



Bond Task Force – Meeting 5 Summary

January 9, 2018

Meeting #5, Wednesday, January 31, 2018, Vista Middle School

Attendees: Task Force members

Joy Born	Riley Cornelsen	Kristie Edwards
Rusti Elefson	John Fairbairn	Maralise Fegan
Rob Fickeisen	Gregg Heyne	Kathy Hopkins
Bud Larson	Wendy Lawrence	Joey McAlpine
Joe Lupo	Bruce McKay	Sandi McMillan
Amy Nylen	Jamie Plenkovich	Julie Rice
Nicole Smith	Terry Terry	Shauna Torretta
Tony Torretta	Garin Wallace	Wendy Wasisco

Staff

Ferndale School District

- Mark Deebach, Assistant Superintendent
- Linda Quinn, Superintendent
- Erin Daniels

EnviroIssues facilitator

- Penny Mabie

Guests

- Ellie Bater, student
- Peggy Lupo, teacher
- Brandi Tilton, administration
- Donny Hennigs, campus safety

School Tour:

John Fairburn gave a group of Task Force members a tour of Vista Middle School.

Welcome and Introductions

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues facilitator for the Ferndale School District (abbreviation: FSD) Bond Task Force (abbreviation: Task Force), welcomed Task Force members and guests to the meeting. She provided members with an overview of the meeting agenda and outlined the primary purpose of the meeting: learn about conditions at Ferndale High School and work to refine packages and shape project recommendations.

Members and staff introduced themselves.

Ferndale High School Panel Discussion

Penny introduced the panel. Each panelist provided a one-minute overview of their perspective on the conditions and need at the high school.

- Ellie Bater, Student, noted that classes are too full for quality learning. She shared that navigation, getting from one side of campus to another in time for class starts is tough. She expressed concerns about campus safety, since there are so many entrances and exits at the various buildings. She discussed the changes made at Meridian High School, especially how tightly the entrance and exit to the campus is controlled and noted that it was much more difficult to skip class due to the close scrutiny of comings and goings at the school.
- Peggy Lupo shared she has been a history teacher at Ferndale High School (abbreviation: FHS) for 20 years. She said the heating system is very inefficient, noting classroom temperatures of up to 90 degrees in the summer and as low as 40 degrees in the winter. She said the way the school is spread out is very difficult to navigate. She noted technology issues with electrical load capabilities and other support systems being out of date and inadequate. She said safety in the 600 Wing is a concern if something should require an emergency evacuation, noting the ramp at passing time is too crowded. Peggy also noted there is no center connection or “heart” of the school, which makes the school community feel disjointed.
- Brandi Tilton, Administrative Assistant 1, noted how crowded the campus is with 1100 to 1300 students. She said there is no space for meetings. She concurred with Peggy’s point about no common place for school community bonding. She noted none of the big facilities supported the entire student body – assemblies have to be split in two and that still leaves students standing.
- Donny Hennigs, campus safety, noted that the high school has 87 different points of entry. That is too many doors to secure and be confident of student and staff safety. He noted there are numerous fire alarms which are a distraction to the learning environment.
- Jamie Plenkovich, Task Force member and Director of Facilities and Maintenance, shared that there are breakdowns and/or malfunctions of building systems almost every day due to age. He noted the inability to easily secure parts for some boilers and other equipment, also due to their age. He shared how a galvanized pipe burst over Christmas break requiring expensive repairs. He noted that Ferndale’s high school is the worst he’s seen in visits to numerous other districts. He also noted that the school’s intercoms don’t reach all parts of the school; during a recent bomb threat some classes weren’t even aware of the evacuation order.

Task Force members asked clarifying questions of the panelists, including questions about number of staff on campus (Answer: 143), number of exterior doors (Answer: 80-100), and if there are procedures in place for emergency situations, evacuations, etc. (Answer: Yes, there are, and they are practiced.)

Developing Recommendations

Penny shared compiled results of the Recommendations Workshop small group discussions from Task Force meeting #4. She noted that it would be important, moving forward, for the Task Force to have a clear articulation of what values the group would be using to inform their decision-making on bond recommendations. She reviewed the Task Force’s Guiding principles and feedback heard from the community through the survey hosted on the Task Force’s website (<https://fsdbondtaskforce.participate.online>). She noted the highest ranked principles identified by the community were fiscal responsibility, accountability, planning for the future, and transparency. She noted



that safety was not included in the list, nor was it mentioned in the open-ended comments. She asked the Task Force if that was an important value to include. Task Force members indicated it was, and they believed the community members just weren't aware of the needs.

Penny then introduced several questions she wanted the Task Force to answer to help inform their development of recommendations. The questions were asked using live polling through texting on cell phones. The questions are listed below along with the polling results.

Polling questions:

1. Should there be a limit to how much the ask should be in the bond measure? 50% said yes and 50% said no. After robust discussion, the Task Force generally agreed that looking more carefully at the project options, their associated budget amounts, and prioritization of projects would inform the question of "How much is too much to ask for?"
2. Should the Task Force be primarily concerned with the amount of the tax increase or with total dollars? 7% said total dollars, 43% said tax rates, and 50% said both are equally important. After discussing the results, the Task Force generally agreed that until they have a better understanding of what the tax rate implications of different options are, it isn't possible to determine an answer to the question.
3. Which option to recommend for Ferndale High School? 63% said Option 1 (build new school at the same site), 38% said Option 2 (remodel gym, cafeteria and Performing arts Center and rebuild the rest of the school), and 0% said Option 3 (build new school at new site). After discussions about the results, the group agreed to remove Option 3 from consideration as no one supported that option.
4. Should the bond only include Ferndale High School, or should it include other projects? 73% said include projects at other schools, and 27% said only put FHS in the Task Force recommendations. After a robust discussion, the group agreed to revisit this question after further discussion of other project options.
5. If including other projects, what other projects, besides FHS, should the Task Force prioritize? The group discussed this question, but did not actually respond to the poll, in part because they wanted to think more about other ways to package projects for the other district needs. This will be taken up again in more detail at the next meeting.

Task Force questions and comments regarding the above questions, included:

- Have we agreed to not include any investment at Mountain View in our recommendations?
Response: Yes. That was agreed to at the last meeting. Penny checked, and the group again validated that decision.
- Could we sell Mountain View and put the proceeds toward the bond needs?
Response: The District would like to retain Mountain View for a couple of reasons. The proceeds would not be that much compared to the needs in the district. Also, property values only go up. If, in the future we need more capacity due to growth, it will be much more affordable to update or rebuild Mountain View on property we already own, rather than having to pay current dollars for property acquisition.



Next Steps

Penny noted the current schedule called for the Bond Task Force to have draft recommendations ready for a School Board study session on February 12th. Penny polled the group and asked if more time was needed for the Task Force to complete its work. Discussion about this included a request to meet more frequently during February. While many agreed an extension to the remaining schedule may be needed, the Task Force would rather meet more frequently and longer to try to finish their work as scheduled, and if not, then to request an extension. Penny closed the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Handouts:

Meeting agenda

Summary of Recommendations Workshop small group bond planning activity

Task Force meeting evaluation