



Provincetown School Committee Meeting

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

**Tuesday
December 4, 2012
5:30 p.m.**

**Members Present: Kerry Adams, Cass Benson, Jamie Kryszkiewicz,
Shannon Patrick, and Lory Stewart.**

Members Absent: none

**Staff: Dr. Beth Singer, Superintendent
Kim Pike, District Principal**

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m.

AGENDA

Public Comments

Tony Bracket – 8 Cottage Street – said that he can appreciate the Fairbanks Inn’s thoughts. His bigger question was – if someone were to purchase a spot next to a parking lot and a school – why if they didn’t anticipate noise would they purchase? He continued by saying - if I were living next to a high school – I would ask to be notified about all school meetings. Don’t just freak out if a bull dozer shows up. He continued by saying that he was not present at the last PSC meeting but he didn’t like the comments from some of the abutters. Children have ears and his objection was at the language of some of owners; we should always be aware of where we are. In his particular case - no one complained about our changing our inn into a private home.

Mr. Bracket is a full time father and diversity and acceptance remain a facet of this town. He implored all - get more involved in this subject. The meditation garden at the Fairbanks Inn is a great idea.

Next Chris Duff – 6 Webster Place – spoke on behalf of his house. His concern is that he will be lumped in with a hatred of the playground. What he asked for was involvement in the discussion such as - were there other locations thought about? We just need to differentiate the views of being called nimbys. (NIMBYs are a group known as Not In My Back Yard.)

Mary Alice Ralph spoke next saying that she is totally in support the playground. There seems to be a vitriol aimed at this project and the Provincetown Business Guild (PBG) is sending out notices to everyone stating - if you live next to the school you will have noise. We were told that the high school would be converted to condos within a few years. Playgrounds could throw trash, make noise, and then nothing might happen. Classes for the children should be held which could encourage them to live in a diverse society.

Jacqui Kelly said that she's in favor but not in this particular location. The owners of the Fairbanks Inn could be surveyed and their business could be impacted negatively. Every parent can relate to the fact that its not only a business and then continued by saying that it's about not protecting a business. Tourists are coming here because of the diversity and everyone is fighting for that one dollar. She wants the kids to have a playground just not in the area chosen.

Lisa Westervelt said that she supports the small playground and said that the location was dictated by using the smallest amount of parking spaces (only 1 parking space will be lost). She certainly thinks that the PSC is bending over backwards. It's hard to raise a children in these hard times and she will volunteer if they need any help.

Elizabeth Brooke, owner of Gabriels, said that she is here in the gray area. She had a son who graduated from PHS. She hears a little black & white and she hopes that Fairbanks will look into noise barriers. We also welcome all. We live on top of one another and we were built on top of one another. Maybe include the Fairbanks Inn in all the planning meetings.

Liz Lovati – she's pro business and was hoping that some of the people were complaining about – why the site selection? A lot of people are here because of the facebook flurry, i.e., why they can't go to the Florence Bent playground. She pled for a "wait and see" attitude. She can't imagine coming to town to put her kids in a public playground instead of a beach. Her comments became repetitious.

The resident from 10 Winslow Street complained that it will be open 24/7 and if the playground is available 24 hrs/day we all know what that means. Already drug paraphernalia has been found in an adjacent area.

The above statement hoped to conclude the Public Statement portion of the meeting.

Minutes

November 13th PSC meeting.

Motion: Move to approve the minutes of the November 13th meeting as amended.

Motion: Kerry Adams Seconded: Jamie Kryszkiewicz Vote: 5-0-0.

November 16th meeting.

Motion: Move to approve the minutes of the November 16th meeting as amended.

Motion: Kerry Adams Seconded: Jamie Kryszkiewicz Vote: 5-0-0.

Superintendent's Update:

▪ Report Cards

The report said that we have had to make processes compatible with the IB model. We have begun the process with Kim Pike being able to further elaborate on our changes.

We have melded and so we've begun to align our report cards – and it's standard on what we want our children will be assessed on. So the report cards that we put together combine rubric and the central part of reporting out to families. Kim continued by saying that we hope that this report card will better inform families of their students' progress.

▪ Winter Concert 12/20 – 6:30 p.m.

The school is planning a winter concert to be held on December 20th which will be called *Stars Fall On Provincetown*. We invite everyone to attend and the operative word is that it's FREE entertainment.

▪ Honor Roll

Kim Pike said that since she has been here we've always had a high school honor roll. Now we've decide to create an honor roll for the middle years program. This is the first year in grades 5 through 8 and we've decided to submit our charter to have a junior honor society. All the children in that age range are excited!

Unfinished Business:

Playground Discussion with Fairbanks Inn

The chair, Shannon Patrick, said that the rules for the discussion will be limiting statements to 2 minutes each. Each person can speak once unless a PSC member addresses them. Also, try not to repeat on what has already been said.

Cass Benson gave the history of the playground. The PSC did ask for an opinion from town legal and a description of our playground. Many things went into the decision and it was determined to be the best location. It will not affect any parking spaces, it's also visible from our building, it did not require removal of trees and will only be used by children aged 5 thru 12. Every element is surrounded by safe space. Recess periods will have up to 35 children using the playground and also the picnic table area. Our children will be supervised at all times when they use the lot which will be monitored by the police. There will be signage stating - no usage after dark and there will be no lights added.

The Community Preservation Fund is paying for the playground and they have stipulated year round usage and 24/7 availability.

Shannon read a letter written by Eric Yingling which stated that the playground was approved by the town meeting. He is saddened by the closure of the high school but excited about the schools programs.

Then the lawyer for the Fairbanks Inn, Chris Snow, rose to speak on the abutter's behalf. He asked the Superintendent to allow the Chair to answer his questions since he was addressing her. He knows that there have been many letters written and you're considering them on tonight's agenda? Had the previous two letter writers requested having their letters read publicly? The answer was yes-it was requested.

Chris Snow then announced that he was here for the Fairbanks Inn owners and they've been maligned. They did buy next to the school. They're probably overtaxed. Their major grievance is the matter of the location. We are standing on the roof of the gymnasium (his reminiscences of years ago and referring to the floor of the library). He continued down memory lane saying that the gym was so low that our basketball teams were champions year after year.

After his two minutes – and then some – had elapsed, he said - we'd like more time. There is everywhere else on the school grounds many other locations that should be considered. He said - perhaps your focus is misplaced. You also have an area for staff parking. You should have an area dedicated for this and maybe use that for the playground. Several days ago – one of you and the Superintendent toured the Fairbanks Inn and that was appreciated. He concluded by stating - while you're at it – look at the parking area. The parking lot is owned by the school and why are you not making the entire revenue - get the revenue back from the town which is owed to you.

Kathleen Fitzgerald – one of the owners of Fairbanks Inn said - let me be clear – we are not against the new playground. We are supportive of the school and grateful for the PSC and she knows personally how much the volunteers give of their time. We're also your neighbors and we have a tremendous stake in the location. She has spent much time reading about 3 years of PSC minutes and stated that hind sight is 20.20. She would have attended every school meeting but didn't want to create an intrusion. She doesn't know why this work can't be halted.

Beth Singer, the Superintendent, said that in selecting a location we involved the company that installs playgrounds, we involved landscape architects and playground designers. They all walked the entire property. They have one set of criteria and we have others i.e., proximity to bathrooms, proximity to the nurse, visibility from inside the building – you don't want a secluded place where people are hidden. Also, a playground has to be absolutely level - we are surrounded by uneven ground – some sites were eliminated. The original site was eliminated because there is a drainage pipe in the ground. She continued painstakingly naming other locations and why the current one was finally selected.

Beth continued - when we walked around the Fairbanks Inn – we saw where their breakfast was served and no children would be outdoors playing at that time. She's trying to answer all the points that she heard. She made the mistake of not reaching out earlier. She didn't think of special invitations because she's never done this before. There will be clear signage eliminating the use of the area at night.

Shannon asked Kathleen - what is your check-out time? Chris shot out of his chair and asked - what's the relevance of the question? We're trying to work together.

Another direct abutter said he is not here to refute the need for the playground but we were at no time invited to discuss this issue. His concern is not the children.

That corner is a mecca for drug addicts. We would like trash receptacles. We asked for it to be locked – landscape it – it's pretty standard.....to lock these playgrounds. It's often when I sit on my patio there are people playing guitars, shooting up, etc. There are tons of people in this community. We are a major thruway. We are just asking for dialog - some people have been great but we were notified at the 11th hour. It's not very sensitive to the people who live below the hill.

A fellow from Sandwich said that he was here to speak for Kathleen and Alicia. Since 2005 he and his wife have enjoyed this community. We have stayed in many of the rooms in the Fairbanks Inn. He has nothing against the gay community and he loves diversity. There is a place for children making noise and then he went on with his opinions.

Sean – lived at 8 Webster Place for one year. Now he lives on Bradford Street – he would love a sound barrier

Betty White spoke next and said – this sounds like the argument for Affordable Housing – as in yes we need it but NOT IN MY BACK YARD!

158 Bradford Street –a woman whose name sounded like Robin Bazlen-Weglarn suggested using arborvitae and wants the group to reconsider the fence. She said that she was a fount of information on fencing.

Beth said that she had looked into acousta-fence. She continued - we're trying to find the best solution for noise reduction.

Jamie K. said - we really want to address all the perceived problems.

Lisa Colley, a teacher, said that she's confused – she's heard there's a lot of noise – how is the situation going to be worse? We currently have a playground at VMCC and we don't have a lot of problems.

Chris Snow bounded up again and tried to placate the PSC by saying that we really appreciate the time and effort that PSC has put in. This is a worst place you could probably place the playground. You have the area behind the gym – a hill that is tailor made to excavate and get a twice as large area. Forget about the placement of parking revenues. Redesign this and we'll help you do it.

Kerry A. said we are more than happy to sit with the neighbors; we offered to put in security cams, signage, not to be used after dark – we want to be good neighbors

but if there is another possibility and we want to make it as soundproof as we possibly can.

Kathleen Fitzgerald asked – are you willing to choose another location? Answer- we will look again.

New Business:

FY-14 Budget Presentation & Discussion

Since these minutes have become too long to read, they have been abbreviated by the fact that this budget will be reworked and re-presented on December 18th. There are many suggestions and thoughts on trimming the budget but since the presentation was the first draft and the suggestions from the PSC were many, it will be reported in detail in the next set of minutes. Beth introduced the budget by stating that she wanted to stay within a 2.5% increase but was unable to meet that goal.

PSC Comments

Jamie had none.

Lory asked about another location for the playground. Beth said she hates to see child-oriented places that are hidden. Beth went down there again today and looked it over – it's the access issue.

Beth stated - one other consideration is that when you design a playground you purchase it with the space in mind. If the dimensions and/or space change then the purchased equipment will not fit.

Kerry had only one word to say - compromise.

Adjournment happened at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Gaudiano

E. Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ on December 18, 2012.

Shannon Patrick, Chair