendations. TT concurred with RG, saying that the instructions to the architect might be to devise a minimal scheme that produced maximum programmatic effects, using the SBA’s concerns as design criteria.
- AM agreed with the rationale of RG and TT, but had reservations that people removed from this Committee would not be clear enough on the need for an architect to produce such a scheme and would withhold their votes as a result. TT responded that the goal of maximum cost-effectiveness through use of the architect would be a convincing argument.
- PP voiced her understanding that the SBC was going to be ready to give the architect the preferred scheme as a result of its deliberations rather than ask the architect to help it produce a preferred scheme. RR responded that that was the original idea in asking for schematic design fees, but the recent comments from the SBA made it unlikely that the Committee could produce a well-reasoned scheme (certainly not in two weeks’ time). RG added that previous SBA rulings on Reading school projects were unequivocal, making the SBC’s review of options very clear in terms of which components would or would not be reimbursable by the state. The present SBA ruling appears to withhold judgment of reimbursability until certain design options have been thoroughly explored, which requires the work of an architect familiar with the current SBA’s regulations. Hence, producing a preferred scheme prior to an architect’s involvement may not be advisable.
- JS expressed reservations about going to Town Meeting to ask for permission to put a request for design fees before the voters when the SBC’s recommendation for the direction the RMHS project should go is still somewhat in doubt, particularly in light of the recent SBA letter. He felt the Committee should take the time to digest the letter’s implications with the options contained in the feasibility studies and clarify its recommendations as best it could before appearing before Town Meeting. RR felt that Town Meeting would not require such clarification since it was only being asked to allow the voters to make the decision for schematic design fees directly. However, he did feel that the Committee should endeavor to clarify its recommendations for the general electorate, meaning that it should do as JS suggested prior to the election (if authorized) and attempt to define concrete goals for the RMHS project to give to the architect.

- JD spoke about the process that had already taken place wherein the goals for the high school from the educators' standpoint had been defined during the production of the feasibility studies and that these goals already formed a "blueprint" which could be developed further. She felt that the SBA's letter would require revisiting this blueprint and may very well require the services of an architect to shape it into a form acceptable to the SBA.
- JS remarked that the blueprint was still undefined and it would take more deliberation by the SBC to define it to the satisfaction of the general public and Town Meeting. He felt that "specificity" was expected by Town Meeting and by the voters to point out a direction that the Town should go in and the Committee should do what it could to provide specifics.
- PP said that she felt that the Committee was suppose to establish the priorities for the high school project in consultation with the high school staff, keeping in mind the dictates of the SBA as expressed thus far. TT countered that the high school staff had already established its priorities in the feasibility studies based on education and the SBC had to re-prioritize those priorities using another set of guidelines, such as maximizing state reimbursement.
- RG wondered that if, for example, the Committee were to remove all the items mentioned by the SBA as being of concern to them as a way of moving forward with the project, it would be faced with having to reconfigure the remaining items to achieve the educational goals of the school. He doubted that that could be done without the help of a knowledgeable architect. AM added that he felt that the Committee should be formulating a plan that was focused on success with its attempts to move the project forward.
- RP reiterated his concern over possible failure of the attempt to secure funds for one solution, recommending that multiple solutions be put forward as a means of ensuring that one of them would succeed. PP questioned how multiple options could be formulated in light of the Committee's difficulty in articulating a single option. RP responded that the high school staff could prioritize the components of the options produced and the Committee could produce of menu. RG, however, reminded everyone that the instructional motion from the last Town Meeting indicated that they did not want multiple options put before it and that further debate on that point would be contradictory to its wishes.
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked the Committee to check on the high school project in Peabody to see if there were any parallels with the course of action planned in Reading. Apparently one architect was hired to produce a schematic design for the school, but was not asked to continue on with the job. Another architectural firm was solicited to complete the design, but the mayor refused to sign a contract with them, effectively halting the progress of the project. Dr. Harutunian said he would check with the Peabody superintendent about it.
- RR suggested that the Committee proceed with evaluating the components of the various options and come to a consensus about which of those components it feels strongly about as being necessary for inclusion in the

RMHS project (as it said it would do, at past meetings). He did not feel it was necessary to finish this process before Town Meeting, saying that being ready with its specific recommendations for the override election in the spring was the primary goal of the Committee.

- DL voiced his opinion to go forward with the project as the most pressing need the Committee had at the moment. He felt that hiring an architect to help develop a plan that would satisfy the SBA made sense, given the changes to the regulations, and that further delay to dig into the options by the Committee should be minimized.
- PP agreed with RR, stating that she hoped the Committee would have been better prepared before it went before Town Meeting, but given the timing of the SBA's response, it should focus on the override election as the target for finishing its deliberations.
- MS expressed his interpretation of the SBA letter that many of the items expressed as being needed by the high school staff were approvable and that any items that they had concerns with could be re-thought. He didn't feel that there was a need to go back to the beginning as far as establishing educational goals was concerned.
- RP expressed continued reservations about not succeeding in going forward with the project due to recommending a single option that might fail, whereas he felt multiple options might succeed. He said he could not support going to Town Meeting in November to ask for \$500K for a single option for that reason.
- AM wondered if Strekalovsky & Hoit (architects for the second feasibility study) could review the SBA's letter and advise the Committee of its implications to the options it produced. He also felt it would be helpful to review the original feasibility study and its menu of prioritized items. He worried that attempting to put forward a solution that was not acceptable would discredit the Committee and impair its future effectiveness.
- JD said that her understanding of the Committee's role was to facilitate expressing the needs of the high school as determined by the faculty and staff to Town Meeting and ultimately the town. In that role, she hoped the Committee would not reject the staff's recommendations. She thought it was time to put a solution out for consideration as a test in order to not lose any more time.
- RR thought that the Committee should have detailed discussions about the options and their contents and attempt to come to a consensus about a solution before it put the \$500K question to a general vote. He endorsed asking Town Meeting for permission to hold an election (without having come to a consensus).
- TT offered the observation that each month of delay in the project could add as much as \$125K to its overall cost (based on current inflation rates), leading him to advocate not only for going to Town Meeting in November but

also to think about scheduling the override election as soon as possible so as not to add months (and the corresponding cost increases) to the project.

- RG interjected that the Town Treasurer had projected the yearly tax increases necessary to fund a debt exclusion override (as opposed to a one-time capital exclusion override) for the amount of \$500K. She estimated the cost as \$3.11 per annum for the average property assessment of \$320K (copy of her estimate passed out and attached to these minutes).
- Observer Jackie Mandell asked if the cost estimates contained in the first feasibility study by DRA could be updated (exclusive of the option to include a centralized kindergarten) to today's dollars. RR said he could do that and RG directed him to do so.
- JS expressed his opinion that the Committee should complete its deliberations before going to Town Meeting to ask for permission to hold an override election. He based this opinion on his view of how Town Meeting viewed the SBC; as a sub-committee whose job it is to digest complex material ill-suited for a large body's ability to go into detail and report back to it with a final recommendation. He felt that stating to Town Meeting that the SBC will finish its work in the near future would meet resistance from TM members who expect to send the exact same solution that it reviewed to the voters. He disagreed with RP on the notion of presenting multiple options, saying that it would be likely that no one would be satisfied with the outcome. He suggested that the Committee plan to finish its work and come before a Special Town Meeting sometime in December or January to present its recommendation for that body's review. In that way, the Committee could finish its deliberations and allow Town Meeting to focus exclusively on the subject of the high school.
- RG thought that the best way to deal with the suggestion of postponing the Committee's presentation for a Special Town Meeting was to entertain a motion for taking Article 7 to the Subsequent Town Meeting in November (Article 7 being the SBC's request to raise \$500K for schematic design fees through an override election). TT made the following motion; "Move Article 7 in the draft warrant report of October 15, 2001 (Peter Hechenbleikner, the Bylaw Committee, etc.) on page 5 (to take to Town Meeting in November)." DL seconded the motion. RG explained that the vote would be to take Article 7 to the Subsequent Town Meeting in November rather than to another Special Town Meeting. Copies of this draft were passed out (copy attached to these meetings). After review of the text, with no further discussion being offered, a vote was taken with the results being 8 for the motion and 2 against; thus, the motion passed.

The Committee planned for (at least) two meetings before the Subsequent Town Meeting (beginning November 13th) and tentatively scheduled them for November 1st (in the library of Parker Middle School) and November 7th (in the Superintendent's office), both at 7:30 p.m. RG added that members of the SBC were invited to attend an upcoming Finance Committee meeting (on October 24th) and a Selectmen's meeting (on October 30th) where Article 7 would be discussed by those bodies. The Committee

decided to take up discussion of the components of the feasibility studies vis-à-vis the recent SBA letter at the November 1st meeting.

Dr. Harutunian requested that any RFQ for schematic design services should include as a requirement up-to-date familiarity with the new State regulations.

Under new business, RP asked to discuss the operating procedures of the SBC, passing out copies of a list of items for discussion and a copy of the *Operating Procedures for Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Task Forces – Town of Reading, Massachusetts* as written by Peter Hechenbleikner (Town Manager) on March 16, 1995 (copies attached to these minutes). Recent meeting cancellations prompted him to explore these procedures and the Committee's original charge from Town Meeting. He expressed confusion over the Committee's purpose and concern over the Committee's procedures (see list).

He also had questions about disclosing any conflict of interest he might have. Members of the Committee recommended that RP attend an upcoming conflict of interest seminar being held for town board members to educate himself about how to handle that subject. RG commented that the operating procedures drafted by the Town Manager do not necessarily apply to the SBC due to its operation under the direct control of Town Meeting rather than under the Board of Selectmen (such BOS-controlled boards were the subject of the written procedures).

RP asked who was responsible for canceling meetings, citing the cancellation of the previous meeting as an example. RG stated that officially the chair alone calls for and cancels meetings. RP also felt the wording of the original charge for the Committee was too vague. RG responded that vague or not, that was what Town Meeting said when it created the SBC and its function over the years has apparently met with that body's approval. He went on to say that the Committee's purpose was advisory in nature and any actions it undertook in an administrative role were done at the direction of an elected body, Town Meeting. RP said he would bring this subject up again at the next meeting.

RG called for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 11, 2001 as submitted, which came from RR with DL seconding. With no additions, deletions or comments being offered, a vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative.

RG called for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 26, 2001 as submitted, which came from RR with DL seconding. AM requested that on page 2 under Item 6, paragraph 3, the word "not" be added in the last sentence so that it would read "In general, the SBA would **not** support a piecemeal plan that disrupted the educational program every 3-5 years." Consensus for the amendment was given by all and RG called for a vote on the minutes as amended. With no further additions, deletions or comments being offered, a vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative.

With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:25 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on June 26, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Reference: Meeting Agenda (copy attached)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Alex McRae (AM)
Paula Perry (PP)
Ray Porter (RP)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent – Reading Public Schools)

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

- RG asked for any additions, deletions or changes to the minutes of the March 22, 2001 RSBC meeting. None appearing DL made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the results were unanimous in the affirmative.

Item 2: Report on Changes to Square Footage Dollars Allowable by Dept. of Education

- RG asked that JS give his findings on research into the costs of other school projects being undertaken elsewhere in Massachusetts. JS reported that he had, through several phone calls to school architects, found that a professional organization – the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) – had put together a synopsis of school project costs for the last five years. The Educational Facilities Committee of that organization compiled comprehensive cost data on elementary, middle and high school projects on a voluntary basis from practicing school architects and analyzed it to track average cost fluctuations over that time period. Copies of this synopsis were obtained and distributed to Committee members (copy attached). JS asked that the Committee not attempt to discuss the data at this meeting due to its large volume and depth and the time needed just to read it, but suggested discussion at a later date.
- JS further found in his research that an the BSA compilation was sent to the Commissioner of Education, David Driscoll, with an executive summary of

recommendations for increases in the reimbursement rates contemplated by the School Building Assistance (SBA) Program (copies also obtained, distributed and attached to these minutes). Commissioner Driscoll used the BSA information as background material for his recommendations to the State Board of Education to increase the reimbursement rates for all school construction underwritten by the SBA by \$10/sq. ft. A copy of his letter of recommendations was passed out (copy attached to these minutes). He noted in the letter that school construction costs did not seem to follow the general cost trends for other types of construction, as represented by a benchmark cost index published in Engineering News-Record (a national construction newsmagazine). The Board agreed with his recommendations and voted to adopt the \$10/sq. ft. increase (copy of relevant BOE minutes attached to these minutes).

Item 3: Update on status of Similar Projects

- RG noted that the information obtained and passed out under Item 2 (above) contains sufficient material for reviewing similar projects (also to be discussed at a later date).

Item 6: Old Business

- RG asked that the Committee jump ahead to this item so that they could hear the response from Christine Lynch, Administrator of the SBA program, to the March 27, 2001 letter sent to her by Dr. Harutunian (see 4/11/01 minutes). A copy of her response is attached to these minutes.
- Regarding the need to have a second bid for architects should one be hired first to produce a \$500K schematic design (and the design was chosen to be taken through to construction), Ms. Lynch deferred to local legal counsel and the Inspector General's office.
- Regarding the SBA's willingness to fund a piecemeal renovation project over many years, Ms. Lynch replied that a review of an over-all long-range plan would be necessary before a definitive answer could be given. In general, the SBA would **not** support a piecemeal plan that disrupted the educational program every 3-5 years.
- Regarding the SBA's funding of renovations to the field house to satisfy Title IX concerns, Ms. Lynch wrote that a review of the facilities plan for the field house would need to be done. Simple additions of locker space would not be reimbursable.
- RG said that he intended to call Ms. Lynch to get more information.
- A discussion about Title IX ensued, with RP asking about the possibility of relocating the Boys' locker room back in the main building to satisfy the intent of the title. TT, RG and Dr. Harutunian explained the legal risks of not addressing Title IX and the history of the subject. Moving the Boys' locker room back would be seen as creating an equal hardship rather creating equal access and might not fully satisfy the statute.

- RG reported that Town Meeting had passed an instructional motion to seek funding for a schematic design for the high school renovation by way of a capital override (a one-time tax increase to cover the cost of the design fees). RG asked Beth Klepeis (Town Treasurer) to forecast the effect this would have on tax bills. She replied that a \$500K capital override would increase property taxes on the average Reading property (valued at \$280K) by \$61.88 for the fiscal year in which the override was passed.

Item 4: Options: What Should Stay...What Can Go

- RG began by reminding the Committee that they were to have studied the Strekalovsky & Hoit feasibility report over the past weeks in order to begin discussions on what recommendations from the report should be included or excluded from the Committee's recommendations to Town Meeting.
- RG attempted to define which of the options in the report had been taken from the table already. He noted that the School Committee had in their discussions of the report rejected Options A and D for not being reimbursable by the State. Option A did not address enrollment increases, undersized classroom sizes or music, drama, physical education and Title IX issues. Option D was to build a new high school. He noted that under the new regulations, Option A may have to be revisited as to its reimbursability. TT, Dr. Harutunian and DL agreed, but pointed out that programmatic deficiencies may well keep Option A from further consideration.
- RG asked JS to begin discussion. JS noted that in past meetings, the Committee had demonstrated consensus about improving circulation within the school. This is one item that appears in several of the options contained in the S&H report. In recognition of this, JS asked whether the Committee might not attempt to identify separate items and discuss their value to the renovation rather than discuss individual options in their entirety. RR and PP voiced their agreement, with a view toward compiling a list of such items, discussing their pros and cons, deciding if they should be included and then go back to the options presented and look for a close fit (modifying it, if need be). A general consensus to this way of proceeding appeared evident. RG called for items to be put on the list for discussion. Members of the Committee offered the following:
 - 1) Links between buildings to improve circulation.
 - 2) Title IX-gender equality issues
 - 3) Drama and music space shortfalls
 - 4) Undersized classrooms
 - 5) Mechanical services, fire-protection, ADA-compliance, asbestos abatement upgrades (recognized as basic goals of all the options presented)
 - 6) Shared classrooms
 - 7) Relocation of non-high school areas and offices (i.e., Supt.'s offices, etc.)
 - 8) Target population (enrollment figures)
 - 9) Modern languages / language lab
 - 10) Field-house general upgrade (apart from Title IX)

- 11) Science labs
 - 12) Technology upgrades
 - 13) Phasing
- AM began a general discussion about the satisfaction of Title IX issues by the various options in the S&H report and was joined by TT, RG and Dr. Harutunian, discussing timing and moral obligations (over legal obligations).
 - PP began a discussion of the inclusion of updated technology in the renovation, with TT stating that the School Committee expects that up-to-date technology would be part of the project. JS, Dr. Harutunian and TT entered into the ramifications of using wireless technology for the Library and the entire school computer network. The idea was voiced that such technology (network and Internet access from anywhere in the high school) might lessen the demands for physical space in the Library and possibly for classroom workstations. The upper floor of the present Library might be employed as computer labs and workshops.
 - RG opened discussion on item 1) Links. AM voiced his concern that the need for the links be such as to justify the cost of them (slightly over \$2M in the S&H report). RR emphasized their inclusion to mitigate safety concerns in emergency situations and to improve traffic flow throughout the campus. MS noted that State reforms mandating increased time-in-learning made short between-class travel times crucial to the educational program and students' well being. This point was echoed by observer Mary Ellen O'Neil, noting the stress that short "passing times" puts on students. Observer Linda Phillips asked if re-organization of the program spaces around the campus wouldn't alleviate some of the congestion. PP and TT responded that getting students between levels and in greater numbers would always be a problem without links. Observer Emerson Tucker voiced skepticism over justifying the cost of the links to senior citizens who could not relate to the student traffic problems. RG responded that the Committee's job was to identify problems and recommend/justify solutions to Town Meeting. JS remarked that increasing the students' safety through construction of the links would be sufficient justification for them, as well as satisfying a major concern of the high school staff. RG called on each member to voice their agreement with including the links in the renovation. All agreed with the exception of AM, who preferred to withhold his commitment either way.
 - RG opened discussion on item 2) Title IX-Gender Equality. TT and RG reiterated their beliefs that the question is a moral one for the Town. AM voiced his support for inclusion of a solution to Title IX in the project and that it's solution would have an effect on other items to be addressed. JS agreed with AM and wondered just how it would affect the other items. Other members responded that it was premature to try and pin that down, that the Committee was discussing the inclusion or non-inclusion of the item only. RG asked for any disagreement with including this item in the project and received none (hence, it is included).
 - RG opened discussion on item 3) Drama/Music Space. Members of the Committee recognized that providing adequate space for both of these

programs was desirable from an educational and a community use standpoint. PP and TT expressed their opinions to keep this item as a part of the project while not yet certain just how to solve the space problems (the options in the S&H have several scenarios). RG and Dr. Harutunian discussed treating any upgrade of the Auditorium as a separate issue with input being sought from persons and organizations outside of the school system who have interests in its future use (arts organizations, the Selectmen, etc.). Enhancing State aid via the community use incentive factor and seeking/accepting private contributions for the Auditorium's renovations were also discussed. JS cautioned that creating a desirable community resource in the form of performing arts spaces would require a sizable community undertaking in the form of the costs associated with creating them. RG asked for any disagreement with including this item in the project and received none (hence, it is included).

- RG opened discussion on item 4) Undersized Classrooms. At issue first off was the reimbursability of a project that left classrooms undersized. Members of the Committee remarked that Option B.2 did leave classrooms undersized and was considered reimbursable. Apparently, satisfaction of the programmatic needs of the school in terms of sufficient rooms to accommodate target class sizes would allow a project to be regarded as reimbursable, but it was felt that the architect should be consulted specifically about this. AM said that he thought increasing classroom size would be a difficult item to justify to the public after so many years of using undersized classrooms. He wanted to know if scheduling smaller classes or teachers' workrooms for undersized classrooms might alleviate their disadvantages as being left in the finished project. TT and Dr. Harutunian explained that it would be too difficult a scheduling problem and too inequitable to teachers to reserve smaller classrooms for smaller classes. RP suggested getting an inventory of current classroom use from RMHS staff member Joe Kane to see just how the classrooms are currently used. Dr. Harutunian mentioned that new technology might diminish classroom space requirements, prompting RG to suggest that the principal should go over those requirements with the staff and the architect. RG suggested that this item be tabled for inclusion in the project until more information was obtained. There was no disagreement with this suggestion (item tabled).
- (Item 5 – Mechanical services, etc. was not discussed, being assumed to be basic to the project. Item is included)
- RG opened discussion on item 6) Shared Classrooms. Committee members discussed the need for shared classrooms, focussing on whether shared classrooms are only an annoyance to teachers or are they a detriment to the educational process. MS and Dr. Harutunian felt that there was an unavoidable education loss in the time teachers spent moving materials around to different classrooms and in the probability of students' long-term projects being disturbed through multiple uses of the classroom in which it takes place. TT questioned where a wandering teacher would prepare for a class in a remote classroom (any unused space they can find, apparently). PP, RR and JL wondered if the amount of sharing could be quantified to ascertain how much sharing takes place. RG thought that the economic

impact of correcting shared classrooms might be the determinant in whether this item remains on the Committee's list of recommendations. Dr. Harutunian said he would speak to the staff and to the architect to see if the degree to which classrooms are shared can be made clear.

- RG opened discussion on item 7) Relocation of non-high school areas and offices. No position was taken on this item due to the understanding that any off-site relocation of Town-dependent offices (RISE, Supt., etc.) would necessitate discussion with other Town boards (i.e., BOS) to find space for them and how to pay for it.
- RG opened discussion on item 8) Target Population (enrollment). RG reiterated the need to have the most recent enrollment figures and Dr. Harutunian said they were available for the 2000-2001 school year. RG continued to say that since the projected enrollments were so crucial to decisions on space, he recommended that a sub-committee take the most recent data and analyze it to return an enrollment projection to the Committee at large, much the same as was done for the elementary school project. RG noted that the data contained in both feasibility studies was getting old; Dr. Hautunian said that both NESDEC and MISER projections had been done in the spring. RG offered that this item remain on the table until the sub-committee returned with its findings. AM felt that such a study should occur sooner rather than later because the options contained in the feasibility report were predicated on the older projections; revisions might change how the Committee viewed these options. Dr. Harutunian summarized that the target number of classrooms needed would depend on whether or not existing undersized classrooms would be allowed to remain under State guidelines, whether the policy of using shared classrooms was to be kept and on the overall projected population of the school. (item tabled)
- RG opened discussion on item 9) Language lab: JS pointed out that educational analysis contained in the feasibility study urged the inclusion of a modern language laboratory, which appeared in various locations in the various options. It requires a large amount of square footage and is something now lacking in the present RMHS. Dr. Harutunian suggested that he arrange for a visit for the Committee to a north shore high school that is now undergoing renovations to illustrate such improvements as a language lab. No disagreement was voiced about this suggestion. (item tabled)
- RG opened discussion on item 10) Field House General Upgrade: The first point raised was whether or not any general renovations to the field house would be reimbursable by the State, with AM asking for clarification on the a State's position. Dr. Harutunian explained that the State would not fund general expansions or renovations to existing facilities simply for the sake of producing larger facilities, such as expanding a 5-lane track to an 8-lane track. Nor would they pay for new field houses. RR made the point that the Committee should be looking at a general upgrade only in the context of satisfying programmatic needs rather than as up-keep, and RG agreed. RG suggested that the athletic director be asked to explain just what the programmatic needs are and why they are needed. TT mentioned the need for an additional teaching station in the field house due to increased

enrollments as an example of a program-generated renovation. PP asked for the status of the renovations to the outdoor track and to its reimbursability. Dr. Harutunian relied that the previous plan to separately fund that track's renovation through the Capital Plan had been postponed due to higher than expected costs. Private funding for the track work similar to the private funding contemplated for renovations to the Auditorium was being discussed with interested individuals. It appeared that including the outdoor facilities in the project would be reimbursable provided that the property was under the control of the School Department, which Dr. Harutunian said that it was (although it is maintained by the Town-side of government by general agreement). This item was tabled pending discussion with the Athletic Director (Phil Vaccaro).

- RG opened discussion on item 11) Science Labs: RG asked Dr. Harutunian about the required upgrade of the science labs that resulted from the accreditation evaluation in the early 1990's. He responded that as a result of that evaluation, RMHS had to agree to upgrade the science facilities, which was done around 1993. The Committee noted the approach of another accreditation evaluation in 2003, the high number of students enrolled in four-years programs of science study and the desire to keep double sessions of labs expressed by the educators and the Administration. Hence, it was agreed to include Science Labs as part of the project (to be discussed further).
- RG opened discussion on item 12) Technology Upgrades: RG noted that the "real world" has developed an enormous dependency on technology. It has become essential, therefore, to educate students to be familiar with technology and its uses if they are to be able to function successfully in the real world beyond RMHS. Dr. Harutunian gave examples of how new technology in classroom settings could be used, such as direct plug-ins to central computers to access documents that an entire class could study and edit together (including helpful audio-visual displays that relied primarily on software and very little equipment).

Mr. Tucker voiced his concern that any technological upgrades and curricula would be obsolete very quickly due to the rapid advancement of technology. He said he thought industry would be the most likely educator of young people in technology which, by its nature, would have to stay up-to-date and would offer training programs to new employees. JS countered this with his observations that industry today demands a minimum level of technological training in order to get a job. He said that most companies today are smaller, leaner and more fast-paced with little time or manpower to devote to training programs. He felt that students coming out of high school should be able to "hit the ground running" in their ability to understand and use technology with a minimum of required training.

RG observed that the inclusion of technology in the program would perhaps make the most economic sense due to the amount of return on the investment. He cited expanded economic opportunities for women as being an example of an important benefit, contrasting it with the limited opportunities of a generation ago. Dr. Harutunian gave examples of newly-

trained teachers who apply for positions being thoroughly versed in the tools and methods which use up-to-date technology and become stymied by their inability to use what they've learned. Ms. O'Neil added that colleges expect students to be thoroughly familiar with computer usage and many required that matriculating students arrive with their own personal computer. TT remarked that discussing technology in regards to the RMHS project should focus on its inclusion in the day-to-day methodology of teaching all subjects, not on teaching how to use technologic tools (such as keyboarding or accessing the Internet). RG asked if there was any disagreement to including technology upgrades as a major portion of the project. None was offered (hence, it is included).

- RG opened discussion on item 13) Phasing: RG began by remarking that phasing was of utmost concern to the administration due to its disruptive effect on day-to-day operations which could extend for long periods of time. He also noted the State's concern with phasing by quoting the SBA Administrator's response to the question of the State being willing to fund ongoing piecemeal projects which read, "We would not support a long-range plan the would disrupt the educational program of the students every three to five years." Dr. Harutunian and TT discussed the uses of swing space to move students out of the Contractor's way via temporary classrooms or additions, noting that restrictions on the Contractor's activities from phasing can have a domino effect on slowing the progress of those activities.

JS asked the Committee if they would like to have a discussion with architects who have designed and phased high school renovations in order to get a better idea of what other school districts do to plan renovation projects with phasing (he had received offers from several such architects in his research regarding school costs). TT felt that planning and phasing was the Administration's responsibility to research. JS noted that to date, only Option C.3 had been phased and since the Committee was reviewing all the options it might like more input. Dr. Harutunian offered to arrange a visit of the Committee to a nearly renovated high school on the North Shore in order to see what such a project looked like and to talk to that school's administration about how phasing was planned and executed. RG thought that such a visit might be documented in order to be included in a presentation to Town Meeting. Committee members and observers thought such a visit (or visits) would be helpful to demonstrate what RMHS could be. Dr. Harutunian said he would look into arrangements for such an event.

- RG noted that the hour was late and that further discussions on the items at the next meeting should focus on addressing the costs and cost-effectiveness of including the items agreed to at this meeting. Tentative arrangements were made to meet again on July 31, 2001 at 7:30 p.m.

Item 5: DRA Report Review for Next Meeting

- RG reminded the Committee that the 1996 DRA feasibility study should be reviewed again and discussed at the next meeting to glean any useful information from it for discussion.

Item 7: Adjourn

- With no other business appearing, RG called for a motion to adjourn. DL so moved and was seconded by RP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 11:05 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on April 11, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Reference: Meeting Agenda (copy attached)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Paula Perry (PP)
Michael Scarpitto (MS)
Alex McRae (AM)
Jane Darveaux (JD)
Rich Radville (RR)
Ray Porter (RP)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)

Item 1: Introduction of New Members

- RG introduced two new SBC members, Jane Darveaux and Michael Scarpitto, both from RMHS (Ms. Darveaux is a guidance counselor and Mr. Scarpitto is an Assistant Principal). Both had not yet been sworn in by the Town Clerk and were advised to do so as soon as possible.

Item 2: Letter to SBAB from Dr. Harutunian

- RG told the Committee that Dr. Harutunian had written a letter to the School Building Assistance bureau requesting answers to several questions concerning State regulations relative to the RMHS project (copy later received by SBC members and attached to minutes). The questions concerned, 1) the hiring of an architect initially for schematic design and whether such architect could be hired to complete the design without re-bidding for design services, 2) whether the State might reimburse a long-term multi-phase renovation project with phases spaced out 3-5 years, and 3) if the State would reimburse additions to the field house that would remedy Title IX issues. To date, the superintendent had not yet received an answer to his letter.

Item 3: Review of Current Cost of Schematics

- RG explained that several SBC members with experience in the design field had investigated the range of fees to be expected from architects who would be solicited to produce a schematic design for the high school.

- RR spoke first and related that he had contacted two architectural firms who have worked on Reading schools (Design Partnership of Cambridge and Strekolovsky & Hoit) and asked for their opinions on what they would consider fair for producing schematic designs for the high school. Both said that their gross (total) fees for such a project would be in the range of 9% of the construction cost of the project as opposed to 8%, due to the large scale and the complexity and the phasing of the project. They also said that full schematic design services would entail 15% of their gross fee. RR calculated that for a construction cost of \$40M (one estimate for one option from the S&H feasibility study), schematic design fees would then be approximately \$540K. Hence, using a cost of \$500K appears to be a reasonable working estimate for the Committee.
- RR further related a recommendation given to him by the Design Partnership of Cambridge. They suggested that monies for schematic design (SD) be included to pay for specialty consultants who would provide such things as accurate site surveys and a geotechnical report (for sub-surface conditions). Other specialties that would be of use would be a kitchen consultant, equipment and furnishings and technology consultants, cost estimators, etc. This would produce a more comprehensive schematic design and as such, would entail more of a schematic design fee to attract qualified architects (who would hire the consultants from that fee). They suggested SD fees more in the range of \$600K for the high school.
- Conversely, RR reported, Strekalovsky & Hoit thought that \$500K would be adequate for their firm to produce a comprehensive schematic design. RR commented that S&H is a smaller firm than DPC and might have lower overhead costs to cover. Thus, the two firms seemed to define a range of \$500K - \$600K as the expected design fees to take the high school project to a schematic level. They both stressed to RR, however, that in this level of design is far different to their firms from a feasibility study costing \$20k - \$50K because it entails a much greater commitment of their resources. As such, they urged that an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) not be put out soliciting for architectural firms until funding for the SD was certain (i.e., not dependent on passage of an override). Even if the entire project was dependent on an override to move past the SD stage, as long as money was in-hand, they said, schematic design (only) for the high school would be a commission worth pursuing.
- JS related his findings after talking to two principals of larger architectural firms that specialize in school projects. He said that he presented both of them with a hypothetical high school project, giving expected project cost range (\$50M-\$60M), square footage, and classification as mainly a renovation with some additions contemplated. He asked how each would calculate their expected fee for producing a schematic design. Both used very similar methods, first finding a construction cost (upon which they base their fee structure) by multiplying project cost by 75%. Their gross fee would then be on the order of 8%-10% of the construction cost, based on the degree of complexity, phasing, etc. Finally, they both stated that 15% of that gross fee would be a fair division to apply towards the schematic design phase. Thus, by multiplying the three factors together (75%x8 to 10%x15%),

a range of schematic design fees would be between 0.9% and 1.125% of the expected project cost, and JS suggested that a simple 1% of project cost would be a reasonable rule of thumb. Hence, for a \$50M project, SD fees would be about \$500K; for a \$60M project, use \$600K as a probable amount and so on.

- One of the contacts told JS that care should be taken when preparing an RFQ for schematic design to ensure that the results are very usable to the Committee. It was recommended that the Committee stress that the schematic design was to be taken before the SBA for an initial needs conference which would entail the production of formal documents for that board's review. Allow for ample use of sub-consultants to identify specific problems that the project might encounter. Use of a cost estimator (as a sub-consultant) should be demanded to obtain up-to-date cost projections. Including these items would likely entail design fees closer to the mid-range of the overall fee schedule (i.e., more like 9% than 8%). In light of this, JS suggested that using 1% of the project cost as an estimate for schematic design seemed reasonable. When the Committee fixed more definitively on one solution and could estimate its project cost, then a more definitive amount for fees for the schematic design of it could be calculated. For now, JS thought, a working number of \$500K should be satisfactory.
- PP asked what an RFQ for schematic design would include. RR answered that it would include very specific language for desired services and results and could use language from a standard AIA (American Institute of Architects) contract form as base material. Specific service requirements would be spelled out, such as meetings to attend, boards to appear before, etc. The amount for these services must also be spelled out as a set fee (no bidding), with respondents submitting their qualifications only showing how they justify their eligibility for receiving the commission.
- PP further asked how the educational program desired (i.e., the agreed-upon solution) would be included in the RFQ. RR, JD and TT responded how the program materials produced during the feasibility studies would be made available to respondents for their information (again via instructions in the RFQ, articulating the desired design). Upon receipt of all respondents' qualifications, a shortened list (short-list) would be prepared (historically done by a sub-committee and voted on by the Committee at large) and the remaining candidates are asked to present themselves to the Committee in person (interviews). After interviewing all candidates, the Committee votes for a single architectural firm to carry the schematic design to fruition.
- RG offered his views on the difference between asking for funds for a feasibility study and for a schematic design. Feasibility studies seek to only identify possible solutions, which are then judged on their effectiveness in solving the problem at hand. A preferred solution is then debated and selected to take before Town Meeting without further design work. Feasibility study fees are not large enough to afford more design. Such work as performing traffic studies and applying for Conservation Commission review are not in the scope of services of a feasibility study. All school projects handled thusfar by the Committee have used only feasibility study results and

gone immediately to full design services and construction via approval by Town Meeting after recommendation by the SBC.

- The high school project, however, will entail presenting the Committee's recommendations to a much broader audience – the electorate – by virtue of the need for approval of a debt-exclusion override in order to proceed. The Committee has previously agreed that the feasibility studies now in-hand do not have sufficient data or design information that would adequately describe any of the solutions to the satisfaction of the voting public. Pursuing funds to advance a preferred option to a schematic design level would produce enough details to answer any questions about it. The funds needed are much larger than those needed by a feasibility study owing to the much-increased amount of work to be performed by the design team. There is also a risk that even after spending this large amount of money, the answer to the override question might be “no”. Architects know this and they would expect that schematic design fees be non-conditional (upon an override result) in order to attract their attention.
- JS added comments about the use and cost of consultants for projects such as these. TT pointed out the high degree of inter-personal contact between architects and users (staff and administration) which then becomes the basis of crafting an educational program that will fit within the State's guidelines for reimbursement.

Item 3: Report from the High School Principal Relative to High School Educational Needs Relative to the Building

- RG introduced Frank Orlando, Principal of RMHS, and asked him to describe the educational impact that a renovated high school would produce on the students and teachers. Mr. Orlando distributed a list of benefits (copy attached) and elected to illustrate the impact of the benefits by describing a typical school day at the present time.
- Upon arriving at RMHS, students proceed to their homerooms. At the signal for the first period, all students must travel between two doorways (between Bldg. A and C) along with over a thousand other students, down corridors and stairs and get to class within four minutes.
- In the science labs, it is quite likely that the heat is not working and the temperature is in the 50's. There are many non-functional gas jets and electrical outlets, which means that lab times are curtailed by waiting for a turn with the equipment. The classroom is shared with other teachers so time is spent just setting up the equipment, as well as breaking it down at the end of class. It is estimated that three to four entire lab sessions are lost at the end of the year due to this setting up, turn taking and breaking down.
- Further class changes might result in students occupying a classroom heated to the 80's with the windows wide open. Getting to class is still a problem. Gym class for girls means dressing in the lower level locker rooms and going outside in any weather across the parking lot to the field house. Mr. Orlando

described the poor condition of the locker rooms and the gym flooring that the students would encounter.

- He described ventilation problems, bathroom problems and the lack of a working intercom and the effect that could have in emergency situations. Lighting and environment and their effects on learning were described. Insufficient technology involving computer and Internet use is creating a gap in the students' education relative to other high schools in other districts. He decried the amount of his and his staff's time that is spent on building issues instead of educating. He said that he felt the building and its poor condition was inhibiting the performance of the educational program.
- Mr. Orlando described how Lexington's new high school employs wireless technology to distribute portable computers for students' use in their class research and presentations. He pointed out that one of the options for RMHS converts the existing lecture hall into a technology center that would provide space and equipment for independent research (he mentioned that the library was too heavily used and too limited in space for solitary work). He added that having computer work stations for teachers that are linked to the technology center would make lesson planning more efficient with less preparatory time, leaving more time for the lessons themselves.
- He re-iterated the need for more science lab space, commenting that the increase in enrollments forces a reduction in the number of available lab times, which can cause some students to skip science electives if they can't fit them into their schedules. This caused RR to question whether such actions could lead to RMHS being seen as less competitive in its science curriculum than comparable communities. Mr. Orlando answered that he didn't mean to imply that the curriculum was becoming sub-standard, but that the space issues were making that curriculum less available. Such are examples of the effects of building issues on education at RMHS, he explained.
- RG asked for comments from MS and JD, given their daily involvement with the operations of the high school (MS is an Asst. Principal; JD is a guidance counselor).
- JD remarked that concerns for ninth graders coming to an old building like RMHS from newly renovated and equipped middle schools are mitigated somewhat by cautions from the middle school teachers to expect the worst – and then finding it's not as bad as they were led to believe. Still, dealing with wildly different classroom temperatures, circulation "pinch points" that can make them late for class and leaking roofs become daunting tasks that negatively affect their learning environment. She further said that contemplating going to a third (early) lunch period to accommodate increasing enrollments is looked at with dread by both students and faculty. Mr. Orlando explained how a third lunch period would disrupt scheduling for everyone, stretching the lunch periods and trying to balance educational program time throughout the day.

- JD continued to describe how such a problem of finding space to administer advance placement (AP) exams had to be dealt with. With regards to the foreign language exams (which entail listening to audiotapes), the lack of a language lab has forced staff to first look elsewhere. Bedford High School offered to take Reading students, but they could only use their lab after the Bedford students were done, which was problematic, since the (national) tests are given on the same day all over the country. Thus, it was decided that the Media Center would be closed to the rest of the school for the day and carrels brought in and wired for audio. This was due to the inadequate desks, lighting and ventilation in the auditorium and lecture hall and the need to use the cafeteria/commons. With more students wishing to take AP courses and exams, finding space to administer the tests becomes even more of a challenge.
- MS began by relaying the results of surveys taken among teachers, students and parents about their concerns for the students' high school experience and by far the most consistent results indicate that all are worried about the effect of the building's poor conditions on the learning environment. He cautioned that better facilities at nearby private schools could attract students away from RMHS. He talked about North Andover voting to construct a new \$55M high school and also passing an override to pay for new high school teaching positions and he expressed frustration about people saying they support education but are not willing to pay for it. He pointed out that North Andover and Reading are similar communities and have collaborated in educational seminars to share experience about their respective school systems.
- JS asked Mr. Orlando if everything in the present building was fixed, meaning that the problems related thusfar by the high school staff regarding heat, lights, ventilating, circulation, utilities and leaks were solved, what would he need most for RMHS. He responded that to continue offering the science program as it is currently structured, he would need more science teaching space. The same could be said for many other programs such as typing, business and fine arts. Having flexibility in space planning for changing programs (spaces that can be used for several different purposes) would be of great teaching value. Incorporating new communication and research technology (i.e., computer networks and Internet access) into all educational programs would be seen as providing a basic teaching tool that would benefit the students. JS said that he asked this question because he thought that eventually the Committee would have to prioritize the components of the options under consideration and he would like the administration's thoughts on the matter.
- RG commented that public perception of the high costs associated with the high school options might not include appreciation of the educational goals that drive them. Further, what is being contemplated for the high school is not unique in that many other communities around the Commonwealth are undertaking the same sort of upgrades to their high school facilities. Simply correcting the faulty wiring, heating and plumbing and patching/painting the walls would not equip the staff with the tools they need to construct and administer an educational program that would prepare RMHS students for the

21st century. He suggested that perhaps the design professionals on the Committee could do some research into what other communities have done and are doing about their high schools (he singled out JS due to his contacts with several school architects, who said he would try).

- Mr. Orlando described touring the renovation project at Lexington High School and related the observation of that school's principal that several millions of dollars go into reconfiguring the school's infrastructure before any significant changes can be felt in the teaching environment. The most eagerly awaited change apparently is the infusion of new technology into the classrooms, labs and library due partly to the fact that teachers' colleges produce teachers that are heavily trained in the use of technology in their work.
- Several comments were made suggesting that an overview of State high school projects would demonstrate that it is not just the communities that are perceived as wealthy that are upgrading their high schools. JS noted that many of his firm's larger projects are in non-affluent towns. TT commented that perhaps the SBA would have a list of approved high school projects that would show at a glance the range of high school projects.
- RG offered the thought that public perception of the educational needs of the high school is influenced somewhat by the success of the current program, which may blunt the sense of urgency that the users of the facility are trying to get across to the public. Mr. Orlando offered his view that the students deserve the most credit for doing as well as they do with the facilities that they are given.
- MS added that during the months preceding North Andover's override vote for their new high school, tours were given to the public of the existing facility and townspeople were able to see for themselves just what the needs were and why. He said the tours were well attended and he thinks that some parents who were considering sending their children to private school for quality education realized that they would have no choice but to do so if their public high school was left in the condition they saw during the tour.
- TT made the point that regardless of the explanation of the high school's needs to the community, the ultimate factor in deciding whether or not to vote the funds necessary to meet them will be community pride. How much a taxpayer is willing to spend to upgrade RMHS will depend on how much they desire to maintain the school as a laudable Town institution. He postulated that a way to test this willingness to pay would be to seek schematic design funds (\$500K+/-) through a capital exclusion override (a one-time increase in taxes to cover this specific capital expense).
- AM said that TT raised an interesting point, expressing his own reservations about performing a great deal of design work on the basis of sale of real estate funds only to find that ultimately the Town won't support the result. Some part of the design might be salvaged, but it could be all for nothing without knowing the Town's disposition towards it. PP agreed that involvement of the general public early on would be a benefit.

- RG countered the idea with a reminder that the Committee's first responsibility was to bring their recommendations back to Town Meeting and not directly to the general public. TT agreed that Town Meeting would have to agree to send it to an override election. RR cautioned that by seeking that source of funding, the Committee might never have the chance to develop their recommendation fully to Town Meeting (as well as the general public), thus hampering its ability to carry out its role. RG further added that another consideration would be the loss of a chance to use sale of real estate funds for this capital purpose (one of only two permissible uses of those funds) by seeking a capital exclusion override. He noted that there are many other capital projects that could use those monies and there may not be any left after a failed attempt at an override.
- AM wondered if this subject might not be brought up at the upcoming Town Meeting. TT said that he felt that it should be put on the Committee's table first to "get it out there". AM mentioned that no matter what was offered, there would be inevitable second-guessing. RG expanded on this point, saying that there are some in Town that would revert to out-right falsehoods to hinder a recommendation, citing the recent rancor over the elementary schools as an example.
- JS reminded the Committee that he had proposed the interim step of asking for schematic design fees (back in August of 2000) in part as a very deliberate way of involving the Town in the decision-making process, to focus everyone's attention on the high school's problems. He said this step was in his estimation the most important phase of the four-vote scenario by which the Committee would guide the project to a final debt-exclusion override election for full design and construction. The reason was that it was at this juncture that the Town would accept just what was to be done for the high school (the solution) through a Town Meeting endorsement. Whatever the funding mechanism for schematic design fees chosen after that would be anti-climatic since all the public discussions would have already taken place. He envisioned the Committee holding many public meetings to present the chosen solution in the weeks leading up to the Town Meeting vote just as it had done with the previous school projects (the elementary schools in particular). Public input would be solicited and heard at these meetings, bringing the public's awareness to bear on the solution in order to gauge their acceptance of it as the solution. He reiterated his belief that the schematic design process is very necessary to give the voters a very clear idea of what the RMHS project would be in terms of cost, physical changes, phasing, etc. But he thought that the involvement of the Town in general would occur during the initial approach to Town Meeting regardless of the funding mechanism pursued for the schematic design.
- RG wondered if perhaps Town Meeting itself could be asked to make the decision concerning the method of funding. PP added that the committee's actions leading up to Town Meeting would not be affected by the funding mechanism itself. AM thought the Committee should stick to its role of advising Town Meeting, but be cognizant of the fact that Town Meeting would not have the last word on the matter and keep an open mind about a capital

exclusion override. PP remarked that using sale of real estate funds might dull the public's attention because it had no immediate effect on their lives.

- RG brought up an almost philosophical question of should a Town agency such as the Committee tailor their recommendations to the Town based on a perception of what the taxpayers are willing to pay or to base their recommendations purely on the letter of their charge from Town Meeting, which is to evaluate the situation based only on space and enrollment needs. TT said that he thought that adhering strictly to the charge of the Committee (to advise Town Meeting) could create a quandary in that the ultimate decision-makers would be the community at large and that their evaluations might not be based on the same criteria that Town Meeting uses.
- JD remarked that she sees tremendous interest in the high school from citizens not directly affected by it, such as elderly people and parents with very young children. RG said that such interest leads him to think that a source of funds set aside exclusively for capital projects (sale of real estate) would be seen as being intended for a purpose just like the schematic design fees. TT hypothesized that the Committee could go to Town Meeting with both sources of funding and let Town Meeting decide which to pursue.
- Concerns were raised by Committee members about the mechanics of putting such proposals before Town Meeting, including such topics as placement on the Capital Plan, instructional motions for reimbursement of overrides from the sale of real estate funds, etc. It was decided that RG should report to the upcoming Town Meeting that funding from the sale of real estate funds was under discussion by the Committee.
- AM reiterated his concern that pursuing Town Meeting's approval to use sale of real estate funds to develop a schematic design might prove to be a waste of time and money if the voters ultimately rejected the design when it came time to vote for its construction.
- RP said that he felt that giving the public several choices for the high school would be a better way to build support within the Town. He also expressed concern about pursuing a single option that voters would reject, delaying action on the school. RG disagreed with RP, stating that his experience with Town Meeting was that when a committee is appointed to address a problem, they want to hear one recommendation, not several. RP still felt that the risk of promoting a solution that died at the polls was too great and that presenting multiple options would avoid this risk. He asked if the Committee shouldn't reconsider its vote to take a single comprehensive plan to Town Meeting at the end of the year.
- JD countered that putting several choices before a large group of voters would pre-suppose that those voters were educated on the subject. In fact, most voters have never seen the high school or taken the time to learn about the problems with using it to provide education. She said committees such as the SBC are formed to do the research necessary to make informed decisions among choices and present their findings back to the larger body that created it. The components of the solution should be solicited from the

students, parents and staff who use the facility every day and who know what is needed to provide quality education into the next century. Putting that solution before voters along with the cost would give them the choice of saying yes or no. Voters look to appointed committee's for direction and can choose to follow or not as they see fit.

- RP responded that he saw no problem with limiting the choices to three in number. RR said that he did see a problem with that. He felt that bringing multiple choices to the floor of Town Meeting would create chaos; that it just wouldn't work. He cited examples from the past like the police station and Coolidge Middle School wherein attempts to re-design the project on the floor created considerable confusion. He said that people did not have sufficient background to evaluate between multiple plans and that the SBC was expected to be the most informed on the subject.
- TT said that in all past reports of progress given by RG to Town Meeting in which he stated that the Committee was considering a comprehensive plan, no one has ever asked that a "menu" of plans be developed for consideration. He thought that even if Town Meeting rejected the Committee's recommendation, they could be sounded out for desired revisions so that the SBC could re-group and return with a plan that suited TM's specifications (he envisioned that cost would be a determining factor). RG added comments about how past Town building projects had gone through several iterations via the process of proposal and rejection with a final realized project emerging from it.
- JS reminded the Committee that the schedule scenario that the SBC intends to follow allows approximately two years between the time of the initial presentation to Town Meeting and putting the project out to bid. This was done intentionally to allow time to re-group or to wait for sale of real estate funds or to handle unforeseen delays. Thus, there would be time to absorb a rejection by Town Meeting and try again and still hold to the intended schedule. Further, the SBC will, at the time of the first Town Meeting, be as ready as it will ever be to change its recommendation to reflect the will of Town Meeting as it makes itself known and can revise its recommendation relatively quickly.
- RP reiterated his concern that seeking \$500K for a schematic design of one option that the voters might reject would cause delay. AM felt that going to Town Meeting with a single option could be fruitless if there was no explanation of the other options and why they were rejected. RG stated that TM and the voters would have to be told that the feasibility studies done thusfar cannot answer many of the questions they are likely to have and that in order to answer them, a schematic design level must be reached. RP stated that the recent results of the operating override election might point out the mood of Reading voters for overrides.
- PP agreed with JS about the Committee being able to adapt to Town Meeting's directives. JS noted that any notion of a "disconnect" between Town Meeting and the Town at large could be dispelled with an override election for the schematic design fees. This might avoid the possibility of

wasting time and money on development of full schematic plans that the electorate would not approve. RG suggested that he report to Town Meeting that the matter is under discussion.

Item 4: Discussion of Options Review for Future Meetings

- RG asked that Committee members prepare to discuss the various options B.1, B.2, C.1, C.2, C.3 (A and D are not reimbursable and are not therefore under discussion).
- Mr. Orlando offered to speak to his department heads concerning how they evaluated their needs to present to the architect. He was asked to also ask them what would happen if their declared needs were not met.

Items 5: Old Business

- RG remarked that the Committee had in effect covered this topic in its discussions under Item 3.

Item 6,7: New Business / Adjournment

- RG called for any other business. None appearing, a motion to adjourn was made by AM and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 10:00 pm).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on March 22, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Reference: Meeting Agenda (copy attached)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Ray Porter (RP)

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent – Reading Public Schools)
Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)

Item 1: Introduction of New Members

RG introduced two new Committee members. Ray Porter (RP) has been appointed as a Citizen-at-Large and Jane Darveau (JD) has been appointed as the Administration representative (Ms. Darveau was not in attendance this evening).

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

- RG asked for any additions, deletions or changes to the minutes of the September 20, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, RR made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by TT. A vote was taken and the results were 7 for, one abstention and the motion passed.
- RG asked for any additions, deletions or changes to the minutes of the October 30, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, TT made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and the results were 7 for, one abstention and the motion passed.

Item 3: Where We Are in the High School

- RG reiterated the progress of the Committee to date (see previous minutes). He stressed the difficulty the SBA will have with implementing the new regulations on a case-by-case basis due to the vastly increased work load imposed on that agency by the new reg's and the lack of added staff to

- handle it. Actual cases will most likely not be handled under the new rules until July of 2002 (one fiscal year after the end of the old regulations).
- Dr. Harutunian brought up the subject of the Killam elementary school renovation project, noting that information produced during the elementary school feasibility study put the probable cost of that project at \$6.5M. He asked that the Committee begin planning for carrying that project forward at or before the time the RMHS project is developed for Town Meeting.
 - JL expressed his concern that waiting too long to begin either project would lead to higher costs. He mentioned the bids for the new elementary school as an example of the cost of delay. TT concurred with this observation.
 - Frank Orlando (Principal, RMHS) informed the Committee that members of his staff had begun visiting other high schools undergoing renovation projects in order to gain insight into what is possible and what to expect. He said he felt such action was not too early to undertake and might help the school-based building committee be of more use to the Committee.
 - Dr. Harutunian mentioned an expected upgrade in technology that will likely be included in the Barrows renovation (as well as later renovations). Wireless connections to a central computer network will make cabling for television obsolete. Projector/receivers will be used for group instruction and portable computers with wireless pick-ups would replace hard-wired computer workstations.
 - RG commented on the \$500K amount that is to be sought from Town Meeting for schematic design funds (see item 4 below). He questioned whether that amount would be enough for schematic design of a possible \$60M project. TT and RR made observations that schematic design fees for architects traditionally average around 15% of the total fees charged. For a renovation of the size and scope contemplated for RMHS, total fees could be estimated as a percentage of the overall construction costs, perhaps around 8-10%. RR and TT (and JS) offered to investigate probable fee structures through their contacts in the architectural community.

Item 4: Review of Timeline for the High School Project

- RG asked JS to begin discussion on a timeline he had prepared for advancing the RMHS project through design phases, Town Meeting and override votes (copy attached). JS explained that the first step to follow after the Committee reaches a consensus on the type of solution to recommend is to request design fees from Town Meeting on the order of \$520K. These estimated fees would be comprised of \$500K for a schematic design of the high school and \$20K for conceptual design of the upgrades needed for the Killam elementary school. Both design phases would be used to present the Committee's recommended solutions for the schools to the Town (first via Town Meeting and later for the electorate at large preceding debt exclusion override elections). The source of funding for these fees would be the monies available as Sale of Real Estate funds that result from the closure of the deal to sell the landfill on Walkers Brook Drive. Hence, the timing of the

Committee's presentation to Town Meeting would follow the expected schedule of this closing (Feb. 1, 2002 originally; but is tentatively planned to be on Dec. 1, 2001, according to the Town Manager). A special Town Meeting could be called soon after the closing (shown as Dec. 3rd on the timeline) to make the request. Prior to the special Town Meeting, the Committee would pick an earlier date for completion of its work (shown as Oct. 19th) in order to present its findings to the community and other boards.

- Assuming the design fees are secured, the timeline continues, showing a relatively long period in which the architect is solicited and a schematic design of the accepted solution is produced. JS explained that the time period was meant to absorb any delays caused by postponements of the landfill closing, a referendum on Town Meeting's decision, "Murphy's Law", etc. Also, another special Town Meeting to go over the schematic design in order to secure its recommendation for a debt-exclusion override would have to occur either before or after the summer of 2002, not during it. Hence, it seemed practical to plan for a meeting after the summer. Following a successful presentation to Town Meeting (in which they would accept the proposal subject to a successful override), the Board of Selectmen would follow TM's direction and schedule a debt exclusion override election, which could conveniently take place on Election Day, 2002 (Nov. 5th). If successful, the architect could develop final bid documents for submission to the SBA for reimbursement with a view towards putting the project out to bid at the most advantageous time (tentatively chosen as the Fall of 2003).
- In general, Committee members had no objections to the timeline as a working schedule to follow. Frank Orlando commented that the high school was scheduled to be evaluated for accreditation in the fall of 2003, and that his experience with accrediting boards indicated that having an accepted plan and schedule to upgrade the facilities could satisfy a board that their concerns with those facilities will be addressed.
- JS asked that in light of the request of the Board of Selectmen to be updated on the Committee's schedule, should the timeline be submitted to them. RG responded that a copy should be sent to the Town Manager for his review prior to discussing it with the BOS (a copy was sent on March 23rd).

Item 5: Discussion of the High School Renovations and Our Recommendations

- RG opened the discussion with the question of what the Committee should plan to send to Town Meeting; a preferred option alone or to include other options that were considered?
- Dr. Harutunian spoke to the fact that an on-going series of renovations, which stretched out over 5-10 years, would be problematic educationally. He thought that partial renovations might do too little in the way of improving the delivery of education at the high school over time.
- Frank Orlando echoed the Superintendent's comments, citing his familiarity with a high school renovation project in Lexington as an instance where disruptions to the operation of the school are often unavoidable and that

significant amounts of time and money are spent on infrastructure before any benefits from the renovation can be realized by the users.

- A general discussion ensued with members discussing presenting the choices that were available for the Committee's review, the effect of no longer needing to have a "soup-to-nuts" project in order to qualify for State reimbursement and the new incentives for maximizing State reimbursement. RG then asked for each member to offer their view on whether one option or multiple options should be presented to Town Meeting.
- RR began by stating that in his view, one plan only should be presented. He thought the Committee should identify the option that best fulfills the needs of the high school and then pursue it by taking it to Town Meeting.
- JL agreed, adding that emphasis should be put on taking advantage of the State's incentives and being able to tell TM how much the option will cost the Town.
- JS stated that he felt it was the Committee's charge to evaluate options such as the ones before the Committee and make a single, preferred recommendation to Town Meeting.
- PP agreed that a single option was what should be developed for presentation.
- RP felt that every effort should be made to enhance State funding and he was not convinced that proposing one solution was the best way to do so. He could envision taking two or three options to Town Meeting.
- TT thought the Committee could go to Town Meeting with the issues that needed to be addressed and explain how the preferred solution addressed them. Town Meeting could then advise the Committee how else to address them if it did not agree with the Committee's recommendation.
- AM thought a single option should be presented as long as it identified other options and explained why they were not recommended.
- RG noted that in the past, school building projects had depended on their ability to fit into the Capital Plan as debt to be serviced and had succeeded or failed on the Town's ability to do so. Since the high school project, by virtue of its funding through a debt exclusion override, was dependent only on its ability to satisfy the Town as the proper thing to do for the high school, he felt that the Committee should decide on the single, best plan that would meet the needs for educating Reading's high school students and put it before Town Meeting.
- RP asked for clarification on how the proposed costs for the high school had reached \$60M. RR explained the work done by the sub-committee that had reviewed Strelakovsky & Hoit's feasibility study and adjusted the costs given therein (see previous minutes). RR and TT further discussed a "domino" effect of having to upgrade infrastructure systems on a building-wide basis if

only a portion of it was to be replaced due to building code mandates (such as electrical systems).

- RG then called for a motion for taking one plan to Town Meeting when the Committee went to ask for schematic design fees. RR made the following motion; "Move that the School Building Committee go to the Fall and/or Special Town Meeting with a single comprehensive solution for the physical and educational needs of Reading Memorial High School." JS seconded the motion. Some discussion ensued regarding the use of the words "complete" or "comprehensive" in the motion, with consensus being reached on "comprehensive". With no further discussion occurring, a vote was taken and the result was 7 for, 1 against (no abstentions) and the motion passed.

Item 6: Old Business

- JL asked for an update from the Administration on the status of the new elementary school. Dr. Harutunian said the bids came in approximately \$1.5M over budget. The School Committee would have to decide whether to trim the program for the school, re-bid it or ask for more funding from Town Meeting. There is also a complaint involving the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality (DEP) that has to be resolved before construction can begin.
- RG asked whether our State representatives could speed up the resolution process in light of the cost of delay. Dr. Harutunian said he doubted they could have much effect, but he would look into it.

Item 7: New Business

- RG and Frank Orlando discussed having another meeting with the school-based building committee to discuss specific educational rationales that went into the crafting of each option. The Committee agreed upon a tentative date of April 11, 2001.
- JS asked that Committee members to begin to think about just how they are going to specifically evaluate the options in order to choose the best one (or choose to craft another, original one).
- In response to a question concerning the requirement of addressing Title IX issues in the high school project, Dr. Harutunian related some legal advice he had been given. He was told that the existing conditions might not be a definitive liability to the Town (owing to the economic hardship imposed by compelling compliance). However, undergoing a large-scale renovation and not addressing Title IX would expose the Town to compelling legal challenge, since economic hardship could not be used as a defense. For this reason, including Title IX issues as (reimbursable) problems to solve in the scope of the project made sense.

Item 8: Adjournment

- RG called for any other business. None appearing, a motion to adjourn was made by JS and was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on October 30, 2000, 8:00 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Reference: Meeting Agenda (copy attached)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Joe Finigan (JF)

Featured Guests:

Dr. Harry Harutunian (Superintendent – Reading Public Schools)
Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS)
School-based Building Committee (RMHS staff members): Carol Galvin, Ron Howland, Brian Venable, Cathy Cook, Phil Vaccaro, Ted Bryson, Dave Bunten, Linda Rozzi
Gene Raymond (Architect – Strekalovsky & Hoit)

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

No minutes were outstanding for approval, but the minutes for the 9-20-00 meeting were distributed to Committee members for review.

Item 2: Welcome to High School Based Building Committee – Introductions

RG welcomed the members of the RMHS staff who had volunteered to act as a consulting school-based building committee to the Committee. Each member of both committees introduced themselves (see list above).

Item 3: Explanation of the Role of the School Building Committee

RG explained to the staff members that the SBC was a special committee of Town Meeting formed to report to Town Meeting on space issues and present recommendations to that body on how to deal with them. He cited the Committee's role in addressing elementary and middle school needs and stated that now its attention was turned towards the high school. He mentioned previous involvement of the Committee with RMHS (1995 feasibility study) and the subsequent recommendation at that time was not to not move forward with a high school project due to financial constraints and other pressing school space issues. It has now, however, been resurrected. RG drew a parallel between the staff committee's input and the input that was obtained from municipal workers

when the Town Hall was to be renovated, stating that it has been helpful to listen to the people that actually use the facility.

Item 4: Review of Meeting with the Dept. of Education at Representative Jones' Office Relative to the New SBAB Regulations

RG briefly reported on the meeting that was held in State Representative Jones' office with the financial head of the SBAB which was attended by the chairs of the SBC and the School Committee, the School Committee liaison to the SBC, the Superintendent and several Town financial personnel. The meeting was to ascertain the effects of the new SBAB guidelines on Reading's applications for state reimbursement for school projects. The group was told that Reading would most likely enjoy at least the same reimbursement rate as before (66%) and may receive an even higher percentage, based on the type of project applied for. The reason for this is that a base percentage of slightly over 55% could be augmented with percentage points based on such factors as innovative community use of the facility, designing for energy efficiency, use of a construction manager, renovating instead of building anew, etc.

Another aspect of the new regulations that was deemed significant was the new ability of school projects to undergo partial upgrades rather than comprehensive overhauls and still receive reimbursement from the state. Previously, the SBAB had insisted on an "all or nothing" approach to school projects, correcting all physical and programmatic deficiencies that might exist. The new guidelines would allow partial corrections if the community deemed them prudent. RG commented that just how this new regulation would affect the Committee's recommendations to Town Meeting was not known as yet. He invited the members of the School-based building committee to be open and frank with the SBC in their comments.

Item 5: Dialogue with High School Group and Administration

Frank Orlando began by complimenting his students and staff for their accomplishments in the current building, but added that the building is long overdue for repairs and upgrading. He noted that a 1990 accreditation report praised the programs at the high school but faulted the facilities. An upcoming accreditation review would likely find little improvement in the facilities from ten years ago. Increasing enrollments will undoubtedly be affecting educational programs, he said, citing the reduction in the amount of laboratory time that will be available to science students due to the need to overschedule the current lab spaces as an example. He then asked the staff members to speak.

Carol Galvin (Science): Ms. Galvin began by listing a number of deficiencies that now exist in the facilities used to teach the science curriculum: poor heat regulation in Bldg. C (science and math centers), lack of technology and poor electric and gas service, poor ventilation, preparation and storage areas for materials and equipment. Increased enrollments will likely cut into the double lab periods now offered which will have an impact on the quality of the science program. Outdated hardware, furniture and services cannot contribute to the teaching of a modern science curriculum. She gave the example of one classroom that had been updated into a more sophisticated lab only to have the

benefits of the upgrade blunted by the need to overschedule its use by too many students (enrollment increases). Dr. Harutunian and Mr. Orlando raised the subject of past accreditation boards noting the need for more chemistry labs to properly administer the chemistry program. Mr. Orlando said that to address that deficiency, two general science labs were converted to chem labs. However, increased enrollments may require the need to reverse this process and give up lab space for general space, which would have to be reported to the accreditation board. This would be a serious matter, according to Mr. Orlando. He also noted that the current layout of the teaching labs is inconsistent with current teaching standards for modern science.

Ron Howland (English): Mr. Howland also mentioned heating problems in the building but went further to mention the potentially debilitating effects on students' morale from constant exposure to sub-standard facilities. He also supposed that some teaching staff might look to other school districts with better facilities for more comfortable working conditions. He gave an example of a potentially enriching educational opportunity missed due to lack of sufficient access to the internet by ninth grade students (a U-Mass humanities professor had made an offer to share on-line facilities and dialogue with college-level educators to all students, which had to be refused). He said that patchwork, make-do types of projects (due to insufficient facilities) often demanded large amounts of work that produced very little results or that simply died out of frustration with inadequate facilities. He expressed his belief in striving to create a "shining institution" which the Town would be proud of and give the students the best opportunities for learning.

JS asked Mr. Howland if his department was physically divided between two different floors. He answered that the English department was in one location, but the combination of English with Social Studies into one large department required the separation of teaching spaces between different areas of the school. Carol Galvin added that the science department had to move its environmental classrooms far away from the main science department to take advantage of available space. This entailed students walking long distances to take environmental science classes and created poor communication between teachers. She also pointed out that lack of computer equipment and dedicated computer lab space has resulted in students having to leave the science department to use the computers in the business department when they're available.

Brian Venable (RMHS PTO Parent): Mr. Venable spoke from a high school parent's perspective on the effect of the facilities on his children's experiences at the school. He noted that he first got involved with the PTO to try and provide better bathrooms for the students' use. His children have developed interests in drama and science and they often are stymied in their efforts to go beyond the basic curricula by lack of equipment, space and lab time. He has heard of his children's teachers' frustration with the school building and wondered how it would affect their morale. He also noted the problems with poor heating control, saying that it becomes a detriment to the learning environment over a long period of time. He thought there was a lot that could be done to improve the facilities.

Cathy Cook (Food Services): Ms. Cook acknowledged that seating capacity for a projected population of 1600 students would most likely be addressed in any renovation scheme, but she tailored her remarks to the equipment, space and service needs of the kitchen area. About half of the present kitchen equipment was 40 years old or more. Freezer, refrigerator and preparation space was too small now and will only get worse as the population increases. Electric service to the kitchen was inadequately powered and circuited and was very frustrating for the staff to use. She expressed pride in the staff's food preparation work and has received compliments for it, but felt that more preparation and freezer space was required to maintain the high quality.

Phil Vaccaro (Athletic Director): Mr. Vaccaro began by noting that since the field house was built (circa 1972), approximately 15 more sports teams have had to be accommodated by it. A large number of those teams involve women's sports and the field house has no locker room facilities for women. He said that if any renovations are to be done, they must reconfigure these facilities in accordance with Title IX (mandating gender equality) as well as address ADA issues. He envisions adding a symmetric wing to the west side of the field house gym which would house added locker rooms, a weight training room, a health and wellness program area, team rooms and audio/visual rooms for team use. The field house floor needs to be repaired to correct dead spots and de-lamination of the wearing surface. If the existing girls' gym (in the main building) were to be made into other program space, then the field house would need another basketball court to take its place. Adding such a court to the north end of the field house would allow the enlargement of the present indoor track to a full 200-meter oval. More storage space is needed for the increasing amount of equipment that the athletic program uses (temporary container space is now needed to store some teams' materials). Heating systems for the field house are tapped off the main building's boiler plant, which is inefficient and wasteful, particularly in regards to hot water for showers, he noted. The exterior stadium facilities need to be updated, he said, including the bleachers and fencing (the outdoor track renovations should be completed via a separate independent project, however). Mr. Vaccaro took the opportunity to comment on the space demands of the band and drama program, citing their need to spread out into any available space (even into Coolidge Middle School) due to a lack of sufficient dedicated teaching areas.

RR made the comment that if the high school's renovated athletic facilities could be used by the community and if the SBAB viewed that as an innovative community use, then the reimbursement rate could be increased by 3-5% (according to the revised regulations). This would mean that the cost of the renovated facilities would be more or less paid for by their inclusion in the overall project.

Ted Bryson (Health/Physical Education): Mr. Bryson echoed the comments made by Mr. Vaccaro regarding team and storage space. He made note of the difficulties that accompany having to dress the students in the main building and send them out across the parking lot to have class in the field house, particularly in inclement weather. He spoke about insufficient locker space and having to use lockers that are over 25 years old (many in disrepair). He said that the athletic facilities are in constant use during the day and that any renovation plan

that reused the girls' gym in the main building for other purposes would require replacement of that facility somewhere else to maintain the present programs.

Dave Bunten (Music): Mr. Bunten listed the many music ensembles that are part of the music program (concert band/marching band, jazz band, jazz vocal ensemble, and chorus) and said that there is not enough dedicated teaching and rehearsal space for them all. He cited current practices that get around these deficiencies such as rehearsing the chorus in the lower level lecture hall, splitting up the large bands into staggered sectional practices in the music room behind the Auditorium because the entire band can't fit in it at one time, and rehearsing the band on the Auditorium stage where the acoustics are poor. The Auditorium's acoustics are such that most productions require amplification (microphones, amplifiers, etc.) to be able to project sound to the rear of the hall and the echoes produced by the hard surfaces detract from the performances. He also commented about the lack of storage space for instruments, band and chorus equipment, uniforms and music library materials, citing instances of using practice and preparation rooms for storage, leaving them unusable for their intended purpose. Large instruments are not well stored, leaving them out in well-trafficked areas where they could be damaged. Current storage space for smaller instruments is in too-small rooms that cannot accommodate large numbers of band members using them at the same time. He mentioned conflicts with the drama productions when they use the stage and Auditorium. Lighting for stage productions are inadequate, requiring (expensive) rental of additional equipment. Specific teaching space deficiencies include the lack of sound-proof practice rooms, sectional practice rooms and a music technology lab, he went on to say.

Linda Rozzi (Mathematics): Ms. Rozzi commented on the problems with the basic classroom environment in the high school. She expressed frustration with the heating and lighting, as others had. The scarcity of working electrical outlets made it difficult to use audio-visual equipment, she said. Without computers in each room, there were no teaching stations to work from, nor was there any reliable intercom or telephone service available. She summarized that the students needed a comfortable, well-lit environment in which to learn most effectively.

Mr. Orlando concluded with some remarks about the betterment to the students that a renovation project would allow. Traffic and circulation would be improved, bathrooms that are now out of service could be used again, honor certificates could be applied for ("blue-ribbon school" status) which would boost morale, and accreditation reviews would no longer focus on shortfalls of the facilities (as has happened in the past). He pointed out that the other schools in town have been upgraded; now it should be the high school's turn.

RG thanked the staff members and asked them about what thoughts they had about phasing any improvements to the school in over a period of time. Mr. Orlando replied that the disruption caused by long-term construction projects at high schools can be considerable (he mentioned renovations at Lexington High School as an example). He also added that the additional cost for delaying work that results from construction inflation/creep would be on the order of \$5M a year, which would be inevitable if a phased project were to be considered. Mr. Bryson

added that successfully continuing educational programs in the midst of constant rearrangement of the facilities would be difficult and would be of concern to the educators. Mr. Howland expressed concern over the length of time any renovations would take. Mr. Vaccaro added that the dust and fumes that accompany construction projects would adversely impact the high number of children with allergies in the school. Mr. Venable and Mr. Orlando commented on the high probability of things going not as planned that seems to accompany any reconstruction project as well as the difficulty of providing quality education under such circumstances.

PP asked for comments from the staff concerning the sharing of classrooms and the need for departmental offices. Mr. Howland said that having an office where teachers within a department can gather and share ideas and discoveries about what methods work (or don't work) is invaluable to achieving a department's educational goals. Mr. Bryson noted that all of his classrooms (for health education) are shared classrooms since the field house has none. This means constant movement of teachers between the field house and the main building, often with teaching materials being carried and shifted around between classrooms as other teachers share them. He said that other disciplines also have to transport materials from room to room, period to period due to classroom sharing. He echoed Mr. Howland's comments on the need for departmental offices. Ms. Galvin added that sharing classrooms in the science department creates problems with experiment set-ups and computer configurations that are needed for more than one day. She went on to say that constant handling of equipment (to accommodate classes sharing the same space) can cause damage and breakage. Mr. Orlando mentioned that many departmental offices have been taken over as classroom as the student population has increased. Ms. Rozzi said that having a dedicated departmental office would help students locate teachers during non-class times.

RG thanked the school-based building committee for their participation and told them that the SBC would be meeting with them again in the near future. At this time, the staff committee members left the meeting.

RG asked for any comments from the Committee concerning the comments from the staff. AM asked if Committee members could secure copies of the last accreditation report. Dr. Harutunian said it would be possible. He also wondered if the heating problems described by the staff hadn't been addressed already with the recent boiler replacements. Dr. Harutunian replied that the heating in Bldgs. A and B were satisfactory and that by and large the problems noted by the staff occur in Bldg. C which has had no renovations done to it. The proposed renovations covered the heating of all campus buildings. AM also asked if the new state regulations would not allow reimbursement of renovations to field houses. RG, TT and Dr. Harutunian explained that the State will not be funding new field houses. However, discussions with the financial head of the SBAB indicated that renovations to an existing field house that needs Title IX issues addressed as well as having intended usage as a community resource may well qualify for reimbursement. They were told that a general policy on such a matter would be replaced with review on a case-by-case basis.

PP asked if the new regulations included a cap on unit reimbursement rates (dollars per square foot). Dr. Harutunian explained that the SBAB would be issuing revised rates early next year (renovation and new construction rates for elementary, middle and high schools) and that these new rates would remain in effect for some time to come. If a town's project were to cost more than these rates allow for, the town would be required to pay the difference at 100% (i.e., no reimbursement above the maximum). He indicated that the C.3 Option would be close to the maximum expected.

Item 6: Upcoming Meetings:

RG noted that on November 2nd there was to be a joint meeting with the School Committee to present the SBC's anticipated report of progress to the Subsequent Town Meeting beginning November 13th. TT indicated that he felt that the School Committee would be expecting the SBC to be presenting the anticipated scope of the project, articulating what needs to be done to the high school. TT also commented on briefing the School Committee on possible phasing scenarios that might now be reimbursable by the SBAB. PP said that at this point, she could not see how the project could be broken up, even though the State now gives us that flexibility. RG, however, stated that he would like to hear from the School Committee their degree of commitment to the project given the present struggle to cope with the operating budget shortfalls. He would like to have an open discussion on this matter before the SBC goes forward. Dr. Harutunian reminded the Committee that producing a presentation to Town Meeting concerning renovations to Killam Elementary School was intended to be part of the upcoming subjects for Town Meeting. AM stated that as Killam's building systems began to break down, the Town would have to pay for all repairs, thus making Killam part of a reimbursable project a prudent way to proceed.

RG informed Committee members that the Town Manager had extended a request from the Board of Selectmen to participate in a round table discussion of the high school project on December 5th with that body, the School Committee and the Finance Committee.

Item 7: Set Up of Further Meetings with School Based School Committee

No dates for further meetings were proposed as yet.

Item 8: Adjournment

RG called for any other business. None appearing, a motion to adjourn was made by DL and seconded by RR. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on September 20, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Joe Finigan (JF)

Guests: Frank Orlando, Principal (RMHS),
Dr. Harry Harutunian, Superintendent

- RG asked for any additions, deletions or changes to the minutes of the June 27, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, DL made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative.
- RG then asked for any comments on the minutes of the June 6, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, DL made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative.
- RG introduced Frank Orlando, Principal of RMHS, who came to discuss phasing requirements for the most-developed option, C.3. Mr. Orlando stated that he had talked with Gene Raymond of Strekalovsky and Hoit (architects that produced the latest feasibility study) and had been able to reduce the expected duration of the C.3 schedule from three years to 30 months. This was accomplished by anticipating a February start time (over school vacation) and building new additions first which would house new and/or temporary classrooms. These classrooms would then accept students displaced from existing ones while the existing spaces underwent renovation. Details about the phasing had recently been produced and delivered to the Administration, but Dr. Harutunian indicated that they had not been reviewed as yet.
- RG then directed the Committee's attention to the recently revised SBAB guidelines, which JS had disseminated to Committee members over the summer. RG commented that the State agencies that are responsible to implement the guidelines are not yet in agreement as to just how to do so. He pointed out apparent contradictions between the Department of Revenue and the Department of Education and the State legislators themselves. In the

midst of this, a meeting with the SBAB is being sought by Brad Jones (State representative) for the chairs of the School Committee, School Building Committee, the liaison between those two committees and the Superintendent to clarify these revisions and their effect on Reading.

- Dr. Harutunian spoke up to update the Committee with recent information. Reading is apparently eligible for at least 54-55% reimbursement before factoring in additional percentage points, which are dependent on the specific project (incentive factors). He felt that reimbursement rates in the low 60%'s might be possible. However, discussions with Representative Jones led him to caution the Committee that the published rates (published on the DOE's web page) might be impermanent interpretations of the revisions.
- Dr. Harutunian continued on the topic of how the Town of Milton recently raised its reimbursement rate from 60% to 90%, an event that prompted many inquiries concerning Reading's ability to do the same. He reported that the raise was due to an attachment to a bill passed by the legislature (a "rider") that mandated the change for new school projects in Milton. Such a direct by-pass of the SBAB is a relatively rare occurrence but not unheard of. RG contributed further information, stating that Milton has a need to de-segregate several of its schools, a condition that did not exist when the latest reimbursement rates had been set. Present guidelines for reimbursement set desegregation as a very high priority so Milton's case is not without justification. Reading, however, cannot hope to duplicate Milton's actions.
- Dr. Harutunian continued on the subject of what is known about the revisions to the SBAB application/reimbursement procedures that resulted from the passage of the State budget in July (wherein the reforms were included). He commented that the budget set and accepted by the SBAB at the time of a project's application would most likely be the maximum value the state would reimburse at the proscribed percentage for a town. This means that any costs that come in over that budget number would have to be paid by the town alone without additional reimbursement. This new doctrine may affect projects that have already been accepted (such as Reading's recent elementary school projects) and will certainly affect projects submitted under the new regulations. Just how this will affect Reading is not yet certain.
- JS asked Dr. Harutunian if the 54-55% figures published by the State included assigned points for Reading's maintenance record. He said they did not. JS explained for an observer that the new regulations have an incentive factor for each specific project submitted which includes points for such items as innovative community use of the planned facilities, hiring of a construction manager, etc. One part of the incentive factor awards 0, 4 or 8 percentage points for poor, good or excellent maintenance records of a school district's facilities. Since these points result from an assessment performed by the SBAB, JS's question was intended to ascertain if this assessment had already been done for Reading. It had not.
- RG commented that such changes as the innovative community use incentive factor seem to make the program more palatable to communities, but that the rules for awarding such factors might be somewhat subjective

(what defines a community use as innovative?). Dr. Harutunian said that the new regulations puts major new duties on the SBAB staff, which would have to increase to absorb the volume of work mandated. He also expressed uncertainty over the definitions of some of the requirements, such as which funds expended for maintenance are to be included in a district's assessment (personnel, materials, benefits, etc.).

- JS continued with a question about two incentive factor items; what exactly is the difference between a renovation/reuse proposal and a major reconstruction (both are worth separate percentage point values, yet they seem to describe the same thing). Dr. Harutunian said that it has been his experience when asking questions like this to the SBAB that they don't yet have specific answers. Nonetheless, he is still trying to set up a meeting between Town officials and the SBAB and he invited members of the Committee to submit questions to them to take to that meeting.
- PP commented that the new regulations appear to allow piecemeal replacement of building systems in an incentive format. Dr. Harutunian agreed, stating that understanding just how this format was intended to work was one question that should be asked at the SBAB meeting.
- RG noted that there appeared to be no prioritizing for new projects in contrast to the present system of placing projects in ranked categories. Dr. Harutunian agreed and mentioned that there is no deadline date anymore (previously June 1st of every year). It appears to be "first come, first served", but the requirements for applications are still in force (financial commitment from the community, sign-offs from various boards, educational specifications, etc.).
- RR presented his revised spreadsheet of the adjusted estimated costs of the various options for RMHS that were contained in the Strekalovsky & Hoit feasibility study (copy attached). The costs were adjusted according to the recommendations of the SBC sub-committee that reviewed the study (RR and JL), adding in items and increasing the "soft cost" factor. He noted that the revised estimates were based on costs expected in 1999 and that he had projected out to the year 2007. The expected increases were based on a 7.5% inflation factor for renovation work and a 4% factor for new work. He noted that these increases had been exceeded just this past year in construction.
- RG explained that JS had developed a scenario for taking the RHMS and Killam projects to the Town over the next year and had mailed it out to Committee members over the summer (copy attached). He asked that JS go over it to begin discussion.

JS began by stating that he developed the scenario of his own volition to try and establish a working schedule (presented on a timeline) that the Committee could follow to meet a June 1, 2002 submission deadline to SBAB. He also tried to include the various concerns and ideas that had been voiced in past meetings about how to present the solutions to the Town. He acknowledged that the new SBAB regulations have jettisoned the June 1st

deadline (released after the scenario was developed), so one of the “targets” of the plan was no longer a strict requirement. The plan put forward involved two stages of Town review and general voting of funds.

The first stage was to seek Town Meeting’s and (afterward) the general electorate’s acceptance of the conceptual solution recommended by the Committee. This solution would be devised after the Committee had thoroughly investigated the options contained in the feasibility studies and fielded the concerns of the RMHS administration and parent groups. The goal of the first stage was to ask the Town to vote funds to take the project to a schematic level of design that could clarify the specific features of the work involved and provide more reliable estimates of costs and phasing requirements for the Town’s ultimate review. It would also afford the Committee the chance to gain feedback from the Town on the direction to be taken on RMHS. JS took as probable amounts \$500K for RMHS and \$18K for Killam (\$518K total).

He explained that at the time of the scenario’s development, an override was being considered for the operating budget by the committees attending a July 10th financial forum. Since the timeline placed theoretical approval of the first stage’s funds at or near the time of the proposed operating override, he imagined that some form of action by Town Meeting could include the \$518K with the monies requested for the operating override (to avoid separate but concurrent override attempts). Since reimbursement for design fees were contingent on financial commitment by the Town for a complete project, there was no guarantee that the first stage funds would be reimbursed (the first stage being an interim step). JS stated that these funds should never be assumed to come from the operating budget without an override (i.e., taken as additional debt service without additional revenue).

The second stage assumed success of the first and would use the feedback and funds obtained to tailor the project to the wants and needs of the community and produce a fully reviewable project presentation that would define the design, the process of construction and the costs to the Town’s satisfaction. A special Town Meeting would then be held to review the presentation and vote to put the project as developed before the voters in a capital override election for full design and construction.

JS went on to say that his overriding concern was to establish a working framework that would guide the Committee’s actions. He felt strongly that the design information contained in the feasibility studies was inadequate to answer many of the questions that would arise about any solution chosen. The unique character of the RMHS project (size, scope, impact) demanded a unique approach by the SBC. His hope was that by producing such a scenario, the Committee could start serious discussions about timing and goals, particularly the goal of producing a higher level of design for the final presentation to the voters.

- RG voiced his concern over the uncertainty that continues to hover over the state of Reading’s fiscal problems and the effect of that uncertainty on the Committee’s handling of the RMHS project. There appeared to be an

impasse in the decision-making process that would put an operating override on the ballot. He pointed out that while the July 10th financial forum may have seemed to keep the option of an override open, in his opinion, the September 18th financial forum did little to advance the idea that such an election would actually occur. With no clear consensus for or against an override being in evidence, he wondered if bringing a request for funds to Town Meeting for any stage of the RMHS project would be a wise thing to do. Until the fiscal dilemma was decidedly dealt with, he felt that forcing public discussion of such a large capital expense would be problematic for the Town, both politically and emotionally. He stated that his comments were more in the form of philosophy rather than rules of procedure because the Committee was not bound to withhold any action it deemed fit to pursue as a result of the actions of other Boards.

- TT asked JS if in the \$518K proposed for the first stage was intended to be funded as part of the operating override or as a capital override. JS answered that it was his hope that the funds could be made part of the operating override vote but with the condition that the \$518K be raised from the tax levy for one year only. His reasoning was that he did not want to have more than one override vote on the same ballot and that he hoped that consultation with Town Counsel could find a proper method of achieving this through Town Meeting's action (such as an instructional motion). TT and others pointed out that the \$518K was a capital expense and should not be considered along with a perpetual increase in the tax base that defines the goal of an operating override. JS agreed, but he reiterated his concern about parallel overrides and how to avoid them.
- TT suggested that in light of the current uncertainty about overrides, the Committee could make a report to Town Meeting about their work to date and put forward the pieces of what they thought should be in the RMHS solution. No action would be asked of Town Meeting other than to give reactions and opinions to the direction the Committee was taking the project. This would allow time for clarification of the Town's fiscal condition while gaining valuable feedback through the report of progress. PP asked if any formal vote would be taken by Town Meeting under such a plan of action. TT said that Town Meeting would be asked for their acceptance of the Committee's report and could perhaps give direction on when to bring the project back to that body.
- Dr. Harutunian expressed his concern over possibly having to choose between advocating for funds for a new school project (capital override) and advocating for funds to support the current educational program (operating override). He felt that it would be hard to justify spending money to upgrade the high school while reducing the level of service in the school department. As he saw it, the Town would continue to experience fiscal uncertainty for the next two years (at which point additional revenue could be expected from the developing business parks). He thought that rather than picking a point to move forward to, the Committee should pick a point when voters might feel more comfortable about Town finances and "go from there". He articulated the administration's problems with the upcoming budget shortfall and the lack of a clear signal from the Selectmen on how to deal with it. Asking for

additional monies at November's Town Meeting without a sense of the fiscal direction to be taken would not be advisable, he concluded.

- JL commented that another capital requirement might also be on the table in the form of the bids coming in soon for the new elementary school at Dividence Road. He wondered if bids coming in higher than the budget might not trigger the need to secure additional capital outlays to cover the overage. Might not those additional funds be included with the request for design fees, he asked. Dr. Harutunian replied that the expected bidding period would be in late December or early January and that recent cost estimate information showed an increase of 8-10% due to the delay of the project (by referenda). This increase may also not be reimbursable due to the fact that the budget prepared for the school was at the maximum allowable value that the State would commit to and any excess would likely have to be paid 100% by the Town.
- JS expressed his concern that the discussion seemed to be focussing on the placement of the request for additional monies and its effect on any operational override. He stated that the main topic for discussion that his scenario was intended to present was the need for interim (15%) design fees to more fully develop the project for Town review. The override mechanism by which these fees were to be funded was secondary to the idea of pursuing an interim phase at all. He admitted that the funding portion of the scenario (through any upcoming override attempt) was dubious politically, but he felt the concept of seeking higher design development was sound. That the request for design fees occurred at the same time as the operating override was a consequence of shooting for a June 1, 2002 deadline and working backward. He also voiced his opinion that waiting two years until Reading's financial situation might stabilize was in effect putting the projects on hold for two years. Dr. Harutunian stated that that was not what he intended to say.
- TT surmised that even though the Committee might discuss asking for 15% design fees, the lack of a definitive time frame in which to take the projects forward made it difficult to know when to schedule such a request. Dr. Harutunian added that proceeding with project design development years before any attempt was made to fund them could make that design development obsolete.
- JS said that it was his understanding that the SBC had been asked by the SC to deliberate on the RMHS project at this time because there was a need to come up with a solution for it at this time. He asked the administration representatives if the needs of the high school were such that they could wait two years. Dr. Harutunian said he could not answer that question "yes" or "no" because he was not comfortable differentiating between capital needs and annual programmatic needs; both were necessary, in his view. He felt, however, that emphasis should be put on guiding the education program through the upcoming fiscal crunch successfully.
- TT reiterated his thought that a report to Town Meeting on the progress made to date would not be a fruitless exercise. It would be a test of whether or not

the Town had the “stomach” for making a serious commitment to the RMHS project.

- Dr. Harutunian made the point that with previous school building projects, it was assumed by all that their acceptance or rejection would not affect the day-to-day operation of the school system. This may not be the case if this project was put forward while the funding of these operations was in a state of flux. He did not want to see voters having to choose between spending tax money for smaller class sizes and spending for upgrading the school where all students would eventually end up.
- RG asked for comments from members who had not yet spoken. RR said that he felt that the Committee should put the project as it stands now before Town Meeting in order to show where they think it is going and how much it could cost. Letting it “drift” by doing nothing ran the risk of losing it, in his view. RG asked if he agreed that the Committee should eventually seek additional architectural fees for more design work. He said he did, noting that what is contained in the feasibility studies were diagrams rather than designs and that the project could not be effectively presented without the details and cost projections that would accompany a schematic design.
- JL stated that he thought the information gathered thusfar should be put out at the next Town Meeting. He added that he did not recommend asking for more fees at that time, noting that the bids on the new elementary school may require more funds.
- PP agreed that a report should be made to Town Meeting since many people in town are wondering what is going to be done about RMHS. She added that Town Meeting could be sounded out about the need for additional architectural fees if the Committee felt they were necessary.
- DL voiced his agreement with the concept of a report of progress, citing his belief that a start should be made in the process of involving the public and that full development of a solution should not be attempted until funding for it was realistically available. The information produced (such as RR and JL’s cost projections) should be put forward and “get it out of this room.” A schematic design would eventually be prepared to facilitate presentations, he thought. He agreed that asking for additional fees for it would be worthwhile.
- JF felt that a report of progress was necessary to give the community a sense of progress being made. He said the current popular view appears to be too nebulous, with the answer to the question of what is the Committee doing being all too often that the Committee is “hashing it over.” They are looking for direction, he said. He also agreed to seek additional fees for schematic design.
- AM cited a number of issues that must be dealt with in the high school solution; enrollment issues, programmatic issues, maintenance and repair issues as well as aesthetic ones. The problems related to each of these will grow worse over time, he noted. His greatest concern, however, was coming to grips with the new State regulations and how they will affect the content

and the timing of the project. He was in favor of providing an interim report to Town Meeting in November but he was uncertain about discussing any finance issues until the State was clearer on its requirements and the Town's financial situation had stabilized.

- RG asked JS if he was comfortable with the comments made. JS answered that it was his intention to generate such a discussion even though he had little hope of the scenario being adopted as written. He felt it was important to take stock of where the Committee was at this point and where it should go. His main ideas about seeking an interim design phase and endeavoring to focus on "what" to do about the high school so that the only question to be answered by the Town would be "when" to do it seemed to be accepted by the Committee even though the timing and the funding of them were not. He was comfortable with that.
- RG asked Dr. Harutunian the same question. He answered that the discussion led him to think that his administration should compile a list of tasks that need to be accomplished in the RMHS project and when they should be done. He mentioned sitting down with the feasibility study architects (Stekalovsky & Hoit) to do this.
- RG commented to Dr. Harutunian that he would like to see the Committee have an open discussion with the group of high school personnel that had volunteered to discuss the specific programmatic needs with them.
- Frank Orlando spoke on his wish that the programmatic needs of the school system be given top priority, even if that meant that the high school project might not move forward right away. He agreed that Town Meeting was owed a report of progress in order to be apprised of the work that has been done and is being done.
- PP made the comment that while the School Committee may recommend Option C.3, the SBC had not garnered enough information from the high school administration to judge which option was best. A meeting with the school personnel would be timely. RG agreed and requested Mr. Orlando to set a time when the Committee could meet with them.
- DL endorsed the need for talking with the school group, stating that he would like to hear from them the driving issues that resulted in the creation of the options and what their priorities are.
- RG called for any other business. None appearing, DL made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:10 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

(attachment to 9/20/00 minutes)

MEMORANDUM

To: Reading School Building Committee Members
From: Jeff Struble
Reference: Reading Memorial High School Project
Subject: 1) Minutes from 6-27-00 Meeting
2) Scenario for RMHS Project
Date: August 2, 2000

I am sending to you all two items that will be discussed at the next RSBC meeting, now tentatively scheduled for August 31st. The reason for this mailing is to use the long layover time between meetings to get some things out of the way and allow us to “hit the ground running” when we start up again. For those of you who wonder about such things, I have checked with Russ G. and he sees no problem with this “homework”.

The minutes are from the last meeting and I had them ready for July 25th. However, we had no meeting in which to distribute them so I thought it would be a good idea to mail them to you for your review so that we can vote on them on August 31st. This will get them out of committee faster so that they can be posted in the Library.

The “scenario” that is attached is my own doing and is something that I’d like to discuss in committee. It is simply one idea of a way to proceed with the high school and Killam projects through the fall and beyond. I have been thinking about this for quite a while and I’ve listened carefully to what has been said in past meetings. Given the desire to submit the projects to the State in June 2002, I have produced a timeline which takes us through several interim “check-points” before actually putting the projects before the voters in the form of a capital override. It creates several opportunities for feedback and adjustment but it also is politically ambitious. Don’t think for a moment that I am being naïve about this point.

The size and scope and cost of the RMHS project put it well beyond the range of this committee’s experience so our approach to handling it cannot rely blindly on what has

been done before. We need to take stock of the situation and design a plan of action (note the quote about good design that I've attached...we need to become optimists). This would allow us to focus clearly on each step and its contribution to the plan rather than constantly wonder about what we are doing and why. The included scenario that I've fleshed out is a framework of reasonable milestones occurring at reasonable times upon which to build our eventual recommendations to the electorate via the capital override. Doubtless, it is not the only one, but I feel we have to start somewhere in our planning, so I've taken a first step. I'm not "grandstanding"; I'm trying to solve a problem that I think we all know we have to face.

I composed an earlier memo of explanation to Russ that tried to guide him through the timeline, so I'm reproducing it below for you all. The timeline itself is on the last page. My request is that you all make an attempt to read and digest it before the August 31st meeting so that we can discuss it (or something like it) from the get-go. You're under no obligation to do so; I just thought I'd ask as one SBC member to another. Feel free to call me with any questions or comments (944-2731 home, 1-617-926-9150 work, jws@fbeng.com e-mail).

Russ:

I thought I'd better produce some directions to accompany the "road-map" that I sent to you yesterday.

Before I walk you through this, be aware that I've done this to try and find a way to take advantage of all the opportunities the SBC is likely to have to produce a definitive, comprehensive publicly-accepted solution to the high school's problems, as well as Killam's. By "opportunities", I mean making the most of the circumstances that are upcoming regarding Town finances, the most notable being the near-certainty of another operating override attempt occurring in Spring 2001. The crucial element to this plan is to attach \$518K to the operating override amount to cover architect's fees for RMHS schematic design (\$500K) and more design development for Killam (\$18K). It also allows for maximum public input before the needed capital override via a Town Meeting vote and two education/debate periods. The target date of June 2002 is maintained and the two override attempts are separated by close to eight months rather than only two or three.

On to the footnotes;

1. *Beginning in the Fall, the SBC must meet with the teachers' group and interested parents to try and come up with the best option it can to address the needs of the high school. Given the time allotted (approximately ten weeks after Labor Day), I think it is unlikely that we can take this input, synthesize it with our own deliberations into an agreed-upon best option, peddle that option around to the other Boards, hold public meetings and devise a drop-dead convincing presentation to take to Town Meeting to secure permission to hold a capital override. Without an architect to help us juggle possibilities and flesh out the final option with data and graphics, we will be woefully unprepared to satisfy all of Town Meeting's expectations and the attempt is doomed to failure.*

What is more realistic is to take the input from the teachers and the community and the other Boards and whittle it all down to a preferred conceptual solution that should be taken to the next step, namely schematic design. We could present this concept to Town Meeting and explain our rationale and ask that TM give its approval to spending \$500K to hire an architect that will produce the schematics (plus \$18K for developing Killam for Town review...I haven't forgotten it). This money would only come from (be conditional on) the approval of the operating override in March to safe-guard the operating budget for FY2002 (the actual mechanics of how TM actually does this need to be worked out...perhaps by instructional motion to the Selectmen). Hence, the public is involved up front and can tell us whether or not to go on with our solution.

If it fails, the SBC re-groups and does what it can to prepare for a capital override in 2001 on its own, which is pretty much where we are now anyway (back to TM in April 2001?...this would delay the capital override, but puts some needed distance between the operating and capital attempts). We run the risk of being blamed for dragging down the operating override and dooming the Town to more cuts, but that might happen anyway without the

\$518K “rider”. Admittedly, it’s a very political decision whether or not to do this. If it works, however, two of the major problems facing this Town are decidedly dealt with in a very forthright and straightforward manner (very “Reading”).

2. At the recent Financial Forum, the three boards agreed to consider the possibility of having the Selectmen call for an operating override in late September / early October in order to give the Town a long time be educated about the need for it. The three boards should be approached with this idea before then to see what they think. Ironically, we can thank Geo. Hines in part for the idea because it was his spontaneous recommendation at an April FinCom meeting to go into more specific design for the high school so that the Town would “know what it’s voting for”. He’s right, I think, but the “Catch-22” of that idea is where to get the money for schematic design if the capital override fails? The answer I’m proposing here is to get it with the operating override.

As I understand it, a “ball-park” override amount is to be declared in October by the Selectmen to begin Town-wide education (read “debate”) and this amount will be finalized later in the year (or even early 2001) after revenue projections and expected costs are defined. An instructional motion to the Selectmen by Town Meeting in November - sponsored by the SBC - could add the \$518K to the tally.

3. Judging from past Town meetings, the concept presented in November will be thoroughly questioned. However, what TM will be asked to do is to give its recommendation to putting this concept before the Town at large via the operating override. If it says “yes”, then the electorate can focus on it as a concept and vote their agreement or disapproval. It’s a built-in referendum on the direction the high school project is going, not on the entire project itself (an intermediate step).

If TM agrees to put the \$518K on the operating override, we could go through the process of soliciting architects for the design of both projects, usually a 6-

8 week time frame. It is common in the design industry to have projects be conditional on Town approval of overrides, so while we would have to be up-front with prospective architects about the financial roadblocks, I'm sure we would get a healthy response to any RFQ's. With the architect selected at the time of the operating override, we would be in position to start immediately on schematic design if the override passed.

The SBC will get maximum feedback from this process and if there is a "no" vote (either in Town Meeting or at the override attempt), we will not have wasted much time or money. We would then have no choice but to develop a full-blown option for a capital override by ourselves, take it back to Town Meeting, schedule a vote and go through another Town-wide education period. We would, however, have the advantage of knowing what the Town wants having gone through the initial review process. We would also put distance between the override attempts.

- 4. If we get the schematic design fees, then we will have approximately 8 months to produce plans and spec's, go before the appropriate boards and try to convince the Town to pass the capital override. Everyone would already be familiar with what we'd be developing (from the initial round), so the public education process would be a "continuation" rather than a "start-up". Ultimately, the electorate that goes to the polls in November 2001 will be as informed as they could possibly be. All second-guessing would have taken place already and all battles would have been fought. If the capital override fails, we keep taking it back until it does pass. The only real question that would be left to answer is "when" does Reading want to pay for this thing.*

Of course, there is risk involved. The operating override becomes inextricably linked with the school projects and could suffer because of them. On the other hand, the linkage may make the operating override more palatable to the electorate and therefore may be a bonus. Since the benefits to both the town's bottom line and the school projects could be substantial, it's worth thinking about. That's why I'm putting this before you. If you like it, perhaps we could all talk about it at the next SBC meeting (7/25?).

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on June 27, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Paula Perry (PP)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)

Featured Guests:

Gene Raymond Jr., AIA (Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc., Architects)
Dr. Harry H. Harutunian, Superintendent

(This meeting was recorded for broadcast by RCTV)

- RG asked for any additions, deletions or changes to the minutes of the May 23, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, DL made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative.
- RR distributed a spreadsheet listing the revised costs of the Stekalovsky & Hoit options for RMHS, having applied the same methodology to the revisions to Options B.1, B.2, C.1, and C.2 as was done to Option C.3 as well as the new school option by the sub-committee that reviewed the S&H feasibility report (adding in expected costs and up-grading the "soft-cost factor" – see RSBC minutes from June 6, 2000). However, TT pointed out that the spreadsheet was in error, listing some of the added costs as deductions. RR acknowledged the error and said he would revise the spreadsheet for the next meeting.
- Gene Raymond began by talking about phasing for the Option C.3 option. He distributed a potential phasing handout (copy attached). In general for feasibility studies, phasing plans are developed in as first-pass scenarios only to see if there is a way to proceed with renovating the building. These plans are then firmed up further during the schematic design phase (similar to cost estimates). He used building layouts on presentation boards to describe the present layout of the high school (similar to the plans contained in the S&H feasibility study).
- In Option C.3, the phasing assumes that in Phase 1, new additions are built first to absorb part of the student population when the work moves into the existing spaces (this was the method employed for the Coolidge and Parker middle school projects). The first additions to be built would be to the field house, adding a two-story locker room and health

classroom side wing and expanded athletic facilities at the north end. This would free up spaces in the existing building that are presently used for these functions (see handout), with the students using the new areas during renovations.

- The next addition would be a three-story structure opposite the Library containing a large music suite (two floors) and added classrooms, departmental offices and tutorial rooms. Again, this new space would replace existing building areas that would be renovated.
- The next addition would address circulation around the existing building by adding two-story links between the front (east) and rear (west) portions of the school where presently connections are only possible at the first story. Also, this addition would add science rooms adjacent to the links.
- The last addition would be capturing the courtyard space between the cafeteria and the commons area by roofing over it to increase the cafeteria's size.
- The next phase – Phase 2 – would not strictly be a construction phase. Rather, it would be a re-organization of existing spaces to classrooms to accept classes that will be displaced during renovation activities. The attached handout describes which spaces are to be re-organized (the equivalent of 36 new classroom spaces).
- Phase 3 would begin the serious renovations to Buildings G and H and science labs, sealing off areas from the students.
- Phase 4 would continue renovations to isolated areas, primarily at the lower levels. Again, the re-organized spaces would be employed to handle the displaced teaching areas while this work is being done (see handout).
- Phase 5 would finish work on the science labs and renovate more classrooms, although the number of re-organized classrooms needed falls to near 24 for this phase, which frees up the areas previously employed as 12 make-up CR's for their final renovations (see handout).
- Phase 6 would find all the new classroom areas occupied and the existing auditorium and music areas would be renovated (the music area becomes drama space). Previous phases had created substitute spaces for these areas, allowing their renovations to proceed without loss of their functions.
- The time for completing all of the phases was estimated to be on the order of 3 to 3-1/2 years. At this stage (feasibility study), specific timetables could not be produced.
- PP asked if options that employ additions seem to make the phasing more practical. Mr. Raymond replied that they would.

- RR and JL noted that the construction of the three-story link would take more than just one summer's construction period, which Mr. Raymond agreed with
- RG observed that the effects of a multi-year construction project on the delivery of the education could be enormous and asked Dr. Harutunian to ask Frank Orlando (Principal – RMHS) to discuss the phasing presented at this meeting with Mr. Raymond with the objective of discussing his thoughts on the matter with the Committee at the next meeting.
- JS asked Mr. Raymond if any work had been done predicting the phasing that might be done for the B-options, which have no permanent additions to re-locate students to during renovations. Mr. Raymond said that he hadn't. JS suggested that B-option phasing might be a subject for discussions with Mr. Orlando and the Committee at the next meeting in order to better assess the benefits or liabilities of B-options.
- PP commented that the two large music areas in Option C.3 could be used for transition space in place of areas used by RISE. Mr. Raymond saw no obstacle to this happening.
- Dr. Harutunian voiced his concerns over the prospects of going through a 3-4 year construction program. Not only would he expect the students and parents to be affected by the long period, he wondered if the SBAB would hold such a project on its reimbursement list for such a long time. He reiterated his comments from previous meetings concerning the need to evaluate cost reimbursements calculated from both the present and yet-to-be-determined future guidelines. This comparison could affect the designed duration of the project as well as the scope of it.
- Dr. Harutunian also reported that he had gotten an estimate for the amount of money required to obtain architectural services for the development of the Killam renovation project for Town Meeting review. The estimate was between \$15K and \$18K. RG commented that it would be likely that the Killam project would be presented alongside of the high school project at Town Meeting for inclusion in the capital override attempt.
- RR asked Mr. Raymond that in the options that enlarged classroom size by converting groups of (small) existing classrooms to aggregates of larger rooms with one less room in the group (four CR's to three, for example), would the resulting rooms then be oversized by State standards. Mr. Raymond said that on a square footage basis, some rooms might exceed the base amount set by SBAB, but when the technology demands are added in (30 sq. ft. per computer, for example) there should be no oversized classrooms. Dr. Harutunian added that recent technology might make hard-wiring of classrooms obsolete with wireless networks being installed in the renovated/new spaces. The space standards could change as a result of this.

- RR continued on classroom requirements be noting that all the options except Option C.3 used shared departmental classrooms (classrooms that are shared by departments rather than dedicating individual CR's to individual departments). He recalled prior discussions on RMHS that had argued against the use of individual CR's and he wondered why C.3 had used them. Mr. Raymond said that Frank Orlando would have to answer that question.
- RR asked Mr. Raymond if he had considered switching the wrestling and gymnastics rooms over the boys lockers in the field house with the existing girls locker rooms in the existing building, thereby creating parity between boys and girls facilities (this would obviate the need for a locker room addition at the field house). Dr. Harutunian and TT explained that doing so would force the girls to have to cross the parking lot to attend gymnastics classes, just as they do now, and that under such a scenario, the boys would have to do the same. They explained that compliance with Title IX issues should not be achieved by imposing the same hardship on the boys as is now imposed on the girls and calling it parity. Taking something away from one gender to equalize conditions experienced by the other could also be seen as a potential civil rights violation. The importance of satisfying Title IX issues was emphasized by TT.
- JS asked Mr. Raymond if the enlargement of classrooms would mean the removal of structural shear walls that resist lateral forces. He said the reason for asking was that fundamentally altering the lateral load resisting system would mean having to retrofit the entire building for compliance with the current seismic provisions of the building code at great expense. Mr. Raymond said that his structural consultants had been appraised of the desired revisions and gave their opinion that retrofitting would not be required, but that the scope of the study was not exhaustive. Checks on the lateral system's integrity would have to be made as any design progressed.
- JS asked if there was developable unfinished space under the cafeteria on the ground floor in Building F. He recalled seeing doorways in the hallway there on the Committee's tour of the high school and was told there were storage areas there. Mr. Raymond was not certain what that space was. RR surmised that the area was a crawlspace for utilities and was not very high and would therefore not be of much use for development.
- JS asked if only the options that included additions (the C-options) addressed the problems with circulation patterns within the school. Mr. Raymond replied that this was true. He pointed out that an elevated link between the field house and the main building was considered and thought to be too expensive. JS asked if a tunnel had been considered. It was not. Thoughts of any links were seen to be problematic in dealing with Title IX issues (as well as a large cost item), which led to the idea of the expansion of the girls' facilities in the field house in lieu of a link.

- RR made the recommendation that the additions needed to improve the circulation patterns should be made an integral part of any solution adopted by the Committee for recommendation to Town Meeting. He said that he saw them as vitally important to improving the use of the high school. JS voiced his agreement with this point.
- RR asked Mr. Raymond about the conversion of the existing lecture hall below the library into a music room in Options B.1 and B.2. He asked if such a tiered space would work for music instruction. Mr. Raymond replied that the thrust of the B-options was to put more educational program into the existing building without additions and that meant using existing space that was best suited for the program. The tiered lecture hall lent itself to the risers typically used in band and choral spaces, plus its location was well-suited for movement of the band's equipment to and from the school (on the ground floor with direct access to the driveway between Buildings A and B).
- JS questioned the location of the music space right under the library for acoustic reasons. He said that the building's concrete and masonry construction would make soundproofing difficult and expensive and the transmission of sound into the library from below could be detrimental to the library's need for quiet space. PP noted that the C-options added a new music space across the hall, which JS and RR pointed out would be easier to isolate acoustically.
- RR asked what was to become of the Superintendent's offices under Option C.3 since the plans showed them as classrooms. Mr. Raymond and TT answered that the need for those areas as classrooms would not materialize for at least ten years, based on the enrollment projections. The offices could remain until then, at which time the Town would have to find other space for the Superintendent. The objective would be to reconfigure the areas as classrooms with State reimbursement now and use them as offices until actually needed as classrooms.
- JS asked why Options C.1 and C.2 added an auxiliary gym to the field house. Mr. Raymond said that Frank Orlando would be in a better position to answer that from an education standpoint, but the main reason appeared to be replacing the girl's gym area that was renovated in the existing building as music space. JS went on to ask if this were the same reason the existing gym was to be lengthened under Option C.3. Apparently it was, with the added benefit of allowing the installation of a full 200-meter indoor track.
- JS continued by asking about the effect on parking around the field house if the C.3 additions are made. Mr. Raymond replied that the area between the field house and the Administration offices would be re-configured for more parking. RR added that parking on Oakland Road would become head-in (rather than parallel) which would add many parking spaces. Further, Mr. Raymond stated that there was a desire on the Athletic Dept.'s part to widen the access road to three lanes in order

to speed traffic in and out of sporting events. JL noted that the C-options included money for site costs (\$900K for C.3).

- JS asked Mr. Raymond if the square footage costs used in the estimating were developed by “fleshing out” Option C.3’s costs on an itemized basis and applying them to the others on an aggregate basis. He answered that the “fleshing out” was done on Option C.2 rather than C.3 (at one time, C.2 was the preferred option).
- JS asked Mr. Raymond to confirm that Options B.1 through C.3 all addressed music, drama and language lab deficiencies, ADA issues, increased enrollment accommodation, required mechanical / electrical / plumbing replacement, fire protection and asbestos abatement. He replied that they all included these items.
- RR asked if the Committee had any misgivings about losing the existing girl’s gym as a community resource, being claimed as educational program space in the C-options. The general consensus was that the new gym spaces would serve equally well as a community resource.
- PP commented that she considered a discussion with Frank Orlando and his staff to be necessary in order to prioritize the programmatic needs for the high school. Her review of the S&H report clearly identified the need for increased music and drama spaces and she also agreed that improving the circulation patterns must be a part of any solution. However, she pointed out she couldn’t see us being able to do everything that has been proposed and prioritizing the Administration’s requirements would help put the monies that are approved to the best use. Mr. Raymond said that most of the additions proposed are for core facilities and not a great deal for increased classroom spaces.
- PP went on to state that the Committee’s review of the options must not ignore the true costs of items like relocating the Superintendent’s offices and the RISE program and the phasing for each option. TT continued with this premise by saying that some of the cost issues that PP is concerned about would be “flushed out” as design goes beyond the feasibility stage. Phasing would only become more definitive as details such as temporary circulation routes and isolation of the student body from construction were planned to achieve do-able construction schedules.
- Before leaving, Mr. Raymond remarked that their report was only up to a feasibility level of design and that the Committee might benefit from going to more of a schematic level to answer more “what if” questions, such as costs and phasing. Both RR and RG commented that they were worried that the Committee would not be able to prepare enough information for Town reviews from the feasibility studies alone.
- Dr. Harutunian said that he was concerned about the State revisions to the SBAB process (still pending) and how they would affect the Committee’s approach to a solution. He agreed that the more specificity

the SBC could bring to Town Meeting (via schematics, for example), the better.

- Dr. Harutunian briefly commented on the site conditions at the Dividence Road and Barrows projects.
- A general discussion ensued discussing the level of design needed to go to Town Meeting and on to the electorate for a capital override. Spending the money for architect's fees for schematic design (\$400K - \$600K) would mean that that sum could possibly fall onto the capital plan as serviceable debt if the capital override failed. The reason this is so is that the State will reimburse design fees as part of the project's cost only if the Town shows financial commitment to the project via a Town Meeting or an override vote. Without that commitment (i.e., a failed override attempt), money spent on design fees must be paid by solely by the Town. It was suggested that the SBC might have to make the argument to the Town that it should provide for such an eventuality.
- RG wondered if more discussion about how to present any solution to the Town would not be contingent on the actions of the State and the new reimbursement requirements. TT added that even after legislation is passed, establishing the rules under which it is implemented might also take some time (Dr. Harutunian thought this process would take several weeks at least). TT thought that Frank Orlando should be consulted about any potential problems that phasing would present to the education process so that nothing major would be over-looked when contemplating solutions.
- Dr. Harutunian suggested that at the earliest possible time a meeting with the SBAB be arranged to discuss the project and the possibilities for State participation (i.e., renovations vs. additions, etc.). He thought the chairs of the SBC, the SC, TT and himself should attend the meeting. TT thought that SBAB's opinion regarding devising a master plan and schedule for the project and the reimbursement for design and construction should be sought out.
- DL asked if, on the basis of the discussions at this meeting, the Committee was prepared to eliminate the B-options (those with no additions) from consideration. He reasoned that the obvious phasing requirements and the apparent consensus to include circulation links seemed to preclude any options that didn't provide additional space (i.e., Options B.1 and B.2). JS and RG responded that at this time, nothing should be considered "off the table" because the Committee did not have enough information to completely exclude options (particularly information concerning State funding). A modified B-option adding circulation links, for example, might arise as a viable option.
- JS inquired as to what would be taken to the SBAB meeting suggested by the Superintendent; specifically, would Option C.3 be the demonstrative example of what Reading is planning for the high school? DL also wondered about showing the State phasing options, which at present

seem to cover only Option C.3. Dr. Harutunian stated that he would like to go to the State with a number of options, including phasing schemes. He also voiced his preference for investigating options that could be accelerated to cut down the 3 to 3-1/2 year time frame estimated for C.3 in order to lessen the inevitable detriment to the education process (RG concurred with this).

- The next SBC meeting was tentatively scheduled for the last Tuesday in July (7/25/00). With no other business appearing, RR made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by DL. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative (time 9:45 p.m.).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on June 6, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Reference: Meeting Agenda (copy attached)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Joe Finigan (JF)

Featured Guests: Frank Orlando, Principal (RMHS),
Dr. Harry Harutunian, Superintendent

Item (1) Approval of Minutes

- RG asked for any additions, deletions or changes to the minutes of the April 13, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, DL made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative.
- RG then asked for any comments on the minutes of the May 16, 2000 RSBC meeting. None appearing, DL made a motion for acceptance of them, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative.

Item (5) Other Business (taken out of sequence in order to have TT and Dr. Harutunian in attendance for Item 2...they had yet to arrive)

- RG informed the Committee that Mr. Orlando had put together a tentative list of high school personnel that will volunteer to work with the SBC on the high school project (copy attached). They appeared to be representatives from the different departments in RMHS although Mr. Orlando pointed out that some of them were to be representatives from the faculty as a group.
- RG asked Mr. Orlando to remind Dr. Harutunian of the need for a teacher to fill a vacancy on the SBC.

Item (2) Sub-committee Report on the High School Feasibility Study by Strekalovsky & Hoit

- Sub-committee members RR and JL said they had gone over the report in great detail and met together to discuss it. RR said that their initial finding

was that overall, it is a competent report with no glaring errors or omissions. It analyses the existing conditions well and identifies the work that has to be done. He pointed out that the sub-committee did not take as its charge the need to analyze the various options presented; rather, they did a professional overview of the study to determine its competency (and found some issues).

- They found some items that they feel were deficient and they reviewed these items with Gene Raymond of S&H. Mr. Raymond confirmed that most of the items could have been covered better in the report. Primarily, these issues involve the project cost.
- The first item mentioned was the absence of any costs to be incurred for structural seismic upgrades that would be required by the building code. The report did suggest that significant renovations would trigger the need for such upgrades, but no cost information was included in any option budget. The sub-committee then determined an estimate for such upgrades (which was deemed reasonable by JS, a structural engineer) that was just over \$1M. They pointed this out on their spreadsheet (copy attached).
- The next item involved roof replacement. While it was noted that many of the roofs of RMHS were on the order of 4-5 years old, many others were closer to 15 years old. Since any project was likely to take several years to complete, these older roofs would be reaching the end of their serviceable lives (20 years) and will need replacement. No provision was made in the report for such replacement. Estimated at 50K square feet, these roofs would add another \$300K to any project undertaken (see spreadsheet).
- The next (bigger) issue was S&H's "soft cost" factor, the multiplier applied to the summary of all the individual project components which is intended to produce a realistic project cost. The factor is intended to cover currently unspecifiable (but expected) costs such as delays due to construction phasing, difficulty of construction, etc. The 1.25 factor (25%) used by S&H (used for both renovations and new construction) was seen as too low by the sub-committee for several reasons:
 - any RMHS project would involve very complex phasing and scheduling, necessitating more costly time for a contractor to plan and complete the work,
 - a professional construction manager should be hired to oversee the work, due to its large scale and complexity,
 - a good design contingency should be included at this preliminary stage to predict as-yet-unknown design issues that will surely surface as any project's design advances.
- For these reasons, RR and JL felt that a more appropriate soft-cost factor would be on the order of 1.33 (33%).
- As a demonstration of the effects of these perceived deficiencies, the sub-committee chose the costs for Option C.3 - the most expensive one proposed

- by S&H - to re-calculate (refer to the attached spreadsheets). All cost amounts are based on 1999 expected values (dollars).
- Keeping to the study's goal of comparing renovation options to the option of building a completely new school, the sub-committee noted that Option C.3, while adding on to the field house and renovating the locker rooms there, did not carry a budget for renovating the rest of the field house. In order to make a fair comparison with new construction, monies should be added for general renovations, estimated to be on the order of \$2.31M.
 - Totaling the S&H new and renovation costs with the estimates for missing items made by the sub-committee and multiplying that sum by the 1.33 soft-cost factor produced a project cost for Option C.3 of slightly more than \$51M (see spreadsheet).
 - RR then explained the sub-committee's treatment of the new school estimated costs. The \$43.3M figure in the report was arrived at by multiplying the maximum expected number of students (approx. 1580) by the current allowances dictated by the SBAB (155 sq. ft./student x \$177/sq. ft.). Discussions with Mr. Raymond by the sub-committee revealed that such a simple calculation ignores the inclusion of other desired and needed spaces that would also qualify for reimbursement. Such spaces would be special education areas, community spaces (SBAB would include half of such areas as reimbursable), technology spaces (computers) and an area for the RISE collaborative.
 - When the cost for these other areas was totaled with the base cost for 1600 students (x 155 x \$177), a more realistic reimbursable new school project cost would be approximately \$54.1M (see spreadsheet). Added to this reimbursable cost would be the cost of the remaining half of the community spaces and the amount necessary to demolish the existing high school. A grand total, then, of approximately \$63.8M would adequately describe what it would take to build a new high school, in the sub-committee's view.
 - Comparisons of costs for Option C.3 with those for a new high school focussed on the net amount borne by the Town (after State reimbursement). The sub-committee's spreadsheet showed \$17.1M net for the renovation Option C.3 and \$28.1M for a new school (still a significant difference, which was the conclusion of the S&H report). To demonstrate the effects of time going by, the sub-committee projected these net costs four years into the future, using a yearly inflation factor of 7.5% for the renovation and 4% for the new construction (deemed reasonable due to current construction market trends - refer to the spreadsheets).
 - The sub-committee concluded its presentation noting that in 2000 dollars, the most-expensive project noted in the report would cost Reading nearly \$4M more than what was quoted therein (\$18.7M vs. \$14.8M). RR offered to do the same cost updating/projecting to all the other S&H options if the Committee so desired.

- Item (3)& Discussion of the Report and Its Use by the Committee
Item (4) Discussion of Tentative Timetable for the High School Project

- PP asked if allowable technology costs were separate from the allowable dollars per square foot set by the SBAB. RR answered yes they were, but he pointed out that what was being calculated was the additional area needed for computers, not the computers themselves. JL added that the actual technology was covered in the soft cost numbers.
- RG asked if JL and RR were comfortable with the report as a possible base for exploring options for RMHS. They answered that they were.
- TT commented that accounting for the cost of a construction manager might tie in with possible new State guidelines requiring one.
- RG asked Dr. Harutunian and Mr. Orlando if they knew of any other options that did not appear in the S&H study that they felt would work for the high school. Dr. Harutunian replied that his most recent discussions with our State representatives indicated that the adoption of new funding guidelines may be delayed by as much as a year, giving the Town more time to develop a scheme for RMHS. Further, he mentioned the possibility of another operational override attempt and the desirability of avoiding a conflict between that override and the capital exclusion override needed for any high school project. He suggested discussing the overrides with other Boards and that setting dates for them would be helpful.
- TT added that a year's grace with the SBAB could be utilized by the SBC to inform the public of any proposed plan and attempt an override, perhaps having time enough to make two attempts at it (should the first attempt fail).
- Dr. Harutunian continued that a wholesale renovation option would be his first choice with a piecemeal option being a distant second. Mr. Orlando added that a piecemeal option would cause extended major disruptions to the education operations of the school, which is not beneficial to the quality of the education provided.
- TT said that even though a wholesale option may be deemed the best solution, other Boards such as FinCom and the Selectmen as well as the Town's financial administrators may see such a plan as not fitting within the Town's financial tolerance and would suggest taking "slices" of the plan in increments that could be (financially) tolerated.
- RG commented that the SBC was not bound to use the S&H report as the sole source of options for the high school and that even after other Boards had their say on the matter, it was still up to the SBC to decide what they would want to take to Town Meeting.
- PP asked that if the project was to be broken into pieces, how would that be accomplished (building-by-building or what)?

- RR noted that renovating services (mechanical/electrical/plumbing/etc.) wing-by-wing would not be practical since the same services “feed” all the wings as they are distributed through the entire complex. Non-service “pieces” might be practical to renovate separately (such as roof replacements and windows) but that is due to their isolation from the main body of the complex. These pieces could be seen as by-products of the project, not the goal of the project.
- JL brought up the subject of phasing for any renovation project, which would become more complex if separate pieces are chosen without regard to an overall wholesale scheme. AM questioned how the work would be planned around the students using the building. RR surmised that a wholesale project would take three to four years to complete due to the need to phase work around the on-going use of the building (another reason for the 1.33 soft cost factor suggested by the sub-committee). DL and TT noted that such a long construction period would push the costs upward due to inflation (out to 2004).
- Discussion ensued about combing through the various options and reviewing their differences and how to approach them. The Committee was in general agreement that they should consider only those options deemed reimbursable by the SBAB. RG asked for each member’s opinion, starting with TT.
- TT said that the S&H report, having been reviewed by the sub-committee and found competent, seemed as good a place to start as any the SBC was likely to have. He thought that the Committee should seek to maximize the usefulness of the high school facility to the school and to the community. He thought that any proposal brought to Town Meeting should emphasize the advantages of doing a comprehensive renovation with State participation and let Town Meeting decide if some other guidelines should be followed in crafting a solution (sending the SBC “back to the drawing board”).
- AM thought that as the SBC progressed with the high school project that they remain realistic, primarily in terms of costs and in terms of phasing. Costs and the Town’s reaction to them should not be ignored in the Committee’s selection process. Phasing of a project may, by its very nature, determine whether it is considered a wholesale or piecemeal enterprise and could have a large effect on the path chosen by the Committee. Education at RMHS must continue and the disruption that’s caused by the Committee’s proposal must be carefully considered.
- JF felt that the S&H report’s options should be considered, particularly with the view that a piecemeal project would not likely equal the results of a wholesale project.
- DL remarked in his agreement with previous members concerning the S&H report that time considerations (and the added costs for delay) make starting with the report’s options quite practical. He expressed his desire to go forward rather than backward. He also emphasized the need to present an

entire plan to Town Meeting all at once rather than present it in several parts over a long period of time.

- RG said that in prior projects, financing had always been done through debt service reserved in the Ten Year Capital Plan and that the SBC had been very careful to present solutions that were cognizant of their effect on the Town's finances. The RMHS project, however, is slated to be a capital exclusion override with its revenue being specifically approved and supplied by the electorate. That being the case, he felt that the SBC should strive to compose a solution that best serves the students' education and the community's needs, even though that solution may well have a large price to pay. He felt that the S&H report was a sufficient basis to begin this composition. The reaction to the final scheme may be negative and require revamping after being rejected, but as a first attempt, the Committee should show the Town what proposal would best solve the high school's problems.
- PP agreed that the report should be the starting point for the Committee and she expected that a wholesale solution would be the result of the Committee's efforts. She also suggested that a natural by-product of the Committee's efforts would be a second alternative to offer should the first be rejected. The State's funding re-organization, she surmised, would be a determinant in the Committee's approach to the wholesale solution.
- JS thought that the Committee was "spinning its wheels" and should start some definitive planning for tackling the project. He said that the S&H report should be used as a basis for starting this process. The Committee should establish what the high school's needs are in three categories; what must be done, what should be done and what we'd like to do ("triage") and do this while waiting for the State to give an indication of what the new funding guidelines will be, making the best use of this waiting period. He questioned what the Committee's goal would be at November's Town Meeting, owing to the short amount of time that will be left after the State makes its wishes clear. Would more professional help be needed to produce and present the best plan possible? He encouraged the other members to become familiar with the needs presented in the S&H report because it may happen that the Committee would have to cobble together its own option different from those found therein.
- RR felt that the S&H report already established the needs for the building and he thought the best thing for the Committee to do was to individually analyze each option in the report and meet to discuss them. He hoped that one of the options could serve as the model to around which to build a proposal to take to Town Meeting. He saw little purpose in trying to re-establish the ground rules of the building's needs.
- JL agreed with RR, but added that the Committee should ask those who participated in the creation of the S&H options (mentioning TT and Dr. Harutunian) to discuss their rationale with it in order to agree or disagree with that rationale.

- Dr. Harutunian suggested two points. First, he recommended that the Committee take an evening to go through the options with S&H so that the Committee's questions could be answered directly. Secondly, he asked that the Killam project not be forgotten since the current fiscal thinking is to have Killam proceed on a near-parallel course for Town approval with the high school. He asked that Killam be put on the SBC's agenda. JS reminded him that an estimate for professional services to produce a Killam presentation was to be secured.
- RG pointed out to Dr. Harutunian that to his knowledge, the School Committee had not yet discussed Killam in terms of its need for a capital exclusion override (other than to approve it with the Ten Year Capital Plan in full). While Dr. Harutunian suggested that such a discussion could be undertaken by the authors of the Capital Improvement Plan, RG said he felt that the School Committee should address it before the authors.
- Discussion ensued concerning what an S&H presentation to the SBC should include. It was generally agreed that the options that would not qualify for State reimbursement need not be presented (including the option for an entire new school). It would be helpful, some thought, if the presentation could give some idea of the scope of the phasing that each option would require. TT theorized that perhaps the best phasing plan might include the construction of a portion of a new school which could house students while renovations were underway (like the Coolidge and Parker projects).
- RG questioned Dr. Harutunian about the status of any operational override coming into conflict with a capital override. Dr. Harutunian answered that the timing of the high school project depended on the new State guidelines and that any decisions or discussions prior to their release would be premature.
- A tentative date for the architect's presentation was set for June 27 or July 5, 2000.
- With no further discussion appearing, DL made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative (time unrecorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on May 23, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Library of Coolidge Middle School)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)

Featured Guests:

Gene Raymond Jr., AIA (Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc., Architects)
John Doherty, Principal (Coolidge Middle School), p/t
Dr. Harry H. Harutunian, Superintendent

The meeting started with a tour of the nearly completed Coolidge Middle School, which began as soon as the meeting was called to order. John Doherty, Principal, conducted the tour, during which time no group discussions took place.

At the completion of the tour, RG conveyed the Committee's thanks to Mr. Doherty for his work on the renovation project and offered congratulations to the Coolidge Science Olympiad team which placed ninth in the national tournament. Mr. Doherty then left, reminding the Committee of the dedication and open house of the new facilities scheduled for June 1.

- Dr. Harutunian asked that the minutes reflect the very positive contributions made by Mr. Doherty to the success of the Coolidge project due to the hard work, time and effort he expended on the design and construction of the new facilities. Like the Parker project (Dr. Jack Delaney, Principal) the contribution of the principals helped significantly to bring the project in on or under budget with excellent results. The Committee was happy to comply with this request. [QED]
- JL requested of Gene Raymond how the remaining unfinished items for Coolidge were proceeding. Mr. Raymond responded that progress was slow but steady, stating that the 5% retainage was being reduced to 2½ % in recognition of the contractor's progress. This remainder will be withheld until all punchlist items are addressed. Significant sitework still needs to be done. Dr. Harutunian added that several interior finishes must (of necessity) wait until the students are not in residence in order to be successfully applied, such as re-painted lockers and protective floor coatings. The soccer field may be ready by the fall, but the surface material must dry out sufficiently before it can be finally graded and landscaped.

- Turning to the high school, RG asked Mr. Raymond for a brief overview of the executive summary contained in the latest feasibility report prepared by his firm for the School Committee.
- Mr. Raymond began by noting that the physical needs of RMHS are typical of a building that has not had a major renovation in 40+ years. His team noted the poor condition of the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems and the portions of the heating system that have not been recently replaced. Their recommendation was to replace the worn-out M/E/P systems and heating system components.
- Regarding architectural finishes, Mr. Raymond stated that ceiling, and floor and wall surfaces as well as most teaching equipment had out-lived their usefulness and deserved replacement. The budget they are proposing includes this.
- Enrollment projections for the high school showed increases from the current 1100 students to between 1500-1600. Therefore, all the development options produced in the S&H study assumed the increased student populations.
- The preferred option (as well as other options) put forward in the study assumed the removal of non-high school uses from the building in order to recapture space for the increased population (examples of non-high school uses are the RISE and REAP programs and the Superintendent's offices). Further, departmental offices that now occupy classroom-sized spaces would be relocated to smaller areas. The options include individual teachers' stations within the classrooms to make up for the reduced departmental space.
- An additional programmatic need identified in the study was to equalize physical education facilities (locker rooms and access to gymnasias) for boys and girls (Title IX issues). One idea that was later dropped was to have an enclosed link to the field house from the girls' locker room in Building H across the roadway between the high school and the field house (the \$2½M cost was thought to be better used elsewhere programmatically).
- Music and drama space were also major considerations in the study. The preferred option has the present girls' gym being converted to a small theater/drama workshop that could be used to stage productions. Also, an addition next to the present Library would house the music department. The current (inadequate) music space behind the stage would become drama space.
- The preferred option also envisions remaking the current lecture hall on the Ground floor of Building B into a multi-media/computer/instructional technology lab.
- Cafeteria renovation in the preferred option would capture the space in the adjacent courtyard via an addition that would allow two lunch seatings instead of three.

- Improving internal circulation within the building would be a major objective of the preferred option. Building A (1969 addition with Math and Science departments) would be connected to the original building through the Library wing with a multi-story link in the vicinity now occupied by the "orange lockers". The Library wing itself would have a multi-story link to the adjacent (original) building (Bldg. B). The links would allow lower passing time (time spent moving between classes), better departmental organization/flexibility and less congestion during class changes.
- The cost data contained within the S&H report was based on dollars per square foot rather than on itemized prices for each component of each option (which would require a level of design beyond the scope of the feasibility study). These unit prices were current to 1999. Mr. Raymond recommended that whatever option is pursued further, money for more accurate cost estimating should be part of the design budget.
- Dr. Harutunian then offered an update on his understanding of the pending revisions to the State SBA program. Projects submitted to the SBAB under the present guidelines would be processed and accepted through the 2000-2001 school year (in effect, those projects whose designs are submitted to the State by June 1, 2000). What may follow this is a new funding program based on designs submitted by June 1, 2001. It is anticipated that renovations and/or new buildings will come under closer scrutiny by the State.
- The State will give communities more latitude in scheduling partial renovations and replacements with State participation rather than having to wait until wholesale renovations are needed (in essence, when an entire school building needs retrofitting or re-building). The rationale behind this (it appears) is to allow school buildings to last longer by replacing individual systems (roofs, M/E/P, etc.) when they need to be replaced rather than wait for multiple systems to break down.
- Having said this, Dr. Harutunian voiced his concern that RMHS still finds itself in the latter category, namely that too many systems need replacement right away. He feared that having a new (partial renovation/piecemeal) option made available by the State would invite calls from within the community to make use of it in order to reduce the large cost that would accompany a wholesale renovation. Having had to follow the SBAB's "all-or-nothing" guidelines of the past, this would be a new consideration for the SBC.
- TT asked if Dr. Harutunian knew if any additional State funds were being earmarked for this (new) funding program. He responded that perhaps the State legislators were considering amounts on the order of \$34M for this purpose, but it was not clear how this money would be apportioned (just for partial renovations or added to the overall pool of funds for school buildings?). Of obvious concern to the State is having sufficient control over this apportionment to ensure that partial renovations are not overwhelmed by

large wholesale renovations (Waltham's recent plans to apply for \$190M in wholesale renovations was offered as an example of a cause for this concern).

- RG asked when the SBC would know when the new funding initiatives being debated by the legislators were accepted by all affected agencies of State government. Dr. Harutunian answered that it would become clear most likely in July of this year when the state budget was agreed upon by both houses of the legislature and the executive branch. He commented that both the House and Senate proposals ignore the Executive recommendation of placing school building funding under the direction of the Department of Administration and Finance and keep it within the Department of Education, which he saw as advantageous.
- RG put forward the need for the SBC to become aware of the new funding guidelines in order to proceed with RMHS, citing past projects that were molded by the Committee to conform to SBAB requirements as precedents. Dr. Harutunian suggested contact with the SBAB soon after the new funding scheme is adopted.
- RG mentioned the fact that increasing enrollments will most likely be a factor in the RMHS project and wondered how such a criterion would be handled under the new funding scheme. Dr. Harutunian responded that it was his understanding that even minimal additions/renovations to accommodate increased enrollments would be considered under the new plan, which in itself indicated a "paradigm shift" in policy for the SBAB.
- RG contrasted this multi-option approach to identifying what a school building project could be to the previous identification process, which was to find out which single project would be acceptable to the SBAB and develop it for Town Meeting's review. The ability to revamp any project and still be assured of State funding could cause confusion and disinterest. Dr. Harutunian added that it could split the community among rival options.
- JS asked for clarification of the dates of applicability of the current guidelines, citing concern for the Killam project and which funding scheme it would fall under. Dr. Harutunian answered that June 1, 2000 would be the last opportunity for projects to make use of the current funding formulae. Hence, both Killam and RMHS will come under the new guidelines.
- TT spoke about the changes in the guidelines affecting the Committee's approach to presenting the RMHS project to Town Meeting, speculating that a whole-building solution could be questioned in light of the possibility that fundable partial-building solutions could exist. He advised that the Committee must stay on top of this changing State funding system, possibly through our legislators. Dr. Harutunian cautioned that the creation of an administrative system to implement whatever is legislated must also occur and will itself take some time.
- Continuing on the subject of the new State funding, TT surmised that by the time the Committee puts together a whole-building scenario and puts it before

the Town, wholly new (piecemeal) options may be declared as acceptable. To this point, Dr. Harutunian added that feasibility studies that had previously been directed towards whole-building solutions may now have to be revised to include menu-driven schemes, describing what various budgets will buy (and still be reimbursable).

- JS posed the suggestion of meeting with our State legislators directly in order to get the most up-to-date information concerning revised funding. He expressed concern over having no clearly understood financial framework around which to build a recommendation to Town Meeting in November. Dr. Harutunian countered that such a meeting would be premature if held before any actual legislation was signed and reiterated his suggestion to meet with SBAB officials after adoption of the new scheme. JS expressed frustration nonetheless at the dependence of Committee action on the action of the State legislature on the budget, citing last year's performance as an example of how expected timing (like finishing in July) can go wrong. Both TT and Dr. Harutunian pointed out that last year was an exception to normal legislative procedures.
- RG asked Dr. Harutunian if the School Administration or School Committee was planning any further enrollment projections. He answered that the Administration would be updating the projections internally, but not until all relevant data was available (like 1999 birth records from the State DPH).
- RG questioned how the State was going to handle enrollment problems under the new funding scheme, particularly those that need attention quickly. TT went further, wondering how communities would accept new additions with up-to-date facilities placed alongside old existing buildings with unimproved facilities. RG questioned if such a project would make economic sense. TT posed the possibility of economic analyses of various options as becoming standard procedure for school building committees.
- PP asked Gene Raymond if the high school could be renovated in a piecemeal fashion architecturally. Mr. Raymond responded that he would not recommend it due to the volume of systems that would have to be addressed and the impracticality of constructing one system at a time and trying to make it work with outdated ones.
- TT wondered if the new SBAB guidelines might force a community such as Reading to adopt a piecemeal strategy even though the community had the desire to adopt a wholesale one. Dr. Harutunian said that in his view, the SBAB would not do so. The revisions to the funding plans are intended to encourage reasonable piecemeal projects that avoid demolition of sound buildings simply to qualify for State reimbursement. RMHS seemed to him to qualify for wholesale renovation.
- TT envisioned a political problem without State mandates for a single solution. He could see various factions in the Town endorsing what they feel is the proper piecemeal amount to spend on the high school (that amount being reimbursable) and promoting it in opposition to the Committee's recommendations.

- AM made the comment that his reading of the Executive proposals for revised funding indicated a desire at the State level to cut costs in order to lessen the long-term financial burden. He asked if any limit to the (reimbursable) dollars per square foot for renovations was being put forward as a “cap”. Both Dr. Harutunian and Mr. Raymond answered that the yearly cost figures (for both new construction and renovations) are set by analyzing feedback from architects who submit cost data on their current projects. They saw no indications that this procedure would change.
- RG likened the attempt to control education costs with the attempt to control medical costs. Needs could be addressed by accountants and if one wants quality education, one must be resigned to paying for it.
- Mr. Raymond offered his opinion that the State would not deny projects with multiple needs such as those at RMHS. He said that the main change for a wholesale project would be justifying the needs more than had been required heretofore. In his opinion, doing so for RMHS would not be difficult.
- The political aspect of a “menu” approach was discussed further. Dr. Harutunian said that he believed that if multiple reimbursable options had been available for past school building projects, supporters for counter-SBC proposals would have organized and pushed their separate agendas. TT wondered if the SBC might go to Town Meeting in November with not only a preferred option but also additional (less-preferred) options for Town Meeting’s consideration. PP said that the needs of RMHS should be generally understood by the Town by then, but TT questioned that point, stating his belief that some people will always believe that only minimal cosmetic work needs to be done. Dr. Harutunian mentioned upcoming accreditation reviews for the high school as possibly providing additional needs.
- RG made the point that after the S&H feasibility study sub-committee makes its report, a tally of renovation items that absolutely must be done be made by the Administration to help guide the SBC in its on-going work (not only for RMHS but also for Killam). JS added that making the schools ADA-compliant was an item that must be done (Dr. Harutunian agreed). Title IX issues were also briefly discussed.
- With no other business appearing, AM made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by RR. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative (time not recorded).

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on May 16, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Library of Reading Memorial High School)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)

Featured Guests:

Frank Orlando, Principal (RMHS)
Rick Barrett, Director of Facilities

The main reason for the meeting was to have the Committee tour the RMHS facilities, which began as soon as the meeting was called to order. Messrs. Orlando and Barrett conducted the tour, during which time no group discussions took place. The tour lasted until approximately 9:00.

- Upon returning from the tour, Mr. Orlando gave a brief description of some of the problems that face RMHS (enrollments increasing, lack of technology, lighting, mechanical, etc.).
- RG stated that the Committee would have a chance to speak with the architect who directed the latest study (Gene Raymond of Strelakovsky & Hoit) at a later date. He then asked the members for general impressions, having had the tour.
- PP asked if the present classroom spaces are adequate or inadequate for their functions. Mr. Orlando stated that different subjects and applications require different amounts of space, citing English and Science as lower/higher users of space as examples. Use of computers in the curriculum also adds to the space demands.
- RG reminded everyone that NESDEC had shown that the older portion of the high school (1954) had smaller-sized classrooms than recommended by the SBAB for present educational programming. TT added that class size plays a part in assessing the adequacy of classroom space.
- Mr. Orlando went on to say that one of his goals would be to have at least three computer workstations for students and one for teachers in every classroom where computers are used. Further, he pointed out some of the architect's suggestions, such as enlarging classrooms by trading three existing classrooms for two new ones, moving the business

department into the present girls' locker room and re-assigning the present business classrooms and trying to keep individual departments together in the same locales.

- JS asked Mr. Orlando if the high school was (in any way) in accreditation trouble at the present time. He responded that in 2001-2002, the high school administration would be evaluating themselves. Then the following year, a visit will be made by a group of New England educators to assess the school on nine standards, ranging from educational program to staffing to facilities. Emphasis will be placed on how well previous accreditation reports have been addressed. Mr. Orlando feels that RMHS will do well on all standards except facilities. The educators will be aware of Reading's plans for addressing the school facilities by way of the Capital Plan and any directives made by Town Meeting and should take them into account. Mr. Orlando went on to say that RMHS may receive some strong recommendations for facilities upgrades, but he would be surprised if its accreditation would be pulled because of it.
- Other observations were offered. RG commented on the dreariness of most of the spaces, stating that they are not conducive to good learning and that this effect should be addressed. Mr. Orlando agreed.
- PP asked if there were any safety concerns. Mr. Orlando mentioned students crossing the parking lot to access the fieldhouse as one issue. Another was the use of too-few electrical outlets. To that point, Mr. Barrett added that the electrical distribution network is nearly maxed-out, requiring increasing use of exposed conduit, which is undesirable from a safety standpoint. Increased technology demands will also increase electrical demand, further aggravating the problem. PP asked about the air quality in the school, to which Mr. Orlando replied that it was acceptable. Recent venting repairs in the science wing (C Bldg.) corrected a long-standing ventilation problem there.
- In addition, the existing intercom system is undependable and in need of general repair. Communications within the building are poor and are a potential safety risk (timely responses to emergencies). Walkie-talkies were used primarily for inter-administration and long-distance (outside) communications and do not work in all areas within the building. Mr. Barrett offered local building component settlement onto communication lines as a possible explanation for their inoperative condition. Mr. Orlando stated that although the building is wired for a computer network, only a quarter of the classrooms that could use computers have them, leaving most of the network access points unused.
- RG asked Mr. Orlando if any progress had been made assembling an advisory group from the RMHS administration to talk with the Committee. Mr. Orlando replied that he had asked the department heads to seek out volunteers (many teachers have expressed interest already) to compose a group with broad departmental representation. This group would most likely be ready to enter into a dialogue with the SBC in early fall of 2000.

- RG asked the members of the sub-committee reviewing the Strekalovsky and Hoit feasibility study if they would be ready soon with their report. A date of June 6, 2000 was offered as a probable date for their presentation to the full Committee.
- RG advised the Committee that they should be gathering their observations for discussions with S&H and that the Committee should plan to devise a working timetable to follow for the coming months.
- JS passed out copies of the minutes from the last meeting (4/13/00), asking for comments by 5/23/00 so that he could post them at the Reading Public Library.
- JL stated that it was his opinion that the Committee would inevitably need more professional help (i.e., architect/planner) in preparing any solution for presentation to Town Meeting given the (expected) large scope of the project. RG further commented that decisions such as that would have to be made in conjunction with the over-all strategy and timing, noting that any money for additional professional services would have to come from Town Meeting in the first place (in the fall). Revisions to the State's School Building Assistance program would also have a bearing on this question.
- Some general discussion occurred concerning summer schedules and the availability of Gene Raymond (S&H) for discussions. No determinations were made pending the report of the sub-committee and the formulation of a timetable.
- JS asked TT if any further discussion had occurred within the School Committee concerning the advancement of a renovation program for Killam Elementary School. TT responded that none had occurred. RG added that Town Meeting had accepted Killam as a capital exclusion over-ride in its latest adoption of the ten-year Capital Plan. A specific direction for advancing the project had not been formulated as yet, however, and should be made part of the SBC's over-all strategy.
- Mr. Orlando added some comments about how accreditation boards are subject to the discretion of the members that compose them.
- No other business being put forward, DL moved for adjournment which was seconded by PP. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative. (Time: 9:35 p.m.)

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee

Reading School Building Committee

Minutes of RSBC Meeting Held on April 13, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
(In the Superintendent's Conference Room, RMHS)

Reference: Meeting Agenda (copy attached)

Committee Members Attending:

Russ Graham, Chair (RG)
Alex McRae (AM)
Joe Lupi (JL)
Rich Radville (RR)
Tim Twomey (TT)
Jeff Struble (JS)
Paula Perry (PP)
Dennis LaCroix (DL)
Joe Finigan (JF)

Item (1) Thanks to committee:

- RG expressed his personal thanks to the members of the committee for their work done on the elementary school projects, commending them for the long hours spent to bring the issue to a successful conclusion.

Item (2) Election of Secretary of the School Building Committee:

- RG announced the creation of the post of Secretary for the School Building Committee stating that Jeffrey Struble (JS) had volunteered for the position. RG called for a formal motion.
- DL made the motion to elect JS Secretary. Seconded by RR.
- No further discussion was offered. A vote was taken and the result was unanimous in the affirmative.

Item (3) Review / Assumption of the Reading Memorial High School Study Process:

- RG began by mentioning the Drummey Rosane Anderson (DRA) feasibility study undertaken in 1995-1996 under the direction of the SBC (members were provided with full copies of this study at this meeting). The recommendations of that study were not taken before Town Meeting by the SBC at that time due to the large cost involved (later acknowledged as requiring a debt exclusion over-ride).
- The School Committee (SC) has since commissioned another feasibility study by Strekalovsky & Hoit (1998-present), full copies of which were also provided to members at this meeting. One purpose of this study was to ascertain how renovating the existing high school would compare with building a new high school. RG asked Tim Twomey (TT), liaison to the SBC from the SC, to comment on this study.

- TT said that Strekalovsky & Hoit (S&H) were asked to address several issues from the DRA report. Among these were preparing several scenarios for renovation of the existing building as well as looking at building a new school. Title 9 issues and enrollment projection updates were also addressed in the S&H study. He went on to state that the SC thought it was time for an independent set of eyes to review it and that is why the SBC was asked to assume the process of evaluating it.
- Superintendent Dr. Harry Harutunian was in attendance and added that while S&H had worked closely with the RMHS staff in preparing the various scenarios, the administration thought they had gone as far as they could go. They (S&H) had addressed space issues and changes to educational requirements that the DRA study did not address.
- RG commented that there seems to be a popular perception in the Town that there is a recommended option for the high school being considered, (at a cost of perhaps \$42M). He said that no option of any kind has yet been officially put before any Town body. Further, the first time that will happen is when the SBC makes a recommendation and goes before Town Meeting at some point in the future. TT added that the SC has taken no formal position on any of the options prepared.
- RG noted that there is likely to be no more professional services available for the SBC due to the fact that \$90K has already been spent on the two studies already. This will make the SBC's task difficult.
- RG stated that to his knowledge, no one in the Town has suggested any other way to fund the high school project than with a (debt-exclusion) over-ride. To that point, RG asked Dr. Harutunian if the Finance Committee had taken a formal position on the need for an over-ride to fund the Killam renovations.
- Dr. Harutunian responded that FinCom has dealt with the Killam project only insofar as its inclusion in the (Ten Year) Capital Plan as presented to Town Meeting. It has in various years been scheduled to be paid either through debt service or through a debt exclusion over-ride. Recent discussions with Beth Klepeis (Town Treasurer) indicated her recommendation to include Killam with the High school in an over-ride in order to reduce the strain on the operating budget that results from funding through (regular) debt service. He also recounted discussions with the SBAB during the elementary school projects that indicated that Killam would receive like reimbursement if counted as part of the elementary system solution.
- RG commented that in order to formally present the Killam project to Town Meeting, the SBC would need funds to secure professional services in order to properly articulate it. Dr. Harutunian offered to approach Earl Flansburgh Associates for an estimate of costs for such services, which the committee accepted.

Item (4) Appointment of Sub-Committee to Review the Stekalovsky & Hoit Report:

- RG recommended that a sub-committee be formed to review the S&H report for professional thoroughness and value to the SBC, reporting back to the committee at large with its findings (owing to its sponsorship by the SC). He recommended Rich Radville (RR) and Joe Lupi (JL) for this sub-committee due to RR's architectural experience and JL's construction management experience.
- TT made the motion to create the sub-committee with these members and DL seconded it.
- TT mentioned the fact that both RR and JL had experience working as construction liaisons to the SC for past school projects. JL noted that he is now employed for a professional construction management firm as a project Owner's representative for three new schools in Lawrence, MA. No further discussion was offered. A vote was taken and it was unanimous in the affirmative.

Item (5) Timetable Process to Review Needs and Solutions to High School Space Including Need of Over-ride and Attention to Killam School:

- RG opened with comments regarding a meeting that morning with the Superintendent and the chair of the SC and others regarding their needs and desires for the high school and Killam schedules. He said that while proceeding swiftly with a target date of June 2001 for these projects would be desirable, it did not seem feasible to accomplish this task. A target of January 2002 was mentioned as allowing the SBC the option of going to Town Meeting in November of this year with as much of a plan as possible to ask for money for a high school project and also do as much as we can for Killam.
- TT spoke about a possible scenario for proceeding with the high school plan (he was in attendance at the morning meeting). After the sub-committee had done its work on the S&H report, the SBC would have a clearer idea of how to use its results and could work towards bringing a recommendation to the Subsequent Town Meeting in November (possibly with a recommendation for the Killam School as well). If a favorable response was forthcoming from Town Meeting, the Selectmen could move to put a over-ride before the public, possibly in January 2001. If the over-ride was successful, then the process of selecting an architect could be undertaken (lasting about six weeks or so) and then the architect would have the better part of 2001 to prepare construction documents for submission to the State at the end of the year. This was appropriate considering the large size of the project, requiring more time for this task than any previous school projects have taken (this preparation time, then, would make submission to the SBA in June 2001 untenable). Under present SBA guidelines, this would qualify for June 2002.
- JS pointed out that the current charter for the SBA expires on June 30, 2001, making future guidelines unknowable at this point.

- RG pointed out that from past experience with over-rides and other capital projects, it takes a long time to build a consensus first within Town government and then within the public at large. There is also a lack of definition of the Town's annual finances as evidenced by the last operating over-ride which should be clarified. He asked TT if there were any formal plans adopted for another over-ride attempt next year. TT responded that there were none. RG went on to comment on the further complications arise from the uncertainty of the reforms to the State assistance program which at present are in the form of various proposals from the Executive and Legislative branches of State government (the SBC members were copied earlier on the Executive proposals).
- JS questioned how much time would be prudent to leave between acceptance by Town Meeting of the SBC's recommendations and an over-ride vote by the general electorate. He cited the recent elementary school referenda as examples of the amount of time required to educate the public, wondering what say the SBC would have in setting the date for an over-ride attempt.
- TT answered that the SBC would be considered a key group in educating the public in an over-ride attempt and the Selectmen would likely ask for our viewpoint on the schedule. RR went on to say that at the present time, we can only talk about scheduling in broad terms due to the uncertainty of just what the SBC's recommendations are likely to be in November. TT added that it may happen that the SBC would receive from Town Meeting directives to further develop their recommendations for the purpose of presenting a clearer picture of them to the general public.
- AM pointed out that scheduling for an over-ride is perhaps two steps away from where we are now, explaining that the SBC's purpose now is to fully explore the problems of the high school and possible solutions to them. He hoped that our deliberations would be followed as we went along by the public at large with all information produced by the SBC made available to it, suggesting that the Town's internet web-site be employed as a posting station.
- RG asked if the general consensus of the committee was that attempting to push the high school project to a June 2001 SBA submittal was not feasible. There were no dissenting opinions to this statement.
- PP suggested that the SBC members could benefit from a tour of the high school to better acquaint themselves with it. RG agreed and also added that the SBC should meet in the newly-renovated Coolidge Middle School (later discussions confirmed that these actions would be arranged with the Administration).
- JS asked how the upcoming changes to the SBA program were being tracked. Dr. Harutunian answered that his office was in weekly communication with the Department of Education concerning the progress of the proposals currently before the Legislature. He noted that what was likely to come out of the Legislature would be a revision to the financing structure of

the SBA. This might include such things as reduction of the individual towns' reimbursement rates to a base value that could be increased through satisfaction of project incentives such as including community use of the schools and energy-saving features in the projects' designs. Also, more attention would be paid to projects with "menu"-driven renovations, such as new roofs, boilers, etc.

- JS asked if there was a timetable set for accomplishing these revisions at the State level. Dr. Harutunian answered that discussions with State representatives indicated that these revisions would follow deliberations for the State budget, with some idea of the direction that might be followed coming sometime in May. He noted that the Legislature might also be targeting revisions to Special Education requirements.

Item (6) Request for Formal Group of RMHS Personnel to Meet with SBC on High School Needs:

- RG recommended to Frank Orlando (RMHS principal, also in attendance) that a formal group of high school personnel be formed to enter into an on-going dialogue with the SBC regarding the needs of the school. Mr. Orlando (and Dr. Harutunian) said such a group could be formed.
- RG thought to remind Dr. Harutunian that the SBC's membership make-up required a teacher (to replace Margaret Cowell, who had resigned) and that a high school teacher may be advantageous to have at this point in time. Dr. Harutunian said he would ask for volunteers.
- In addition to an advisory group of RMHS personnel, RG recounted that during the Parker Middle School project, community arts groups were supportive of keeping and upgrading the auditorium for community use. He suggested that such groups may also be interested in the high school for the same reason and that perhaps these groups should be given access to the SBC to discuss it.
- TT reiterated that inclusion of community usage as part of the over-all renovation might gain additional incentive benefits from the SBA in terms of a reimbursement package. Dr. Harutunian expanded a bit on this subject, noting that community use spaces (such as theaters) would not count as educational space in the total tally for the high school's square footage and student capacities.
- RG suggested that community arts groups might also contribute financially to the project if (public) fiscal constraints were seen to be tight. Further, their participation could establish a support group that could help encourage the passage of the SBC's recommendations to the Town. Dr. Harutunian mentioned that the such focus groups could help to document the community's need for access spaces at the high school which could then be submitted to the State in support of the over-all renovation plan.

Item (7) Other Business

- RG asked the newly-formed sub-committee for a probable timetable for their work. JL suggested that their work would take approximately one month, which RR agreed with.
- Dr. Harutunian suggested that it would be instructive for the SBC to meet at the Coolidge Middle School to tour that facility and also to meet with Gene Raymond of S&H to discuss their report. RG asked for the committee's reaction. DL, PP and AM voiced their preference to tour the high school first before entering into discussions with S&H and the high school personnel, which appeared to be the general consensus. Dr. Harutunian said he would arrange possible dates for a high school tour and (some weeks later), for a meeting at Coolidge with S&H. He would coordinate these dates with the chair.
- RG called for any other business. None appearing, RR made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by DL. A vote was taken, which was unanimous in the affirmative. (Time: 8:40 p.m.)

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Jeffrey W. Struble, Secretary
Reading School Building Committee