



West Linn – Wilsonville Schools

From: 2009 Sunset Primary School Siting Committee
Greg McKenzie, Facilitator
Tim K. Woodley, Director of Operations

To: Roger Woehl, Superintendent

Date: December 2, 2009

Subject: **Sunset School Siting Recommendation**
Report to Superintendent

Roger: The Sunset School Siting Committee has concluded their work and offer herein both the Committee recommendation and a summary of how the group reached this conclusion. This report is provided in the timeframe requested, for your information and use. Greg McKenzie, group facilitator, is prepared to provide an overview of the process and conclusion at the next regular board meeting.

Executive Summary

After studying the information available to compare construction of a primary school at either the current Sunset Primary site, or Oppenlander site, the Committee concluded the current site achieves comprehensive educational goals while optimizing community and neighborhood values. In making this decision the Committee recognizes that Oppenlander Field, beyond its value to community sports, is an important playfield annex for all West Linn schools. Therefore the 2009 Sunset Primary School Siting Committee recommends that the re-construction of Sunset Primary School be located on the current Sunset Primary School site.

As the time for building the new school approaches, the Committee also recommends the school board consider the following:

1. Additional land through:
 - Right of way vacation
 - Minimal portion of Sunset Park
 - Property acquisition
2. A smaller school building on the site, (if necessary) so long as program and space utilization are not compromised



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3. Jointly plan the use of Sunset Park with City of WL and the Sunset neighborhood.
4. Maintain and enhance Oppenlander (especially parking) as a playfield annex for all WL schools

Additionally, the Committee recommends that in order to generate strong support from the community, an information campaign be undertaken to inform the community about the work of this committee and its recommendation to rebuild at the current site.

In conclusion, the Committee suggests that even though the site is 4.5 acres and the school district's Long Range Facilities Plan recommends at least 10 acres for a primary school, the Superintendent and School Board should select the current site based on a comprehensive examination of the overall circumstances, the level of neighborhood support and the district's strong commitment to the neighborhood school concept.

Background

In the Spring of 2007, the LRPC report to the Board included a recommendation to consider the replacement of Sunset Primary school as part of the next capital bond election. Subsequently, the Board asked district administration to follow up with two specific activities.

First was a complete architectural and engineering review of the Sunset Primary facility to determine the extent of the needs of this facility if it were to be remodeled. Additionally, playground needs were reviewed. Second, the Board asked district administration to organize a citizen's task force to review the findings of the architectural study in the context of the question:

“Should Sunset Primary be remodeled to bring it up to current codes and academic standards or should it be razed and replaced with a new facility on the same site?”

A citizen task force was organized to review information pertinent to this question and prepare a recommendation for the School Board. The task force charge at that time was to:

1. Review the architectural study and recommendations.
2. Review the structural needs of a primary school in the West Linn - Wilsonville S.D.
Consider issues of curriculum and academic needs and equity.
3. Weigh the options between remodeling and replacing the Sunset Primary facility.
Consider cost/benefit of each option.

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4. Prepare a recommendation to be initially presented to the Long Range Planning Committee in November, 2007.

The recommendations of that task force were to:

1. Raze the current Sunset Primary facility and,
2. Rebuild a replacement school at Oppenlander field.

Subsequent to the recommendations of the 2007 task force to the Board, several community meetings were held with Sunset Neighborhood Association and other interested groups. Neighbors in the current Sunset Primary School area were unhappy with the task force's recommendation to relocate the new Sunset Primary to Oppenlander. The Board decided not to include funding for the replacement of Sunset Primary in the 2008 Capital Improvement bond. However, the Board did include funding for revisiting the 2007 Sunset Primary Task Force recommendation to locate a replacement school at Oppenlander field. The LRPC, Board and Administration determined that the evidence supporting the replacement of the current Sunset Primary facility was conclusive but that the location of the replacement facility remained an open question.

Administrative Direction to Sunset Primary Committee - 2009

The District engaged the services of Greg McKenzie to facilitate the 2009 Sunset Primary Committee work to examine the location on which to rebuild Sunset Primary. Mr. McKenzie initiated, at the direction of District Administration, a three-fold process.

1. Determine the stakeholder groups that should be represented on the task force.
2. Bring the established stakeholder representation together to design and agree upon the process of answering the question: "Where should the replacement of Sunset Primary be located?"
3. When the process agreements were in place, answer that question (item 2).

Approximately 350 contacts and invitations were sent to community members inviting them to participate. Included in the list were five Neighborhood Associations, parents of Sunset students, future parents of Sunset students, other Sunset area residents who are not active in the Sunset NA, members of the previous Task Force (not including Wilsonville members), David Lake of the LRPC and facilitator of the 2007 Sunset Task Force, neighbors adjacent to Oppenlander Field, neighbors adjacent to the current Sunset Primary School, senior citizens, Ken Worcester from City of West Linn, and youth recreation groups.

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The invitation proposed the following tasks for the Committee:

- Develop a community process to study the site options
- Investigate the feasibility of site options
- Evaluate site options
- Develop a recommendation for locating a new Sunset Primary

Committee Process

Nineteen (19) members of the school district community responded and became members of the Committee. A roster of the Committee members is attached to this Memo. The Committee members represented neighbors around both the current Sunset Primary School site and the Oppenlander Fields site. Representatives from the neighborhood associations closest to each site also participated. The City of West Linn was represented by Ken Worcester.

The Committee was staffed by:

Tim Woodley, Director of Operations
Amy Berger, Bond Operations Assistant
Kathy Ludwig, Principal at Sunset Primary School
Norm Dull, architect (Dull Olson Weekes)

A series of four Committee meetings were held:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
6:30 pm	Thurs. Oct. 22, 2009	District Administration Building
6:30 pm	Mon. Nov. 9, 2009	District Administration Building
6:30 pm	Mon. Nov. 23, 2009	District Administration Building
6:30 pm	Tues. Dec. 1, 2009	District Administration Building

The meetings format consisted of facilitated small group discussions and whole group discussions. Each meeting lasted about 3 hours.

Committee Protocols

Committee members agreed to the following operating guidelines for the work of the Committee.

1. Keep an open mind
2. Engage active listening skills
3. Challenge assumptions - ask clarifying questions
4. Conversation and discussion will include all Committee members
5. Be courteous and respectful of other's opinions
6. Seek commonalities and areas of agreement

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7. Stay focused on the task at hand
8. Have a parking lot for topics to be revisited at a later time
9. Keep discussion focused on the best interests of the students and community
10. Have a sense of humor
11. The facilitator presides with rules of order and process at the discretion of the facilitator
12. Meetings are open to the public, but not subject to the Public Meetings Law
13. Action by the Committee will be based on a strong consensus which is more than a simple majority, but less than unanimous
14. No Committee member is authorized to speak on behalf of the Committee to the media, unless authorized by the Committee
15. All recommendations from the Committee to the Superintendent are advisory only
16. Research material and other information requested by the Committee will be directed to the staff through the facilitator

First Meeting Summary (10-22-09)

At the first meeting, Superintendent Roger Woehl presented a Superintendent's Memo dated October 22, 2009 outlining the work of the Committee. He explained the link between the work of a prior task force in 2007 concluding that Sunset Primary needs to be replaced and the work of this Committee to make a recommendation about where the new facility should be located. This Committee was charged with developing a process to study and evaluate site options, then submit a recommendation to the Superintendent. The Committee needs to be confident that the recommendation will have strong support from the community.

Director of Operations, Tim Woodley discussed the recent work done at Sunset Primary school. The main concerns are that the building is safe for the children and staff. Work was done in the 2002 bond in the cafeteria, library, kitchen, and other upgrades. The 2008 bond addressed water quality, safety lighting, seismic reinforcement in the gym, remodeled bathrooms, window replacements, parking lot paving, and removing asbestos as well as technology upgrades. Sunset needs to be a viable place for students for the next few years until the school is replaced.

Facilitator Greg McKenzie divided the Committee into table work groups and posed these questions for their discussion with the responses recorded on flip chart:

Protocols Question: For the operation of this Committee, what guidelines or protocols should be followed for group interaction?

Question #1: What characteristics about Sunset Primary should be preserved?

Question #2: What elements about Sunset Primary need to be improved?

Question #3: What information do we need to make an informed decision about the location for a new Sunset Primary?

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The Committee agreed that others could be invited to join the group so long as new members studied the work to date, committed to attending the remaining meetings and notified the school district about their interest.

Information was requested from the staff by the Committee to begin its deliberations.

Information needed

1. Comparison of costs for constructing similar sized schools on each site
2. Zoning for each site: current & future
3. Parking requirements for a school on each site
4. Traffic impact on Rosemont Rd. if Sunset Primary moves to Oppenlander
5. Research studies about impact of larger vs. smaller primary schools
6. Seismic/Geologic status for each site
7. Information from prior work
 - Data from 2008 Bond Summit
 - Sunset neighborhood petition
 - Sunset Neighborhood Assn. complaints about parking
 - Information about neighborhood schools vs. busing
8. Criteria for determination that 8-10 acres are needed for a primary school
9. Impact on busing students at each site
10. Projected enrollments for the area

Other Questions

1. Is more land available to expand the current Sunset Primary site?
2. What options are available to replace any portions of Sunset Park lost to the school site?
3. Is the right of way behind Sunset Primary available to expand the site size?
4. What is amount of cost difference between constructions at each site amounts to a significant differential?
5. What is the impact on Sunset neighborhood if more parking is added at current Sunset Primary site?
6. Are any design plans already proposed for each site?
7. What is correct acreage of other primary schools in the district?

Second Meeting Summary (11-09-09)

At the second meeting of the Sunset Primary School Committee, the facilitator reviewed a Facilitator's Memo dated October 28, 2009 that had been circulated to Committee members electronically and by handout at the meeting. The Facilitator's Memo organized the first meeting discussions into a format that might be useful for the Committee's deliberations.

The Committee decided the following should be categories used to compare the two sites.

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Categories for Comparison

1. Community/neighborhood ambiance including school history
2. Total costs associated with re-construction of Sunset Primary
3. Traffic flow, safety and impacts
4. District's long-term plan for growth
 - Enrollment projections
 - Demographics
 - Walking vs. busing
 - Attendance area adjustments required
5. Utilization for non-selected site
6. Selected site characteristics
 - Sustainability
 - Parking
 - Program constraints
 - Site size

The school district staff and architect Norm Dull of DOWA provided information and handouts for the Committee in response to the requests for information from the first meeting. Committee members discussed the information and asked questions. For historical perspective Jeanette Spence shared a petition signed by approximately 125 neighbors, submitted to the Long Range Planning Committee from the Sunset Neighborhood Association after the 2007 Sunset Task Force, which proposed Oppenlander as the site for the re-built Sunset Primary.

Other Handouts

- Chart of acreages for WLWV primary schools
- Recent WL Tidings article about Parker Rd.
- Sunset site plan study July 22, 2009
- District capacity vs. enrollment chart
- Excerpts from Long Range School Facilities Plan for Primary site size
- History of Sunset Primary

Third Meeting Summary (11-23-09)

At the third meeting of the Sunset Primary School Committee Troy Bowers reported information from Oregon School Board Association about neighborhood schools and the master plan for the Sunset Neighborhood Association including elements directed at keeping Sunset Primary in its present location.

The facilitator led discussion about each of the Categories for Comparison recording the observations and comments about each site. Each category was evaluated by the Committee based on prior information provided by staff, Committee members and the architect. A preferred site choice for each category was determined.

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The results of the discussion about Categories for Comparison are:

Neighborhood/Community	
Sunset	Oppenlander
Already existing	New unknown issues
Status quo situation	School would be in back yard of neighbors
Neighborhood wants school	
Emotional attachment to school	
Neighbors already comfortable with the benefits and burdens	
School district should embrace neighborhood desire	
School would be in front yards of neighbors	
Neighbors moved in because of school	

Choice: **Sunset**

Total Costs	
Sunset	Oppenlander
Parking requires a creative solution	Infrastructure costs unknown
Infrastructure costs unknown	Building costs same per SF
Building costs same per SF	

Choice: **Undecided.** Note this topic probably received the most discussion over the course of 4 meetings. Based on the information available, the Committee concluded that the uncertainty of future infrastructure costs, parking, and other factors made differentiation of the two sites on a “cost” basis a difficult analysis. Please note that we will never know the cost of the un-chosen site. The consensus is that the overall infrastructure costs including parking facilities at both sites appear to be comparable or within the acceptable range.



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Traffic	
Sunset	Oppenlander
Would not significantly change traffic volume, patterns	Adds traffic burden to Rosemont Road
More kids within walking distance	Neighbors concerned about more traffic
Spanish Immersion program may increase transitory traffic	Compounds LDS church impacts, but primarily after school hours
	Ball field traffic already a problem
	Flow patterns more predictable
	Only one way in - one way out
	Rosemont Road only gets worse

Choice: **Sunset**

District's Plan for Growth	
Sunset	Oppenlander
	More changes in attendance areas required
	School not in center of attendance area
	Too close to Erickson (Note: for kids already in district and does not impact Sunset needs)

Choice: **Not a factor.** Future growth in Stafford triangle area will require additional schools. The Sunset Primary where ever located will not serve that enrollment need.



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Site Characteristics	
Sunset	Oppenlander
4.5 acres	10 acres
Small site	Ideal size site
Already integrated into "green space"	Avoids construction dislocation
Maybe options to expand site available	Districts comprehensive education goals can be met
District's comprehensive education goals can be met	

Choice: **Oppenlander.**

Other Site Future Use	
Sunset	Oppenlander
Unknown	Serves as playfield annex for all WL schools including Erickson
	Fields in middle of town
	Would need to replace fields at cost to community
	Would need to find replacement land
	More flexible for future uses

Choice: **Sunset**

Fourth Meeting Summary (12-1-09)

At the fourth and final Committee meeting, the group assembled to review their recommendation and finalize the written draft. Direction was provided to staff to produce a final draft, forward to Committee for review and submit to the Superintendent in preparation for a regular school board meeting scheduled December 7, 2009 in the district board room.

Overall Site Selection

After considering each of the Categories for Comparison, the facilitator led a general discussion about the Committee’s overall preferred site for the re-built Sunset Primary School. A strong



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consensus without dissent favored the current Sunset Primary site, but the Committee felt that other considerations should be added to the recommendation to the Superintendent. The committee recognizes that Oppenlander fields, beyond their value to community sports are an important playfield resource to all site-constrained West Linn schools.

Therefore, the Committee concluded the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Preferred site: | Current Sunset Primary location |
| Recommended Considerations: | |
| 1. | Consider additional land for site through <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Right of way vacation• Minimal Portion of Sunset Park• Property acquisition |
| 2. | Consider a smaller school building on the site, (if necessary) so long as program and space utilization are not compromised |
| 3. | Jointly plan the use of Sunset Park with City of WL |
| 4. | Maintain and enhance Oppenlander (especially parking) as a continued playfield annex for all WL schools |

[END OF REPORT]