



MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Greg Baker, Superintendent
FROM: Gordon Carter Environmental Education Advisory Committee
DATE: August 13, 2018
SUBJECT: Recommended Large Group Facility

Introduction

In March 2015, you received a recommendation for the Gordon L. Carter Environmental Education Site from a community advisory group that included school district staff and community members. This recommendation included eight recommendations that were grounded in an understanding of how the site was utilized in the past and exploring what new opportunities for outdoor learning exist. One of those recommendations was to **Build Large-Group Facility that is Flexible and Forward-Looking**. The original committee made recommendations for this large group facility that included:

- A site that harmonizes functionality with the site's natural biophysical features utilizing green and sustainable building practices.
- A structure that will enhance and inspire connection with the natural world around them through biophilic design.
- The design of the structures themselves should incorporate form and function so they serve as a learning lab about sustainability.

This process has been on hold due to a moratorium on drilling wells in the Lake Whatcom watershed. The moratorium was recently lifted and drilling for water is now permissible again. Since this was lifted, we reconvened a committee to look specifically at building a large group facility. We met as a team on May 16 and May 30, 2018. In addition to our two meetings, an opportunity for members to tour the Gordon Carter site was provided on May 19. Finally, the committee co-chairs toured the site on June 22 to review the committee's final facility recommendations.

Our committee was composed of the following members:

Mike Anderson: Director, Buildings and Grounds
Byron Gerard, Principal, Options High School
Teri Herda, Teacher, Geneva Elementary School
Jay Jordan, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning
Curtis Lawer, Capital Projects Manager
Josie Melton, Professor, Western Washington University, Science, Math, Tech
Gene Meyers, Professor, Western Washington University, Huxley College
Eric Paige, Principal, Carl Cozier, Elementary School
Steve Ruthford, Principal, Geneva Elementary School

Abby Sussman, North Cascades Institute, School Day Programs Coordinator
Sarah Walker, Teacher on Special Assignment, Science
Chao-Ying Wu, Family Medicine Specialist
Suzanne Wu, Community member
Co-Chair Ron Cowan, Executive Director, Capital Projects and School Facilities
Co-Chair Rob McElroy, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

Next Steps

The current and planned uses for the site include a newly designed third grade program focusing on habitat and what humans and non-humans need for habitat and how communities work together to survive. Gene Meyers, Professor of Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington, University provided an overview of a sixth-grade program. Currently this program supports Whatcom Middle School, but we would like to offer this experience to other middle schools as well.

We started one process by reviewing the 2015 committees and moved into a deeper dive regarding the facility recommendation to create a more detailed recommendation for a design team to ensure the design supports the original uses and purposes.

The committee was asked to consider things such as spatial requirements (square footage), proximity and adjacency requirements, environmental variables (lighting, heating, acoustics), use of technology, finishes (ceiling, walls, floor), display requirements, furniture and fixtures, storage requirements, etc.).

The committee was charged to provide recommendations that included:

- **The number and types of spaces needed inside the building** (restrooms, kitchen, large open area only, smaller classroom, other).
- For each space, we asked them to describe **the estimated number of users as well as the intended use and purpose of the space** (large group and/or small group instruction, collaboration and projects, etc.) i.e. ‘This is what we plan or want to be able to do in the space’.

Our charge was to create detailed specifications for the new facilities. Specifically, to produce a written document which will describe the major program elements associated with a large-group facility. We are including as an appendix the design criteria for each space the committee developed recommendations for:

- Appendix 1: Big Room, 1,500 to 2,000 square feet
- Appendix 2: Mud Room(s), 200 square feet
- Appendix 3: Food Preparation and Storage, 600 square feet
- Appendix 4: Staff Head Quarters, 600 square feet
- Appendix 5: Storage Areas, 100 square feet
- Appendix 6: Bathrooms, code driven square feet
- Appendix 7: Attached Outdoor Covered Area (TBD Square Feet)
- Appendix 8: Classroom/Science Lab (TBD Square Feet)

Conclusion

We are requesting your authorization:

- A. To procure the services of architects, engineers and other consultants to develop plans and specifications for both infrastructure improvements (well for potable water, septic system, electricity/data, road/parking) large group facility

It is the goal of the committee to follow an aggressive timeline and start on some of the infrastructure improvements and have the facility up and running by fall of 2019.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need additional information about our recommendation or process.

APPENDIX 1

GORDON CARTER ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING SITE

BIG ROOM

(1,500-2,000 square feet)

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Flexible use
- Sub dividable – small group/large group
- Integration into outdoor spaces
- Natural lighting permeates
- Work and eating space
- Balanced space – not to nice; push people outside

PLANNED USAGE

Activity Description

- Large group activities
- Small group or independent activities
- Story telling by the fireplace
- Crafts and art projects
- Storage of instructional materials/supplies
- Display of posters/charts
- Eating area
- Serving food
- Counters for coffee/tea/snacks
- Presentations with projectors and screen
- Messy project work
- Flow inside to outside and vice versa
- Indoor/outdoor activities – Explore, find, retrace to inside and report/analyze
- Area to come inside to dry off and get warm
- Earth Science/ non-chemistry activities

USER INFORMATION

- Capacity – up to 150
- Design to accommodate all sizes (PreK-adult)
- 7 days a week – year around – potential

GROUPINGS

- Varies: individual work, small and large group work, full class work
- School staff
- Up to 2 classes of students

PROXIMITY REQUIREMENTS

- Close to bathrooms
- Close to food prep and serving

- Proximity to the staff room - headquarters
- Provide multiple entries with mud rooms
- Integrate into covered out door area
- Away from parking
- Place for sick or injured Sick room/health room
- Caretaker space (RV Pad)

SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Approximately 1,500 – 2,000 square feet

SUPPORT FACILITIES

- Portable partitions or single floor to ceiling folding partition to divide space in half
- Fireplace

INTENDED COMMUNITY OR ADULT EDUCATION USE

- Staff day retreats
- Community partners outdoor education

ENVIRONMENTAL VARIABLES

- Heating and Ventilation
 - Displacement ventilation with 100% outside fresh air with thermostat control? (preferred)
 - No A/C
 - Radiant Heat (TBD)
- Lighting
 - Natural light - as many windows as possible, operable
 - Standard LED, plus daylight through exterior windows with shutters
- Acoustics
 - Music / presentations
- Flooring
 - Durable, easy to clean; likely concrete

UTILITIES

- Plumbing
 - (1) Sink, prefer larger/deeper sink. Prefer high gooseneck. Paper towel dispenser should be in easy reach, locate adjacent to sink not behind
- Electrical
 - Power: (2) quad power on each wall & floor
 - Consider student device (tablet) power docking station area
- Communications
 - (1) 4 data drops on each wall (wireless?)
 - Telephone system
 - Sound system – voice enhancement

FINISHES

- Floors: concrete
- Walls – tackable vinyl

- Ceiling: High open ceiling; exposed wood, not typical acoustical ceiling tiles

STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

- Sink area - Base cabinet height?
- Provide (4) drawers to accommodate poster board materials (30" x 42" x 8") and standard size paper
- Materials to store: books, art paper, art supplies, posters, office supplies, etc.
- Counters with storage
- Earth Science Materials

DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS

- Tackable wall surface (2)

FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT (suggested)

- Furniture
 - Adjustable folding group tables
 - Sturdy chairs for (150) students/adults – stackable – suitable indoor/outdoor
 - (10) large folding work tables with chairs (for computers, small group tables)
 - Folding benches?
- Portable stage
- Equipment
 - Wall mounted projector
 - Document camera
- General
 - Analog clock
- Sound System – voice enhancement

OTHER ESSENTIAL ENFORMATION

- There should be a garage door opening to covered out door area
- A way to communicate to those in the field- PA sound system

APPENDIX 2

GORDON CARTER LARGE GROUP FACILITY MUD ROOM(S)

(~ 200 square feet each)

- Should have two (2) entering the Big Room
- Remove/store coats and shoes
- Hooks (30) each room
- Custodial supplies (no chemicals)
- Storage for tables
- Storage for portable partitions
- Long narrow (?)
- Cubbies?
- Walk-off grate/mats

APPENDIX 3

GORDON CARTER LARGE GROUP FACILITY FOOD PREPARATION AND STORAGE

(~ 600 square feet)

- Catering kitchen (Squalicum Boat House Kitchen)
- Size of elementary school kitchen
- Large refrigeration (including space for sack lunches)
- Freezer
- Food storage
- Food Prep Sink
- Stainless steel counter space
- 6-burner range/oven
- Large stainless steel island – food prep
- 3 compartment commercial sink with spray
- Dishwasher(space and utilities for future)
- Concrete floors with drain
- Food service counter opens to big room for serving (rolling door)
- Back door for supplies
- Recycle/compost station

APPENDIX 4

GORDON CARTER LARGE GROUP FACILITY STAFF HEAD QUARTERS ROOM (NCI – LIBRARY) (~ 600 square feet)

- Existing Cabin?
- Smaller classroom size
- Bookshelves
- Computer table/desk – built in
- Windows
- Wood or carpet flooring? Area rug? (Create warmth)
- Comfortable soft furniture – small group <20
- Work table
- Storage cabinet
- First aid/AED
- Projector/document camera/screen
- Wireless or Data Drops
- Storage for meals

APPENDIX 5

GORDON CARTER LARGE GROUP FACILITY STORAGE AREAS

(~ 100 square feet)

- Wet & Dry (ponchos, etc.)
 - Dehumidifier?
- Supplies – instructional materials
- Ponchos
- Science /field kits
- Wall to wall shelving; floor to 6'? (Consider modular)
- Possible re-use of cinderblock buildings

APPENDIX 6

GORDON CARTER LARGE GROUP FACILITY BATHROOMS

(Code driven square feet)

- Indoor/outdoor access
- Gender neutral
- Number of stalls? (code driven)
- Sinks
- Location
 - 1 each gender neutral in The Big Room
 - Larger detached restroom facility with large trough sinks outside (allows for groups to use the site and restrooms without needing to enter the Large Group Facility)
- Compostable toilets? (Septic tank savings?)
- Pit toilets throughout the site
- Lime Kiln Point restroom as example?
- A single shower

APPENDIX 7

GORDON CARTER LARGE GROUP FACILITY ATTACHED OUTDOOR COVERED AREA (TBD_ Square feet)

- Ability for lines for tents
- Eating space
- Outside sink (food prep)
- Flexible attachment points
- Respite space from weather
- Staging area for orientations, etc. (NCI)
- Hooks for coats, ponchos, etc.
- Example Null in Conway (example)
- Proximity to drop off area

APPENDIX 8

GORDON CARTER ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING SITE

CLASSROOM / SCIENCE LAB?

(_TBD_ Square feet)

- Sink
- Concrete floor
- Storage