

D38 (cont. from page 1)

three. Committee member Ashley Cook explained the process, saying that capacity issues could not be solved by moving sixth-graders into the present single middle school and that building a new middle school, due to the need for labs and other special facilities, would be much more expensive than building a new elementary.

The utilities for a new elementary are already in place on the Bear Creek campus, and Jackson Creek is the primary area of growth among elementary-age students.

Cook pointed out that the committee considered several sites for the new school, and most were impractical because they were not in the area of maximum growth or did not have sufficient infrastructure. A site in the new Forest Lakes development was favored because the developer has set aside the land and the committee wished to have one of the schools on the west side of the highway, because parents preferred not to bus their kids from one side to the other.

Growth predictions might be conservative

Committee member Michelle Glover said that the committee strove to get Tri-Lakes demographics specifically and that the committee feels that growth predictions may be conservative. There is also pressure to change local zoning from commercial to residential, which would increase the demand for school services.

Developer and committee member Matt Dunston said that the schools need to be where the people are. Jackson Creek is where the kids are. By changing Bear Creek back into a middle school and moving sixth-graders into the two middle schools, 10 to 15 percent of space in existing schools is made available. In that way, fewer of the present students at Bear Creek would need to be accommodated in a new elementary.

Board Treasurer Chris Taylor asked about the growth rate of the district over the past three or four years. RTA Architect Doug Abernethy responded that the rate is increasing.

Director Mark Pfoff asked whether the committee was limited to certain sites and whether cost was a major factor in decisions.

Committee member Anne-Marie Hasstedt responded that the committee first considered land owned by the district. She also pointed out that if the district wants to build only one large elementary school, more land would be needed.

Superintendent Karen Brofft said that as more developments are built

there may be other sites available. Perhaps it is wiser to think in terms of geographical location than a specific site.

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman said that the district has only enough land to accommodate a school for 650 students. To avoid re-drawing boundaries, the schools at the Bear Creek location would have to serve grades K-4 and 5-8.

Committee member Teresa Barnes said that the district should build a school west of the highway because the Beacon Lite corridor is beginning to grow with entry-level homes and apartments appropriate for young families.

Tri-Lakes Chamber President Terri Hayes said that traffic should also be considered. An advantage of smaller schools is less traffic.

Pfoff asked whether there are limitations to the Forest Lakes site. Abernethy responded that the Forest Lakes site has the newest roads and utilities and good access for emergency services. Glover also commented that Forest Lakes has the least commercial traffic.

Taylor commented that it would take two years to build and populate a school. Brofft responded that by centralizing preschool services, some space could be claimed in existing schools. This solution would also benefit the preschools by making it easier to identify students who may require special service. Preschool students are not included in the numbers considered by the committee. (*Please see www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#d38 in the December issue about DAAC discussing preschool options.*)

Board Vice President Tiffney Upchurch said that each current preschool room only serves up to 15 students. By freeing up these rooms, more students could be accommodated. Wangeman agreed, saying that a centralized preschool would require seven or eight classrooms.

Taylor asked whether there was space for a preschool at Lewis-Palmer High School. Pfoff said that there was a preschool at Palmer Ridge High School at one time, but parents like to drop their preschoolers off at the same school as older siblings.

Pfoff suggested that Kilmer Elementary should continue to be pre-K to 6 due to its distance from other schools. He suggested that parents would be less willing to drive their students to a central location for preschool services from that distance.

Abernethy suggested that by building two elementary schools, the decision to centralize pre-K could be postponed to a phase 2.

Uses for Grace Best

The committee discussed uses for Grace Best Education Center. The op-

tions were to keep it as is, tear down the entire building, or tear down the older part and retain the newer, two story part. Advantages of keeping it include:

- The district already owns the land
- Central location
- Has less traffic in its present use than it would as an elementary

Disadvantages include:

- Much of the building is not up to code
- There is too little land for a 650-student elementary school
- New construction is quicker and cheaper than a remodel

Pfoff commented that by making Bear Creek an elementary, the flow of younger students to District 20 was slowed. This confirmed that an elementary in Jackson Creek is needed.

Pfoff added that the district is already using the newer section of Grace Best, and dealing with problems in the older section would make the new section unusable for a time. The old part is now used as storage. Wangeman said that the building is in compliance in the way it is used now.

Brofft asked if the committee concluded that Grace Best is something not to pursue. The district cannot use the old part as a solution to population growth.

Dunston suggested that perhaps Monument Academy could use Grace Best as a middle school. This would allow the academy to accommodate more students, including elementary students at their present campus on 105. Pfoff said that he didn't think it wise to bring up this alternative at this meeting.

Taylor commented that money is being invested in Grace Best regardless of its use and should therefore be discussed.

Taylor said that his meeting with Brian Risley of CRP resulted in a report that Bear Creek, when it was built 15

years ago, was intended to be a middle school with an elementary on the same site. It could be converted back into a middle school relatively inexpensively. Another option would be to create a K-8 campus with the two buildings. He asked whether the K-8 campus should be part of the deliberation discussion.

Pfoff said that perhaps ask about K-8 versus K-5 and 6-8 at the deliberation the following week.

Taylor said that Bear Creek and the middle school are currently near capacity. The RTA suggestion is to build two elementary schools.

Board President Matthew Clawson suggested designating a certain population before considering a second school.

Taylor said that the second opinion on Grace Best is the same as RTA's—it does not offer a solution to growth and capacity problems. Money would be better spent elsewhere, but the district needs to decide whether it's an asset or a liability. CRP said that a nonprofit has expressed interest in it. If it's not good for D-38, is it good for a charter? The architect said that charters have different conditions to meet and there would not be buses for a charter.

Pfoff suggested just offering the alternatives of keeping it as is or selling or leasing it at the deliberation.

Pfoff said in closing that the board will need to start the ground work soon if it plans to put a bond on the November ballot to support these plans. The board needs to determine an amount and describe what it would cover. Brofft said that if the board did not begin proceedings in February, it would have to wait another year.

The board adjourned into executive session at 9:30 to discuss lease or sale of real property.

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D-38 deliberates: Community Outreach meeting Feb. 5

Community encouraged to consider options for long-term facilities planning



Above: Participants in the district deliberation vote their preferences. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

By Harriet Halbig

A second D-38 public deliberation session on the topic of long-term facilities planning was held on Feb. 5. As was the case at the November session (see www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#d38-1106), this session was moderated by Carrie Bennett. More than 100 people attended, including members of the public,

administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders in the district.

Each attendee was supplied with a placemat-size sheet of supportive material on the options to be discussed. These included the use of Grace Best Educational Facility (leave the facility as is or dispose of it through sale or lease) and managing student enroll-



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Friday, March 9, 2018

Start Time: 6:30 pm

"THE STUDENT BODY"



Description: This film is a true story of two brave girls who take a stand against government intrusion and hypocrisy while exploring the complex and controversial truths of the childhood obesity debate. Length: 85 minutes

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Spring Retreat

"YOU ARE LOVED, FORGIVEN AND PURSUED BY A JEALOUS GOD."

Saturday, April 14

9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Fee: \$45

Presenter: Sister Rose Ann Barmann, OSB

Retreat Description:

Come and realize that from your mother's womb, you are cherished and invited to participate in the Oneness and Threeness of God. Experience and rest in the knowledge that you are loved, forgiven and pursued by a jealous God.

