



Provincetown School Committee Meeting

**PROVINCETOWN HIGH SCHOOL
ELMER I. SILVA LEARNING CENTER
12 Winslow Street
PROVINCETOWN, MA 02657**

**Tuesday
November 16, 2012
5:00 p.m.**

**Members Present: Kerry Adams (left @6:15p), Cass Benson,
Jamie Kryszkiewicz, Shannon Patrick, and Lory Stewart.**

Members Absent: none

**Staff: Dr. Beth Singer, Superintendent
Kim Pike, District Principal
David Gardner, Assistant Town Manager**

AGENDA

Executive Session:

Negotiations with Non-Union Personnel

Laura Grandel-Admin. Assistant to Superintendent-H.R.-

Votes may be taken

The regular meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Unfinished Business:

Playground Discussion with Neighbors

Beth made the rounds of the neighborhood to inform all of this additional meeting. She also asked the Police Department to give her the records of incidents on the playgrounds over the last three years. There have been no calls to the dispatchers. There were 75 routine checks and 0 complaints recorded. The Grace Hall parking lot has had a lot of issues, i.e., 10 reports related to animal safety (dogs left in cars), 17 vehicle reports, one driving under the influence, and 3 disorderly conduct charges resulting in an arrest. That was the total of reports. The playground installer has taken us off his calendar but will be back by the middle of December.

One of the abutters had a chart he assembled with most of his issues. Each of his concerns were answered. We have 120 students in the school and the size of the group varies. During the lunch time period there might be 40 children or so using the playground.

Another person cited the “change of use” and he felt – based on his unspecified research – that 65 to 77 decibels of sound come from any playground and he would love to see a noise study done here. He also insisted on knowing the number of usage hours per day. He was told that 45 minutes/day was projected but there are also teachers who may use the facility as they see fit.

He was also told that there are 2 school playgrounds on the property and there are two or three off the school property. The playground at the Veterans Memorial Community Center has been gifted to the Recreation Center.

The Provincetown School Committee (PSC) is the custodian and will hold sway over the property. The Wee Care is back there. We have ages 5 through 12 in the High School and for children less than 5 who are in a different age group – their needs also have to be accommodated.

One of the fellows from Webster Place was quite troubled by a statement made at the Tuesday meeting – “our children don’t bring trash onto the playground.” He made a pile of wine bottles, etc. He was informed that his trash is from the parking lot clientele.

Cass said the terminology isn’t “change of use” – she’d prefer that we’re adding a playground to this school.

The highly concerned man said that he’d like to clarify issues and not to be corrected.

Beth in an attempt to clarify (and not correct) said that the fence that has existed there was in disrepair and there was no buffer between the properties and suggested that with improved fencing you may have considerable less trash.

The playground will become a great place to hang out and therein lies the fear of the unknown. The neighbors said that you guys are not here to see it.

The playground way up at the west end doesn't have problems but this will be dead center in the town. Jamie felt that signage would be the panacea.

Beth responding to one neighbor's desire said - if we lock it at night then it's locked every week-end from Friday afternoon to Monday morning.

One man said that he's lived here 16 years and he's never seen any kids using the playground behind the VMCC.

Two of the people most concerned were the two owners of the Fairbanks Inn located at 90 Bradford Street which closely abuts the area in question. They have been in Town since 1985 and have owned the Inn since 2005 and run it year round. They have diapers (used, I assume) thrown in their back yard; many of their guests come on an annual basis to meditate on their rear patio and they are greatly concerned about the noise that may or may not be generated. Their garden is called a Meditation Garden and is very quiet. Some of their guests have been coming for 20 odd years with the anticipation of quiet and the owners feel that the playground will have a negative impact on their business. One of the owners begged for the PSC to reconsider this location.

Kerry Adams who works for the parking lots in the season said that the trash comes from the visitors. We aren't having basketball hoops or anything that would encourage play by the young people after hours.

Beth said that they have had engineers come to this site and they selected the best place for the playground. There is no other neutral space meaning that if you're not the neighbors, there will be other abutters. There will be no loss of revenue in the parking lot which had been a major concern and the other concern is that it be available to all people – hence the “open all the time” policy.

Fairbanks Inn reiterated their stance – they are very opposed.

Webster Place – their concern is the after school hours.

Cass Benson said that we don't want drugs, alcohol, etc. in this area.

One of the Webster Place men said that the High School building has a beautiful façade and he's concerned with the sound travelling. He also thought that there could have been better outreach.

The two from Fairbanks Inn said - you have definitely changed the nature of my business.

Another abutter said – there is confusion over the playground and we feel that you are creating a new public park in our backyard. Not all of us appreciate children's noise and if you are creating a public park that will be open every summer – a police patrol would be nice – but. We need the tourists. One fellow said that he deals with the tourist noise by wearing ear plugs and that is the heart of his concern. If it becomes a public park, this raises his level of concern. It also distresses him that the facial expressions on the members of the PSC are so condescending.

Shannon Patrick said that we all live here year round. We have to tolerate noise from each other and the intention is not for a public park.

One person said he was confused – will this be a public playground? He's perfectly happy to have a playground for the school children.

Beth said that the school is always responsible.

One abutter said that he would love to have the playground opened only during school hours.

Jamie K. said she has heard the concerns of abutters and the issues pertain to the parking lot. The playground does not yet exist. We have not put in a public park and we definitely won't be opening it at night.

The east end playground is used all the time but one abutter thinks it's day time use.

One of the most reasonable abutters from Webster Place said that we would like to talk about what is happening. He would like to see a web cam and he'd like to see some landscaping to mitigate the noise. He also thought that maybe we can formerly agree that we can meet in 3 or 6 months and discuss whatever is happening.

Beth thanked him and said that much of the hill in dispute belongs to the school.

One of the owners from the Fairbanks Inn said that she had heard about it at town meeting but the location wasn't sited. It sounded to her as though this problem is a go. She left abruptly.

David Gardner who brought calm to the meeting said that he would implore the PSC to go back to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and ascertain that this is not going to be a public park. The Grace Hall Parking lot suffers noise in the early hours of the morning from downtown drinking establishments and he doesn't think the playground will change the neighborhood at all.

Lory Stewart said that she was going to say that the money came from CPC and landscaping the perimeter is a great idea but she doesn't really think that there will be a huge amount of noise coming from the playground. We're talking about 25 kids at the most coming in for a few minutes. She also doesn't think the inn would lose business. She feels that we could meet every couple of months to see what is happening. Lory lives in the west end and the Boatslip is her neighbor so she readily understands people's noise concerns.

Fairbanks begged the PSC to reconsider the location and come and hear the problems.

One of the Webster Place men said that we all bought a house here and knew there was a school here. This person felt that a web cam is a great idea. He continued by saying that what David Gardner said a few minutes ago is that the whole thing is now clarified. So when we met in the parking lot a couple of months ago and we thought that you would send out a mailing BUT the bulldozers showed up a lot sooner than we thought.

Beth said that some of the problem with notification is that she took the addresses of the owners from the Assessor and – for example - #8 Webster Place has a New York address which would account for a time lag.

Jamie said that we really have to apologize but I think that we all realize that this was a communication problem.

David G. said that we've been working on the playground for over a year or two.

Beth said that there will be no swings and there will be 36 children at the most with multiple teachers. There will always be supervision.

The man who was hung up on decibels said that there are communities that regulate the sound per decibels.

Beth said that sometimes kids will fall and cry and that's why we'd like it here where we have a nurse on staff and you certainly wouldn't have 35 children out there after school.

Another question satisfied was - what's the surface of the playground? wood chips.

One of the owners of the Inn, K. Fitzgerald said – it sounds as though this is going forward and we're wondering – what is our purpose in this process. It almost sounds like a lot of other processes and if maybe it would have been discussed before we would have saved all this distress.

Shannon said - the cam is another idea and we're really trying to find a compromise to work with other groups.

Shannon suggested calling the police and one man said that he has called the police for people sitting on the steps of the school and drinking.

Ratification of Article XXI of the CBA

The article has to do with evaluations and how they are conducted. A question was asked as to - how much of the evidence is used in the evaluation. Answer: The new state model requires that all schools use MCAS and in grade 3 we add the MCAS scoring so it will vary.

Motion: Move to approve ratification of Article XXI of the CBA.

Motion: Cass Benson Seconded: Lory Stewart Vote: 4-0-0

Adjournment happened at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Gaudiano

E. Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ **on December 4, 2012.**
Shannon Patrick, Chair