

## Update November

### ***What will the facility planning advisory committee do?***

In four scheduled meetings, the Mt. Hebron Facility Planning Advisory Committee, comprised of parents, staff and central office personnel (Ken Roey, Chair), is tasked in the HCPSS' design team guidance letter dated 10/02/07 to “develop a schematic design recommendation that addresses:

- the primary mechanical, structural, and electrical needs;
- abates hazards within the tunnels underneath the building;
- complies with applicable fire and safety codes (100% sprinkling of building) and requirements of the American with Disabilities Act; and
- includes State Highway Administration improvements and other regulatory agency site requirements.”

If funding remains after the above work a “secondary objective is to improve and/or increase net available program space in areas described as priorities by the Mt. Hebron Facility Planning Advisory Committee.” *HMH interpretation-- the building's innards are the top priority rather than programmatic needs and space deficiencies.*

If additional square footage outside the existing building footprint is included as a part of the design, then program space within that area will be built in accordance with HCPSS 1999 Educational Specifications. *An annex, if money is available, will be built to Ed. Specs. Any space reconfigured in the existing building will also conform to Ed. Specs.*

Where possible, the U.S. Green Building Council LEED for schools for new construction and major renovations (2007) will be used; certification is not required.

### ***What happened at the first meeting?***

Principal Dave Brown posted meeting minutes on [www.mthebron.com](http://www.mthebron.com) . Ken Roey introduced the consultants on the project: representatives from Smolen Emr (architect of record), J. Vinton Schaffer (construction manager of record) and the civil engineer. Members questioned why the construction management firm, J. Vinton Schaffer, and Smolen Emr were present without the project going out to bid. Ken Roey, stated that they were consultants of record. The job would not go out to bid. Only the construction management sub work would. Questions on HCPSS conformance to state law requirements pertaining to the bid process were unaddressed. Those questions were placed by staff into the “parking lot” (see below) for a future response.

Ken Roey began by asking the committee to select a site for the annex. He stated that if money remained after addressing the building's basic needs (mechanical, electrical, structural and life safety work), an annex may be constructed. While just a conceptual cost estimate, a 25,000 gross square footage annex could be built yielding 20,000 sq. ft. (\$240 per sq ft x 25,000 = \$6,000,000)

Committee members raised questions about the existing building's functionality and programmatic space needs. In response, Smolen, Emr, the current architect and past architect who authored the FIOA discovered April 2006 Report, spoke to the site's limitations and presented a floor plan of proposed changes. The plan was a scaled down version of option 2B which was earlier rejected by the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

Ken Roey again asked committee members to vote which of the 7 possible annex locations they preferred. Members questioned how this could be decided when the circulation bottlenecks and the programmatic space deficiencies were unclear. Instead, members wanted to identify major congestion points and program needs because the information would influence where an annex's best location would be. For instance, if the most congested area of the building is the northwest corner, placing the annex there exacerbates the problem. If Fine Arts or Physical Education were to be placed in an annex, it would be necessary to co-locate it near a specific area. Physical Education couldn't be placed in the northwest corner of the site.

Additionally, it was learned after further member questioning that an annex's optimal location would be 30 feet from the existing building and the connecting breezeways may not be enclosed or climate controlled. If the annex were placed on the west side, steep slopes require a two story annex and an elevator. Eventually, the committee agreed to only brainstorm the pros and cons of each of the 7 locations. The committee would not agree to vote on a location's preference due to insufficient information needed to make an informed decision.

Other information learned: 1) There are abandoned fuel tanks on the east side of the building which would remain unless the annex is placed there. In doing so, the fuel tanks' removal would require a "significant" dollar amount from the \$46.9 million budget. 2) According to Ken Roey, Mt. Hebron has enough teaching stations; therefore the current portables would most likely be removed. However, he pointed out that the annex would not include classroom space to replace the portables. Annex classrooms would replace only reconfigured existing building space.

Members' questions, which staff declined to answer during the meeting, were placed in a "parking lot" to be addressed later. Prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, staff emailed answers to some questions but did not answer others they considered to be "unofficial" questions. See [www.mhhspts.com](http://www.mhhspts.com)

### ***What happened at the second meeting?***

Members raised concern about the unanswered parking lot questions. Staff reported that they may be able to answer them later. No further discussion took place. Following the 10/30/07 meeting, Committee members have requested that the questions be addressed at the 11/13/07 meeting.

To discuss programmatic needs, a color-coded floor plan based on the Gilbert Report (June 2007) was presented. Ken Roey stated that members would have one minute to discuss needs and advocate for their prioritization in the renovation process. Committee members objected; they asserted that each area's limitations and deficiencies needed to be presented without time limits and question/answer dialogue should be allowed. All departments reported overcrowded classrooms with not enough room for the teacher to circulate; non-existent space to break students into smaller groups which results in students being sent unsupervised into the hallways, to the Media Center or to other classrooms to complete their work; too little storage space for project work (Art, Gifted & Talented) and materials and equipment; lack of computer access; and other various issues.

Upon review of the floor plan, committee members noted that numerous department areas were erroneously assigned on the floor plan, specifically 28 out of 64 classrooms were incorrectly assigned. Also, even though HCPSS has stated that Mt. Hebron has enough teaching stations, at least 5 areas classified as teaching stations are incorrect on the Gilbert floor plan. Two teaching stations are really teacher offices and one room is used for book storage. Another room is the drama work room. Two other rooms do not hold daily classes in them; one is the technology computer lab and the other is the reading room. Committee members are asking for the official definition of a teaching station in order to ascertain whether other areas are wrongly classified. Please recall that the Gilbert Report's plans were the basis for the Board's decision on how much money to provide the Mt. Hebron project.

In the committee's viewpoint these mistakes create a very fundamental and serious problem. HCPSS' inaccurate accounting of teaching stations has resulted in no net classroom gain for Mt. Hebron in the HCPSS plan. If not corrected, the proposed renovation will keep Mt. Hebron below the HCPSS standard for teaching station allocations. At the very least, the shortage will require the continued need for portables that Ken Roey said would be removed when the renovation is completed. Furthermore, incorrectly assigned department space leads to both the under and over estimation of space deficiencies for individual departments. How can the committee prioritize which department is the most deficient if the areas are wrongly assigned?

The committee also speculates that the actual measurement of a department's classroom space in their corrected assigned areas is wrong as well. HCPSS has commissioned and paid for two space analyses of Mt. Hebron. As a result, two different architects have two different square footage numbers for Mt. Hebron's actual space. Smolen's April 2006 Report identifies existing programmatic space as 123,808 square feet with a 61,580 square feet deficiency. The Gilbert Report (June 2007) states existing programmatic space is 137,565 square feet with a 35,514 square feet deficiency. The committee questions how can two different architects measuring the same exact space reach two different numbers? How did Mt. Hebron gain nearly 14,000 square feet in one year? The committee requested that the floor plan be redone to reflect actual conditions in the building.

### ***Next meetings***

The November 13<sup>th</sup> 2:30 pm meeting in the Media Center is, like all the meetings, open to the public. Ken Roey has directed committee members to vote on the four top areas the project should address. The vote is preceded by one minute of advocacy by members, even though not all departments are represented. However, more than four departments have identified program space deficiencies which limit the teachers' ability to deliver the program effectively. Committee members are reluctant to proceed with the vote that chooses one area of a child's education over another. Is Art more important than Social Studies, Science or Physical Education? Members are concerned that the structure of the voting process lends itself to a popularity contest and are reluctant to make such an important decision in this manner.

Because the committee insisted on taking time to discuss program limits and deficiencies on 10/30/07, additional meetings were scheduled or else areas would not be addressed, according to Ken Roey. Remember the public can attend each of these meetings and is encouraged to do so. The meeting schedule is as follows:

November 14, 2007 2:30 pm

November 27, 2007 2:30 pm

November 28, 2007 2:30 pm

**Feel free to forward.**