

**Monadnock Regional School District
Community Relations Committee Meeting Minutes
Gilsum Renovation Project Community Input Session
October 26, 2021 (Not Yet Approved)
Gilsum STEAM Academy, Gilsum, NH**

Members Present: Betty Tatro, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Dan LeCLair and Karen Wheeler **Absent:** Winston Wright and Colleen Toomey

Other Board Members Present: Scott Peters.

Administration Present: Taylene Givetz, Gilsum STEAM Academy Principal and C. Czifrik, Director of Technology.

Also Present: K.Barker of Barker Associates and L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

S. Peters called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

CRC Presentation for Gilsum: S. Peters thanked everyone for coming out tonight. He explained there were about 20 people who attended the Swanzey Input Session as well as 20 people in Fitzwilliam. He mentioned they will be in Troy tomorrow. We are not here with a plan for the new renovations and additions but to explain the problem and explain the work and plan options. The funding for the plan will be discussed and then there will be a question and answer time. Your school is the center of the community and the other schools feel the same.

S. Peters introduced K. Barker the architect from Barker Associates. S. Peters also began his presentation of the screen. Every year the District has put one or two warrant articles on the ballot for a renovation project. Over the past 5 years we have focused on MTC and it is almost done. That would mean we have not focused on the other schools in the District. Every building has projects emerging. The buildings were built more than 100 years ago. Last year the School Board looked at the elementary schools regarding what is needed as far as the buildings and this year they took a look at the SAU and MRMHS. The backlog list of projects is over 137 items. The pay as you go will not get us out of the backlog. In some of the schools there are important projects that need to get done. The School Board received the Turner Report and the report from K. Barker Associates. K. Barker has gone through each of the buildings in the district and as a result there are projects totaling \$27,000,000.00 if we do the projects now. If we were to

do the work with the pay as you go focus in 10 years, the cost would be \$35,000,000.00 due to an inflation rate of 4% which the Board has agreed on. The SAU and the MRMHS projects total \$13,000,000.00 and the elementary renovations total \$22,000,000.00.

It was asked about State or Federal money for the project. S. Peters explained he will speak to that in a moment.

S. Peters presented pictures of the new classrooms at MTC. He explained the portables were removed and replaced with classrooms which we consider the standard for the district. We want all of the schools to have classrooms as nice as MTC. The way the schools look affects education. It is about making sure the students get a great education.

K. Barker explained the study began by measuring compliance issues and general conditions. Life safety issues are not all grandfathered. ADA issues are not a compliance code but a Civil Rights Law which said in 1992 you have a certain amount of time to get the ADA issues complete. There are many schools who do not comply. It is not a Fire Chief issue but the district could be sued. Homeland security designed to make schools safe not for only active shooters but for a non-custodial parent. When entering the school, a parent could walk directly to a classroom. There needs to be a visual connection to the main office, a locked vestibule. The difference with Gilsum is it does not have many students. There are 59 students who attend Gilsum. There are a lot of code issues. When entering the school, it is hard to see the entrance and the driveway is bumpy. The buses and cars are separate but there could be a better design. The building is situated on a property line and on steep slopes. There is not really any room for a fire truck to go around the building. This building consists of 5 parts. People enter the building through the community center but the main entrance is through the courtyard. Looking through a camera and a hidden courtyard is not good for security. The ramp is extensive and needs work. In the event of a fire it will be difficult to get out. There are critical issues in the building. Your schools are maintained better than those he has seen in the State which is a good thing. The State wants to know that you take care of your buildings when applying for the Building Aid. The courtyard is a maintenance issue. There is sitting water, the oil tank is in the middle of the courtyard and the boiler is in the middle of the school. Changing the boiler to propane and moving

the oil tank is on the project list. MTC changed to propane, changed the windows and insulated and has an energy savings of 30%. It was commented that the courtyard is slippery and asked what will be done to fix it. K. Barker explained we are not discussing a new design but he might suggest that the main entrance needs to move. Possibly move the main entrance beside the community center. S. Peters showed the backlog for Gilsum. It would take 5-6 years to complete the compliance issues without the bond. Ventilation might possibly be partially paid for by grants. Most of the projects should be done together so the work does not have to be done twice. The fire alarm panel at Gilsum is a stand-alone project and is proposed to be on this year's ballot. Every project on the backlog for Gilsum could be completed with the bond. K. Barker explained the figures being presented in the slideshow are not cast in stone. They are to the best of our ability. The individual towns let the Board know that they want their own school. Option 10 is to renovate Gilsum, Troy and Emerson, close Cutler and add an addition to MTC for the Cutler students. He explained that Cutler is the most expensive with the most expensive work. The property line is right next to the neighbors.

State Building Aid: K. Barker explained the State Building Aid. If the District is awarded Building Aid, it will be around 50% of the project. He explained up until a few years ago there was no State Aid. The district has a backlog of 35 million. The funds from the State for the elementary school's renovation project would be 80% before and 20% after the project is complete. The application is based on a points system. The life safety issues in the district will help, free and reduced lunch numbers and Troy being a historical building. If the district decided to close a school, there would be bussing costs. It was asked why close Cutler when K. Barker said it is a historical building and historical buildings help on the application and it has the most compliance issues. K. Barker explained the life safety issues at Cutler help with the application. The district will be getting rid of the life safety issues and the State will agree. He said Amy Clark from the State has done a walkthrough of all of the schools and she is well aware of the situations. The total for the elementary renovations project is 22 million with the State Aid the district would have to bond 12 million for 20 years over the 20 years the bond payment will decrease. Do all of the work upfront rather than over time and save money. You will also spend less money on bussing and energy. The students who attend Cutler will be on the same bus as the MTC kids. It was asked if this was going to happen in a short amount of time. S. Peters explained the blueprinting will happen after the

community input and the staff surveys. In December the district will hire a construction manager. In June of 2022 the Board will approve a detailed design and we will receive a GMP. The state will let the district know if they are receiving State funding in December of 2022. In March of 2023 the Board will ask the voters for a bond which requires a $\frac{3}{5}$ vote. If the bond is approved the district will begin work in April 2023. The entire project should take about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ years to complete.

Construction Manager: K. Barker explained the hiring of a construction manager. The district will hire a construction company to be part of the design team. The construction manager will help K. Barker with the best design. Once the bond passes the bids will go out to the subcontractors. It is not the traditional bid. We hire and pick who we want, the lowest and best bid. It was asked how the district would pick the construction manager. K. Barker said it is a high level estimate. There will be 5 or 6 construction managers and they will be given plans. They will come back with a cost, fees and general conditions. It will be apples to apples. Their reputation with schools and this district will be considered. It was asked about the life expectancy of the buildings after the renovations. K. Barker felt 50 years was a good estimate but possibly more.

S. Peters asked the people in attendance how they heard about this meeting. Some people said the mailing. He also asked what the committee should do differently to contact people. The Board has hired a PR Firm to create a dedicated website for the elementary school renovation project. S. Peters explained under MRSD.org there are 3 videos with the link to YouTube which K. Barker has created. It was commented that it all sounds great but we need to get the word out. S. Peters said it is challenging.

S. Peters thanked C. McDaniel-Thomas for organizing the input sessions. Monadnock does not rank high on Zillow. People do not want to move into the district because of the schools. He explained these input session minutes will be posted on the website when complete. The Board will be speaking at the Deliberative Session about the elementary renovation project. S. Peters asked what is important to Gilsum. The driveway lighting, heating/air for the small rooms and safe rooms for the kids. K. Wheeler would like to have a generator hook up at every school. It was commented that the kitchen was usable but tight.

MTC is the benchmark. MTC may not be Londonderry but it is the standard for the rest of the district.

C. McDaniel-Thomas presented a clipboard for anyone who would like to give their email. These emails will be used to send out additional information regarding the elementary school renovation project.

S. Peter thanked everyone for coming.

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Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis

MRSD Recording Secretary