

Minutes of the Special School Board Meeting

Of the School Board of Independent School District No. 709 held at the Historic Old Central High School, 215 North First Avenue East, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, on

Monday, January 9, 2012

Members Present:

Mary Cameron
Art Johnston
Tom Kasper
Mike Miernicki
Judy Seliga Punyko
Ann Wasson
Bill Westholm

Others Present:

Bill Gronseth, Interim Superintendent
Bill Hanson, Deputy Clerk
Sue Talerico, Interim Secretary

- Chair Wasson called the special school board meeting of January 9, 2012 to order at 5:42 PM.

Public Comment – None

Update: Central High School Property – Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map Amendment

Kerry Leider explained that the purpose of this special school board meeting is to update the board with regard to the land-use classification for the Central High School property, and to address their interest in the sale of the property and how it is impacted by the City of Duluth zoning for land use. Mr. Leider indicated he wished to update the board regarding the City of Duluth staff's *Proposed Recommended Future Land Use for Former Central High School Site*, which will be presented to the City of Duluth Planning Commission at its meeting of January 10, 2012. As a public entity, the District's properties land use classification must be in compliance with the City's comprehensive plan / future land use plan prior to being sold. Mr. Leider further noted that, per comments made to him by school board members after attending public meetings or reading articles in the newspaper regarding the City's proposed recommendations for the Central High School property, the school board may want to take action relative to the land use classification and land use map being proposed to the City Planning Commission, then the City Council.

Mr. Leider introduced City of Duluth staff Chuck Froseth and Keith Hamre, who gave a summary of the process by which they developed the proposed staff recommendation for the Planning Commission, future steps in the process that ultimately leads to a City Council proposal, and answered questions regarding the same.

Board members and Interim Superintendent Gronseth expressed concern with the late timing of this meeting and the randomness of the boundaries. Keith Hamre stated that the District is allowed to ask the City to give more time for dialogue and planning with the District. Member Kasper asked how to formally ask the Planning Commission to table this for a month. Discussion, questions and answers took place. Member Wasson expressed that the land use classification for this property needs to be broad enough to benefit the city and taxpayers; we must make sure the tax base is there for the community as a whole and that the tax burden is not.

Chair Wasson encouraged the school board to take action and asked if there are other comments.

Member Cameron presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

Central High School Property – Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map Amendment

WHEREAS, the School Board by Resolution B-6-07-2452 adopted a Long-range Facilities Plan for the District, and therein also directed the District's administrative staff to commence with the disposition of certain non-school sites including the Central High School property that will no longer be used for purposes set forth in Minnesota Statute Section 123B.51; and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLP) with Map that categorizes the Central High School Property use as "Institutional"; and

WHEREAS, the sale, redevelopment and repurposing of the Central property, other than for institutional uses, requires an amendment to the current Comprehensive Land Use Plan - Map, and where City Planning and Community Development Departments have completed a process and created a recommendation to amend the current Plan, and they have presented this recommendation for consideration by the City Planning Commission and then the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the School Board has been presented with a copy of the City Staff report recommending the amendment to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and have considered such Plan as it relates to the District's obligations to Tax payers and what the School Board resolves will be in the best interest of the Duluth Community as well as the School District;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Duluth School Board, hereby resolves they are not able to support the CLP Map Amendment as it has been recommended by City Staff; the reasons for non support and objection are as follows:

1. The School Board and District have adopted and have substantially completed a Long Range Facilities Plan that contemplates a value for the former Central High School property based on its highest and best use other than a school.
2. The Proposed Amendment to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan recommends a Map that randomly divides the approximate 77 acre property without regard for existing platting, and this bifurcation is expected to result in significant devaluation of the property and severely reduce property redeveloper interest in this site.
3. Should this Plan amendment proceed and the devaluation of this property be experienced, the School Board expects there will be a correlating property tax increase impact affecting the property owners in the School District; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the School Board hereby requests the Planning Commission and City Council postpone action on this current Staff recommendation until it is modified and amended in a manner to resolve the Duluth School Board's reasons as stated above for their non-support of the recommendation.

Resolution B-1-12-2965

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M-Cameron, S-Kasper, to approve the Resolution B-1-12-2965 – Central High School Property - Land Use Plan Map Amendment.

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Chair Wasson requested that Kerry Leider attend the City Planning Commission meeting of January 10, 2012 to request, on behalf of the School Board, that the issue be tabled to give the District and City time to work together in adjusting the land-use recommendation to be more flexible. Chair Wasson also stated she would appreciate them looking at the same for the Rockridge and Kenwood properties.

Upon a vote the same passed - unanimously

- Chair Wasson adjourned the Special School Board meeting of January 9, 2012 at 6:47 PM.