

## **2013-14 Repurposing Larrabee Think Tank**

### **February 27, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

Think Tank Members in Attendance: Mike Anderson, Barbara Perry, Terry Brown, Katie Franks, Jim Darling, Rick Benner, Kristi Birkeland, Courtney Sawyer, Saralee Sky, Kathy Hasenjaeger, Ron Cowan, Rob McElroy.

Observers: Holly Miller.

Ron Cowan welcomed everyone and the meeting began at 4:39 p.m. Ron made a brief overview of the handouts that everyone should have. He then asked the members to review the minutes from the Feb. 3 meeting, and the minutes were approved without changes.

Ron also asked for everyone to review the updated Criteria Assessment document, and stated that at this meeting the three proposals will be reviewed using the established criteria. There have not been any changes to the criteria document since it was finalized at the Feb. 3 meeting and will now serve as the final criteria document.

Rob McElroy indicated that the Larrabee statement of interest form was sent out to all of the administrators in the district to generate ideas for potential uses. Dr. Baker is not asking that we make a decision regarding the future use of the facility, but to give input on the proposals submitted.

A group member asked if Bobbi Vollendorf had contacted anyone with regard to her interest in the facility for a community use. No one had been contacted. There was discussion by the committee that only Tier I proposals were being solicited at this point, and a community use would not be considered as a Tier I use.

There was discussion regarding the plans for a district Parent Partnership Program. It was clarified that there are plans for the district to move forward with the program, although the location of the program is not yet determined. A question was asked regarding whether the funding for a homeschool program would be the same as a student attending one of the district's schools. Rob indicated that the district would receive a prorated portion of the funding from the state, matching the amount of time the district was serving a homeschool student. The question was asked if there would be initial startup costs. Rob indicated that most parent partnership programs are self-sustaining, but there would be a need for funding support in order to get the program started. When questioned if there would be scheduled classes, Rob indicated that there would likely be some classes offered, as well as family consultation services. Course offerings are developed in partnership with the families participating in the program. It is anticipated that initially there could be 50-100 students, and that will require office and secretarial space, some classroom space, the gymnasium, and the

cafeteria which could possibly be used as a gathering area for families. It is possible that portables could be used as classroom space as well. It was asked how much investigation has occurred into forming a parent partnership. Rob explained that staff has visited other districts that offer a program, and the School Board hosted a linkage meeting last year where current homeschool parents expressed an interest in the district offering a program to support this population of students.

There was a question about whether the district will need to address ADA requirements if a new program were to go into the building, as well as system upgrades. Because it would not be a change of use, there will not be a requirement to bring the building up to full modern ADA compliance. It was also indicated that the building has a boiler and central distribution plan that are fairly effective. The lighting and electrical systems have been upgraded, and the plumbing is good. The downstairs restrooms are old and operate with a gravity flush system that may at some point need to be updated.

A question was asked for a clarification regarding what portion of the building was deemed to not be adequate for a K-5 education program. Ron clarified that the decision to retire Larrabee was not based on cost, but because it no longer functioned as a full K-5 facility capable of delivering the comprehensive elementary program for all students.

The group then moved on to evaluating each of the three Tier I (District) proposals, following the criteria document that was earlier established:

1. Parent Partnership Program
2. Temporary District Office Space
3. Preschool Expansion

The group developed a list of the pros, cons and challenges for each proposal.

The group came up with a list of things “to think about” in moving forward with their analysis to Dr. Baker:

1. Is it good long-term thinking to put a preschool in each school or into a separate facility?
2. It may not be a good move by the district to use a recently closed K-5 school for an administrative space.
3. There is a strong interest by this group to not leave the building empty.
4. If the district has determined that the building is functionally inadequate for K-5, is it also inadequate for Pre-K? A homeschool use might be more flexible and adaptable than a K-5.
5. The preschool proposal might be a good fit while the homeschool program is starting out and growing. For long term, it will need to be decided if it is a good facility for a preschool.
6. The portables being moved from the site could enhance the appearance of the property.
7. The portables are valuable as additional space.
8. The group believes in the preschool program strongly, but not necessarily in this facility.
9. The homeschool program, by group consensus, seems to be the best fit.

10. The criteria was not very well aligned for accepting only Tier I proposals, which is why not all areas in the criteria document were addressed.

The group talked about next steps. A document will go to Dr. Baker to summarize the process of how the group arrived at the criteria, and the fact that the criteria was used when reviewing the proposals, and the pros/cons associated with each proposal. Group members will work with the Department of Communications and Community Relations to draft the communication to Dr. Baker. A small group should plan to meet with Communications staff. Katie Franks, Saralee Sky and Kathy Hasenjaeger volunteered to help write the proposal.

Rob thanked the group for their time. He stated that it has been an enjoyable team to work with, and the work is very much appreciated by the superintendent.

The meeting was adjourned @ 6:15 pm.