GROVE CITY AREA
SCHOOL DISTRICT

ACT 34 HEARING

September 25, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Grove City Middle School, LGI Room
100 Middle School Drive
Grove City, PA 15127

Reported by:

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APPEARANCES

MRS. KIMBERLY BUCHANAN, BUSINESS MANAGER

MS. JAMIE DOYLE, PFM FINANCIAL ADVISORS, LLC

MR. DAVID A. ESPOSITO, AIA PRINCIPAL

MR. ANDREW EVANKOVICH, SOLICITOR

MR. JEFFREY FINCH, SUPERINTENDENT

MR. ANDREW GRAHAM, CHIEF OF MAINTENANCE

MRS. TAMMI MARTIN, ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

MR. MARK E. SCHELLER, AIA PRINCIPAL/PROJECT ARCHITECT

MR. ROB SCHIRRIPA

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MR. FINCH: Okay. I would like to get the evening started by welcoming everybody. I appreciate the nice crowd that we have, the turnout for tonight. Obviously this is a very important topic and discussion. My name's Jeffrey Finch. I'm the superintendent of schools here at the Grove City Area School District. I've been here a little more than a year and a half.

So the first job that I have tonight is just to welcome all of you, and I would like to do so by making introductions so you understand the folks that are here, their role for being here, and also your role and opportunity to contribute at the end of the agenda.

So I would like to start here on my right. Mr. Andy Evankovich is here from the law firm Andrews and Price. They are our solicitor firm, and he will be facilitating the meeting tonight.

We have Mark Scheller from Eckles Architecture. He's one of our leading architects on the project who has been working
with the district for quite a number of years. Eckles participated in multiple buildings here in Grove City. I can't list them all, but we are standing in one of them, that they most recently worked on.

Dave Esposito also from Eckles Architecture will be here covering a portion of the agenda.

Dr. Josh Weaver is our assistant superintendent who will be making an effort during our public comment period to capture questions that might be revealed through your comments so that we can develop a frequently asked question section for our Website so that the whole community can benefit from the responses that we will put together.

We have Jamie Doyle from Public Financial Management in Harrisburg. If you've been coming to our board meetings, Jamie's been in twice now to present a financial outlook in relation to this project. There are two different presentations that have been posted on our website that shows the different views. They've been looking at lending options for us, borrowing options, and she
will be presenting tonight a cost analysis.

Mr. Rob Schirripa. He is from Cannon Construction Management Services. He is our project manager. Cannon is another large firm that we are working with, and they have quite an extensive team. Rob represents that team at all of our meetings and engagements, and he is overseeing the construction management aspect.

We have Tammi Martin who is our elementary principal. She is our principal overseeing both Highland and Hillview.

And we have Mr. Andy Graham who is our chief maintenance. He is the guy we turn to for any facility needs and questions, and if and when the project progresses, he is an invaluable resource to the different folks that might be coming here to work with us. He knows what's in all the buildings and he has the keys to get to it.

So what I want to offer tonight is just a quick explanation that Mr. Evankovich is going to provide an overview. We ask for everybody, you know, to keep in mind one person speaking at a time. Each person on the
list or the agenda has a brief presentation,
and we really want to get to the portion where
you have an opportunity to provide commentary
or comment, and we do have a stenographer here
that is creating a permanent record of the
entire meeting.

So to our panel and anybody
wanting to speak as well as public comment,
we're going to ask for everybody that speaks
to come to the podium. She likes to be able
to see the person talking as well as hear
them. Please keep in mind to talk loud and
clear so that she can get the record.

So I will turn it over to Mr. --
oh, I did forget. This is not a board
meeting. So our board members are amongst the
crowd. I do want to acknowledge which board
members are here. I see we have Mr. Somora up
here to your left. We have Heather Baker. I
don't know where she is right now. I saw her.
There she is (indicating), Heather Baker.
Bernie Hensle, I noticed. Mr. Bill Norris.
Mr. Gubba, Paul Gubba. Mr. Gubba, back here
(indicting), Carolyn Oppenheimer. And am I
missing any others?
So certainly I would like to thank the board members for coming. Remember, a big part of tonight is to create the opportunity for your voice to be heard by the board, not only those sitting in the room, but also through the record we create, and a 30-day period after tonight where people can continue to provide input and comment, and that will be described further as we go along. So thank you for the board members that made it.

MR. EVANKOVICH: Good evening. As Jeff said, my name is Andrew Evankovich, and my firm, Andrews and Price, serves as solicitor for Grove City Area School District.

Together Dr. Finch and I will moderate tonight's Act 34 public hearing in regards to the additions and alterations/Hillview Elementary School project which will be constructed on the current Grove City Area Middle School site.

I will be initially reading into the record a client statement explaining a legal purpose for tonight's public hearing. After that I shall outline some of the procedures we will be following tonight.
In 1973 the Pennsylvania General Assembly amended the Public School Code with the passage of Act 34. The purpose of the act was informational, to ensure that no major school construction could be undertaken without making certain facts and details of a project known to the public.

To this and any time that a school district plans to build a new school building or expand an existing school building by more than 20 percent of its architectural space, the school district must approve and publish maximum building construction and project costs, conduct a public hearing in a format of a legislative hearing upon 20-days' notice, and provide a printed brochure detailing the need, the plan, detailed costs, and other features of the project in at least 20 days of the hearing.

On August 14, 2017 by a majority vote, the board of school directors authorized the addition and alterations of the Hillview Elementary School, the maximum building construction cost of 19,429,693. The term "maximum building construction cost" includes
general construction, heating and ventilating, plumbing, electrical, another structural expense, and fixtures and equipment and architectural and engineering fees on these items.

The term "maximum project cost" means those building construction costs of 19,429,693 plus all other costs of the project proposal including site development, rough grading access roads, architectural and engineering fees on these items, legal fees, and the like. The maximum project cost was authorized not to exceed 37,600,000. Included within the brochure is a form of public notice that appeared in the Sharon Herald on September 2nd and the 24th of 2017 and the Allied News on September 6th and September 20th, 2017.

The proof of publication will be made part of the final record once received. This brochure was also made available for public inspection at the administration office of the school district beginning August 31st, 2017. The brochure was also placed on the school district website beginning September
4th, 2017. According to and upon review of the public school code and applicable regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education, I find this public hearing duly constituted and properly conducted pursuant to law.

We will have several presentations by representatives of the school district. Thereafter, we will entertain public comments. Importantly this will be the public's opportunity to make comments and suggestions relating to the project.

Although it was not necessary for a resident to reserve agenda time in order to speak at tonight's hearing, those individuals who chose to reserve agenda time will be given the first opportunity to speak. Participants who did not reserve agenda time will still be given an opportunity to speak. We will recognize all participants who wish to provide testimony at tonight's hearing. You must preface your comments by stating your name, spelling your name, and providing your address and group affiliation, if applicable.

Each participant shall be limited
to a five-minute duration. The school
district is also required to maintain a
transcript of tonight’s proceedings. This
will be sent to the Department of Education
and will be available for review by the school
board. As you know, because we do have a
public stenographer present, to enable the
stenographer to maintain an accurate
transcript, we can only have one person speak
at a time. We, therefore, request your
cooperation in this regard. Written comments
already received prior to tonight’s hearing
will be made part of the record.

Lastly, if you do not want to make
a comment tonight, the public may still
provide written comments regarding the
Hillview Elementary School project until
Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at 12 noon. These
comments are to be submitted in care of the
school board secretary, Kim Buchanan, at the
school district administrative offices located
at 511 Highland Avenue, Grove City, PA 16127.
Such post-hearing comments will be made part
of the record of tonight’s proceedings.

Please note that to be included,
comments must be submitted to Ms. Buchanan.
E-mails, letters, et cetera submitted only to
individual board members will not be included.
With that, I will turn the agenda back over to
Dr. Finch for an introduction to the project.

DR. FINCH: The "PROJECT NEED"
portion in the handbook, we printed 50 copies.
So, a number of you may have them, and
Ms. Hawk just brought in more. So there's a
handful more if someone needs one. But it is
the end of Page 8. I am going to read a brief
summary of the "PROJECT NEED" and provide just
a little more information.

The end of the "PROJECT NEED"
states: "The mission of the Grove City Area
School District is to "'Equip All Learners for
a Successful Future." The need for the
proposed Hillview Elementary project is
primarily based on the fact that the current
elementary buildings do not empower the
collaborative and dynamic learning strategies
that the District is striving to develop and
provide to prepare students for the future.

Furthermore, the existing spaces
are compromised by age and wear. Practical
structural and mechanical repairs to the
existing buildings would not provide the
physical enhancements that are needed to meet
the educational goals established by the
community through the Grove City 2040
initiative."

As many of you know, I'm a
relative newcomer to the community. And a
big part of this initiative started about two
years before I arrived. A number of folks in
this room I recognized from the videos I
watched before I came, and I was impressed by
the high degree of engagement with a number of
different stakeholders.

The Grove City 2040 documents are
extensive. A majority of them are available
on the website if you have not found them. If
you go to the school board section under
GC2040, you will find a bit of historical
archive of documents as well as physical
documents that have been maintained in the
boardroom at our offices at 511 Highland
Avenue.

I bring that up just because
tonight our architects, Mark Scheller in
particular, will be touching on aspects of
that. But I want to explain in relation to
"PROJECT NEED."

The project need doesn't describe
the simple need to keep a building vertical or
to keep a building dry. It talks about the
desired design of collaborative and dynamic
learning spaces. So with schools like
Highland currently housing our kindergarten
and first graders, a building that's been in
operation since 1961, and it is a
double-loaded single corridor, what we are
saying is in addition to its age and wear, it
physically does not provide what we are
striving to produce for our kids.

One thing that is important to me,
before I turn it over to our architect, is
that in my short time here, I could not be
more proud of the efforts that I see on behalf
of our faculty and staff as well as the
students, for those of you that are parents,
send to our schools. I do not see our
elementary teachers or our elementary students
sit by waiting for this new building to start
to think bigger and better.
I see our teachers engaging in team camps and technology-based initiatives. I see our students reacting to programs like engineering and elementary, and I see a great excitement and influence about the design work that we've done so far in motivating our community, but particularly our teachers and students, to start to think about dynamic learning efforts.

So one of the things that I'm enjoying about the project is that in the theme of construction, in the idea of building, and a building starting with thoughtful design, form follows function. I see a deep level of engagement of our teachers rethinking themselves, redesigning their efforts, and students meeting them with excitement.

If this project continues with the support of the community and board, we not only intend to build a beautiful building to support the initiative of the district and to honor the work of the Grove City 2040 that many of you participated in, we intend to use it while in the process to engage our students
in very relevant learning of a community
working together to build something great.

So even though we haven't stuck a
shovel in the dirt, the efforts so far have
been used as a tool to teach our kids that it
takes a lot of hard work and people working
together to make big things happen. And
tonight's an example of it.

So, again, I thank you for your
attendance, and I turn it over to Mr.
Scheller.

MR. SCHELLER: Thank you,
Dr. Finch. Mark Scheller from Eckles
Architecture. Myself and Dave with Eckles has
had the pleasure of working with the District
and the District's team throughout the
initiation of the Grove City 2040 study,
throughout the study, and throughout the
options being explored and the considerations
that we have made and developed over the last
several years to get to this point this
evening.

The next part of the Act 34
hearing booklet and the information that you
have before you, are alternatives considered.
And the Department of Education wants to make sure that various options are considered and so that, you know, the project and the project need is derived from extensive exploration and a familiarity of the District's facilities, educational goals, and the needs as they move into the future. And so these are the options that were basically the combination of the 2040 study.

Throughout the 2040 study, various teams were assembled to look at options, such as educational programming, safety, security, athletics, building infrastructure, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, exterior envelope. And part of that study in that report, you can find the information that kind of qualified or assessed each of these facilities.

And so these options that I am going to move onto next explores the entire District as a whole. And the responsible way to look at that is through a short-term, midterm, and long-term planning approach.

Financially you're not able to do all the projects that you need to do all at
one time. So you need to strategically plan
for those and budget and get the absolute most
for the taxpayers' dollars; get the
educational programming, get infrastructure,
and get the mission of the District with one
or two projects and be successful for each of
those projects as they are done in the short
term, midterm, and long term.

This slide here kind of summarizes
each of those options. There are five primary
options that were considered. If you go to
the middle of the page here. And bear with
me, I like a laser pointer, so I'm going to
use it quite a bit.

Option (1) is a "Stay Put" or a
"Maintain Status Quo" option. And that is
simply to leave all of the grave groupings in
the buildings that they are in now and to
correct or address the deficiencies within
those buildings without shifting around any of
the students or the grade levels.

So that is a "Stay Put" option.
So we would look at the deficiencies of each
of the buildings' safety and security,
mechanical systems, infrastructure, even some
facial layout. Look at those and address them within the buildings as they are now.

Option (2) is "Consolidate Elementary Grades at Hillview Elementary School." And you can see here I've designated this is the selected option. And this is a project you will hear about more tonight as we move forward.

This was an effort to deal with Highland Primary Center and to eliminate the short-term as well as the long-term needs and the deficiencies of that building and to focus on a facility that is more appropriate for adding students and the future. And so Hillview was deemed as more of a structurally sound -- a better site and it had more capacity to expand than Highland did. Highland is located at the high school site, so the site is very tight and constrained, and Hillview has much more area to expand and develop that site. So the Option (2) was consolidating elementary at Hillview.

Option (3) is consolidating the elementary at the high school with the new high school on the middle school campus. And
this is basically taking all the grade levels
and throwing them up in the air and repurpose
them, or relocate those to other districts.
So this one is a pretty big move. This is
going to move the elementary grades to the
high school building.

One of the challenges with that
was that the elementary grades -- the high
school is not designed for elementary grades.
The spaces are not appropriate for that type
of education. So that was one point working
against that option. And then a new high
school on the middle school campus. That was
a long-range approach because you had existing
Hillview.

You had the middle school. You
needed to look at whether you could utilize
the existing site or you needed to purchase
the existing site. So that was a very complex
option that would not necessarily work within
a timeframe of two to three years. That will
be a very long process. This would be a
renovation of the high school for the
elementary grades, and then there would be
construction of the new high school. And that
became quite an extensive option that we considered.

Option (4) is an elementary addition at the middle school, and that was an effort to create a K-to-8 building at the middle school. So if you know the soccer field behind the middle school and the corridors that connect down -- we are here now. These corridors here and here (indicating), working down towards the back of the building where the classroom wing was at. Those corridors could be extended and a new elementary school could be built behind.

Challenges with that was that the middle school and the elementary school would need to share some spaces. The spaces weren't appropriate to be shared. There might need to be two offices, two entranceways, maybe two gyms, two cafeterias so that the higher grade level students could be separated, just from a control standpoint, from the younger students. So that became an extensive approach as well.

And finally Option (5). Reconfigure the grade level groupings, and that was going to further reallocate the
students. Seven to 12 would be in the high
school. The high school would need an
addition to accommodate the other grade levels
that are added to that building.

Fourth through sixth would be at
the middle school and K through three at
Hillview. So that was an option that was
considered. Then at -- you know, once these
were presented to the group and the public --
there was a public meeting. It was on October
19th. There were three options that kind of
rose to the top and sort of additional study
was merited for those. And that was Option
(2), Option (4), and Option (5).

At the end of all of that
evaluation, Option (2) was still the more
appropriate project. And that is what is
being developed and that is what you are here
to find out a little bit more about this
evening.

These are various slides that were
used during the evaluation of each of the
options. And as I mentioned, there is the
short-term, the midterm, and the long-term
approach. You can see we listed each of the
district's facilities. We looked at those. We looked at, you know, if a new facility was going to be built for Hillview, what would happen to Highland? Highland needed to stay in operation for several years until construction would allow those students to be relocated.

The middle school would certainly stay in operation, but there could be some site logistics and some mobilization on the site for the construction project that the middle school campus would need to endure during the construction. The high school and Forker Field, this diagram just sort of sets up a game plan, you know, looking at consolidating the grades at Hillview. I go back and forth. Forgive me. Consolidating at Hillview, how the rest of the District will be impacted through that.

This slide here starts to get a little bit more finetuned on the exploration. We look at the grades, we look at the students that are in each of the grades, and we look at how many square footage per student, and that is based on Eckles' experience as well as the
industry, the educational planning industry. We looked at about 180 square foot per student. And that's appropriate for an elementary grade grouping. And we looked at what the existing building could accommodate as well as what size addition could be used to accommodate all those students in the building.

And we are looking at approximately 872 in this exploration. And just keep in mind, these studies are done way before the true design and planning of this project occurred. This was all when we were just kind of brainstorming options. We didn't really know the specifics, so this is just a best guess scenario as far as the Hillview consolidation project.

And then we allocated some of the square footage costs; a unit cost based on renovation, based on the addition. And we came up with an estimate of probable cause. We did that for each of these options. I'm only showing you tonight the Option (2). But if you look back at the facility study, the District one facility study which is
available, both on the District website as well as the District office, you can see these options for each of the five studies.

This is just another diagram looking at the deferred maintenance of Highland, the construction phase of Hillview, and what would happen to the middle school. And we assigned costs. After the meeting on the 19th, we wanted to get a little bit more accurate on the estimated cost, what the deferred maintenance -- like if a mechanical system needed improvement at the high school, what could we expect for a cost.

So we went to great extent in the District one facility studies to look at all of the deferred maintenance costs based on estimates of what that work would cost. And we were able to use that comparison versus the project that we are looking at, Hillview, and find the sweet spot where the best value for your dollar was going to be spent. So those are the options that were studied. So here the next portion of the presentation is the project design. I'm going to forward my document here.
So Option (2) was selected for further development. So what is the process for project design? The Grove City team decided that it wasn't appropriate just for architects and engineers and faculty and administrators to design the project. They felt the need that the community should have a bigger say in how their money is going to be spent and how the education is delivered; what kind of facility the education is delivered to their students, to their relatives.

And so a way to gain information from a large group is to have what we call "design charrette." And basically that is a design exploration with a single goal that everybody within the group is working towards. And so we defined three community charrettes and held them on the various evenings, invited faculties, staff, parents, the community, to come and join us in these explorations.

The first one is the learning community design charrette. And this is a charrette where we ask the groups to design a classroom wing in a building. What spaces would you like to be adjacent to one another?
What shared spaces? What kind of lockers would you like? What configuration of the classrooms? Would you like a rectangular space? Would you like an L-shaped space?

We took an entire evening. We basically used cutouts and arranged and developed floor plans. You may have seen the options on the website and throughout the building. Those diagrams are still being displayed and were available for quite some time.

And then the second charrette was a STEAM program charrette. The educational trend is that the assigned technology engineering arts and math are a program that is designed very detail-oriented so that those spaces are collaborative. The regular classroom supports the steam program spaces. The steam program spaces support the regular classrooms, and it is a space that is very collaborative and shared amongst everyone within the district -- within the building.

So the STEAM program charrette really helped provide what that science program may like look, what technology, what
kind of spaces are needed to support that
STEAM program. So we had a lot of fun. Tammi
had set up multiple rooms with each -- with a
science program, with a math-based program and
everyone took time and went through the
building and explored those kind of STEAM
exercises. And we got back together and we
brainstormed how that program should be
facilitated into the Hillview project.

And then finally, the community
partner charrette. We know that the District
is an asset to the community as well as the
community is an asset to the building. So we
had an exploration where we asked people to
explore options upon how the community could
really use the building, but also how the
community could also further the education.
So it's not just within the classroom time.
There could be evening programs. There could
be weekend programs that the community could
come, use the facility, but offer additional
programs for the students in the building or
even parents in the district to come and
utilize those programs for some education that
might meet their needs.
So that program or that exercise would help us to define some of the top community relationships that are out there and allowed us to work towards defining spaces to make that relationship grow into the future; the YMCA, the college, GE, for instance, for science and those kinds of things.

You'll see when we go through the plan that there are community-oriented spaces that allow for easy access from the outside, securely from the rest of the building, but equally as approachable from the classroom wings of the building. So it's shared both with the outside of the building with the community or inside.

So then to kind of digest all of that and to focus those studies in the community charrette, we designed a project team. And the project team meets regularly every two weeks, and we have thorough discussions about various components of the project design. We take thorough meeting notes and publish those so we can remember what we decided and the discussions that we had.
And so that project team included board members, administrators, faculty, community members, architects, engineers, and construction managers. This is an extension of that community charrette approach. This is a very diverse team that is involved in the decision-making process. It is a sounding board. If something we are presenting or proposing for the layout of the building just doesn't sit well with that team, then we would reconsider it. It's just a really good sounding board for each of the design discussions and the development discussions as we were moving through the design to get to this point. And this team still meets regularly to make decisions on building programming, finishes, construction, layout, things like that.

So now I'll take you into the drawings. You have copies of the drawings. I know that some, in the books, were a little difficult to see. The site plan is difficult to see. Just, for some reason, the resolution as we shrunk this down for the presentation, things get a little bit muddy.
So this drawing I replaced with this (indicating) so that it's a little more simple in color and you can see the orientation of the building. So I'll walk you around the site. This is East Main Street up here (indicating). This is your existing building right here (indicating), the YMCA is here (indicating), and the middle school here (indicating).

So this is north up on the screen. So in the layout of the front parking lot, this parking lot is going to be maintained into its current configuration. There will be repairs made to it. The paving will be increased. The accessible parking areas will be enhanced and provided signage.

Their access into the building will be in this area (indicating) during the morning drop off and the dismissal times. This yellow portion is a proposed building expansion that we will be designing as a bid alternate. So the way that we work, the bidding document we will provide, a design for the base bid of the document, that is the bear minimum that you are going to want to build
and construct. But we will have alternates
that will allow complexity to be added to the
project, alternate materials, things like that
that you can add through an add alternate.
And so if the bids come in favorably during
bid time and those alternate things can be
considered and added into the project when the
final contract was signed with contractors.

So this right here is a
two-classroom wing alternate located here
(indicating). I'll show you in the floor
plans how that shakes out. In the gray
portion is your existing building right here
(indicating). The yellow portion is the
addition. A classroom wing addition here
(indicating), a two-story classroom wing
addition here (indicating). This is the main
entrance to the building (indicating). The
classroom wings, located here (indicating)
with access out to a playground, which is on
grade so the students can just come out to the
playground area to a safe, secure area with
fencing around it. So it is nice, safe, and
secure.

There is a gymnasium located down
here (indicating). This will make more sense when you look at the floor plan. So the layout of the site is that the busses will be dropped off here (indicating), coming back to the main entrance to the building. This is where the parents will be making a drop-off around here during the morning. They will need to park in the afternoon to pick up their students. They come into the main entrance, into the cafeteria, which is the existing cafeteria here, pick up their student, come out to their cars and then exit the site.

There's a hard surface play area here that is -- we are building the building over top of a hard asphalt play area. So we needed to provide that as part of the site development, a new space to do that. And you can see that is located here. But one of the dual purposes of this area is for overflow parking. The existing parking counts do not include parking in this area. We're talking with Grove City about that. And they are acceptable to this becoming -- you know, being a play area during the day, and then if there is an event, you know, taking place here that
you need some additional parking, you can use
the middle school parking, and you can also
use this hard surface play area and we will
mark that off and students wouldn't be able to
play there. Students wouldn't be able to play
and community wouldn't be able to play there
during parking events.

The reconfiguration of the parking
lot here is very similar to the way it is now,
but just because we're building over this
portion of the site (indicating), we needed to
realign some parking areas. So parking
counts. We were only needing, based on
zoning -- I'm going to go back over here so I
can see it. Total parking required is 175
spaces. The total existing parking that is
there now is 233. And we are providing a
total of 227 spaces which does not include
this overflow. So we can fit approximately 25
to 30 spaces in there as well. So you would
be exceeding the parking counts as the site is
now, beyond what you have now.

So I also wanted to let you know
that the District has engaged a traffic
consultant to evaluate the site. As it is
now, as it is in 20 years with a no-build
scenario, so no project is happening here, and
also 20 years in the future with a project
being built here (indicating), and with the
additional parents, with the additional
students -- and the bussing count is not going
to change. It is 15 busses now. It will be
15 busses now and into the future.

In summary, that report had
indicated that your site as well as the
intersections around are working at successful
rates. It does not warrant any additional
traffic lights. It doesn't warrant any
additional restrictions coming into the site
or out of the site. But I will say this:
that when we were with the borough at their
last meeting and we were reviewing the plan
with them, they recommended that we look at a
driveway in this area (indicating) that
connects over to Campbell Drive. And what
that will allow to happen is that the parents
will be able to come down here (indicating)
and as opposed to mixing with the middle
school or back out on 173, which is way down
here (indicating), they could come out, come
out of Campbell Drive, and then get onto East Main Street.

So, you know, a certain number of parents during that drop-off time could exit the site without further impacting the middle school and the other area. So we are looking at that right now. That may change from here, but the borough did ask us to look at that. So we have civil engineers as well as the traffic consultant looking at that.

As I indicated, the main entrance located here (indicating), one of the design features of the site is the fact that it does slow down. So we use sloping grade to our advantage to create a lower level of the building, which is right here. And you can just see on the diagram here that these are amphitheater-type steps. It is kind of an outdoor amphitheater or a classroom, if you will, so the students can come out of the building, whether it be from this entrance or this entrance, sit there, wait for their parents, or read outside the media center or the library. So it is sort of an extension of the inside of the building for classroom space
and used by the students as well as the community.

Also, you will note this zone right here (indicating), this kind of area, it encapsulates. This is the exterior wall of the building. Your play areas are here (indicating). The new building is being built here (indicating). This is an outdoor classroom, and it is adjacent to the art room. So it is basically an extension of the buildings out into an enclosed space that is hard-surfaced with adequate drainage. It is going to have access to several areas into the building. But the main adjacency that is quite successful there is the connection to the art room so then art projects that are inside can extend outside. Drawing could take place outside. It just opens up a lot of possibilities for that art program to use some outdoor spaces as opposed to how it was contained within the building.

So that's the site plan. Here's the building floor plan (indicating). This is an overall floor plan. And one of the main goals in designing a renovation addition
project is to utilize the existing facility to its full potential, to use the existing walls, use the existing classroom layouts, the kitchen, the cafeteria, if they work, to reuse as much as possible so that you don't need to expend as many resources in the existing building, and then that will allow you to purpose those resources and the money to the new or -- the expansion.

So that's the goal. We wanted to utilize the existing facility, the existing building, to its fullest potential, utilize the windows in their current location as opposed to adding new structure to put new windows in. We're going to make them better, but use them in the existing location. We are going to use the existing stairs where they are at. Toilet rooms, we will upgrade them and improve their appearance, their functionality. But they are utilizing them in their current location, which is one of the driving tools of a renovation.

So here's the layout (indicating). Here is your existing building. Here are the existing classroom wings. Here's your
existing entrance. Your offices are located here (indicating). The cafeteria is in the existing location. This is where we connect to the building (indicating).

The exterior wall of the cafeteria is removed and we expand the cafeteria. We connect to the existing building here (indicating) through a new lobby and a new entranceway. We expand the mechanical room. This wall of the existing building is where we take and we expand down towards the middle school.

This is an existing wall of the building (indicating). It stays as it is as well as here (indicating). This is the new two-story classroom wing that is built to the side of the existing building. And then everything down here is -- this is a classroom grouping here (indicating), the administrative offices, a media center and a gymnasium here (indicating).

So as I told you before, there are -- before I go into that, let's move into the next slide, because we will go through further detail. Here's the second floor of the
building (indicating). You can see that here is the existing roof. The second floor is in its existing location with some reconfiguration. And then here's that second floor of the new classroom and wing. These are all just roofs of the space below. The general roof, the classroom here, the entrance plaza over here (indicating).

Okay. So this is a slide of a K-to-1 learning community. If you remember back, I told about the learning community charrettes. Part of the charrette and the combination of that evening, it was determined that learning communities developed around grade groupings that are similar to one another was a successful approach.

It would put the K-to-1 classrooms and build a learning community based on their needs, their smaller needs, their smaller spaces, and they're type of collaborative space that works very well within the K-to-1 community. So I'm going to show you what that does. And the K-to-1 is as it states, kindergarten through first grade.

The kindergarten wing classrooms
are located around this area (indicating). First grade classrooms are located around here (indicating) as well as supporting spaces: Storage, faculty rooms, special ed rooms, planning rooms. They're all kind of within this community. But the one feature is that each learning community has a collaborative space that is age-appropriate to that grade level. And so this is the gross motor skills collaborative space. Adjacent to gross motor skills is small group instruction so that classes could come in, pull out of there if they need a little more privacy. But they can also, then, open up out into here (indicating) and be complimentary to one another.

So gross motor skills is going to have carpet. It's going to have very flexible furniture. It's going to have soft seating so that it can be moved so it is such as the name suggests. Gross motor skills will be developed in there. So those kinds of activities and physical exercises can occur in the gross motor skill space.

So the K-to-1 learning community focuses around the gross motor skills area,
but kindergarten and first have internal
toilet rooms to their spaces so that classroom
instruction can go on uninterrupted. The
students can go in if they need a little
assistance. The faculty is there to do that
for them.

So right up above if the K-to-1
learning community and the existing classroom
wing is the 2 and 3 learning community. Very
similar. Around the shared spaces, there's
second grade classrooms, there's third grade
classrooms. There is a space here for a small
group instruction. That's basically a
collaboration room. It doesn't necessarily
have a function associated with it other than
small groups will utilize it for media
presentation, talking, planning, strategizing.
Students can use it. Faculty can use it. And
it's adjacent to the academic coach's suite
right here (indicating). So these are the
reading and math coaches (indicating). The
resources for faculty are located in this zone
right here (indicating).

So this is all working around
their collaborative space, which is a major
space. Similarly to what you saw down below, we have some small group instruction that are complimentary to the major space, and it gives you that breakdown area, that planning space that is more sound, more isolated.

This is a large space (indicating). This can accommodate maybe two, maybe three classrooms in here in various areas. You can see that there is built-in stations with a sink here (indicating), with a sink here (indicating), and that allows for two stations, or two wet areas, to be utilized at the same time.

So this is the 2-to-3 learning community. And then finally the 4 and 5 learning community. So this is new construction. So we are not held so much to the existing configuration of the building, but we have new construction that is located at the fourth and fifth grade. Learning support, special ed, life skills, and Title I. There's the toilet room court, very similar to what is in the existing building. We took the model of the toilet rooms in the existing building and utilized it here.
So as the students move through the building, they will be very familiar with the bathroom layouts, where they're at. They are centrally located in the core of their learning community. So finding their way is not an issue.

And then this is the collaborative space that is developed in fourth and 5th. It is a little bit more developed. It is a little bit more advanced, as the fourth and 5th grade students would be themselves.

You have a small group instruction suite here (indicating). Two of them here (indicating) that are complimentary and adjacent to the computer lab. The computer lab is possibly where -- you know, that is where the computers and the design ideas could be initiated. That could be where they start their exploration, or they go there to research before they move into the next adjacent space, which is life sciences and a STEAM lab.

So this is a science-based collaborative zone which will have areas for the hydronics and the finny and the biology
studies. It will be very durable material so it can get wet. They will have gas. They will have electric. They will have all the resources they will need to fully exercise and explore the sciences. Then they can equally be connected over to the computer lab. So they are sort of one space that can be connected between one another.

What you are not seeing here, it didn't show up on this previous plan, but there is an overhead garage door that is going to open up and physically connect these two spaces with a 12-foot wide opening so it essentially becomes one room. So if the computer lab needs to expand into life sciences, they can do it, and vice-versa.

And then wrapping up this collaborative area is the secondary art room, and this is more of a fabrication and a little advanced part that the fourth and 5th grade students can use. And there will be shop-type tables. There will be small equipment where they can fabricate some wood pieces and do a hands-on approach.

So what that can do, is this is
essentially a located resource that the K-to-1
community could use. You know, the teachers
could come in and utilize this. This is a
space where the sound, the power, the dust
collection, everything will be located in this
space so that they can have that possibility
to use it however they wish as they deliver
the STEAM program. So that wraps up your
three learning communities.

The rest of the building is a
shared space. So up here we have a music
suite. So this is also the "M" of the
STEAM -- or the arts. I'm sorry, the arts.
The music classrooms are located here
(indicating). The LGI, which is existing
gymnasium in the space, that is going to be
reconfigured and repurposed to a large group
instruction. And it's not going to be a large
group instruction like this space we're in
now. This was more of a general, large group
instruction. It has, you know, satisfactory
audio and video. It has, you know, flexible
seating. This space is going to do that. But
we're going to take it another notch up.

One of the things that we learned
is that the community would love to have a
small theater on this side of the district.
And this is going to be that space that is
going to allow us to provide that to the
community. But it will also be an extension
of the music department. Practices can happen
in here. Performances can happen in here.

And this is a little bit smaller
venue. You can fit 3-400 people in here. Not
the entire building. So if there is a need
for an entire building presentation, that's
going to happen in the new gymnasium. I'll
show you in a moment. The kitchen is in its
existing location, but it will be fully gutted
and reconfigured to make the best efficiency
and the layout as possible because we are
adding additional students.

We want to make sure that they can
move the students through safely, accurately,
get them out to the cafeteria because we do
have additional students in the building. And
the cafeteria, as I mentioned before, and the
existing location, we are expanding it here
(indicating).

The cafeteria can seat -- it's on
another slide. I'll get to that with the numbers, as far as the seating capacity. I'm going to move to the next slide. This is the gymnasium, and this is the space that is very multi-purposed. It is going to be primarily a gymnasium, but if you look here, this is a bleacher arrangement that is fully retractable, and it can also come out to a partial extension which would allow for a full-size basketball court or volleyball court to happen in here. If it is extended all the way out, it accommodates about 720 to 750 people. You can pick up the remaining enrollment or population of the school by either sitting on the floor or adding removable seating here.

This wall of the gymnasium will be designed as a presentation wall. It will have a screen similar to this. It will have audio. It will have video capabilities. It will have sound and lighting so a full presentation can happen. Not quite to the sophistication that the LGI will offer. But this is that space (indicating). So within the building you have the capacity for smaller groups with
sophisticated presentation, and this one, which is large but still a very, very nice performance and components. Adjacent to it are lockers rooms, showers, storage rooms and coach's room.

Now this is also -- you can see at the top of the screen. This is a secondary entrance (indicating) off of the entry plaza where the steps/tier seating is located.

This is an entranceway that can be used by the public to come directly into the gymnasium. The security gate will be provided at this corridor intersection. And so this entire zone building can be used by the community but isolated from the rest of the building. Security is primary in laying out these facilities and we'll do that by using security gates, access control entranceways, things of that nature.

This is a diagram we saw before, but I think the kitchen -- we are approximately at 450 -- 350 students are able to be accommodated in the cafeteria. But the cafeteria is not just a cafeteria; it is also a multi-purpose room to be used within the
building as well as the community. There will be a screen. There will be projectors. There will sound panels and access panels like we have here (indicating) to control all the AV. So this is also a third option for large-group presentation instruction.

Here's the administrative offices (indicating). One thing I wanted to note is that this is a vestibule for a safe school entrance, and that is something that is improving what we have now at Hillview, which is that the exterior doors are not connected to the office space. So, you know, all the people are buzzed into the building. They can wonder through the corridors quite easily unless they are escorted, which is a burden on the staff and the office, you know, to leave their posts and the work they are doing to go out and escort someone in.

So this is a reconfiguration of a main entrance vestibule. The way it will work is that after bus arrival, all exterior doors are one hundred percent locked down. Everybody visiting the building must come to this main entrance vestibule. They'll park in
the adequate spaces outside in the parking area. This is an accessible way into the building.

These doors will have a buzzer located at the outside door. It will ring into the main office desk. If the person is deemed appropriate to come in, they will be buzzed into the door. Secondly they will be buzzed into this door. These interior vestibule doors which lead into the building are locked at all times. Everybody coming in gets access into the vestibule and then into the office to sign in, get their credentials cleared, their visiting passes, very similar to what we have at the middle school right here.

If everything checks out, they can go into the building. They can go into the principal's office and meet with Tammi, or they can meet with the assistant principal or psychologist. I did mention the principal's. A large work room here (indicating). There's a toilet room. There is mail. So the faculty, then, can access their mail from the outside of the office. They no longer need to
come in to get their mail. They can, you know, pick it up in the corridor and head off to their classroom, whether it be in the morning, afternoon, whenever they choose to do so.

There is a file room. This will be a locked file room for all the District or school files. There's a psychologist office. Adjacent to the administrative component of this is the guidance office, as well as the nurse. So students will come into the guidance area. This is kind of a welcome area. The counselor's office will have a direct view to visitors coming in, and they can have meetings out here in kind of a conference scenario, and also in the counselor's officer in a more private scenario.

The nurse's suite has an entrance in here (indicating). The nurse's office. So if the nurse is sitting at the desk here, she will have a direct view of students coming in. But if the nurse isn't here, the office staff also has a direct connection into the nurse's station so they can support the nurse when he
or she is not in the office.

Now, there are resting cots, there is a private exam room, and then the triage area out here (indicating), a refrigerator, locked cabinetry, and a sink.

So this is the administrative suite. It is relocated to the center core of the building so that everybody coming in goes past it. Everyone within the building goes past it. So it is a very accessible -- it is accessible for the administrators in this office to reach everyone in the building, as well as they can reach the admin as necessary.

This is an area that is -- the fourth and fifth grade wing is working out over the grade. The current grade slopes down and it creates kind of a drop-off area. So in order to minimize the amount of fill and provide the utility connect into the building, we created what we are going to call the ground floor. And this is a space -- the playgrounds are out here. These are the stairs that go up to the fourth grade and the fifth grade wing. This is an overhead garage door. This is a 3-foot wide door, a 3-foot
wide door (indicating). Your fire pump and
water and electric access will be coming into
this space below.

So as opposed to importing fill to
create the, you know, the fourth and fifth
grade wing, we created a space to locate
utilities, district storage, as well as play
equipment storage, because directly outside of
these spaces are the play areas. So they
could bring in equipment and store them there,
you know, after playtime.

Here's the exterior of the
building. This is the masking of the
building. We are still working on the
materials and the finishes and exactly what
the colors are. And you will see more of that
on the district's Website as we develop it
with the team. But one thing that we want to
show here is that you can see that we are
going to be very mindful. And the way you are
oriented, is East Main is up here
(indicating). Your existing entrance here
(indicating). Your existing back entrance to
the cafeteria is located here (indicating).
Here is the YMCA (indicating).
This is your existing classroom wing, and you can see that there is horizontal banding here (indicating). You've seen the building. You know what it looks like; the brick and the cast stone. We're going to use that same kind of vocabulary to inform the new design for the building. So it might have newer materials and different looking materials, but the vocabulary will be the same.

We will take queues from the existing building. The window spacing and the arrangements in the vertical patterns, that's going to be taken from the existing building and form the new. You can see that here in the classroom wing (indicating). We're going to also, then, minimize the height or kind of the experience of the height of the building, because -- so, this is essentially -- it's a one-story classroom wing.

Here's where that storage space is (indicating), and the utilities will be coming in here (indicating). We're going to use a very rusticated material down near the grade so it takes the abuse of the rain and the --
you know, the lawn care and things like that. Then we will transition up to a lighter material up here (indicating) and add a top of color.

So this will be stone, concrete blocks that will be split-faced, and then up here we'll have a lighter material with the windows dotted, and then we will use some different colors and materials to represent those vertical elements of the existing building.

You can see their flat roof located throughout -- they are really not flat. They are actually just shallow-sloped for roof draining, and they will be good permeable materials. And we will look at alternate options whenever we are working on that part of the project.

There is a gymnasium, a two-story gymnasium. Tall -- it is essentially two stories, but it is a tall gymnasium; very similar to the middle school. And here is your entranceway here (indicating). The next one shows the entranceway.

This is the parking area
(indicating). This is your existing building
(indicating). New mechanical room here
(indicating). New loading dock and trash and
dumpsters will be located here (indicating).
They are no longer located -- you know, we
pulled them and tucked them around the corner
for ease of access from the delivery vehicles
and trash. But it's also, then, around the
side of the building and no longer near the
main entrance of the building.

Here's the main entrance
vestibule, the entry plaza with the tiered
seating (indicating). Here's the media center
or the library (indicating). Here's the
gymnasium (indicating) and the fourth and
fifth grade classrooms only.

So that is it for the project
design. Thank you for letting me talk for so
long. There's a lot of work that went into
it, so it takes a little while to go over it.
At this point I will turn it over to Dave to
go over the project cost.

MR. ESPOSITO: Good evening. As
you see, the Act 34 hearing's purpose is to
inform, the second purpose of the Act 34
hearing is to comply with the cost limitations in Act 34.

Act 34 was developed to, you know, manage construction costs for new construction. Following through the process called PlanCon, which stands -- it's the acronym that is short for planning construction workbook. There are a number of steps in that that are labeled by the letters of the alphabet A through K. And part D of PlanCon, which the forms I'm going to review with you, are titled "Project Costs" based on estimates.

So besides designing the building, we've been working very closely with the administration and with Cannon Construction Management Services. They have been doing detailed cost estimates, quantity takeoffs, and then opinions of those components and the quantities to arrive at cost estimates for the project.

The forms that I am going to go through are selected pages out of Part D. After this hearing we have a 30-day comment period, and then we are eligible to submit
Part D. And we will submit that along with Part E, which is Design Development Submission. The board will vote on those, approve them, and they go on to Harrisburg for their review and approval. Again, these are small numbers. I'm sorry. This is -- for those of you that have copies, you can follow along.

This is Page 2 out of Part D, and it is broken down into new construction costs and existing and total. The reason the forms are broken down into new and existing is because Act 34 pertains strictly to new construction. And so they use the cost of new construction and test it to make sure it doesn't exceed the cost limits.

The other thing you will notice is that we have costs for general construction; for heating, for plumbing, for electrical. The minimum, four separate different contracts, is part of state law and is called separation's act. And all public work has to be bid that way.

So we come up with a new cost for general construction, an existing, and a
total. And these numbers all, of course, add up. As far as the actual -- what we call the structure cost, which is the bricks and mortar cost, they are currently estimated at 31,596,053. You see there's some blank spaces below. This is something that hasn't been determined yet. These figures include insurance being purchased by the contractor. If the owner decides to purchase insurance directly, then these figures will be adjusted and there will be costs put into these boxes. That is a decision -- that is a future decision.

You can see the architect's fees in the next group. And the reason those are in this project is because the department of education reimburses for these costs. So they are identified there. There are some costs for asbestos abatement identified following that. And, again, the reason those are identified is because those are reimbursable costs.

And then item or Line C, Movable Fixtures and Equipment, these are rule of thumb estimates at this point based on, you
know, other projects. We have them broken
down into the new and existing. This is for
the furnishings and equipment. There will be
some furnishings that can be reused that are
in Hillview but there is also some that need
to be purchased, particularly for the STEAM
labs, the equipment in those. So this is
another item that is reimbursable, and they're
talled.

There are some additional
reimbursements from sanitary and sewage
disposal. So those are tracked on this page.
And then the bottom of the form is totaled up
to that $34,628,538. On the next page, Page
3, these are referred to as the Soft Costs.
The front page was your bricks and mortar cost
and then the reimbursables associated with
that. So on Page 3 we pick up the
construction manager's fees. We pick up some
other miscellaneous fees, architectural,
printing, test borings, site survey, and then
a contingency fund. The Department of Ed asks
that you have a contingency fund established.
That will be an amount of money that is
financed when you finance the project. And it
is there for unforeseen costs, for costs that you might decide to do during construction. That is this figure right here (indicating). It is typically a percentage of construction costs. I believe for a renovation project, that's typically about 4 percent.

The grouping of costs below that are the Financing Costs. And these are for the bond issues that will be used to pay for this, and then you will get to this number here, $37,600,000. That is one of the numbers that the board adopted when they passed their resolution. The bottom of the form -- basically you notice the bottom number, $37,600,000 matches the $37,600,000. This is the financing and how it is arrived. And, again, I will be getting into all of this in more detail.

This page is "Additional Costs."
And the reason I included it, is just to show you that the budget is comprehensive. Mark had mentioned the traffic study. There is a cost for that. I assume this is an assumption estimate; legal fees. The building permit cost, you might be surprised by that, how
large that is.

    Special Inspections, that's also a
code-mandated inspection. We have to hire a
specialized inspection agency that will
inspect the construction beyond what we do.
They will actually do testing of material
strength and tightening of bolts and things
like that. We're going to do an existing --
we're going to survey the existing sewers that
are below the slabs in the existing building
to determine the condition of those. And then
the demographic study which was done as part
of the feasibility study, there's a cost for
that.

    The next page are the site costs.
The reason these are broken out is because
when a figure is determined for the maximum
project construction costs and new
construction costs, site costs are excluded
from that. And so these are estimates --
these are estimates of what we believe to
be -- or Cannon believes to be -- a cost
associated with the site construction. These
costs were in the figures on Page 302. But
they are broken out here so that later in the
form they are subtracted and that is used to
determine that figure.

And then the last of my
presentation is Page 20. This figure here,
$19,429,693, is the estimated cost of the new
construction only, not the existing, plus the
architect's fees for the new construction plus
movable furnishings and equipment for the new
construction less the site cost of the new
construction.

And then this number was adopted
by the board. And this will be used to test
against the aggregate expenditure standard,
which is the top limit of costs. Right now we
are about 1.4 million less than that aggregate
expenditure plan. That is the estimate.

So those are financials of the
project. Jamie Doyle will now present that
group of numbers.

MS. DOYLE: Good evening. I'm
Jamie Doyle from Public Financial Management,
Incorporated, and I'm the financial adviser to
the school District, and our job is to analyze
the various methods of financing the project
to determine the most cost effective method
that meets the school District's needs.

So we first looked at cash or a short-term loan and ruled that out given the size of the scope of the project. We next looked at the three long-term methods of financing, which consist of the general obligation bond issues, an issue through a local authority, or a financing through the state public school building authority, and determined that based on these analyses and past performance, the least costly alternative for financing the project is, in fact, the general obligation bond issue.

On the next page we also considered various ways to reduce the debt service and, therefore, local effort needed to fund the project. First of all, the school District will consider the use of bond insurance when they go to the bond market to begin borrowing money to pay for the project.

The cost of that insurance may increase the size of the bond issued slightly, but reduce the interest rate that the school district ultimately pays on the bond, therefore resulting in lower debt service.
The District is also considering
the use of a wrap-around debt service
structure. I will show you what that looks
like in a minute in the handout. But
basically what that means is the school
District is very fortunate in that they have a
very short debt portfolio remaining today, if
they did nothing, and were able to use some of
those drop-offs in the debt service going
forward to pay for this project. So I will
show you an example of that in a minute.

The district is also very
fortunate to be able to consider some cash
towards the project so they will ultimately
borrow less. And currently they are
considering a cash contribution of $7,495,060
in order to minimize the amount of bonds
issued.

The tables that are included in
your handout are broken out. We anticipate
breaking the borrowing into the pieces that
are $10,000,000 or less. That gives the
school district an even lower interest rate, a
bank-qualified interest rate.

So we will show you Table (1). In
2017 they issued $9,995,000, just below that
$10,000,000 threshold. Likewise, in calendar
year 2018, a second $10,000,000 issue, and in
the 2019 calendar year, a third $10,000,000
issue in conjunction with their cash
contribution that should fully fund the
project.

The good news is that the state
will share in the cost of the project. The
project is entitled to receive $8,680,430 in
reimbursement. Those dollars get translated
into a reimbursement percentage, which is
23.09 percent. That percentage then gets
multiplied by the school district's market
value aid ratio, which is 58.58 percent.

When you do the math and multiply
those percentages together, the effective
reimbursable percentage is 13.53 percent. In
other words, for every dollar the District
spends on the project, the state will pick up
13 and a half cents, roughly.

Also good news, the indirect cost
section is actually a saving section. So the
state requires the District to think about
other annual indirect costs that may increase
or decrease as a result of the completion of
the project.

So the District is estimating cost
savings of approximately $42,353 annually.
And the categories that are listed;
Professional Personnel, no change. Support
personnel, the reduction of one secretarial
position due to the consolidation of building.
So about $45,600 savings there. The
additional custodial supply is expected to
increase about $10,000.00 a year. And fuel
and utilities, the new systems will be more
efficient. However, the square footage will
also be larger, and so they are estimating
that to be zero, or a wash.

And then finally, additional
contracted maintenance and repairs, that is
expected to be about a $12,000 annually in
additional insurance premiums. There is
expected to be an increase of $5,300 annually.
So when you add together those increases and
decreases, that's how we get to the annual
savings of about $42,350 a year.
Likewise, that has a millage
equivalent, assuming a collected mill
currently provides $184,500, the indirect cost
savings will have a millage decrease of 0.23
mills annually.

And then in the final section,
"The Total Millage Impact," we're going to
look at the tables in a minute to back this
up. The three $10,000,000 bond issues that I
described earlier are laid out here. And
Table (1) is expected to have a millage of
about 2.23 mills. The second $10,000,000,
about 1.48 mills. And the third $10,000,000
at about 0.36 mills, for a total millage
equivalent of the three bonds combined of 4.07
mills minus the fact that the district already
has the mills in place to the tune of $500,000
which equates to 2.71 mills. So the net,
after you subtract that out, is 1.36 mills.
And furthermore, when you subtract from 1.36
mills, the indirect cost savings from up
above, of 0.23, that brings us to a total
millage equivalent of 1.13 mills.

If you look at the first table,
and I know these numbers are too small to
really see, but what I wanted to describe was
the wrap-around structure. So in this column
it's labeled existing local effort. You can see, you know, if the District did nothing, they are leveled out at about at $950,000 a year for the next three years, and then they have a big drop-off in the fourth year where their local effort drops down to $113,000 and, finally, they make a final payment here during the fiscal year ending 2029.

So what we do with the wrap-around structure is we start the new debt off in Column (2), the principle amortization off of very small principle payments until some of these drop-offs in Column (9) occur, and then we start to fill in with larger principle amounts as you look down that column.

And this satisfies state laws where they must have overall -- in the last column, Column (10), is the overall old debt and new debt added in. It must be level or declining. So we go through that. That's table (1). And then we have table (2) for the second $10,000,000, and then finally table (3) for the third $10,000,000. So at the end of the day -- and these are just estimates. The District hasn't bought in for any of this debt
yet. But at the end of the day on table (3), Column (10), the debt should be level right around $1.7 million as you look down that column which, again, satisfies state law.

That concludes my portion of the hearing and I turn it back over to Dr. Finch for the question and comments.

MR. FINCH: Okay. Just a quick explanation of how this will work. I know that we've been in here for a while and some people might need just a minute to -- a seventh inning stretch, so to speak, but I don't want to drag on the night any longer than we have to.

So what I'm going to ask is that before we take just a few minute break, so that we don't disrupt the speakers, if some folks need to step out for just a moment, I'm going to go over the rules of the comment period. And we'll take five minutes, and then you can come in and we'll go through it.

So, the comment period. You can see we have the podium over there (indicating). There is a microphone in case you are soft-spoken. Be very mindful the
stenographer wants to pick up every word. As Mr. Evankovich explained in the beginning, we have a five-minute limit. We right now had five folks, who I assume are here, presubmit a request to speak. So I will be calling those five folks first, and then after that we will open it up to the floor. So I could use your cooperation. I will move myself to that side of the room so I'm not interrupting the speakers.

I will be looking for raised hands and try to indicate until we work through everybody that wants to speak. But what I would like to do is not have a bunch of people standing at the mic and making the speaker uncomfortable, but kind of have an on-deck area so when we change speakers.

So, it's a good opportunity for me to pull maybe two folks to move over so you are not crossing through the speakers. So do your best to give me a que that you want to speak and I will get you to the on deck area.

During the period for you to speak, it is not a two-way dialogue. That does not mean that we don't want to be
responsive. So what we're going to be doing is, as you give your commentary, we will have a timer and Mr. Evankovich will try to subtly indicate with this sign. We didn't make it red. It's yellow. He will just tilt it up so keep an eye on this when you hit that 30 minute mark -- thirty seconds, not minute. I'm sorry. 30 seconds remaining.

We'll give you that indication so you know you can try to wrap it up. And when that 30 seconds is up, he will just flip it and hold this card up so knowing it is time to stop, and we'll put the person on deck.

During the time of comments -- one, we're going to have a complete transcription of the entire event. So we will be able to go through and look for specific questions. But Dr. Weaver is going to make his best effort to try to capture questions as he's hearing them, and he will be on his computer trying to start what we want to turn into a frequently asked question section to post in that Grove City 2040 section of the website where we can give accurate and thoughtful responses.
So, you know, don't expect from
the microphone that, you know -- I don't mean
-- you can say, "What day is today, again?"
And we aren't going to say. "Monday." So,
you know, it is a comment period. We will
capture the question and we will document it
and we will work on those frequently asked
questions to better the whole community to
access. And remember, this isn't the end of
commentary. This is the beginning.

So we have 30 days from here on
out. Mr. Evankovich explained the date. I
believe it's October 25th at noon to submit
those questions to Kim Buchanan our board
secretary, and we will try to put those
questions -- you know, match them up to other
similar questions and add responses where we
can and keep a very live document.

Remember that this information is
to be considered by the board. The board
holds the authority for the governing of its
votes. They will be called upon at the
threshold of time. Particularly in November
will be when we arrive at the eligibility of
after the 30-day waiting period to propose a
design for them to make the next levels of
decisions and to be considerate of the input
of the community even further. So look for
the frequently asked questions.

Once we get to the last speaker, I
will simply ask the members of our team that
have been working with us if they have any
closing remarks or comments. I'm not asking
them to -- we will put the list of questions
up so you can kind of check and see if
Dr. Weaver caught them. You'll know if the
stenographer cheated. (LAUGHING)

But we will give them a chance in
closing remarks to tie up any loose ends and
for the sake of the themes of things that
might come up, there may be some very accurate
simple responses they give to satisfy some of
the interests of those present. But if they
are not equipped to give a very accurate and
concise answer, they will withhold and
populate that document thoughtfully.

So once we're done, we will
adjourn and we will wait the 30 days for more
responses, and you can encourage folks that
aren't here to add responses as well.
So it is 7:25. At 7:30 I will begin with our sign-up speakers and we will begin the process.

(WHEREUPON, AT 7:25 P.M., A BRIEF RECESS WAS TAKEN)

MR. FINCH: I have the first five names. I'm going to read them in order so those five folks know you are up, and if you can choose an appropriate time to transition between speakers to move to our on-deck area, we would greatly appreciate it. We will make it as streamlined as we can.

Our five speakers that preregistered, I'll call them in order; are Sue Herman, Esther Salcetta, Josh Brown. Is Josh here? George Latkey. I believe I saw George. He's still here? He's already on deck. And Amy Trezona.

So, Ms. Herman, let's start with you.

MS. HERMAN: My name is Susan Herman, S-u-s-a-n, H-e-r-m-a-n. I currently reside at 710 Beatty Street, Grove City, Pennsylvania, 16127. I am a community member in Grove City. My affiliations include
formerly serving on the Grove City school
board and as a member of the Grove City 2040
committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to
share feedback regarding the additions and
alterations for Hillview. First and foremost,
thank you to the former school board members,
the former superintendent and administrators,
Eckles and the community members, of which I
see many here tonight, who took on the
initiative of the Grove City 2040.

This strategic visioning effort
focused on three guiding questions to initiate
a community dialogue. In addition, thank you
to the current board, the current
superintendent, the current assistant
superintendent, the administration, Eckles
Architecture and Engineering, Cannon Design,
PFM Financial Advisors for connecting the
original ideas and findings to
forward-thinking strategies to best meet the
needs of all students in the Grove City area.

The document provided for this
public hearing is a detailed chronology of the
project. It includes the ideas that were
generated, refined, and discussed. The role of the community and opportunities to provide feedback are well documented. The charrettes were an excellent example for the community to take a deeper dive into the understanding of the scope of this project.

There's evidence throughout the entire process of the commitment on the part of the teachers, many of whom I see here tonight, the administration, the superintendent, the architects, to consider all perspectives throughout the various methods that the community could offer feedback. The Grove City Area School District has a long history of fiscal responsibility.

Through the efforts of strong educational leaders, school boards that make the needs of the students and the mission of our District its highest priority. Fiscal integrity as they shared responsibility of all partners in this project, including Eckles, PFM, Cannon Design, and the school board. Thank you for providing such a comprehensive document to fully engage the stakeholders of Grove City in this discussion forum.
This is an exciting time to live
in the Grove City community with several small
businesses choosing to locate here, continued
commercial growth in Springfield Township and,
most importantly, a school District who
chooses to be forward-thinking in providing
the best educational experience regarding
curriculum, faculty and staff, and facilities
for its students.

Thank you for the opportunity.

(APPLAUD)

MR. FINCH: I think I neglected to
say -- thank you, Mrs. Herman. Each speaker
needs to say their name, spell their names,
and state their address.

MS. SALCETTA: My name is Esther
Salcettaso, E-s-t-h-e-r, S-a-l-c-e-t-t-a. Our
address IS 418 North Center Street, Grove
City, Pennsylvania. Over the past several
years, many citizens have presented concerns
and questions to the board that remain
unresolved and unanswered. I have been
compiling a list of those concerns and
questions and I will be submitting that list
to the board as follow-up to this evening's
hearing as part of my written testimony after
the hearing. My question this evening
concerns the ongoing lack of response from our
board.

For the questions that remain
after the Act 34 hearing, how will the board
be communicating the boards' response to
concerns and questions that have repeatedly
been presented to our elected taxpayer
representative denying taxpayers who have full
legal authority and responsibility for every
aspect of this project and the District's
educational programming. Thank you.

MR. FINCH: Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN: Good evening. My name
is Josh Brown. J-o-s-h, B-r-o-w-n. I live at
509 Forest Drive, Grove City, PA, 16127. I
come to speak tonight as a parent, former
student, and employer here in Grove City. I
work for General Electric, and I am excited to
be working with Tammi and her team in the
school as part of the STEAM program. If you
guys don't know what's going on with that, you
need to check that out. They are doing some
amazing things in the school for the kids. I
was blown away the other day when I was in there with Mr. Scheller. Great stuff.

What I would like to say is that I would like to thank Mr. Finch and the board and also the community for supporting this building project. It is important. We need to supply our kids with the best facilities as possible to attract the best talent and back that up with an education plan that I see kind of starting to shift back to a problem-solving base system rather than testing.

When you get out in the real world and you have to deal with what I have to deal with every day, equipment breaking, facility stuff breaking, having to figure out why this went wrong, why that went wrong -- right? The testing, you can test all you want, but unless you have a good set of skills to problem solve and you have the equipment and the know-how to do it, you are never going to succeed. And if we don't provide that to our children, it is a disservice to the community and the kids that are coming in. So, with that I thank you and have a good evening.

(APPLAUD)
MR. FINCH: Mr. Latkey.

MR. LATKEY: Good evening. My name is George Latkey. G-e-o-r-g-e, L-a-t-k-e-y. I reside at 350 Irishtown Road, Grove City Pennsylvania. It is in Pine Township. I'm glad that I had the opportunity and I was able to hear about this meeting this evening. And it's quite obvious when you look at the information that's been provided, how much effort and energy has been put forth not only through the school, but the community, the school board, and there's been, as stated by Mrs. Herman, many opportunities along the way for people to provide feedback and more opportunities than I've seen. And of course I've worked on this in the past. I taught science here for eighth grade for six years. I was a guidance counselor at West Middlesex for three, and now I work up at the county career center as a work-based coordinator.

This building project has undergone extensive research, and although I haven't participated in the 2040 project very much, I did participate in some of the charrettes, because I have a great deal of
trust for the elected officials for the school board, and then the administrators that are hired by the District, I have a great deal of trust that they're doing their best to make decisions that are in the best effort of the students and the community. And for me to participate in this, it's kind of the end, like I'm getting to see the final product of what has really taken years, well before Dr. Finch and Dr. Weaver were here.

This is something that started -- and I remember watching the Grove City Channel 201, and seeing these great performances by Dr. Netzworth (sic.). You would think he was an actor in Hollywood, although he may do that on the weekends, I'm not sure. But I'm very impressed with what has been presented here. It is quite a bit of information to digest, but I am objective about this and I think that there are a lot of things that have been discussed back and forth at some of the meetings.

I hear things about the board meetings. I've attended a couple of them. And I know that there is concern, however.
And in looking at the project itself, the number of students, some of the building projects in the area, some of the potential for new homes that are going to be built for people to move into the community.

You can look at it optimistically or pessimistically, but I think strategically our location here in Mercer County with how close we are to 79 and Interstate 80, people can travel to Pittsburgh, to Ohio, wherever they need to jobwise, but this community itself, Grove City, is a great community to live in.

I'm very proud to be a part of this community. And one of the things that I think -- and I could be wrong, and oftentimes I am, so I'm open to be corrected. But one of the things that this project, I believe, will address, is the need, in my opinion, to have full-day kindergarten. And I could be wrong about this, but I think Grove City is the only District in Mercer County that does not have that at this time. I could be wrong, but I do believe that it is.

So in my situation, although this
project hopefully -- and I am hopeful that it will move forward. By the time it's finished, my children, two and four, will probably not be able to have that experience of a full-day kindergarten.

So I'm in a situation now as a community member, as an educator, where my son is currently in full-day preschool. So now next year -- and I really want him to attend Grove City School District. I really do. But next year I have to make a decision, for my son and my daughter, what is in their best interest because I know there is at least one, maybe two school psychologists here in the building. Developmentally K through 5 are critical stages for students.

Any of those who have studied psychology know that, and that full-day kindergarten is something that I will see. Although my son an daughter may not get it here, it's going to benefit the community. And there are steps that have been put in place for mediation because maybe we don't have that now. But in order for my son to experience full-day kindergarten, it's going
to cost me $9,290 in tuition to enroll in a neighboring District that does have full day kindergarten.

That decision is going to have to be determined, but it is important to me because it is going to impact, potentially, the growth and development of my son for the rest of his life. So thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

(APPLAUD)

MS. TREZONA: Amy Trezona, A-m-y, T-r-e-z-o-n-a. I reside at 28 Trezona Trail, Grove City, PA. There's obviously really phenomenal things happening in our District, and I'm excited about where we are headed.

I know that the price tag of this project is large and, for some community members, it can seem daunting and overwhelming. But I think it's important to put that number into perspective. The price or the total yearly cost for the average taxpayer is less than $20. That is what it will impact -- that's the impact it will be for my household. So really what you're saying is for the price of a couple large
pizzas we will be able to educate our children of our community in a new safe, state of the art facility. At this point, it is so imperative that we focus on meeting the needs of our students and they embark on a future and a technological and a globally competitive society.

We have to acknowledge our responsibility to educate 21st Century learners. And to do this we have to equip both our students and our teachers with the space and an infrastructure where students can be collaborative, creative, engaged, and productive.

While my own children will not benefit from this new building, I am excited that other future generations will. My grandparents and my mother are Grove City graduates, as are my husband and I. My children will be graduates of Grove City. And I'm looking forward to the future, because I believe that as a community we have always considered and acted in the best interest of our children.

I sincerely hope that we will
continue to do so now. As I look forward, this could be the building that my grandchildren are educated in, and we need to be considering the needs of all of our students in all of our community.

(APPLAUD)

MR. THOMAS: My name is Doug Thomas, D-o-u-g, T-h-o-m-a-s. I reside at 561 North Liberty Road, Grove City. I don't think I'll be quite as inspiring.

MS. TREZONA: Oh, I wasn't trying to be inspiring, but thanks.

MR. THOMAS: But you did a really nice job there.

(LAUGHING)

MR. THOMAS: A few things I would like to point out in my analysis of this, and I can't underestimate how much I appreciate what the board has done, what Eckles has done, and all those people that are involved in the 2040. I do realize firsthand how much work you put into all that and how much work it is to go and sit through those meetings and weigh through all the information and make informed decisions to the best of your ability and,
still, no matter what, you are going to be
criticized.

So having said all that, I
appreciate everything that you've done in the
past and I appreciate very much how difficult
your position is. But allow me to point out
just a few things about this addition. It's
not that I'm against giving our kids the best
that we can give them. I'm very much in favor
of that. But there are some things on the
practical side that I think we really need to
consider before we move forward with this
37 million or wherever the final price ends
up. Hopefully it will be a little less than
37 million. Eckles is pretty good at
estimating how much construction costs are,
and when we've done other projects with them
in the past, they've come in under budget and
we were very pleased about that.

But there's 40,000 square feet in
Highland School right now that we want to
eliminate. And I understand the sentiments of
the community saying that school has outlived
its purpose and cannot be fixed. I
respectfully disagree with that, but if that's
the decision that the board makes, so be it. We will move forward. Because my grandfather used to say on a regular basis, "Boy, remember this; reasonable people can disagree and still be reasonable."

We don't have to be upset. We don't have to call each other names. We don't have to be unkind. We can still disagree and still be reasonable. So it is my position here tonight that the addition is 78,000 square feet. And if you do that quick math, we are adding 38,000 square feet onto our District that is shrinking in size.

The demographics has pointed out in this brochure, which I took quite a bit of time to read through, is thinking there are less students here than there were when George Pokrant (sic.) was in school. Yeah, he did go to school here. Or even when my kids were here there are less students. Or when I was on the board there are less students.

To assume that we are going to continue to shrink is not necessarily the case. However, the trends are for this area not to grow significantly. I do agree with --
I think it was Mr. Latkey that said we live in an area that is on a crossroads of Interstate 79 and 80. And, quite frankly, I bet my fortune every day that this area will continue to grow, because that's what I do for a living. I build things. But the real trends are that our school District is beginning to shrink. We have less students now than we did in the past, and yet we think it's important to add 38,000 additional square feet.

My question would be to the board, and to Eckles, and to Dr. Finch; is there anything more that you can do to shrink the size of this addition down to a more reasonable size?

I'm not saying you have to replace square foot per square foot. I do understand the need for the collaborative learning, but can you be a little bit more imaginative? As I look through that presentation -- and you did a really good job on the presentation, on presenting all the different spaces. As I look through it, though, there are so many spaces that I think are going to be
underutilized with the shrinking amount of
students that we have.

There is 119 students based on
this report. I'm sure it will increase. But
based on this report, there is 119
kindergartners. The largest class that I can
remember in Grove City is 200. So let's take
an average size class of 150. We are still
adding an awful lot of space with an awful lot
of money placed on the taxpayers to add that
space that I believe will be underutilized.

The last thing, and I am not a
naysayer -- in fact, I'm spending an awful
lot of money betting on Grove City continuing
to at least stay even with the status quo.
However, if we are betting a lot of money on
that outlet mall really staying as vibrant as
it has in the past -- the trends out there,
as I talked with the outlet mall managers, are
going down slightly. Their numbers are down
significantly. Let's just hope that that mall
stays viable, because that is a very large
source of our tax base revenue, and if that
goes out for some reason, our taxes will go up
significantly.
I do applaud the school board for all its hard work. I don't mean to cast disbursements on anybody's character, but I think it's time to really reevaluate the overall cost of this. I think it is too expensive for Grove City. I think we can do the same thing with less square footage. Thank you.

(APPLAUD)

MR. OPPENHEIMER: Hi. My name is David Oppenheimer. My last name is spelled O-p-p-e-n-h-e-i-m-e-r. I know that's not a household name, so I was asked to spell that. I live at 140 Overhill Street here in Grove City.

Thank you, Mr. Thomas, for the demographics information that he provided. I think it is accurate and vital to this discussion that we are having. We all want better education for our kids, but a fantastic new school building which we all would like to have is not necessarily equivalent to improving the education of our children.

I think we need to not fall into that trap that spending more money means better education. I would also say that I've
heard a little bit of disinformation tonight about the impact on taxes. I think we need to think about senior citizens. And one of the reasons why people do move into a tax district -- to an area, is because the school District provides a fantastic education, not because they have a curb appeal building. I would tell you that as a parent, that was not my top concern or consideration.

The taxation of the community is also very important. People take that into grave consideration when they think about where they are going to move. I also would just say, and the board will be glad to provide you with some of the information, but the benefits of pre-K-12 education I think has been greatly exaggerated. If you look at some of the latest research, it will substantiate that statement.

Six questions real quick for the board that I have: Why is the board ignoring a 2008 Eckles facility study that concluded that Highland had a use life of 30 years more with proper maintenance. That would be 2038. When did the board deliberate in
an open meeting the various construction
options that resulted from the Grove City 2040
citizen committee? I don't think that those
were citizen considered.

At what open meeting did the board
approve the current option from all the Grove
City 2040 options?

Fourth question. Why is the
majority of the board interested in accruing
more debt instead of waiting three years to
pay off the middle school before embarking on
another capital project. I don't think three
years is going to kill anybody. I don't think
the sky will fall.

Regarding Cannon's projected
construction cost on the Hillview project,
will the board ask Cannon to exclude the
construction estimates from the Philadelphia
area, as those construction estimates will
skew estimated costs of the project.

Number six. When in an open
meeting did a board deliberate and approve to
change to a full daycare kindergarten program,
additional pre-K classes.

I understand it's the board's job
to not just approve things, but also to supervise and get feedback. Thank you.

(APPLAUD)

MS. SWARTFAGER: Hi. My name is Julie Swartfager, S-w-a-r-t-f-a-g-e-r. I reside at 104 Overhill, Grove City, Pennsylvania. My husband and I moved into Grove City a couple of years ago and we moved here because we wanted to choose Grove City School Direct for the education of our children. I've been an advocate for public education for many years. I'm a believer in facility renovation. Due to some of my personal experience, I feel the scale of the project possibly might be inflated, and I think that sometimes as educators we feel that facility renovation is going to produce educational outcomes.

My husband and I lived in a District that did a 35-million dollar building project, and the students of that District concurrently choose to go somewhere else because of school failure. Certainly you're not in that situation here and that's one reason we chose
to come here. But you just need to not equate facility with educational outcomes.

I've been very encouraged here with the level of faculty commitment to the education of the children, and we just need to make sure we're not spending all of our money on a building and then not be able to attract the highest quality faculty that we can possibly, afford as well as providing professional development for these programs such as STEAM, as was described to you this evening.

I'm fully committed to supporting the board of directors. I believe in supporting what the board proceeds with. I mean, if they vote as a majority to move forward with the project, I will be a hundred percent behind them. I'm just a little concerned that there's too much focus on the facility at this time.

Coming from a District who put about 525 K-to-6 students in one building, I just wanted to highlight a couple problems that we had after the move to the consolidated building so that the staff could prepare for
that. One of them was the special schedule and fitting all the specials into a school day. And I think I'm sure that the faculty has thought about these types of issues, like having one gym and so many sections of kids coming through.

The bell schedules were lengthened. The school day was lengthened, and that affected the faculty as well. The transportation schedule was lengthened. What time your kids were getting picked up and brought home was affected.

Also, one of the things that we did was we put a lot of technology into the building, like the smart boards and all the latest bells and whistles, but if your staff is not professionally trained and also willing to use those, it ended up being a waste of money in some regard.

If you had a very traditional approach to teaching and you didn't want to use the smart board -- you know, you have to think about is this something you are going to require of your staff, or is it a choice.

I would say our biggest dilemma
with having a lot of small people in one building. Actually, moving little people around a building is a lot different than moving high schoolers. And getting kindergarten and even pre-K kids through a lunch line is quite interesting, and we ended up with starting some sections of lunch before 11:00 and overlapping groups coming. And there was a lot of frustration on the cafeteria staff with moving the children through the lines quickly enough. So those are some things. I guess, as a heads up for you as you move forward with the project.

Thank you for your time.

(APPLAUD)

MS. OPPENHEIMER: Hi. I'm Carolyn Oppenheimer, C-a-r-o-l-y-n, O-p-p-e-n-h-e-i-m-e-r, and I live at 140 Overhill Street in Grove City. I am a school board director. Administrators have inferred that Highland Elementary is at the end of its usage life. I have here part of the 2008 study. It states here about Hillview Elementary. The life expectancy of the building with normal maintenance should exceed
30 years. That would be 2038. So my question
is what has changed between 2008 and 2016 when
Eckles suddenly recommended that Highland no
longer has the same used life.

Also, why did the board not direct
the administration to obtain a comprehensive
third-party physical needs assessment of
Highland? And all of this from the company
that would not eventually seek to obtain
additional contracted work for designing and
construction of our facility. I would refer
to a company that would not have a financial
conflict of interest. When did a quorum of
the board decide to not deliberate in an open
meeting and authorize to make final decisions
about design and function of a plan of a
construction project?

When did a quorum of the board
deliberate in an open meeting to choose the
current project option from all options that
resulted from the Grove City 2040 committee?

When did a quorum of the board
deliberate in an open meeting about the
potential demolition of Highland versus other
uses of the facility?
When did a quorum of the board deliberate in an open meeting about comprehensive financial production associated with this project, and wages, benefits, pension, transportation, and other random expenses that have to be paid from local tax dollar revenue?

How is the school board informed of decisions that are being made by the administration and/or the general project committee regarding the Hillview project?

How is the school board informed of what is submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is eligible for reimbursement?

When does the school board receive copies of what is submitted to PDE for PlanCon?

I have asked several times as a board director for documents of those that have been submitted to PDE, and I have not received them yet. So I still don't understand why the school board is receiving copies of these documents when they are submitted to PDE regarding the Hillview
project.

What significant deterioration occurred either inside or outside the Highland facility between 2008 and the 2016?

Where have the comprehensive financial productions of the total annual budget of the district been for the public to review? This would include the annual expense financing of the project.

Based on the continual noninvolvement I have witnessed of the board in the decisions in this project, it looks like to me that six board directors are voting to support what the administration recommends for this project without having adequate information first.

This greatly concerns me, because the board's legal duty is to oversee all of the district's operations, including this construction project.

MS. WILSON: My name is Patty Wilson, P-a-t-t-y, W-i-l-l-s-o-n, and I live at 427 Old Mercer Road, Volant, Pennsylvania, 16156. I do have a soft voice. I do. I just wanted to respond to some things that were
said earlier in our meeting tonight.

There was the most recent
demographics study which the District paid
$15,000 for, if I remember correctly. It
indicated that there is not slower growth
happening, but that there was very slow but
steady growth occurring.

I sat in on that long, lengthy
session, and it was very well helpful. I am
also a member of the Springfield Township
planning commission, and my work there
informed me that there are a lot of things
happening. A lot of businesses are contacting
this community to get involved. And many of
those businesses are starting, not just in
Springfield Township, but in our District, in
the school District.

There was concern about too much
space, maybe why we have so much space. And
with all due respect to Doug Thomas, things
have changed significantly educationally since
you were so actively involved. And thank you
for your involvement. First of all, the
computer technology, the computer spaces have
increased significantly.
Secondly, and this is the one I'm the most proud of. Our District used to send all multi-handicapped students away. They couldn't be educated in their community with their families and with their friends. They were shipped out. I don't know when we actually did this, but it was when I was still working. It was at least maybe ten years ago. We moved -- we have all of our multi-handicapped students in our District now. That seriously influences --

(APPLAUD)

MS. WILSON: It was well needed. And that really effects our space usage as well. We need sensory deprivation rooms for some of these youngsters who cannot learn if they are in a traditional classroom environment. There's a makeshift sensory deprivation room at Highland right now, but it's not good.

We also need gross learning spaces for those students as well. So that's additional space. And I think that's everything I wanted to say. Thank you for allowing this to happen.
(APPLAUD)

MR. POKRANT: George Pokrant, G-e-o-r-g-e, P-o-k-r-a-n-t, 440 Memorial Avenue, president of Grove City borough counsel. I've heard a lot of debate and discussion tonight. The school District is the key to our economic strength, stability, and growth.

I agree that the facilities need to be addressed. They are decaying and lacking in the current structure and the current offerings that we need to have. But I would challenge the school board to make sure that we are addressing the academics as well as the facilities. Let's make sure that we have an academic plan that's been developed currently with the facility's plan to address what we need to do for the kids.

Right now we have people who are not coming to this community due to the education that we offer, due to the lack of commitment from the school board and, not to cast disparagements, but we need to get together on the same page and work on a symbiotic relationship and our academic plan
as well as our facility's plan.

Being the leader of the board that
really addresses the economic development, we
are concerned at the council level that we are
losing valuable teachers, whether or not they
are leaving the district or not coming here.
We need to address that and make sure that we
are strong academically as any other school
District in Mercer County and Western PA.

At one time we were a blue ribbon
school of excellence. What happened? Let's
go back after that. Let's address what we
need to do for the kids so that they can stay
here through the economic strength and the
stability of this community. Thank you to the
school board. I know it is a very difficult
job. I've been on council for 20 years. You
can't win for losing and you can't make the
right decision always, but please consider the
economics as well as the facilities. Thank
you.

(APPLAUD)

DR. FINCH: Any others?

MR. SCOTT: John Scott Somora,

J-o-h-n, S-c-o-t-t, S-m-o-r-a, 629 Euclid
Avenue, Grove City, PA. I imagine most people in here know me. I'm a board director at this time. I have also served on the 2040 committee.

I have some concerns about the project. I believe we do need some sort of project. I'm just not sure whether this is the project that the board has directed to happen. And if you have your papers here, if you go to page 9, Options Considered.

Now, I was a member of the board at this meeting. Okay? We had options 1 through 5 that we talked about. And it says here at a board work session, which was open to the public, on October 19, 2015, the board directed that the further analysis or short-term deferred maintenance needs and following long-term strategies be prepared. These options included -- well, somehow as a board I guess we narrowed it down to those three options.

My concern is that -- you can go back through the public record. I think I believe Mrs. Hermann was the president of the board at that time. I ask this question; when
did the board decide which option we were
going to go with? There is nothing in the
meeting minutes. And I'm a big person on
process. I believe we have a certain process
that -- the board of directors is supposed to
be a board of directors. All right. We're
supposed to ask tough questions and do the
right thing for the community and our
children.

I'm concerned about the design
process. When did the board decide to add an
administration wing? Well, we didn't. We
never decided to. It was added to what they
call PlanCon A. The first time I heard about
it was the week before we had to vote on
PlanCon A, because Eckles brought us our plan.

It was already all filled out and
ready to go, and we had to vote on it the
following week. My concern was at that time;
well, how come we didn't have any other
options. We put all the options in.
Everything came into this basket. And if you
look in there, it says "selected options." I
want to know when we selected that option, and
nobody can tell me.
I imagine we should have meeting
minutes of that meeting, if that's what the
board decided. I don't know. Do we have
minutes of those meetings? I was not able to
find them. And it -- but it says here at a
board work session. The board is supposed to
be directing this process. But as I look
through this booklet -- and there's five
decent options, and I believe we need to do
one of them. I'm just not sure which one.
Because the board hasn't really deliberated on
which one we do need. If you go to page 22
where it says "Project Description," and I'm
always concerned about words in a report. All
right. Because if you don't know, I'm a real
estate appraiser and I read reports and
drawings and contracts and all that stuff all
the time. Okay.

Option (2) was selected by the
school District. Now when they say "selected
by the school District," what do they mean?
Do they mean board of directors? I believe
that's where the selection process should have
taken place. I believe the selection process
was taken from the administration. I don't
believe the board had any input or at that
time decided.

And my concern is about the debt
service that we are going to have. I know we
have a financial consultant the has shown us
different numbers. And it does look all rosy
when you move the numbers around. It's only
going to be a 1.13 mills impact. My concern
is as a board director and as a tax payer, we
just passed a 40-some-million dollar budget.

Of that budget $30 million is
basically for the school district. The
additional is for the students at George
Junior.

We are taking roughly a
$30-million-dolar budget for the district. We
are going from $1 million worth of debt
service, which would have been paid off in
three years, to $2 million worth of debt
service for the next 28 years. That's a lot
of money to come up with all the other
obligations and different things that we are
going to have.

We have a teacher contract coming
up. How in a District can we raise $1
million. Well, roughly a way you can do it is by raising taxes 5 mills.

We passed a budget with a half a million dollar deficit. But in their plan they're taking an additional $500,000 out of the budget to pay for this debt service because they are assuming that we are going to still going-to have 1.2, $1.3 million worth of debt service.

My concern is that as a board of directors, we need to take this process back into the board room and make a decision, because the administrators -- we have two new administrators in this District now. One has never been a superintendent and the other has never been an assistant superintendent dealing with a project like this.

I believe that we need to take it back, look at it. It's not that -- the sky's not falling and we don't need to do this project tomorrow, but we can sit back, take a comprehensive look at what we do need for the future and make sure that our kids have those things for the future. Thank you.

(APPLAUD)
MR. FINCH: Any others?

MR. NORRIS: Bill Norris, B-i-l-l, N-o-r-r-i-s, 791 Enterprise Road, Grove City.
I would just like to ask the question so that it can be posted into the minutes. You know, what is the total savings potentially for us on reimbursement? I believe I heard some numbers of 13, 13.5, or 13.25 percent of the total construction. That's $5 million. So hopefully if I ask the question correctly it will be posted out there, but us, as the board, we moved forward on this. We know something had to be done. But don't look at what we're spending, but also what we're saving and what benefit we're providing for the kids.

MS. TURNER: My name is Karen Turner. K-a-r-e-n, T-u-r-n-e-r, 168 Perrine Road, Grove City, Pennsylvania, 16127. It is wonderful to be here this day.

First of all, I would like to thank the board for all your work that you do. I started off on the 2040 project. It was -- when I started, I didn't know what to expect. We had meetings every month. It was an
enlightening time, a time to give your
opinion, a time to listen to everything that
was going on, a time to talk to your teachers,
adминистation, and to get information of what
this project was about. I was about there
from the beginning.

I came here tonight to see what
the ending might be. Every meeting that I've
gone to as a board member -- person. I felt
like a member after a while, then I backed it
up. I thought, I don't think so. I don't
think so. There hasn't been many meetings
that I haven't been to. I've seen many votes
been taken, many conversations been done.
People might have a little lax of memory of
things that may be going on.

I have no agenda here. My agenda
is -- and I have no grandchildren, no children
in the school. My thing is, I want the best
for the children. Maybe things are a little
large in the buildings. It's changed since
1968 when I graduated in Grove City. I went
to the high school when it had fourth grade
through 1st (sic.) all the way up the line.
See, I'm a little older than most. So I've
been here for while. But you've got to look
-- we can't look at what we're doing. We have
to look at what's going to be best for our
children. Back in the day, yeah, we could go
with smaller spaces. Maybe if we look and see
that it might not be growing. But how do we
know? People are traveling up here every day.
I have a son that drives to Cranberry every
day. People travel now. They have not a
thought of getting on the highway and going
down.

If we make this place, the school
District, an outstanding place, get it back up
to where it should be -- that's our job.
That's our board members' job. That's the job
of the board to hire people that are top
teachers, top aides, top administrators. Get
it together, board. You work well most of the
time, but you got to get it together. You got
to get on one level. As long as you're not,
divided you will not succeed. You won't go
far divided fighting and bickering. But just
think the steps you'll take if you do it
together.

Come to a conclusion. Say, you
know, that we're going to do this project and
we're -- if we have to smaller it, smaller it.
If we have to go with what we got, we'll go
with what we got. But do it. Don't go
backwards. I've been to too many meetings.
You take one step forward and five back. And
I was so proud of yinz that night that you
just took the vote to say we're going forward.
I could have done a cartwheel, and that would
have been amazing all by itself. But we've
got to keep going forward. We've got to keep
going forward. Do some more communications.

If you don't like the -- and you
think it's -- write your letter. Get it
together. People, as a community, that's what
we got to do. I pay taxes here just like
everybody else, but if you have an opinion
that you don't think this should go on or it
should be smaller, I want to see you a little
more at the meetings and I want to hear your
voices being heard, because this is our
community. Let's do it together. I'm all
done. I'm all done.

(APPLAUD)

DR. FINCH: Okay. Before we wrap
up, as I said at the beginning, I would like to give our team that's been up front here this whole time -- nobody is obligated to do a closing remark or comment. I like to give you the opportunity. Mr. Graham is usually the guy that is doing the work but not talking a lot. So no pressure to be first, but if you have anything you would like to share in closing.

MR. GRAHAM: I would. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the board personally for all the work you've done getting us in the start of the 2040 to where we're at. Not only the board, but the community members, we had a lot of meetings over the last three, four years, and it took us a lot to get to where we're at. I feel we are at a critical point now, and I think things are progressing well. But thanks again everybody for your input.

MR. FINCH: Thank you. Our principal, Ms. Martin.

MS. MARTIN: I would like to thank everybody for being here tonight. At the elementary school, we are all working very
hard to engage kids, and the space will be
very beneficial. But we are going to proceed
either way and your support will be very
helpful.

MR. FINCH: Thank you.

Mr. Schirripa?

MR. SCHIRRIPA: Yes. We just
appreciate the opportunity to be part of the
team. We're excited about the project.

MR. FINCH: Thank you. Ms. Doyle?

MS. DOYLE: I would just reiterate
that the District is very well positioned. I
work with many school districts across the
Commonwealth. The fact that the debt
portfolio is so short, it affords many
opportunities that other school districts
don't have.

MR. FINCH: Dr. Weaver?

MR. WEAVER: I just want to thank
the community for coming out on a Monday
night, sharing thoughts, concerns, questions.
We will be populating the frequently asked
question section. I think I've gotten most of
the questions down on the laptop there, will
load them on the website. That may help as
well. And we will look forward to seeing what
the next 30 days brings in terms of other
comments or questions regarding the process.
Thank you.

MR. FINCH: Mr. Esposito?
MR. ESPOSITO: Our specialty is
school design. And because of that, we do a
lot of work with a lot of different clients.
Most of the school districts in Western
Pennsylvania at some point in the history of
our firm we've probably worked for.

A number of them for many of
years, like Grove City. I participated in a
dedication of a high school that had an
extensive addition focused predominantly on
their STEM and STEAM education. And this
district's committed to that. And I
compliment them. And in the little talk I
gave, I said, you know, at my age, and I'm 62,
I can remember as a child we were in the space
race with the Soviets, and I remember when
John F. Kennedy said, "We're going to the moon
in ten years."

I don't hear America do many big
things anymore. We've pulled our horns in.
We're afraid. We're too poor. We don't have the money. So, you know, that District has the same problems that you do. They have people coming to their board meetings that say, tell them the budget, you are spending too much money, I have to decide between taking my medicine and paying my taxes. But the board has stayed the course and they've been implementing STEM education throughout their curriculum from elementary grades all the way through high school. And they're winning awards and achieving great things.

You should not shy away from this. It is for our society that you are doing this. You are doing this to help us be competitive in the world and to improve the lives of the children that you are educating. That's what I have to tell you tonight.

MR. FINCH: Thank you.

Mr. Scheller?

MR. SCHELLER: It's been a wonderful process so far. It's been dynamic. It's been interesting. And, you know, tonight is a combination of a lot of work. And we've heard a lot of good comments. You know, take
every comment whether it's for or against the
project, there's passion here. And take that
passion and our students and our families are
better off for it. So I really appreciate it.
It has been a great ride with you all and we
would like to see you at upcoming board
meetings. We will be providing more
information and we will answer some of your
questions, as we do have some. So I really
just want to say thank you and I really
appreciate your passion.

MR. FINCH: Mr. Evankovich?
MR. EVANKOVICH: A good solicitor
knows not to prolong the meeting any longer.
I have nothing further to say.

(LAUGHING)

MR. EVANKOVICH: And I want to
limit the superintendent --

MR. FINCH: Let me take a quick
minute, as the superintendent, to wrap it up.
I just want to thank everybody for being here.
If I have anything I want to say
at the end is, I'm proud to work for you. I'm
proud to be here for your superintendent, and
I'm most proud of the passion that the staff
in our school has to work for the kids here. They are a horse worth betting on. You are not wasting your money on the kids or the staff of Grove City. I promise you that. So thank you.

(Whereupon, at 8:26 p.m., the record was closed.)
CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the transcript of the proceedings and evidence contained herein are a true and accurate transcription of my stenographic notes taken by me at the time and place of the within cause; that the transcription was reduced to printing by me; and that this is a true and correct transcription of the same.

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Act 34 Hearing - Follow-up Questions
1 message

Esther Falcetta <efalcetta@zoominternet.net>  
To: Kim Buchanan <kim.buchanan@gcasdk12.org>  
Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 10:57 PM

Mrs. Buchanan:

Please include the attached with written testimony/questions received after the Act 34 Hearing. I give permission for this to be shared with the administration and full Board.

Thank you for your assistance. Please acknowledge receipt of this message and attachment.

Esther Falcetta

Falcetta Act 34 Hearing Follow-up Questions.pdf
72K
Statement for Act 34 Hearing:

Over the past several years, many citizens have presented concerns & questions to the Board that remain unresolved & unanswered. I have been compiling a list of those concerns & questions, and will be submitting that list to the Board as follow-up to this evening's hearing.

As per my statement at the Act 34 hearing on 9.25.17:

For the questions that remain after the Act 34 Hearing, how will the BOARD be communicating the BOARD's response to concerns & questions that have repeatedly been presented to our elected taxpayer representatives, the nine of you who have full legal authority and responsibility for every aspect of this project and the district's educational programming?

Attached are additional questions related to what has occurred prior to 9.25.17.
QUESTIONS FOR ACT 34 HEARING: PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED AT LEAST ONCE PRIOR TO THE ACT 34 HEARING. Most have been asked multiple times by multiple citizens and individual board directors.

1. Please define the legal authority of public school boards and the legal responsibilities/duties that are specific to facilities planning and changes to the educational program? This will clarify for the public what should legally be expected of our elected taxpayer representatives when considering their authority and duties related to a facilities construction project and decision-making about the district’s educational program.

2. What were the dates of the open meeting(s) of the GCASD Board when a quorum of the Board deliberated and/or took official action on the following:
   a. Changes to the educational program (including full-day kindergarten, addition of district-operated pre-k, continuation of STEAM educational programming between grades 6 & 12; curriculum changes due to proposed changes in educational program, etc.)
   b. Selection of financial management services and decision to work only with PFM
   c. Comprehensive financial projections of all known and anticipated obligated/mandated expenditures that will be paid from local tax revenues. This should include wages, pension, health benefits for current and retired employees, transportation and all other known mandated expenditures.
   d. Review of all GC2040 options presented to the board & public, narrowing down to the current K-5 consolidation project being presented to PDE
   e. Current schematic design and financial projections relevant to what has already been submitted to Plan Con for Part D; and any revisions to Part A
   f. Comprehensive consideration of all available facts relevant to Highland facility and potential alternative uses vs. demolition and necessary site improvements after demolition
   g. Comprehensive consideration of all other district facility needs presented as immediate and/or short-term (within next 5-10 years)
   h. Financial planning specific to the K-5 consolidation project (in other words, setting budgetary limits for soft costs, construction costs, contract fees, etc.)
   i. Increased classroom ‘spaces’ vs. increased # of classrooms per grade level to reduce class size (student to teacher ratio)

3. How is the full board monitoring the financial investment of local tax dollars for all aspects of this project?

4. How is the full board monitoring the design planning for all aspects of this project?

5. What information is the full board using to monitor the design planning for all aspects of this project?

6. Do the decisions regarding the design and construction timeline that have been made by the Internal Communications Project Committee represent all decisions of the GCASD Board?

7. Who is legally responsible for all final design decisions for all aspects of this project?

8. Where are the comprehensive financial projections for ALL obligated/mandated district expenditures that must be paid out of local tax dollars (wages, benefits, pensions, charter schools, transportation, special education, etc.) for the next 5 to 7 years AND what is the projection for tax increases expressed in percentages and actual mills over this same time period?

9. Due to concerns from citizens about class sizes over 22-25 students per classroom, what specific research has the Board reviewed regarding educational outcomes aligned with larger classroom spaces vs. class size (teacher to student ratio)? When did a quorum of the Board deliberate this research in an open meeting?
10. Who made decisions about inviting community members to participate in meetings of the Internal Communication Project Committee?

11. Several community members and board candidates continue to make public statements about the "less than $20 per year per taxpayer" for the total cost of the proposed/planned project over the full term of debt service. Please either provide a detailed explanation that clarifies how this is being calculated (based on financial projections from PFM) or issue a detailed statement that refutes what is being communicated.

12. When will the BOARD be surveying all current parents and students to seek input about the current educational programming and suggestions for future programming across ALL grade levels? When will the BOARD be requesting input from post-secondary educators and employers regarding skills and competencies required for post-secondary education/training/employment?

13. What is a sensory deprivation room (as mentioned several times by Ms. Wilson)? How many of these rooms will be part of the planned construction?

14. When did the full board review the traffic study and deliberate the outcomes of this study in an open meeting to approve the current traffic patterns?

15. Where are the meeting minutes for the project committee after 7.13.17 (per comments made by Mr. Scheller at 9.25.17 hearing)?

16. How will teachers assist one student in classroom bathrooms while supervising other students remaining outside of the classroom?

17. Will there be fees associated with community use of 'community' spaces?

18. How will the district monitor community use of 'community' spaces? Will a district employee need to be present at all times when community members are using the facilities after hours?

19. What state-issued communication is being consulted to define the proposed 13.53% state reimbursement? Please provide either a link to state website with this current information or electronic copy of state-issued communication.

20. What secretarial position will be reduced to save the projected $45,653.73?
Written Testimony for Act 34 re: PFM Financial Analysis
1 message

Esther Falcetta <efalcetta@zoominternet.net>
To: Kim Buchanan <kim.buchanan@gcasdk12.org>

Board Secretary Buchanan:

Please find attached additional written testimony regarding. Please respond and acknowledge receipt of this submission.

Thank you,

Esther Falcetta

MVS: RED-GREEN

Strengths Development Coaching &
Relationship Awareness Training

10.10.17 testimony submission Falcetta.pdf
43K
10.10.17

Esther Falcetta

Written Testimony: Planned K-5 Consolidation Construction Project

Questions regarding inconsistencies between data in Act 34 Hearing Booklet and PFM Financial analysis dated 10.9.17

1. On page 53 of the Act 34 Hearing Booklet, there is data regarding potential reimbursement from the state. Please explain the difference between the following two amounts (using the 13.53%/13.53 cents/dollar data in the Act 34 Hearing booklet):
   a. 10.9.17 PFM Analysis; Page 3; Scenario 3; Column 18; $6,877,252 reimbursement
   b. 8.7.17 PFM Analysis: Page 5, Scenario 3; Column 18; $4,610,580 reimbursement
   c. Changes in Est. Project Millage between these two financial analyses
   d. Change in column 21 between 8.7.17 Analysis ($12K/year) and 10.9.17 ($43,353/year)

2. When did state reimbursement for the most recent Highland Primary Center project end?

3. Was any debt service for the Highland Primary Center project integrated into the financing for the GCMS project?

Thank you.
I would like to thank the Grove City Area School District and the Officials working on the Highland Demo/Hillview Expansion. I attended the meeting on September 25th, 2017 at the GC Middle School. I found the event very interesting and was happy to see what progress has been made.

I think the expansion is a wonderful idea. I think the space is highly appropriate. I firmly believe that wonderful teachers are already in place at the schools and that the opportunity for growth and improvement will only enhance what a great school district this is. When people feel valued, they always give more. What better way to encourage our teachers than to give them this wonderful new space to work in?

I do not agree with the suggestion that the project should be scaled back. My daughter is a 3rd grader in the school. Those rooms are tight. When I toured the classrooms in Hillview last year I saw crowded rooms, hallways and stairways. I fully support the square foot addition onto the school. I bet every space will be used.

As far as Highland is concerned, it is falling apart. I disagree with spending anything but demo money on that building. I firmly believe that if anyone has been in that school and seen the dripping tar, slanted desks, single pane windows, security and safety issues, they would then agree the building is at the end of its life.

Our children deserve more. We should all agree that in order to be a well functioning society, we must take care of all of our members.

No one likes to be in debt. However, I firmly believe that this is a cause worth spending what it takes. To reside in a school district community that has residents that believe we should not take care of its smallest residents is embarrassing. Highland does not have 30 years of life left. It shouldn’t have 30 DAYS left.

I fully support the leaders of this project. Thank you for all your time.
Molly Breakiron
Grove City PA
Hillview construction project

1 message

Lacey Altman <dundermuffin89@gmail.com>  
To: kim.buchanan@gcasdk12.org  

Wed, Oct 18, 2017 at 11:04 AM

Dear Board Secretary Kim Buchanan,

I wanted to write to express a few of my concerns regarding the current Hillview construction project. As a citizen within the Grove City School District, I have tried to stay informed on the process and planning of this project. I want us as a people to do what is fiscally responsible and best for our community.

I have been disturbed by some of the recent actions of our school board. The lack of transparency in decisions regarding the Hillview project has been unacceptable. While many issues have bothered me, two prominently stand out as direct violations of law.

First, the approval by board vote to commit the building contract to Cannon Construction Management Services. Financial documents were withheld, impairing the board’s ability to accurately assess the lowest bid. As per Act 14 Section 751, the lowest responsible bidder must be awarded the contract. It does not seem that this was the case with the construction management services contract award for the Hillview project.

Second, violations of the Sunshine Act occurred October 19th at the public meeting. Citizens were told that this meeting would be for the ‘purpose of discussing GC2040 Plan with the community’ (see minutes of October 5, 2015 board meeting). If this was a lawful meeting of the GCASD Board, a special meeting should have been called for a specific purpose, and only business related to that purpose should have been conducted. The purpose stated in the newspaper advertisement was also ‘for the purpose of discussing the GC2040 plan’. There was no lawful official action taken by a quorum of the GCASD Board during this meeting. There are no meeting minutes recorded for this meeting. Because citizens were misinformed about the purpose of this meeting, citizens made the choice not to attend the meeting and therefore, had no opportunity to present comment on matters of concern to the Board. Because of unlawful outcomes of this meeting, citizens were not informed of board business that would be conducted at the November board meetings related to ‘narrowing down’ possible facilities planning options. Because no minutes were recorded and published, citizens did not know what had occurred at the October 19 meeting and therefore, were unable to present their concerns to the board prior to official action of the Board in the November meeting. There are also concerns about whether a quorum of the Board was present at this meeting.

I hope these issues can be addressed and corrected. I thank you for your time and consideration of these matters. If you could please acknowledge receipt of this, I would appreciate it.

Sincerely,
Lacey Allman

Virus-free. www.avg.com
Act 34 Hearing Hillview Elementary Project testimony

Carolyn Oppenheimer <integritygcasd@yahoo.com>
To: Kim Buchanan <kim.buchanan@gcasdk12.org>  
Mon, Oct 23, 2017 at 3:45 PM

Dear Kim Buchanan,

As a Board Director, the following is my written testimony to be submitted to PDE.

I am concerned about the lack of transparency in decisions regarding the Hillview project. I also am not confident the Board adhered to the law regarding their choice of Cannon for the CMS contract for the Hillview Elementary Construction Project.

Therefore I ask these questions:

1 Please explain why Cannon Construction was the lowest responsible offeror through the competitive sealed proposals from all six construction management firms that submitted proposal? Please answer this question by referencing the fixed evaluation criteria from the proposal and/or any other criteria used by the administration when they reviewed the proposals and made the final selection of Cannon vs. Thomas & Williamson.

2 Please provide the agenda and minutes of the public meeting when the GCASD Board voted to select the current K-5 construction project from all other options identified in the GC2040 planning. This should NOT be a meeting in April or May 2016.

3 Please provide the agenda and minutes of the public meeting when the GCASD Board authorized the Internal Project Committee to make decisions on behalf of the GCASD Board. This committee I refer to is the one that included Bertie Hensel and Bill Norris as the Board representatives. I do not have nor was I given, any Board agenda or minutes that reflect the Board authorizing this, though if this occurred in a public meeting, meeting minutes are required to document this.

I would appreciate answers to these important questions regarding the Hillview Project, along with this being submitted to PDE.

Thank you. Carolyn Oppenheimer
testimony for the Hillview project
1 message

David oppenheimer <oppenheimerdavid7@gmail.com> Wed, Oct 25, 2017 at 10:30 AM
To: kim.buchanan@gcasdk12.org

David Oppenheimer
140 Overhill ST
Grove City, PA 16127
October 24, 2017

Mrs. Buchanan Business Manager

Dear Mrs. Buchanan,

As a citizen of the Grove City School District, I am concerned about the following actions taken by the school board that violate Pennsylvania law. It appears that there was an obstruction of transparency in the process of planning and approving the Hillview Project. First, the school board was not given a financial document that was presented to Superintendant Finch by Thomas and Williamson that was vital to the school board being able to make an accurate determination of which company was the lowest bidder for the construction management services for the Hillview Project.

Second, I believe violations of Pennsylvania law occurred at the public meeting on October 19, 2015. The meeting on 10/19/2015 was advertised in a local paper as a community meeting to discuss the GC2040 project and not as a school board meeting where official decisions would be made. Later the Act 34 Hearing booklet stated on page nine that the board determined at that meeting to narrow down the seven GC2040 options to three. One of the options is the present Hillview construction plan. There was no agenda nor minutes indicating that this was a school board meeting and there is also no documentation that a quorum of school board members were present. Therefore there is no proof that any legal official decision occurred at this meeting. Also, the public was not given the opportunity to comment on the decision to narrow the GC2040 options, so there seem to have been violations of the Sunshine Act.

Best regards,

David Oppenheimer