

Architect's Meeting Notes

Middletown Public Schools – Core Committee: Meeting #1

Middletown's Educational Future - A Strategy for Change

Fielding Nair International/Litman Architects

November 27, 2006

ATTENDANCE

Mike Crowley..... Chairman – School Committee
Rosemarie Kraeger.....Superintendent
Edward Collins.....Director of Facilities Management
Prakash NairFielding Nair International
Jay Litman, AIA.....Architect
Dr. Frank Locker.....Fielding Nair International



OVERVIEW

This was the official kick-off meeting of the Core Committee. In attendance were the new members of the Core Committee, town council, teachers, principals, leadership committee and administration. There were about 42-members in attendance.

SUMMARY

1.01 Mike Crowley and Rosemarie Kraeger made some opening remarks and introductions. The Core Committee in attendance numbered around 42-people.

1.03 Members of the Core Committee then introduced themselves, explained why they decided to join the Committee and outlined their Hopes and Fears:

- Continuation of positive growth..... Hope
- The we devise a comprehensive plan for the future..... Hope
- Increase in property taxes..... Fear
- That we create a more flexible and helpful system Hope
- That the Community will support the results of this study..... Hope
- That the Community will **not** support the results of this study..... Fear
- That we look “Long Term” at what education should be. Hope
- Desire to insure exemplary education Hope
- Schools continue to meet desires of students and parents Hope

- That sufficient money and political clout are available to realize our dreams..... Hope
- Develop public and private partnerships.....Idea
- New systems might cause reduction in programs Fear
- That we become bogged down in rhetoric Fear
- That we do not over-simplify what we need to do Hope
- We build an auditorium and field house for the HS..... Hope
- That the Vision does not meet the budget or goals..... Fear
- That the plan sits on the shelf Fear
- We develop a proactive plan..... Hope
- That Middletown citizens are afraid of change Fear
- That we continue forward and follow through on the plan..... Hope
- That we learn about collaborative education..... Hope
- That we see where the direction of education is going Hope
- That we create new facilities that support teaching Hope
- We achieve a better understanding of our goals Hope
- What is created binds the community not divides it. Hope
- That nothing happens!!!..... Fear
- That we focus on the leaders of tomorrow Hope
- That we operate as a better community Hope
- That we will be able to educate our kids to meet the challenges of the new world..... Hope
- That we are held back by external mandates..... Fear
- That we will help bring support to “at risk” kids..... Hope
- We don’t forget basic skills..... Hope
- That we make the most efficient use of our existing facilities Hope
- We need the premier Elementary and Middle School systems to feed into the High School. Hope

1.04 Prakash introduced the members of the FNI team; Dr. Frank Locker and Jay Litman of Litman Architects, and then made his presentation of new educational trends, the emerging pattern language of school design and a case study of best practices as realized in a new High School in Denver, CO. Afterwards we fielded several questions.

- Can we develop facilities that will be shared by the community?
- Are the consultants going to speak to the teachers and students?
- What is the barrier to success? – Our fears!
- How do you gauge the success of our students? Who monitors their work? Teachers? Grades?
- How can we develop effective relationships between the public schools and businesses? How do we form public/private partnerships?

1.05 After a short break we started the community meeting. Approximately six citizens attended, in addition to the school administration and the project

team. We again asked members of the community to outline their Hopes, Fears and thoughts:

- Decline of enrollments. Fear
- How can the community use the buildings more?
- Parents need to get involved.
- Recent bonds have been passed for public services facilities. Have we spent all our available money?..... Fear
- Sell Linden School; use the money for improvements to other schools.
- Political factions across the state may become a Middletown problem.
- Schools should have flexible capacity for fluctuating enrollments. ...Idea
- Middletown professional growth is highest on the Island. Professionals and technicians are a brain trust the schools should tap in to.Idea
- Use the courtyards at the High School and Middle School.Idea
- Concern for the discussion on the “open” classroom. We need places for small group learning, writer’s workshops, and computers.
- Community schools should be explored: after 2:15 the buildings could be used by others.Idea
- Security and safety in buildings.
- Does the Gates Foundation support this type of initiative in schools?
- Schools should build relationships.

The above meeting minutes have been recorded as understood by this writer. Clarifications or omissions should be sent to Jay Litman, AIA within five (5) days of receipt. Unless notified otherwise, these minutes will be considered accurate as written and distributed in this form to all parties.

Respectfully submitted,


Jay Litman, AIA
Principal – Litman Architects

cc: Attendees
Members of the Leadership Committee
Members of the Core Committee