

**Minutes of the Special Board Committee Tier Two Facilities Meeting  
Community Unit School District No. 4, Champaign County, Illinois  
Mellon Administrative Center, 703 S. New Street, Champaign, Illinois  
May 5, 2016, 6:00 p.m.**

**Committee Members Present**

Amy Armstrong, Sam Banks, Laura Berg, Jamar Brown, Steve Carter, Brad Diel, Paul Faraci, Craig Hays, Chris Kloeppel, Will Kyles, Tim McMahon, Alan Nudo, Craig Rost, R. Dee Shonkwiler, Laura Weis, Jewell White

**Public Comment**

Bruce Zimmerman, Old Town Neighborhood Association - Edison is the anchor point of the neighborhood. He does not want to participate in taking the neighborhood apart. Lack of planning for school growth does not allow for emergency reactions today. The District did not purchase property that was available in the past. He is looking forward to hearing a positive solution for Edison and the neighborhood.

Joseph Pavia – Has lived across from Edison since 1987. Be aware of the neighborhood you are dealing with. Homes at one time were in bad shape on the west side of Prairie. People moved in and have improved their properties. Improvements made will not be recovered and people plan on staying in their homes for a long time. He appreciates the Board and Committee's sensitivity to eminent domain. The people living around Edison have planned for a future in that neighborhood.

Tod Satterthwaite – Thanked the committee for their work in taking a comprehensive look at facilities. Mr. Satterthwaite lives one block away from Edison. He encouraged the District not to purchase property around Edison. Properties to the north were available at one time and that opportunity has now passed. He does feel it is a good idea to purchase property around Central. He is a member of PACA. Acquiring properties that are not historically significant would be good. He does not want Central High School at the Interstate Drive location. He would like to see Edison and Central stay where they are and upgraded.

Patrick Smith – Hopes that the International Prep Academy's library will be big enough for a bilingual library. More books are needed.

Michael Stewart – lives in the 500 block of Prairie Street and has been there for 15 years. He has put money into his house that he will never get back so he intends to stay there. Getting the letter from Pat Fitzgerald was a shock. He was glad to hear the Board's thoughts on eminent domain. He lives in this neighborhood because it is the neighborhood it is – old town. He walks to work and enjoys living by Edison. Tearing down houses for parking lots will not foster that lifestyle and he feels this is the wrong direction. He would like to see Edison and Central improved and upgraded on site.

**Communications/Correspondence**

All communications and correspondence can be found on the Tier Two Facilities website:  
<http://facilityplanning.champaignschools.org/community>

**Feedback from Dr. Howard and IPA Staff**

Feedback from Dr. Howard and IPA Staff can be found on the Tier Two Facilities website:  
[http://facilityplanning.champaignschools.org/sites/planning/files/DH%20and%20IPA%20notes\\_April%202016.pdf](http://facilityplanning.champaignschools.org/sites/planning/files/DH%20and%20IPA%20notes_April%202016.pdf)

## **Preliminary Budget Presentation: South Side and Edison Middle School**

The presentation can be found on the Tier Two Facilities website:

[http://facilityplanning.champaignschools.org/sites/planning/files/Champaign%20Unit%204%20Tier%20II%20Presentation%20160505\\_V4.pdf](http://facilityplanning.champaignschools.org/sites/planning/files/Champaign%20Unit%204%20Tier%20II%20Presentation%20160505_V4.pdf)

### **Public Comment**

Beatrice Pavia – Concerned that there is not a broader picture/conversation in conjunction with the City. She does not want to see decay in the central part of the City. How does a school serve the neighborhood? Schools improve a neighborhood and the City. There are good neighbors around Edison Middle School. What is the school doing in conjunction with City? The neighborhood is willing to work with the District. How do we make Champaign a vibrant community? Could the student drop-off be off of State Street? Make a circle drive? What happens to Edison if it is no longer a middle school? Buses come and sit during games with their engines running the entire time. What is that cost? What about air pollution? Please include female homeowners when correspondence is sent. Do not address letters to the men only.

- City, Savoy, Park District membership on committee. The District continues to have conversations.

Dr. Lawrence Richards – Get more comments and input on South Side. He is in support of neighborhood schools. A high price referendum will not pass. If South Side is so beloved there can't be that much really wrong with it. Work with what is there and add an elevator and gym. Long term facilities plan is good. Preservation folks will not want anything to happen to Edison. Dr. Richards will write a letter which will include more of his thoughts on facilities.

Brian Wall – lives on Elm Street. He has lived in the neighborhood since 1968 and the neighborhood has really improved. There are wonderful houses. It's a safe place and he enjoys what Edison students bring to the neighborhood.

Sujata Dey-Koontz – Lives on South Lynn Street. Her children have attended South Side, Edison and Central. She does not have to drive. Her children can easily access the Champaign Public Library and Downtown Champaign. The location of Edison helps the neighborhood continue grow and helps children become a part of the community. Many students do attend their proximity school.

### **Thoughts and Comments from Committee Members**

- Never saw Edison going anywhere – do phase in.
- Neighbors not willing to sell. Does not see structural problems with Edison. Would like to see Edison stay where it is.
- People will be driving less in the future. Improvements should be made to improve efficiency. Buildings should be kept in the core of the City.
- Neighbors want Edison where it is. Does not want to see Edison at Barkstall as it would pose the same problems as moving north. Land at Barkstall could be used for an additional school in the future, if needed.
- Either plan could work. At peace with keeping Edison where it is. Does the cost for Edison include relocation fees?
  - Price does include temporary housing fees.
- Can some of the accessibility problems be practically solved?
  - Walking around to the back of the building or a lift is not the answer.
- Does South Side have good bones? Why do people have such a strong attachment to the school? Is it the building, location, the teachers?
  - Generally speaking South Side has life left in it. The building is not challenged in the same way Dr. Howard is. Accessibility is a challenge. There are ways to

continue to look for solutions but it will take more time. The Committee will hold on South Side until more information is available.

- Consensus from committee (12 out of 16) was to give preference to Edison's existing site and expand.
- Would like to make sure dollars are being spent wisely. There is growth to the south and votes. Wants to make sure the committee is making rational decisions.
- Will air/heating improvements pay for itself at South Side?
  - Long-term efficiency will pay for itself over time. Savings will occur in the design phase and not the budget phase.
- Hard to put a price tag on student comfort.
- Can a strand be added later at South Side?
  - Have started exploring this.
- Could students stay at school during a renovation?
  - Yes.
- Savoy residents are looking at growth. Could look at a middle school at the Barkstall site in the future.
- The District has schools of choice and not neighborhood schools.
- Not a neighborhood school but the neighbors do like the school being there.
- Please go to the Tier Two Facilities website and review past minutes and documents <http://facilityplanning.champaignschools.org/>

Meeting adjourned: 8:22 p.m.

Next meeting: May 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.