

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2006

Present: Ald. Schnipper, Weisbuch, Albright, Salvucci, Gentile, Yates, Mansfield, and Lappin

Also present: Ald. Baker, Burg, Coletti, Danberg, Fischman, Harney, Hess- Mahan, Johnson, Linsky, Merrill, Parker, Samuelson, Sangiolo and Vance

City personnel: David Olson (City Clerk/Clerk of the Board), Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings), Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk), Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer), Ouida Young (Associate City Solicitor), Michael Kruse (Director of Planning), Robert Rooney (Commissioner of Public Works), Sandy Pooler (Chief Administrative Officer)

School Committee members: Susan Heyman, Ann Larner, Reenie Murphy, and Dori Zaleznik

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#231-06 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$15,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of making repairs to the fire station poles.

ACTION: **APPROVED AS AMENDED 5-0 @ \$13,000**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell presented the item to the Committee. The request for additional funding to repair fire station poles in the six fire stations. The Board appropriated \$30,000 in April of 2004 to make these repairs; however, when bids were received they were well over \$30,000. Therefore, the additional \$15,000 is needed to make these repairs. The repair of the poles is important, as they are fitted with a device that seals off the top of the pole and keeps fumes from the fire engines in the garage area from entering the living quarters of the firefighters.

The Committee questioned why there was a 10% contingency instead of a 5% contingency, as that is the usual contingency amount. The Commissioner responded that it is an error. Ald. Salvucci moved to amend the docket item by reducing the contingency to 5% making the appropriation \$13,000 instead of the requested \$15,000. The Committee approved the amendment unanimously. Ald. Salvucci than moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#232-06 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$149,050 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of providing funding for ongoing environmental remediation projects at various sites across the city and for purchasing monitoring equipment for municipal fuel tanks.

ACTION: APPROVED AS AMENDED 5-0 @ \$142,280

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell presented the item to the Committee. The request is for \$149,050 to fund ongoing environmental remediation at various sites within the City. The Commissioner reviewed the progress at each of the sites. He expects Cabot Elementary, Horace Mann Elementary and the Elliot Street Public Works Yard to be completed in approximately a year. The Newton South High School field must be reported on every year. The City is not pressed to remove the soil immediately; however, the Commissioner is looking into removing 80 yards of soil that can be used in reclamation of streets by the Public Works Department. The Committee asked the Commissioner to provide information on Veeder Root Systems (attached). The Commissioner will provide the information before the next full Board meeting.

This item also has a 10% contingency amount; therefore, Ald. Salvucci moved to amend the item by reducing the contingency to 5% changing the requested appropriation to \$142,280. The motion carried unanimously and Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the main item, which also carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#233-06 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$262,500 from a combination of Free Cash (\$157,500), Capital Stabilization Water and Sewer account (\$15,247), Water Surplus (\$44,877) and Sewer Surplus (\$44,876) for the purpose of replacing two 10,000 gallon underground gasoline and diesel fuel tanks at the Elliot Street DPW yard.

ACTION: APPROVED SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL 4-0-1 (Lappin abstaining)

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell presented the request for \$262,500 from Free Cash, the Capital Stabilization Water and Sewer Account, Water Surplus and Sewer Surplus to replace two underground fuel tanks at the Elliot Street Public Works Yard. The tanks are over twenty years old and the double lined gasoline tank's inner lining is leaking. Due to the age of the tanks, it is appropriate to replace both at this time.

The Committee questioned the use of funds from water and sewer accounts for the purpose of fuel tank replacement. The Committee would like a reading from the Comptroller regarding whether the use of water and sewer funds for the replacement of the fuel tanks is appropriate. The Committee would also like an explanation from the Chief Administrative Officer regarding the rationale of the use of the water and sewer funds for this replacement.

The Committee discussed holding the item but Commissioner Parnell urged approval of the item due to the leak in the tank. The Committee felt that it was important to get the information from the Comptroller before the full Board approved the item. The Chair suggested approving the item subject to second call in order to allow the Comptroller and Chief Administrative Officer to provide the information before the next Board meeting (attached). Ald. Lappin moved approval of the item subject to second call, which carried by a vote of four in favor with one abstention.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#234-06 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$150,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of supplementing the energy accounts in the FY06 School Department operating budget.06-02-

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell was present for discussion of this item. The appropriation is necessary to provide supplemental funding for the energy accounts in the School Department. The Committee reviewed a memo provided to the Board from Sandra Guryan, Assistant Superintendent for Business, Finance and Planning. The memo outlined the projections for the cost of utilities for all of the school buildings. The original budget for utilities was \$4,394,557, which falls short of the projected \$5,180,244. The School Department has supplemented the utilities account from savings from other accounts within the School Department and an additional appropriation in March 2006. However, there are still not enough funds to cover the utility costs. Ald. Lappin moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

#224-06 DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE petition pursuant to Sec 5-58 for site plan approval of the new Newton North High School.

ACTION: **PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED TO 6/14/06**

NOTE: Chairman Schnipper welcomed everyone to the public hearing. She explained the purpose of the public hearing and the process for site plan approval for construction or modification of a public building. Chapter 5, Section 58 of the City of Newton's Ordinances lays out the process for site plan approval. She outlined the order of the presentations for the public hearing beginning with Arthur Cohen, Chair of the Design Review Committee, who will introduce the site plan and give information about the design review process then the design team will present the design and the design team's traffic engineer will give a report on the siting of the entrances and exits and traffic flow surrounding the site. After the presentations, there will be time for questions from the Aldermen to the design team and public input.

Arthur Cohen, Chair of the Design Review Committee, addressed the Committee. Mr. Cohen summarized the letter sent to the Board of Aldermen. The Design Review Committee held 11 meetings over the past 22 weeks at which design concepts were presented and the pros and cons of each were discussed. Neighborhood input was solicited and instructions were given to the design team. The discussions included building location on the site, orientation and location of athletic fields, off-street parking, access for both pedestrians and vehicles, landscape features, drainage, site grading and building service. The Design Review Committee's goals were to maximize site utilization, minimize impact on the abutters and meet all program elements supported by the School Committee and School Department in a way which achieves a balance between the goals and objectives for the project. The Committee also discussed cost implications, sustainability and mechanical systems including lifecycle costs. Of all the options that Design Review Committee reviewed, 4A best met the goals of the Committee. The Design Review Committee forwarded a letter and the Site Plan 4A to the Board. The letter includes a list of issues that the Design Review Committee wrestled with and still need to be resolved as design progresses.

John Prokos, Graham Gund, Dan Rutledge and Chris Schaffner of Gund Partnership and Todd Blake and Dan Delasky of Traffic Solutions presented the proposed site plan. The PowerPoint presentation is attached. Gund Partnership worked to design the most attractive school that meets all needs, uses, and incorporates the current best practices for school design. Mr. Gund reviewed the existing site. The current school isolates the rest of site from the community. 50% of classrooms do not have natural light. The parking spaces are located together and there are small-scale elements around the school.

The design team reviewed the set of drawings submitted to the Design Review Committee. The proposed school is located in center of the site with parking distributed throughout the site. Elm Road is a through street but one-way from Walnut Street. There will be no parking on Elm Road during the day. There is an entryway to drop-off students from Walnut Street. There is limited student parking within the site. There is another drop-off located across from Trowbridge Avenue.

There is underground retention for storm water. There are retention tanks under the tennis courts and entryways. All of the utilities come in from Walnut Street. The design team worked closely with the school regarding the athletic fields. The building is pulled back from the property lines. However, the building is nestled into Hull Street. The stadium is recessed in order to create the stands. Landscaping is used to help scale down the building and parking lots. There is pretty much a continuous buffer of vegetation around the site. A garden courtyard is located off the lobby of the theatre and a portion of Main Street. The cafeteria is oriented towards playing fields. The design team also reviewed the floor plans. Main Street is recalled in the building and weaves the entire building together. There are four houses situated on different levels. The classrooms are very specifically laid out to allow natural light and air into each classroom. The lay out is very organized and logical. It is a very simple organization into houses. The building is envisioned to be masonry with glass highlighting major public spaces.

Mr. Shotner reviewed the sustainability issues. The goal is to give a sustainable building. A feasibility study funded by MTC Green Schools Grant will look at renewable energy. There is a study to examine wind and solar photovoltaic power. The design team is looking to follow Mass CHPS guidelines. The goal is to have a LEED certified project. Currently, the project is getting 44 points out of possible 85 for the MA-CHPS rating system, which assesses environmental performance of schools. The project is on track to meet all the goals in terms of Green Building.

Todd Blake reviewed the traffic plan for the site. The existing school has 2200 students and Traffic Solutions based their plans and studies on those students. There is an existing traffic signal at Cabot and Walnut. Existing emergency access is provided from Walnut Street, Lowell Avenue and Hull Street. There is pedestrian access from Lowell Avenue, Elm Road and Hull Street. There is pick-up and drop-off activity at Hull Street, Lowell Avenue, and the majority via Elm Road off Lowell Avenue. There is limited drop-off and pick-up at the Walnut Street entrance to Elm Road. Access to parking facilities is generally from Walnut Street at Elm Road. Approximately 70% of the traffic comes from the north to the school. The proposal is to make

Elm Road one-way from Lowell Avenue to the proposed loop, which will be used for pick-up drop-off activities. Elm Street at Walnut Street will be the main access for parking. A new access for pick-up drop-off activities for people coming from the south is proposed across from Trowbridge Avenue. A police detail is planned at peak times at Walnut Street and Elm Road. There will be an additional pedestrian light at Trowbridge Avenue. This access point will also provide emergency access to the site.

Ald. Schnipper asked for questions from the Aldermen to be answered at the next meeting on June 14, 2006.

Ald. Johnson will send a list of her questions. However, she thought the projected enrollment was for 1,850 students and wondered why we are designing a building for 2200. She would like to see the size of the footprint of this school design versus the current Newton North including square footage, length and height. She requested that the design team overlay the proposed site plan over the existing site plan. In addition, she would like a better understanding of how the proposed building is nestled into the hillside on Hull Street and what the people on Hull Street going to see from their homes.

Ald. Albright stated that the number of parking spaces provided on the map is not the same as the number of parking spaces provided in the Traffic Solutions report. She asked what the main entrance is really is, if most of the drop off is on Elm Street is that not where most of the people will be entering school. If so, what kind of entrance does that make the ceremonial entrance. She asked how the 37 parking spaces, which are labeled temporary spaces, compared to the existing temporary spaces. She also questioned whether they are really temporary or if they are really part of the number of parking spaces needed for the school. She asked how the design reflects the character of the neighborhood. She also asked why there is a fence around the athletic fields. She understands that the footprint of the proposed building is even larger than the existing school. It really cuts the site in half and to have a fence around the stadium even further cuts the site into pieces.

Ald. Linsky stated that it is pretty obvious from the report that the Design Review Committee submitted to the Board that there are at this juncture many outstanding issues, which is fine at this point. Chief among the issues, in his view, is the fundamental issue about safe, effective and efficient circulation flow in and out of the site. In that regard, he still has a difficulty trying to conceptualize the proposed plan. If you go to the site and you go onto Walnut Street and look at Trowbridge Avenue, it just seems so obvious that it does not seem to be the optimal site to place an entrance. He has concluded that it seems as if the whole entrance is driven by a predetermined entrance to a predetermined building. There does not seem to have been a fair vetting of other plans. The design team should have provided more options in terms of design of the building. He also asked how this particular option works in respect to the footprint of the old buildings foundations. He presumes that we have gotten some information to find out what is down there in terms of foundations and culverts and he would like to know how anything existing might effect any particular option. While he has seen that the culvert has been marked out clearly, he is not quite sure that he has seen how it affects and applies to this particular scheme. He would ask that the design team look into that and have it addressed.

Ald. Lappin was wondering if there were traffic improvements on Walnut Street and if for the working session the Aldermen could have a lay-out of what is going to happen on Walnut Street. The design team mentioned narrowing and lights and she would really like to see what that looks like and she would like any traffic reports that the City has related to Walnut Street.

Ald. Weisbuch would like to see a specific list of improvements to Walnut Street. He would also like to know how much the improvements would cost and whether the funding would come from the City operating budget or out of the money that has been earmarked for the construction costs. He asked that the exact cost of construction of each of the ten proposed tennis courts be provided. He also questioned whether any pieces of the existing building can be recycled and if there are any cost savings derived there from. He would like to know the viability of an outside amphitheater on site to provide the possibility of outside theater.

Ald. Samuelson explained that it is not clear to her what the pedestrian access is to the site and the building. If the ceremonial entrance is truly ceremonial, she does not understand putting a traffic light in that location. It is her belief that there should be traffic calming on Walnut Street, regardless of the school. However, she would not be in favor of a traffic light at the entrance to the high school. She also feels that designing for a traffic cop to be located at Walnut Street and Elm Street is a design flaw. She does not know the number of parking spaces, but would like to hear from the Traffic Engineer about the sight lines to the Trowbridge Avenue ceremonial entrance area.

Ald. Burg is concerned about where the main entrance is. She questioned why the main entrance cannot be moved down, the practical part where people drive in, further down Walnut Street. She does not see why we cannot think about something that is aesthetically pleasing but also considers those and puts that entrance across from the church, which would provide safer access. She asked if the 44 points from the Mass CHPs Program is for the building as it is currently designed and if there is an optimal range that should be the City's goal. She would like to know where we are heading in terms of a green building.

Ald. Mansfield asked how the design team addressed cost control and budget issues. In addition, he wondered what design elements have been employed to reduce costs. He asked how the length of the building addressed the community impact in terms of scale and what buffer is provided to the closest homes on both Hull Street and Elm Road. He also questioned why the stadium needs to be depressed and what implications that has for the cost as well as what drainage issues it may create. He would like to know whether the classrooms that are shown in the basement also have natural light and if so, how much area there is in a typical room bringing in this natural light. In terms of the sustainable building presentation, he heard that on the Mass CHP scale we have achieved 44 out of 85 possible points. He would like a further explanation of the Mass CHP scale and whether we can improve on where we are in terms of points. He also asked if the cost of the traffic control, improvements and calming measures that have been proposed are part of this analysis. Ald. Mansfield would like to hear from the Design Review Committee regarding their analysis of the major alternatives in terms of siting options.

that they studied, particularly Option 2 and their analysis of the alternate access points onto the site from Walnut Street.

Ald. Merrill questioned what would happen if the Trowbridge Avenue entrance was eliminated and why there is parking on Lowell Avenue and evening parking on Elm Street. He also wondered what type accommodations have been made for people with disabilities

Ald. Sangiolo would like clarification from either the design team or the Design Review Committee about whether or not they looked at making adjustments to the program and whether they had discussions with the School Committee about making adjustments to the program, so that the site is not as tight and it does not limit the amount of alternatives or options available in terms of the traffic flow, building height and location of fields. She would like to find out who would recommend that the site is too tight and it does not work; therefore; the design needs to be sent back.

Ald. Yates asked the design team to respond to Anatol Zuckerman's questions (attached). He asked what assumptions are there as to how many kids will ride school busses to school and how many kids will ride the Needham/Watertown bus. He would like a definition of a ceremonial entrance.

Ald. Vance stated that given the barrier of the proposed building, which blocks access to the eastern and western portions of the site, why is it regarded as a good site design for the use of this particular site. He also asked why it is preferable to site the building north-south as opposed to east-west.

Ald Hess-Mahan asked if an entrance between Clyde Street and Cabot Street could work and what the implications would be if the entrance changed. He asked if it is possible to reorient the building for a driveway across from the church. In addition, he wondered if there had been any consideration of geothermal cooling and heating

Ald. Johnson asked why option 4A was chosen, as she did not hear that in the presentation and would like to understand why that is the best choice.

Ald. Albright question why the Cabot Street/Walnut Street intersection is going from a B to a D level in terms of service and why that is acceptable. She would like a further explanation regarding buffering of HVAC systems. She also would like an explanation regarding the S curve and how traffic is going to work. In addition, she would like know if there was any effort put into thinking about smaller learning communities. She asked the design team to explain how all of the classrooms get natural light.

Public Hearing

Dr Frank A. Howard, 34 Fairfax Street, West Newton - My wife and I came to Newton in 1950 mainly because of the outstanding public school system. We were the youngest couple on Fairfax Street, with three daughters in schools. We are now the oldest couple on the street with three daughters who are graduates of the school system and Newton North and three grandsons

who have been given great starts in the Newton school system, for which we are grateful. Although, I am a member of the High Performance Building Coalition, I rise to speak to you as an individual citizen with one message only: high performance students and teachers are the top priority – a healthy environment promotes high performance teachers and students. I am a retired physician, formerly active as an internist at Brigham Women's and the Newton-Wellesley Hospital. Not only I, but also the E.P.A., am convinced that a healthful indoor environment promotes high performance students and teachers. (Dr. Howard provided information from the E.P.A., which is attached.)

David Del Porto, 448 Ward Street, Newton Centre – I am the Chair of Sustainable Newton Committee and a member of the Green Decade Coalition. The design team should have looked at an east-west orientation. I would urge the Board to keep eye on the prize. Health and productivity of the students and staff is important, although surprised at the high cost. I would remind the Board that the first cost is a fraction of life-cycle costs of building over 50 years. Facing very high-energy costs and alternative heating and cooling systems should be looked at. Costs of fossil fuel have risen considerably-need to avoid them.

Al Chechinelli, 224 Chapel Street, Newton – It is a disgrace for the City to be robbing Peter to pay Paul. The City's fire stations are disgusting. There will be no money to make repairs to other city buildings, if we build this school. We do not need this building. Why do we need a new Newton North High School? I was told that the HVAC system is broken. Why don't we fix it? We need to stop this project.

Marie C. Franklin- 29 Trowbridge Avenue, Newtonville - I have been a resident of Newton for 18 years. My husband and I live on Trowbridge Avenue where we raised two daughters, both recent graduates of Newton North High School. We have always been engaged citizens, who have supported the decisions made by the City's schools and elected, appointed and hired officials until now. I thank you for the opportunity to outline the reasons why my husband and I are not in favor of the Newton North High School project as presented by the Design Review Committee as Plan 4A. First, as a close abutters I have concerns with the presented design, particularly around the safety of placing intersection at the base of Trowbridge Avenue and the increased traffic and danger along Walnut Street. I also think the presented building is much too large and sprawling. It looks more like the Galleria Mall than a school. Surely, there are ways to scale down the project, our expectations for the building and the cost. My second concern is financial. I have watched the budget on this project go from a \$40 million renovation to \$87 million hybrid to a new building for \$104 million to the present estimate of \$160 million and climbing. The Mayor advocates new growth for the project but I ask at what cost. The Garden City is well on its way to becoming the automobile city, so more development on Needham, Walnut and Washington Streets is not what we need. Especially when we can still decide to renovate the existing high school into one of the best in the State for less than \$50 million, at least according to architect Mark Sangiolo's plan of which I am intrigued. What other community in the Commonwealth can we name that would vote to tear down a school that is 33 years old. When the roof on our house leaked last summer, we replaced it. When the furnace malfunctioned, we have it replaced. We do not tear down a historic property every time something needs to be repaired or maintained. I agree the present Newton North High School is

not the most beautiful of buildings, but my children received a good education there and I am sure that with the talent and expertise of the Gund Partnership that we could design an attractive and functional renovation plan that the City can be proud of. Watching NewTV the last few months has been a study in contrast. On one channel, I watch parents literally plead to the School Committee to restore cuts to the schools and decrease class size, while on the channel I listen to the Aldermen fret about the cost of this project going beyond \$160 million. I hear Jeff Young say that the City's custodians are upset that the schools are not as clean as they should be and I wonder what assurance do we have that the new schools will be properly maintained. Look what vandals did to the boys' bathroom at Newton South High School a few weeks back. What is more important Newton having the Cadillac of school buildings or making sure there is enough money in the budget to pay for the nuts and the bolts and the gasoline of education?

Tom Kraus, 480 Walnut Street, Newtonville- I wish to voice strong opposition to the driveway at Trowbridge Street. I have witnessed a significant number of accidents in front of my house over the past 30 years that we have lived here and I strongly feel that putting an entrance at this location is creating a dangerous situation. It is naïve to believe that a new school building will be without problems, however, the least one should do is to address the problems of the current site. For example, the drop-off access requires a loop with an entrance and an exit at the same main street clearly creates a problem at Day and this current site at Lowell Street. The current site plan not only perpetuates this but duplicates it two fold. I am afraid that I don't understand the logic that was behind the decision a while ago in demolishing the existing athletic complex and stadium only to rebuild them again elsewhere on the site. The City determined that the pool was just fine when the decision was made not to build one at South. Now, just a year later it must be replaced. I understand that it would be preferable for the football field to be oriented north-south rather than east-west; however, by moving the stadium the architects are creating a liability the steep slope from Hull Street. The current location of stadium utilizes otherwise unusable space, as seating for the stadium on a very constrained site. However, my biggest concern is that the site plan comprises an enormously expensive project. If I am to believe the articles in the TAB, the operational budget of the City is being squeezed with the elimination of support staff, underfunding of maintenance, increased class sizes, etc... This is at a time when increased revenues from new growth should be at a maximum given the unprecedented low interest rates coupled with high digit property value growth. Both of these conditions are disappearing. The incremental decisions that have resulted in the project growing from a moderate renovation to one of the most expensive school construction projects in the State may all have been correct within their scope but I implore you to reassess the project as defined by this site plan. Fundamentally, I do not believe that the proposed building is the best way to address the quality of education in Newton. I understand that the building capital funds are totally different from operational funds; however, debt service on the project ultimately competes with operational budget. According to a recent TAB, even the Mayor anticipates a need for an operational override and in the current economic climate; I question the ability of the City to pass either a debt exclusion or an operational override, let alone both. Before you vote to approve this site plan, I hope you query the educational professionals at North to determine if the problems of the current building are the primary problems affecting their ability to teach. An overly expensive building accompanied by the programmatic cuts will not result in better education. A more modest building plan may in fact be better for education in Newton.

Libby Holman, 28 Converse Avenue- I am a parent of three children in the Newton Public Schools, two currently at the high school. I am a member of the School Council at North, which is made up of faculty, the principal, parents and also students. I would like to emphasize that we have been involved with and consulted with the architects and have had input into this project. I would like to comment briefly on a couple of the important points that we expected or considered in the design decision with respect to the site. I would like to agree with the comment that it was not really made clear in this presentation why this was the superior plan but we did have confidence in the Design Review Committee. Some of the important points that were considered and in which the School Council had input, were the siting and the fact that this is a compromise on a very tight site with a lot of very different, competing needs including the school program, the number of students, athletics were considered, the green and sustainable issue was important to the School Council, the issue of community use, parking and access, also the concept of Main Street was considered important to the students, particularly and the faculty. I would like to advocate additional focus on the program and input from the faculty and staff in regards to this design and perhaps a little bit less emphasis (this is my own personal comment not now one on behalf of the School Council) on the parking. This is a very small site. It is a crowded community. If any of you take your kids down Hull Street or Lowell Avenue, you know that the parking and access is going to be hellish here no matter where it is. So, let us focus on the school and the program. Many of the decisions that were made were related to indoor environment, light, air, things that are sorely lacking in the school at present. My kids wear the most amazing things to school and I say why are you wearing that sleeveless shirt in the wintertime-because we need to be ready for any kind of climate at North. The building stinks, it needs fixing, let us move on with it.

Alan Mayer- 479 Walnut Street, Newtonville – I am an architect. I live in white house with the red door right next to the proposed entrance across from Trowbridge. When the Gund Partnership was hired, it was at the end of an exhaustive design selection process. Every time that I have called it a design competition; I have been corrected by my Aldermen and members of the Design Review Committee. You are wise to set it up that way. You understood what you needed for such a complex project on such a constrained site was not an answer but someone who could come up with questions and generate possibilities quickly. You were looking for an architect that came up with alternatives, that was flexible, that could learn and teach and grow. These last six months should have been amazing. They should have been filled with collaborative thinking and brain storming of what the nature of education in Newton will be in the future. There are so many models out there of classroom organizations, of campus plans, of pods and spokes and new paradigms for a truly forward thinking education. I know that this site is constrained, we all know that but than the brain storming is even more critical to get us all thinking outside the box, to visualize a new kind of school or at least what a school could be. One would hope that after six months of working on this project with so much input from so many sources that there would have been an abundance of options and variations and ideas. One would have hoped that we would have had the chance to explore the real substantive differences that different designs could bring. Yet, meeting after meeting, presentation after presentation for six months we have seen the building time and time again. When the Design Review Committee requested another option, we were presented with Scheme 2, which the architect himself called

“a stillborn plan” that is not much of an option. The design team has spent an exhaustive amount of time and energy defending their plan rather than changing and learning and growing. Getting them to even move their building to the current plan was so onerous for them that the neighborhood representatives on the Design Review Committee and members of the community had to draw it up and present it to them. Every building of this scale has the opportunity to either shape the space or simply to fill it. Successful schools going back to Thomas Jefferson’s University of Virginia have always used the building to create a real and rich sense of place. This building is the moral and architectural equivalent of a McMansion that completely fills a lot from one end to the other. I believe in a new school and I believe in the power of architecture to inspire it, to encourage, and to empower. I applaud this City’s reputation in education and I applaud this willingness to spend vast resources in time, money and political will to build a better building because at the end of the day we are not building a new building because we have too many students for this one, we are not building it to house new programs we are building it (one of the most expensive high schools in the State) because we want to change the architecture. We are building a new building because we recognize how powerful an influence design and architecture can be. Spend the time now and send this back to the Design Review Committee and to the design team. Tell them that you want something more. Tell them that you want something that inspires. Tell them that you want your \$150 million worth.

James Robertson, 30 Trowbridge Avenue, Newtonville - I would like to commend the committee and the architects for all their efforts at continued progress. I want to speak on one issue tonight it is the ceremonial drive at Trowbridge Avenue. I think that it is a fatal flaw of that plan. I think that this is a constrained site and to use up that amount of space with roadway for a ceremonial entrance is unnecessary. I think it is a safety risk and I think you have heard that over and over again. The average speed coming out of that S curve is 40 mph; the speed limit is 25 mph. That means for everyone that is 25 mph there is someone going 55 mph. It is very dangerous. You are adding a light to an area that does not have a light now. I think that the entry needs to be either moved farther down the straightaway closer to the Methodist Church another option would be to make the entrance right turn only in and out and that way you would have no cross traffic and possibly the need not to have a traffic signal. You could do this by putting a triangle island at the end of the entry forcing right turn from the north. It has already been said that 70% of the traffic comes from the north and it would further reinforce the clockwise rotation of traffic around the site.

Jeff Seideman - 53 Eliot Memorial Road, Newton – I am president of the Newton Taxpayers Association. Let me be the first to say that the design for the new school looks a lot like a serpentine prison. I think that is a frivolous thing for me to say but that it is about the level of discourse that we have had about the need to destroy the current \$80 million building. As far as I can tell, the only argument in favor of destroying it is that it is not pretty enough. I brought a list with me of a number of different issues of misinformation that have been going on about the school for quite some time now. I will try to go through some of them. The whole issue of the current school, as Mr. Gund brought up, as being all brick and not enough windows. Mr. Gund fails to...possibly does not realize it but the building was designed that way. It was designed, as were many buildings in early 70s to be fuel-efficient and in fact it is. The cost of heating fuel for Newton North is 2/3 that of Newton South. Yes, there is a higher electricity cost there because

there is a problem with the HVAC system but if the system was fixed it would prove that the school was at least as efficient if not more so than the current Newton South. When this whole thing started, the switch from renovation to a new school the big argument was that the renovation could not be done in such a way according to Turner Construction, that they could not guarantee the safety of the students during construction. Two months ago at a public meeting at Newton South, I asked the architect and the construction manager can they guarantee the safety of the students in the current school while this new construction is going on and the answer was no they could not guarantee the safety of the students. Mayor Cohen got up and said –Now wait a minute that is not really issue that we had some years ago but than two weeks ago at your joint committee meeting what did Mayor Cohen say – He said the issue was that you could not guarantee the safety of the students during a renovation. Well is it an issue – does it matter or doesn't it matter. It seems to me when it is to someone's benefit they say you cannot guarantee it and when it is not to their benefit, they say it does not really matter. When all the renovations were being considered they all seemed to be these bizarre renovations in which you slice the building down the middle, destroy half of it and than of course, you have to build temporary classrooms to handle the students while new construction was going on. Now, that may have been appropriate for some plans but it then evolved that all renovations costs \$20 million in temporary building space and it turns out of course as we heard from someone else that the Mark Sangiolo plan does not have any costs like that. It was also said that a new school would cost \$104.5 million.

Bruce Gore-14 Kirkstall Avenue, Newtonville – I have lived at my home for fourteen years. I happen to be positioned in such a way that I have a very good view of the flow of traffic all hours of the day and night. I will just take a minute here and say I appreciate several of the Aldermen who clearly have responded to the gut sensation of standing on Walnut Street and watching semis and busses and general cars come whipping out of that curve at the speed the traffic consultant determined to be a 41 mph median, so it has been said before. I just want to make it a little more concrete, why this is such an issue. It is not a neighbor abutter issue. The study that looked at how many cars from the north and south that is sort of a microcosm that is a valid study of any new public facility like a school but that is just one micro flow of traffic set into one of the major north-south arteries in Newton. This is not an issue about the neighbors. This not an issue just about the kids crossing safely. This is anyone who drives on Walnut Street north coming out of that curve in the rain, in the snow; at dusk it is just a ridiculous place to try to stop traffic. It was disappointing tonight to see nothing about the cost of putting the supposed traffic calming measures in. We did not hear from the City's Traffic Engineer this evening but neighbors and I in May of 2000 had one of the former Aldermen, Robert Gerst, sponsor a request to the Traffic Council, going through the proper measures, where we requested traffic signage. It is a 25 mph zone, the prevailing City's speed is 30 mph but that is regulated by ordinance to be 25 mph. To this day six years later if you come north from Commonwealth Avenue, you will not see a speed limit sign, you will not see a downgrade sign, you will not see a steep hill ahead sign – all of the things you see on Centre Street very sensibly. I hear that they are being proposed now but they are needed now to take a dangerous section and make it safe. That is why we have this visceral reaction to adding an aggravant to this dangerous traffic situation. The last thing I'll say is that the suggestion that there would be a left hand turn lane squeezed in with cars queuing, as Ald. Albright mentioned – and narrowing – I don't understand this narrowing. If you stand

there and watch, people kind of veer right up the yellow line right now. Are we going to put three lanes in the width of two? There certainly were not answers provided tonight.

Adam Maleson, 3 Winona Street, Auburndale – The Newton North that we have now was built in 1973 at the same time that Paul Simon wrote the song Kodachrome. I would like to quote a line from that “When I look back at all the crap I learned in high school when I think back it’s a wonder I can think at all.” Well, in 1973, we tore down an historic building, the Newton High School, to build what looks like a prison and now you have a design that looks to me like a hospital. Seems to me the message was, in 1973, we are saying that high school kids are basically criminals, now we’re just saying they are sick. How about building something that looks like a school, so that we can treat kids like they are students. It looks to me from the designs that the school we have now when they built it they made an effort to preserve the athletic stadium because you see there is a plaque up that says dedicated 1937 or something but your new designs have taken out that 1937 stadium and created new ones. Now, I am looking at the design and I am saying if you are going to say screw the old 1937 stadium, we don’t care, we are going to demolish that; I would build this school on the east-west along that slope because that is the one street because of the slope people are not crossing it from the streets. Whereas, the street going north, Walnut and the ones going east-west up and than Lowell those are all crossing streets for pedestrians. I would locate the whole school along the slope where the stadium is if you are going to get rid of the stadium anyhow. As far as the tight space, I am looking at how much space there is on there. You have two baseball fields and the huge football field, which is combining-taking much more space than the actual academic space. I ask you is there ever a time when you have baseball and football going on at the same time. If you are going to spend a zillion dollars, could you not put your thinking caps on and work out a way to have a stadium that could be alternatively baseball or football and than you’ve got a lot less tightness of your space and you could make a bigger school for more academics. Additionally, what I will say finally - smaller learning environments and greenhouse emissions. What I said in 1995 and I put it on the docket of the Board of Aldermen and Mr. Robert Gerst rose to adjourn, so they did not get to my buy back Warren Junior High School. If you took ninth grade out of the high schools you would have a lot more space, a lot less tightness and you could do it for a lot less than \$150 million. Buy back Warren Junior High School and I am going to put it on the docket and this time it is going to be heard and not dismissed, as it was in ’95.

John Peters – 25 Kimball Terrace, Newtonville – My street is located to the north of the proposed high school. My comments relate to the impact of the school on the residential area to the north. Which I think is a concern that has been a little under heard in many of the community comments. Most of the concerns relate to the traffic and pedestrian flow that is likely to be caused by the new design. Four main areas of concern – vehicle traffic for student drop off and pick up, the student loitering around during waiting for drop-off and pick-up, security of the residential homes, primarily of petty theft, which has been increasingly occurring north of the school and litter generated largely by student loitering. As I understand, the goal of Newton is provide a healthy environment for people to raise families, a pleasant environment in which to live. I want to make sure that the school design considers that in all of the neighborhoods surrounding the school. Two facts were clear to me in the traffic study - that 70% of the traffic does comes from the north of the school and that the proposed plan leaves all

of the bus traffic on the north end of the site along Elm Road. What was not mentioned in traffic report, at least I did not hear, was the significant amount of student drop-off that occurs in Blithedale and in Kimball Terrace right now. My concern primarily with the design is where the new primary entrance to the school is, not the ceremonial entrance on Walnut, but the primary entrance to the school, which is on the north end of the school very close to the residential homes in the northern part of the site – just north of the proposed school. It will increase the traffic and loitering dramatically. It is the primary drop-off point for students in the proposed plan and it is the primary access point for busses in the proposed plan and it is the primary point for truck traffic that are delivering things to the school. All of those are on the north end of the site, along Elm Road. So my questions to the design committee would be what is the City planning on doing to protect the residents of Elm Road, Blithedale and Kimball Terrace from the traffic, student loitering, and the petty theft and the litter that is going to be increasingly existing along Blithedale, Elm Road and Kimball Terrace. What barriers are planned and when and if those barriers are proved inadequate what is going to be done by the City to protect the residents to the north of the school.

Saeed Mossquat, 462 Walnut Street - I am in opposition to the location of this driveway at Trowbridge Avenue. I have witnessed the unsafe condition of this road every day. It is 100% obvious that it is not a safe place to put that driveway and I do not understand how you can make a greater line of sight by narrowing the street. I have one question and that is what is wrong with placing the driveway across from the church. Throughout the meetings, that I attended there was no mention of what was wrong with that option. That is basically, all I wanted to say.

Ofra Segal, 23 Trowbridge Avenue - I have three major points regarding this new design. My first one is my concern about how the new school is going to affect the aesthetics and the environment of the neighborhood. I live in an old Victorian house and the neighborhood is primarily Victorians. The character of our street is historic and quiet. It is a suburban neighborhood. With the entrance of the school being at the end of our street and the large massive school building that is going to be built very close to us, my concern is that the character of our neighborhood is going to be affected detrimentally and the quality of our lives is going to be impacted in an irreversible way. My second point is the priorities that we have in building a new school. I have three children one of them is currently at Newton North and my two other children are going to go to Newton North at some point. I am concerned that the fact that we are replacing a school with a very high budget instead of prioritizing the quality of education. We are laying off teachers - different budgets I have heard. Nevertheless, I do not think it is ultimately different budgets it is ultimately out of the same pockets. We are laying off teachers, closing down programs and scaling down citywide programs and at the same time we are willing to spending \$160 million on a new school building, not on programs, not on quality education, on a building and that is a huge concern for me. I think many of us have gone to schools that are much less privileged than the current Newton North is and have gotten very good educations. I am a physician and I do not think I went to a school that is as fancy as the planned school for our children. I am perfectly happy with my children being at less than this proposed elegant school. My third concern is about the safety of the entrance across from Trowbridge Avenue. I go down Trowbridge Avenue daily. In the winter, the street is icy and it is often hard to stop when you

reach Walnut Street. I cannot imagine the ceremonial entrance being at the end of that street with the risk of all these multiple cars going into the entrance.

Linda Jordan Kraus- 480 Walnut Street- I am a former member of this august body. I am also a direct abutter. I am the mother of two former Newton North High School students and currently a teacher at Newton South High School for 12 years. My major concern here is that this site plan does not foster quality educational practice. The monolithic structure proposed will ultimately be as unserviceable as the brick edifice you seek to replace. I understand the Newton North has issues, particularly heating and ventilation issues. Any of you who think this is the solution please visit me in my classroom where I have not had heat in brand new construction for three years. Please visit my classroom that exceeded 90 last week, with the AC brand new that did not turn on. Please visit my classroom where the new HVAC system actually burst a pipe last week in an adjacent classroom flooding two large spaces. A campus style site plan would be far more appropriate, both to the neighborhood scale and more conducive to meeting educational needs. I note Ald. Albright's comment about the value of smaller learning communities, with which I have been deeply involved. Yet, this option has not even been explored here. We cannot entirely fault the architects for this; given the constraints imposed, their hands were tied. One enormous constraint has been the mandate to place all athletic facilities on the site and to place each and every one of those athletic facilities in the most auspicious position. We keep hearing that program is driving the site plan, which program. For example, we are building a 2,000-seat football stadium, an amenity not present at most other area high schools. The stadium will be moved from its current location to provide a north-south orientation rather than east-west, a far less efficient use of the site. Why do we need a 2,000' stadium? At the previous public meeting, we were told that it was necessary to accommodate graduation, an event that occurs once a year. I am not singling out the football stadium, there are many examples but this is left, as virtually no flexibility for the building size, placement or for meeting traffic safety needs. I do not like traffic lights on the Board or at the foot of my driveway, so I will yield and send you the rest of my comments in writing.

Arlene Gilman, 110 Hull Street – I live at the corner of Hull Street and Lowell Avenue. I just want to make a few points. Primarily I am opposed to tearing down Newton North High School and I am opposed to the ball fields and or stadiums opposite homes on Lowell Avenue and Hull Street. As a last ditch effort, I as a taxpayer am totally opposed to tearing down Newton North High School for the following reasons: the estimated cost from \$140 - \$164 million is too costly for all taxpayers to endure besides the low birth rate does not justify, such an expensive project at this point in time. In past centuries, school buildings were seen as a status of the community, like the coliseum was built to show off the status of Rome. Newton does not need to show off with a new school building, at this point in time. The 32-year Newton North High School can be vastly improved by proper building repairs and regular maintenance both inside and out. Any responsible homeowner knows the importance of repairing and maintaining one's residence. Why shouldn't Newton North High School do likewise and do not mention lack of funds – our high taxes will prove otherwise. I would like to make a comment on the ball field that is proposed opposite my home. Before the current Newton North High School was built in 1973, there was a ball field opposite my home. The previous homeowners constantly had broken windows due to fly balls from the ball fields opposite my home. Would any of you like to live in

that kind of neighborhood? The previous homeowners were forced to put up an unsightly net in front of their picture window. I, as a current homeowner, should not be forced to do so, would you? A ball field opposite one's home is an open invitation to constant noise pollution, unexpected trespassing, invasion of privacy and disturbance of the peace that I now endure in that neighborhood besides littering and loitering. Therefore, I ask for the removal of the ball field from your site plan and after hearing all of the comments tonight I feel that you should rethink the whole idea of putting a school together, a Newton North High School, I do think it is not appropriate at this time. I think it is too costly and I think the current building should be looked at very carefully and it should be reworked and it should be revamped to suit the needs of the neighborhood.

Deb Klein – 29 Calvin Road, Newtonville – Calvin Road is on the Lowell Avenue side of the high school. I have two small kids and I am very interested in what is going on and proposed for the schools. A couple of comments – clearly traffic is a big concern. Living on Calvin Road, which is almost directly across from Elm Road on Lowell I am very familiar with the current traffic issues and frankly, I do not envy you because I do not think they are going to be easy to solve. I think that the traffic flow, no matter what you do, is going to be tight. People are convinced that they need to drive their kids to high school. I am not sure why but that seems to be true and it will probably continue to be true. Given that, I just have a couple of simple fixes or meliorations that I propose. One is better signage. A couple of people have mentioned that and the other is paint the curbs and let people know where they cannot park. Often if you come of Calvin or Bolton or any of those cross streets that are coming down the hill towards Lowell you cannot see. You are pulling out onto Lowell Avenue and you cannot see because people park right up to the curb on Lowell, despite the fact that there is an officer there every day those people are not ticketed or they are standing waiting for their kids. I think some very basic things like that would help make it easier to pull out onto a busy road and I think that with the current design as proposed the Walnut Street side is going to absorb a little bit of what those of us on the Lowell side have been living with for a long time, so I think they are going to need that too. I know that there is no parking allowed but there is nothing that says “no standing”, again there are some very unsafe places, and the police just do not attend to it. I know that they have a lot to do. They come through and ticket people that park in front of my house but not people who park very close to Lowell and make it very unsafe. I think asking people to setback from those corners when they are parking and picking up would be important. The other thing that I would say is that there are many people here from the Walnut side obviously better organized than the Lowell side of the school. The houses on Lowell side are not Victorians but there are families in those houses regardless of whether they are fancy houses or as pretty houses and there are little kids in them, so please just keep in mind that although there may not have been a lot of people here there are a lot of people who live on that side and our traffic concerns are just as valid regardless of our house design. The last thing I would say is that I am very impressed by the design. There is a lot of cool features some of which may be necessary, some of which may not but I do think that one thing that is very important and this is such a global comment but there are also a lot of other things that are important in the City and I think a lot of other people have spoken to them. There are kids in elementary school, there are firehouses, there are other things and I recently went to a meeting at Cabot School and basically we were told that there is no money for Cabot School for a long time and some of it has to do with the high school and it is

not just about Cabot there are a lot of buildings in that situation. I think that if we build one building that jeopardizes so many others, I am not sure that it makes sense.

Laura Naylor, 489 Walnut Street, Newtonville- My husband and I are one of the direct abutters in five homes within the perimeter of the site. This is a bit of a reunion this evening to see all of the neighbors and folks from the Design Review Committee and some of the Aldermen who have been participating actively in that process and I want to thank you. I wanted to take just a couple of minutes and clarify some of the community endorsement for 4A. I personally was one of the people who had gotten up and spoken at the community meeting that was held on Tuesday, April 25 voicing my support for Option 4A. Option 4A that you have in front of you is not Option 4A that we spoke of at that meeting. On Tuesday April 25, the plan had limited parking, a very narrow driveway and was perceived as ceremonial. I would like to request that the nomenclature be dropped because it is no longer ceremonial and has not been for some time. Following that community meeting, the width of the road doubled and is viewed the same size as Commonwealth Avenue and the parking spaces increased over 70% and the reason for that is because it is a main door. I have prepared and will share with you off-line a comparison chart of Option 4A, as you have in front of you and Option 4D, which was at that point in the process was not properly vetted, just due to exhaustion and the need to move forward. I would just like to recall support for 4A, as I did on Tuesday, April 25 and personally endorse 4D should we move forward with this project; the entrance in front of church. There are many positive things associated with that plan that did not get properly vetted. One of which is the whole approach to the school. You do not even know that you are coming to a high school driving from City Hall, you see four homes, and then there is nothing that would tell you that you are approaching a school. You would know you were approaching something but you would not even know that you are coming to school until after you have passed that entrance and if you moved it down all of the safety concerns that you have heard and there are many other benefits.

Beverly Spencer, 44 Hull Street- I live directly across from the gymnasium for the proposed building. Our major concern is the trees that are directly across from our front porch. We live there twelve months a year, not just during the school year and so we feel that it is very important that however this building nestles into the hill it does not nestle in at the expense of everything that is directly across the street our house right now. I understand that there is a legal restriction, a conservation restriction, which can be requested and if that is what is necessary to protect the setback if this design is what is ultimately used than I think that is what one has to think about. We want some guarantee that when construction begins, if it does, if this design goes through that someone does not inadvertently come in and chop the trees down. Another thing I am not sure that you are really thinking about in terms of the traffic on Hull Street, and we have lived there since 1979, our daughter went to Newton North, if you have your ceremonial entrance and people come out of that entrance and have to turn right on Walnut and want to go back north many of them will come down Hull and take an immediate left on Dexter, right back out to Walnut Street and you may face a little back up of people that no one has mentioned to this point, looping around like that. The other thing is that there is a hill on Hull Street and if the traffic increases on Hull Street in the winter, you are going to have an issue with that hill icing, etc...Especially if you have any busses circulating around that way. We are used to traffic on that street and we expect that there will always be traffic on the street but there needs to be some

consideration given to the fact that there is a hill and also that the people may use Dexter as a way to get right back out and go north again.

Stephen Shufro, 20 Blithedale Street, Newtonville- I have been a resident for the last 30 years at 20 Blithedale Street. We bought our house a year after the new Newton North was built. We thought we fully understood all the implications for the neighborhood and we made that decision. We thought that there would be some trash; we thought there would be some traffic, and we thought there would be some vandalism and a variety of other things that might have happened to us. It turns out that we sort of learned to accept the sort of condition of that environment. We knew what we were getting into by and large, maybe not the magnitude but we live with basically a good relationship with the high school, a good relationship with the students that are there, have experienced very little vandalism if any at all and generally found that this neighborhood was a good place to live. What we did not realize though at the time because the street planning at that time was still not in the formative stage was that Blithedale Street was open to Elm Road. What happened was that there became a circular pattern of people going Lowell to Elm Road to Blithedale Street. It became a major access and in some ways it made some sort of sense because that is where the front of the school was, if you want to call it the front of the school, I sort of thought it was the back end of the school but someone told me it was the front end. I understood that this was sort of a magnet for the cars coming around. It took us ten years to come up with the solution that the Design Review Committee has adopted, which was preserving Blithedale Street and Elm Road in kind of a dogleg and disconnect that dead end street from Elm Road. I think this plan is sensitive to that, has maintained it in its planning framework and I just want to encourage you to give serious consideration, as we go forward to maintaining that, as a very important feature of the quality of life in that neighborhood.

Mark Sangiolo, 60 Indiana Terrace, Newton Upper Falls – I think the architects did a lot. They totally responded to all the neighbors concerns. Look where they located the building; right in the middle of site. Seems like it was driven by the neighborhood trying to get it as far away from everybody. My feeling is that to build anew high school is inappropriate. \$160 million is too much. Lets all remember how got here. Originally, it was supposed to be \$39 million, someone forgot about the little sentence that said we may have to move the students off-site then it became an \$80 million hybrid thing and they said well for \$10 or \$20 million more we can have a new school and now we are at \$160 million. I think we should be renovating the existing building. It could be a wonderful building. It has an interesting , in fact, not unlike the scheme that is presented. It has an interesting main street with public access areas off the main street and than classrooms on the other side. All you have to do is renovate it, punch some atrium spaces. There are a lot of things that could be fixed. It could be one of the best high schools in the State. It is inappropriate to build this building and spend that kind of money because I have elderly neighbors – They live on a very fixed income. You would be surprised they leave one light burning, they are afraid to flush the toilet. Their taxes go up, you are forcing these people out, and what we are going to end up with is what happened in Weston. You have all financial and computer people there now. It is not a diverse population. We need the elderly people in the community. They are the eyes on the street. They are the history of the neighborhoods. It is also wrong because it is the wrong statement and the message to send to our students. When

little Johnny or little Davey does not take care of his bicycle and it is a little beat up and he says “Daddy I want a new bicycle” I say “No you are not getting a new bicycle; show me that you can fix the bicycle and take care of your bicycle and then maybe when it is time to get another one you can have a new bicycle.” We do not take care of these buildings. The maintenance is deplorable. Every motor in the building should have been replaced by now. As we all know that it has not happened, and I know, I went through every drawing that the original architects did in Nick Parnell’s office – I have a complete understanding of what kind of shape that building is in. There is no question – it has been proven that it could be renovated. I do not know why we are not renovating the building. I do not know why we got so far down the road on this monument building-big dog, eating feeding frenzy situation. The other thing is that it is environmentally irresponsible to tear down a thirty-four year old building that cost \$20 million to build in 1973 or 1974, whenever it was. That is about \$100 million in today’s money. Some people value that asset, as about \$70 million, so that really should be added to the \$160 million. I just think it is the wrong thing to do. We could have a great high school. I have nieces currently in the high school. One of them graduated just the other day and it could be a really great place. All we have to do is fix it up right.

Michael Zalis, 15 Otis Park – I live with my wife and two small children, who are likely going to be participating in the various programs of Newton public education. We live directly across from the high school site. I would like to make three brief points to you. The first is echoing what you have heard from several people and that is I strongly encourage you and the other members of the Board of Aldermen to revisit the issue of renovation rather than building a monstrosity huge building on an over programmed site, which is simply too small to accommodate it, despite the excellent efforts of the various people who have had a hand in the design of the current building. It is simply too big, too expensive and not environmentally sound for the site. The second and third points that I have concern the plans, as they exist on the kiosk outside and on the various PowerPoint presentations, you have seen. One of these is concerning the nature of Elm Road. Elm Road is currently is where ten houses directly across from the high school site are situated. I strongly encourage that whatever the decision of the Board of Aldermen that the current low or zero through traffic state of Elm Road be preserved because opening up Elm Road or expanding, as has happened on the recent revisions of Plan 4A will substantially change the nature of the neighborhood affecting ten houses that is simply unacceptable for someone who generally speaking has been supportive of measures to improve the facilities at Newton North High School. Opening it up as a major thoroughfare is exactly counter to our sentiments. The third point concerns a small detail that has not been mentioned, so far, and that is the afterthought of the basketball court, as it is currently situated which is now primed to become a hang out place in an unsupervised way for high school students to loiter, make a lot of noise, directly across from a number of houses. It should be relocated closer to the other athletic facilities on the other side of the site further away from any residential facilities, as the plans from before. I ask you to take these points into consideration.

Virginia Gardner – I was a member of the Newton North High School Task Force and I need to tell you that my children have all graduated from Newton North. I went into the task force as a critic I believed Newton North could be renovated. However, after six months of endless meeting and hours of study, and we took this charge very seriously, it became clear to me at least

on our tour of the building that we should build. The tour showed me mold, asbestos, leaks, unpredictable temperature changes and lastly and probably most importantly poor to unacceptable air quality. I ask you to review or task force findings because I challenge many of the statements made here tonight by the taxpayers and with all due respect, Mr. Sangiolo. I think that we should be able to overcome obstacles and the challenges of this project, certainly with sensitivity to the neighbors. I urge you to move forward with a new Newton North. We owe it to our Newton North staff, teachers and students to provide them with a safe learning and teaching environment.

Presentation by Neighbors

The PowerPoint presentation from the neighbors is attached.

Rich Franz, 20 Trowbridge Avenue, Newtonville – I am one of four neighbors here who have followed this process for the past two years and representing all of the sites. Basically, I would just like to give you a brief overview of what we want to discuss, our guiding principles, what we are requesting of the Design Review Committee, the architects, the school, the Aldermen and again since this is a site review discussion we are just going to focus on site issues, specifically circulation, parking and the site perimeter. Most of us moved here because of the quality of the Newton schools. We wanted our kids to get a good education, so we do continue to support Newton North and again I enjoy living in the community with the school. Again, many of our kids have gone to the school. We enjoy having the kids around. We are committed to welcoming the students and assisting them to understand that they are citizens of our neighborhood and our community, as well. The kids are getting old enough and mature enough to accept this responsibility and we would like to participate. We agree that the negative impacts of living near a high school should be divided among all four sites. I think everyone agrees here that the existing site on Lowell Avenue has placed an undo burden on that neighborhood. That was a mistake and that should not be repeated. We live here 24-7. Last night notwithstanding, Celebration '06, we have first hand knowledge of what is like to live here and we believe we have valuable information. Our request is that the City, the high school and the designers value our inputs because we are stakeholders, as well in this process, that the high school administration, this is an ongoing basis, proactively engage with us in educating and than monitoring the behavior of the students. Also, to establish a process that addresses the issues that are going to come up even after this school is completed, the Design Review Committee is gone, the architects are gone; this is an ongoing process. With that, I would like to move it to Mark Naylor.

Mark Naylor, 489 Walnut Street, Newtonville – For purposes of talking, as I will about the Walnut Street impact, I am going to put aside for one minute the deep misgivings that many in the community have about the process to date, as well as the limited site plan options that have been developed and instead focus on 4A and one alternative, Option 4D. Clearly, as it relates to Walnut Street, the primary site plan issue is the location of the main entrance. The neighbors are understandably concerned about the location primarily because of the direct impact it has on pedestrian and vehicle safety but also because the impact the location has on traffic flow around the site and on neighboring streets. Clearly, Option 4A places the entrance opposite the bottom of Trowbridge Avenue. An entrance that someone else pointed out is now as wide as

Commonwealth Avenue and conveniently on the site plan maps the double S curve is always omitted but that is obviously at the bottom end of a downward sloping double S curve with limited visibility and reasonably high speeds. This dangerous traffic dynamic on Walnut Street has created many accidents that the neighbors have observed and most troubling, these accidents are concentrated at the location of the proposed new entrance. Most troubling is that these accidents are concentrated at the location of the proposed new entrance. These accidents all occur within twenty or thirty meters of each other and of the new proposed entrance. This is what has led to a high level of concern that placing the main entry at this point would be dangerous and exposes the student and neighbor population to undue risk. Other concerns include the substantial width of the entrance and the necessity and expense of signals and traffic calming on Walnut Street. There are a large number of mature trees that will be, unfortunately, removed to create this entry. Option 4D, which has been mentioned by several Aldermen this evening offers relief from many of Option 4A's shortcomings and adds additional benefits. It provides greater sight lines for pedestrian crossing and neighbors believe that the safety would be greatly improved by moving the entrance to where it is currently proposed in 4A to opposite the church, as it is shown here. We believe that Option 4D does have other secondary benefits that include reduced need for traffic signage and traffic calming measures, reduced expense and reduced enforcement burden for enforcing the proposed parking measures in the quote ceremonial entrance. To answer one Alderman's question, it does not even involve moving the precious ceremonial entrance, only the entryway to the entrance. There is an additional 400' of sight line you get if you use Option 4D. We believe that additional amount of sight line has the capacity to perhaps save students' lives.

Terry Morris, 57 Elm Road, Newtonville – I am an abutter to the site and I am also an aldermanic appointee to the Design Review Committee. I, like former Alderman Kraus, was honored to have served the City in these hallowed chambers for ten years, which as I look around me and see some of my former colleagues, seems like the blink of an eye. More importantly, I have had three children graduate from Newton North High School. I have two grandchildren, who are in the Newton Public School system and as many of you know; I have a fourth child, who will be in the Class of 2024. We are taking a look at circulation issues from three different sides of the building. The previous speaker having spoken about the access from the east side, we are talking about the circulation on the west side, which is the Lowell Avenue side. There are three main points of concern. Should the Aldermen determine that parking on Lowell Avenue is appropriate as has been recommended by the design team, than we propose that the parking be limited to the east side to protect the houses on the west side of Lowell Avenue from reduction in the quality of life by having parking on that side of the street between Elm Road and Hull Street. We also think there is an issue around the proposed – If the parking area is proposed to be lit that the residences be shielded from parking lot lighting glare and that the present crosswalks at Hull Street and Elm Road be enhanced to improve pedestrian safety. Speakers have talked about the width of the entrance drive into the ceremonial entrance. One of the things that most people do not realize is that Elm Road – to call this new roadway is really a misnomer because Elm Road was discontinued with the construction of the present high school. It is ironic that we think of Elm Road, as in fact a roadway when in fact one of the issues that was of concern at the Design Review Committee was the width of the road. I was one of the ten members who voted in favor of Option 4A, only to find out that two days later a substitute 4A

was put before us, which increased the parking on both onsite and offsite by a 152 spaces and much of that parking was located on both sides of Elm Road. I should point out to you that the proposed width of Elm Road is 36' wide with parking proposed on both sides. The current width of Walnut Street, which services 18,000 vehicles a day is 33', so we are proposing what should be a driveway into this site is proposed to be wider than Walnut Street. I think that is totally inappropriate and as the presenters had pointed out it is not going to service the daytime parking at the school but is supposed to be for overflow parking for events that happen at night. I would urge this Board to eliminate parking on the north side of Elm Road and reduce the width of Elm Road from 36' to a more manageable width of 20'. At some point, you may hear that the Fire Department needs this kind of width to have access to the site; I think that myth is debunked when one points out that the Fire Department does not need more than 16' in width when they lay out their outriggers, when the machines are stabilized to fight fires. That portion of Elm Road is furthest from the building and you will have situations where that situation will not occur. I think that the roadway should be reduced to more livable standards. The issue of access to the west Elm Road residences has already been addressed by the design team and the previous speaker, Mr. Shufu, has talked about the dead end roadway. So, I will not repeat those remarks other than to say we echo those concerns. Finally, the issue on the south side, on Hull Street – currently, we know that parking is on the north side of the street only and we would urge that be retained simply on the north side only. There was one thing that was not addressed and that was the elimination of parking between Walnut Street and Dexter Road that was seen as an issue in the Design Review Committee and we urge the Board to take a close look at eliminating that, restricting parking east of the tennis courts. I do appreciate the effort that was made by the design team to respond to the many issues that were put before them; however, we think that the Board of Aldermen in its capacity as a site plan review entity should take a close look and not be shy about making suggestions.

Michael Rudden, 26 Blithedale Street – I live two doors from the high school entrance and my daughter is a graduate of Newton North. I want to address parking. I do not want to spend too much time at all in terms of site parking. I thought that Ald. Albright asked the right questions today relating to getting more information on how the students are getting to school and where they are parking on school grounds. I would like to ask for a focus from the designers and the Board to look at what are neighborhood parking management system might be. Right now if you look around the four sides of the school, it is very obvious that we do not have a consistent or logical system of signage. It is confusing to us. It certainly has to be confusing to a student. From a philosophical point of view, we would ask you to consider distributing the offsite parking away from those residences, which are getting the brunt of the student activity immediately adjacent to the campus. Lastly, I would like to ask you to consider ways by which we can assure that the City has a commitment to adequate and ongoing parking enforcement and access regulations. We need more than signage. We need help in terms of enforcing that into the future. Regarding the site perimeter on all four sides, we do not have a solution to present to you but we have some observations that we would like you to take under consideration. First, we do believe that one has to understand the student behavior to arrive at future solutions and collectively the neighborhood knows exactly where the students loiter, where they drop their cans when they come back from Newtonville, where they smoke and where they hang out and we would ask you to tap into that source of information as best you can. Secondly, I think you

will find that the solution for each side will be unique. There is no one consistent solution though possibly a common vocabulary. I would also like you to consider that there are two sides to every fence and when you put a visual barrier between the neighbors and the school, you are also giving the students a potential place to loiter outside of the view of the school. Obviously, we need to provide sustainable solutions that retain their value long after the design is completed and I would bring your attention to the means in which you are going to control the busses and access off of Elm Road. Lastly, we do have to assure that there is adequate landscape dollars, which are inevitably under pressure as the building goes along. Also, realize that in terms of maintenance the neighbors are perfectly willing to pitch in and help; we do it now. Organize this and maybe we can be an asset. Having lived in Newton for twenty years, I have seen over the period of time a slow incursion of chain link fences on what was basically an open field. I think that if you had a chance to look at Newton North now, there are some mistakes in terms of over fencing some areas that possibly we do not want to repeat. Therefore, I would ask you to relook at alternative solutions, such as what an architect like myself might call decorative fencing along Lowell Avenue and Elm Street. Also, the eight-foot fence around the football stadium, I would frankly love to have people climbing over the fence to get to the football games. Lastly, and in summary by and large the neighborhood celebrates the Newton North High School, the vitality, and the contribution to our neighborhood. We cherish our neighborhood; otherwise we would not be here tonight. As a group, we are informed active, united and sometimes vocal. We seek a productive partnership to address mutual concerns during the design, during the construction and certainly afterwards and we expect from you creative, sustainable and responsive solutions. In parting, I would ask you to consider one thing – which we will live with your decisions long after the architects, the city officials and the school administrators retire.

Jane Frantz, 20 Trowbridge Avenue – My concerns revolve around the safety of Walnut Street and so I began to look into the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials Green Book to see what was meant by stopping sight distance and discovered that it was the distance traversed from an instant that a driver sights an object necessitating a stop and the distance needed to stop the vehicle once the brakes are applied. According to the green book, these distances are often inadequate, when drivers must make complex or instantaneous decisions. It says that it is evident that there are many locations where it would be prudent to provide longer sight distances. This new intersection will have an MBTA route, a crosswalk, a high school, teenage pedestrians, a hill, a double S curve, a complex intersection at the top of the hill, possibly a traffic signal, a minor road also on a hill and it is one of the three streets that allow trucks to pass through the City. If this is not a situation that requires prudence, I am not sure what might. Secondly, I looked into the statistics about intersections and I was surprised to read that the accident rate for three leg intersections and four leg intersections is so strikingly different. A three-leg intersection has a 50% lower rate of accidents than a four-leg intersection and I wonder why are we building a four-leg intersection when safety says we should be doing something different. Finally, I am wondering why we are using data in our traffic study from an existing situation, which is Walnut Street is a straight street to determine the safety of a future situation that will be completely different, which is a four leg intersection. I am wondering why, and it could be in the traffic study but I did not see anything about sight distances for those intersections and I know that is data that can be gotten. This data would establish the field of view for cars leaving Trowbridge for Walnut or cars entering Trowbridge from Walnut. Three

legs of the future intersection already exist and could easily have been included in the study. One last point, I wondering what we are saying to residents – this is about the traffic light and the crosswalk – what we're saying to residents and to high school students when we install a crosswalk. I think the message is really clear that this is where the City of Newton wants you to cross, this is where we think it is safe for you to cross, this is where the Aldermen, the School Committee, the School Department and the Mayor think it is safe for you to cross Walnut Street. I keep hearing people say that we do not have to worry about a crosswalk at Trowbridge because the kids won't use it and that just does not make sense to me. It is a mixed message and it concerns me. If we put in a crosswalk in a particular place, I think we are ending a message that this is where you should walk, this where you should cross and I think you need to keep that in mind.

The Chair explained that the public hearing would remain open and the Committee would continue the hearing and begin discussion on Wednesday, June 14, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman