

Facilities Optimization Committee  
Weston, CT  
Regular Meeting Agenda  
April 5, 2022

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85872417908?pwd=VDQzb1ZDMWpqQ2cwVk9OdFpFN2JOUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 7241 7908

Passcode: 902539

Join by phone: 646 558 8656

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes
3. Discussion regarding a potential 3 school solution
4. Review of responses from questions asked in response to the Community Conversation #2
5. Discussion regarding the proposed options

**Town of Weston, CT**  
**Facilities Optimization Committee Regular Meeting**  
**March 16, 2022 7:00 PM**  
**Via Zoom**

Call to order- Chairman Bertasi called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Attendance: Richard Bertasi, Gayle Weinstein, Ken Edgar, Denise Harvey, Richard Wolf, Rone Baldwin, Steve Ezzes, David Felton, First Selectwoman Nestor, Tecton Architects (Jeff Wyszynski, Antonia Chiaverella), members of the public

Approval of minutes: Ms. Harvey made a motion to approve the February 28<sup>th</sup> special meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Edgar. The motion carried.

Discussion regarding feedback and follow up to Community Conversation #2:

Mr. Bertasi collated the questions received by the public in response to our community conversation #2. (See attached). He would like us to talk through the questions to make sure we are aligned with the responses.

Questions from Gregg Haythorn:

-Mr. Bertasi clarified that we did not present the options as educationally required, we presented several scenarios.

**-Q1**: What are the educational compromises required if one of the 4 buildings was closed? We have covered this, it is publicly available. We would have too many students in the building that is considered optimal for learning.

Mr. Edgar said that this was the primary question in the RFP, so we need to nail this down. We also had a pedagogical conversation about not moving grade 5 to the Middle School. Mr. Baldwin agrees that this has been an issue in the community and that we need to run this scenario to its full degree, including the economics. Ms. Weinstein agrees. She feels we first need to go back to the essential question as to why we can't go from 4 to 3 buildings. The students simply won't fit without an addition. Mr. Bertasi added that the volume of head count confirms this. Ms. Nestor remembers the discussion regarding why 5<sup>th</sup> grade should not be in the Middle School because of leadership and natural transitions. Ms. Weinstein feels it was the school administration who made that decision, but the BoE has not confirmed that bias. Ms. Weinstein also emphasized that preK-4 cannot fit into WIS. Tecton did a very thorough analysis of this. Mr. Baldwin would like to see the economic analysis of adding this addition.

Ms. Harvey feels we need to bring a consolidated analysis to the public. Mr. Wolf said that if he was not a member of the committee, he would not yet be convinced we can't go to 3 schools. Tecton identified spaces originally designed as classrooms that could be recaptured. This allows us to bring an additional grade into the school. What does that mean in terms of capacity? This needs to be presented graphically. He thinks we need to do the same analysis for the Middle School. PreK and K won't be able to be accommodated in 3 buildings. Mr. Wolf emphasized that we cannot handle preK-12 in 3 buildings without adding significant investment in space. A broader conversation is that we fully need to show the 3 school scenario played out. We will go through the information and put it out in an explicit way.

Mr Felton said that with all the uncertainty, we can't say that this committee has ruled out a 3 school campus. He agrees with Mr. Baldwin that we need to go back and do a financial analysis of the cost of building additions.

Regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the question, we are using the medium project from SLAM.

**-Q2:** Why is Tecton and the FOC informing the public that without building additions, proposed maintenance to the WPS buildings will be disruptive? Mr. Bertasi replied that not all the scenarios are equally disruptive. But the break/fix model of scenario one is the most disruptive. Work would be scheduled during school breaks, but things happen during the school year that must be addressed.

**-Q3:** Are these 3 options the only ones worthy of future consideration? Mr. Bertasi said we looked at many different scenarios, and these represent a good range from doing as little as possible to new buildings and leveraging WIS.

**-Q4:** What are the total savings estimated from closing one of the buildings? This analysis is in the public record. Ms. Weinstein said that we did the analysis from an operational perspective but we do not completely eliminating a building in its entirety in any of the scenarios, so the 10 year capital costs would remain, although there may be a difference in cost. Costs for Hurlbutt would shift from the school budget to the town budget.

**-Q4B:** Please provide a detailed explanation of the Tecton rating methodology. Mr. Bertasi will take with Mr. Wyzsynski about the details.

**-Q5:** No question identified

**-Q6:** A list of studies conducted by Tecton. Ms. Weinstein said that Tecton is not legally obligated to give this information.

**-Q7:** Provide Tecton's report on district wide academic outcome. This is not part of Tecton's scope of work

**-Q8:** What were the results of the library resource and space utilization? Mr. Bertasi said that this is incidental and immaterial at this stage.

**-Q9:** What is the Town's contractual recourse with Tecton? The contract is a public document and should be publicly posted.

Questions from Name withheld:

**Q1:** How many phases of STEAM are there, and shouldn't we be looking at the total cost of all the phases? Mr. Bertasi said that we will be looking at the total dollar cost. Mr. Edgar said that FOC will present the work that we have been tasked with. Tecton will work with the Town to review the rest of the buildings not included in the FOC study and we will look into the total dollar burden. This will be used to decide what should go into capital budgets, what will be bonded, etc.

**Q2:** On what data is the cohort of the grades based on? This needs to be answered by the school district.

Questions from Carl Urbania:

Q1:What do the kids get from a “21<sup>st</sup> Century” education and why does it cost so much? Response:The cost estimates are dependent on the scenario. The environment is critical to kids’ health and the wholeness of the educational experience. Mr. Wyszynski will gather some details to share.

Question from Nina Daniel:

**Q1:** What will happen to the Senior Center in these scenarios? Mr. Bertasi had a conversation with Nina who voiced her support for the 4 schools and the Early Childhood Education Center. Could the Senior Center be repurposed as a Teen Center after hours? We anticipate improvements and an expansion of the Senior Center in several of the scenarios. Ms. Daniels’ preference would be for a new Senior Center. Mr. Wolf said that the Hurlbutt complex should be the highest priority and that the Senior Center should be properly sized for the community. Associated with that is the issue of the portables and relocating those employees.

Discussion regarding next steps: Mr. Felton asked if there would be an additional cost for Tecton to review the 5-8 configuration. He does not feel it would be worth it if BoE does not approve a 5-8 configuration. Mr. Bertasi does not believe that there would be an additional cost. The discussion will be had with the full BoE in the next few weeks.

Mr. Edgar asked if we will be narrowing the options in our next meeting. Mr. Bertasi would like to come back with the 3 school content first, so that we can make a decision with all available options.

Ms. Weinstein wanted to clear up the misconception that we are adding space. While we are looking at building new space, in two of the scenarios, we are actually reducing the total school campus footprint by 9%.

Mr. Ezzes emphasized that the ultimate decision will be made by the voters.

Adjournment: At 8:45 PM, Ms. Weinstein made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ezzes. The meeting was adjourned.