

The buildings and grounds committee met in the Forum Room on August 11, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. with the following present: Abby Geotz and Mike Domin. Jamie Skjeveland, Steve Stroschein, Tim Ramerth, Erica Marcussen, Travis Fuechtmann, Josh Schiffler and Bill Tollefson were also present.

Proposed Easement at East End of CRES Bus Loop Exit Driveway for Heartwood Main Entry – Steve Stroschein from the Crow Wing County Highway Department and Tim Ramerth, the District’s civil engineer at Widseth, were in attendance to present information on the proposed round-about to replace the current intersection at County Road 31 and State Highway 210. In close proximity to this intersection is the main entry to Heartwood, the CRES bus loop exit driveway, the new entry to the Super One retail complex, and the entry to Cuyuna Country Auto Center. With clearance distances required on all roadways approaching the round-about, the Heartwood main entry will no longer be able to stay at its’ current location. Areas of concern include the plan to enter and exit Heartwood from a driveway off the CRES bus loop exit driveway, as well as the increased traffic at where that driveway intersects with County Road 31, as one of two entry approaches to the new Super One retail complex will be directly east of the bus loop driveway. Josh Schiffler from Crosby-Ironton Transportation shared some of his concerns regarding the proposal. School district representatives had previously met twice with Crow Wing County Highway Department, including one meeting attended by a MN Department of Transportation (MNDOT) representative. At that meeting, the District inquired about the potential of having Heartwood’s main entry approach directly off of State Highway 210. That does not appear to be something that MNDOT will approve. The traffic count on County Road 31 is expected to increase from 1,400 vehicles per day to over 2,200 vehicles per day when Super One is completed and operational. With other options limited, it appears that the best approach would be for the School District to sell the exit driveway area to the City or the County to make it a public access road and to put some sort of automated gate just to the east of the bus loop to keep traffic from entering that space. Crow Wing County Highway Department would like a reply from the School District within the next 2 months so that they can proceed with the next steps of planning and a period of public comment and engagement.

Phase II Construction Update – The committee was provided with an update on the status of remodeling and planning as the start of the 2021-2022 school year approaches. Travis Fuechtmann, construction manager with Contegry Group, provided the following updates:

CRES 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Pod Classroom Enclosure – There is lots of construction activity at CRES as the project moves into the finishes phase. The ceiling grid is in and the above ceiling inspection has been completed, which will allow ceiling tile to be installed. Cabinetry and carpet are scheduled for next week. Movers and furniture delivery are scheduled to start on Wednesday, August 25, 2021. There may be some items that are not completed, but the space is anticipated to be usable for staff and students as school starts. One item that will not be completed, for sure, is student lockers. They are not expected to be delivered and installed until October or November.

Career/Technical Education Wing at the High School – The Career/Technical Education (CTE) wing was a more complicated project. From the start of planning, impacted staff and the high school administration were advised that this space would not be available for student use until sometime in October, and staff has prepared for delivery of instruction in other areas of the building using modified curriculum. Masonry walls are being installed, the painter has started painting the ceiling in the shop areas, as well as some walls, the storefront glazing is expected to be completed before the start of school, but is dependent upon completion of the masonry. If this happens, the temporary wall may be able to be removed because the actual doors and windows would be in place to serve as the barrier between students and staff and the construction activities. Many of the equipment items that were ordered are in queue to be shipped, with hopes of aligning delivery schedules with construction benchmarks which will allow the equipment to be moved directly into the space upon delivery.

Tennis Court Lights – The committee was updated on progress with the tennis court lighting project. There was hope that the light pole bases would be able to be shipped and installed prior to the start of school, but the provider will be sending the bases with the rest of the poles and lights. Work is expected to take place and be completed by

mid-September or early October. Work has been done in preparation for the arrival of materials, including sidewalk removal and installation of underground conduit between the locations of the light pole bases. The lights will have two control panels – one for the courts on the south side and one for the courts on the north side. When lights are turned on, there will be a timer to turn them off after a certain period of time, as well as a period of time from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., for example, where the lights will not come on. The committee also discussed potential ways of charging for use of the tennis court to help pay for the cost of electricity.

Phase III Construction Project Scope – The committee was provided with an update on the status of Phase III project planning, with remodeling taking place in the summer of 2023. Erica Marcussen, architect at Widseth, provided the following updates:

CRES 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pod Enclosure and Media Center Area – There have been several planning meetings with 6<sup>th</sup> grade teaching staff, Title I staff, Northern Pines and school counseling staff, special ed staff, custodial staff and technology department staff, in preparing the plans for these areas. The footprint for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade pod will continue the master planning already completed for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade pod classroom enclosure, except that modifications have been made to make the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms in response to teacher requests to make the classroom space as large as possible to accommodate 6<sup>th</sup> grade students being physically bigger than students in the primary grades. To further facilitate this, the flex classroom has been shifted from the west end of the pod to the east end, which is the smallest classroom space due to the original design of the building. The media center space has been redesigned to allow for the Northern Pines office space to be incorporated into this area, as well as Title I, redesigned elementary counselor office space, and OT/PT special education space. The “great space” in the area adjacent to where story mountain used to be is being configured to make that space more usable as a collaboration space.

Main Body of the 1976 Portion of the High School – Media Center/Locker Bays/Cafeteria – A group of high school staff and the food service director have been involved in several planning meetings to look at a redesigned and upgraded cafeteria/commons space. A Board member comment was that this would be a space where Board involvement should be increased because that space is the “storefront” for the high school. The combined 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade locker bay/commons space was also presented. The media center has been designed with space allocated for multiple smaller rooms or spaces, but work continues on potential modifications to refit those rooms, spaces and adjacencies into a different “puzzle” configuration. Technology department space will include a room presently labeled as collaboration space, but which could easily be converted into a student-staffed technology center in the future.

The architect and the construction manager will be at the August Board meeting to provide a similar report to the entire School Board. There will also be an action item asking the Board to approve Phase III project scope for the High School commons/media center and CRES second floor 6<sup>th</sup> grade pod/media center area to allow planning to continue toward summer of 2023 construction. This will allow for planning to continue and will keep the planning process on track to meet timelines to get plans submitted early to avoid delays in getting the building permit.

Potential Remodel of Junior High Band Room to Daycare – The committee engaged in dialogue regarding the potential to remodel the junior high band room to make it suitable as a licensed daycare space. Initial construction estimated, based on a cost per square foot and without input from a person knowledgeable in rules associated with licensed daycare spaces, as well as required outdoor playground space are estimated to be \$400,000. The largest unknown is now many children, and at what age levels, could be served in that space. The current plan would be for the School District to remodel the space, but to lease the space to a private daycare provider to operate. The committee discussed that CRES might be a more logical location, asked for information about what other school districts might be doing to address this topic, and how the remodeling would be financed.

Custodial Department Restructuring – The committee was updated on the resignation of two members of the custodial staff over the past week. With that level of staff turnover, it might be a good time to consider restructuring the custodial department to address issues that have arisen but have not been able to be resolved. The committee expressed interest in restructuring.

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by William Tollefson