

## Town Meeting

5-14-15

### TOWN MEETING

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Precursors - none

#### Announcements

- Acclaimed poet Linda Pastan will be giving a poetry reading on Friday during TA in the chorus room. Marie Johnson has arranged this visit and refreshments will be served.

Consent Items - none

#### Motions

- Amanda (12<sup>th</sup>) made a motion on behalf of the senior class to use the wall starting opposite the library and stretching to Cecilia's classroom for their class painting.
  - o Short discussion followed about the size of the area, the space allotted to each student, and whether they will paint expecting to be redacted or will self-redact from the start. Emma (12<sup>th</sup>) and Amanda agreed that they will put the word out asking all seniors to respect the population at large and leave profanities out of their work. **Motion passed** unanimously.
- Casey made a motion to convene a hiring committee for the new Academic Activities Coordinator (the Jolly Good Fellow/Gal). She said it would be an internal application process with all applications due by this Sunday. The committee will meet next Wednesday, 5/17, in the afternoon. She will post a sign-up sheet outside the main office. **Motion passed** unanimously.
- Casey made another motion to convene a room committee to decide which classes will be taught in which rooms next year. A committee is formed every year, but it is perhaps more important this year in light of the appropriation increases. The first (perhaps only?) meeting will be next Wednesday at lunchtime in the library. **Motion passed** unanimously.

#### Discussions

- Sean Franklin from BIG (the Bjarke Ingels Group - the architectural firm designing our new building) and Jennifer Xu (an APS facilities project manager) were here to present models currently being considered by the BLPC for the new school. Sean displayed (on the new giant TV screen mounted last night on the library wall!) the 5 proposals that have been chosen out of approximately 100 possibilities initially considered. He explained that their priorities have been and remain:
  - o promoting a shared experience (between H-B Woodlawn and the Stratford program)
  - o a large ground floor
  - o a sense of community
  - o sufficient field space
- He then showed representations for 5 different design proposals:
  - o The Fan Bar or "French fry"
  - o Stepped Courtyards
  - o Stepped Terraces
  - o Stepped Courtyard
  - o Stacked Bar
- All five drawings could be moved to various sections of the property lot, and discussion followed concerning effects of sunshine and shadow (a 22-story building will be located on an adjacent lot) and the best spot to build in terms of quick access to the bus circle (especially important for Stratford students).
- Sean said that the next step will be to hold an instructional visionary session for the architects to get a better feel for exactly how we now teach and how we want to teach in the future. There is an instructional adviser who is part of their team, and he will be observing and meeting with students and teachers. Some questioned whether now was the best time of the year to be doing this, (testing in progress and seniors starting projects, etc.), but Casey confirmed that in order to keep on the design timetable, it would not be

possible to delay this step until the fall. Results from these observations will be discussed at the BLPC meetings and will help in whittling down the design options, and Jennifer reminded everyone that minutes from the meetings are always posted online.

- o More discussion followed about the best layout for field space and the importance of keeping areas most likely to be visited by parents, community members, etc., such as the auditorium, near or at the ground floor.

- o Sean's presentation had included ideas for separating parts of the building according to grade or department, so discussion about the pros and cons of various arrangements ensued, and Maggie suggested we also think about whether we prefer large or small "hanging out" areas.

- o Alison suggested that shared grade space would probably be very advantageous to the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, but others pointed out that it would be much less so for upper grades when students take classes in a more individualized pattern.

- o Paul pointed out that all of the pictures showed the models from a bird's eye view and asked if we would be able to see street level models. Sean said that he expected to have those soon.

- o Dave Soles and others then discussed the importance of easy movement throughout the building, and the consensus was that practicality was more important than any "cool factor" in design.

- o Tom pointed out that we as a school are not following trends in education in general, and that we are not "cutting edge." Our priority is individual education, so our building shouldn't have to be designed along current trends towards great communal space.

- o Ganzorig (12<sup>th</sup>) asked how many floors the building would have, and Sean answered between five and eight, depending on which design we go with (parking will be underground).

- o More discussion followed on how best to organize the inside space, and Emma (12<sup>th</sup>) pointed out that one big plus for HB is that we *don't* separate by "teams" the way other middle schools do. We don't try to fit square pegs into round holes and make everyone be a team player, so we shouldn't try to design our school around the "team" idea.

- o Brad (12<sup>th</sup>) suggested maybe a survey should be taken of how students think classroom space should be grouped, and Brooke (8<sup>th</sup>) pointed out that most students *do not* eat in the cafeteria, so to consider that a main student meeting place might be a mistake.

[at this point a motion to adjourn was made and failed, but it was also noted that Frank and Casey had both left and that there was no administrator present. The speaker list had been closed on the design topic, so discussion moved to the next item on the agenda.]

- Luke (9<sup>th</sup>) had posted a suggestion to replace one TA per week with an additional Town Meeting. He said there was often not enough time to discuss important issues. Some comment followed, most of it negative, but Luke agreed to table the discussion for a later time as no motion could be made in the absence of an administrator.

- Amanda (12<sup>th</sup>) then opened discussion on an idea discussed by the senior class to try to leave something tangible behind to H-B Woodlawn since their wall paintings would obviously not be transported to the new building. They had thought perhaps to make some sort of flag or banner as a memento of their class. Emma added that it was important to discuss it now since many seniors wanted reassurance before they dispersed for senior projects, etc.

- o Carl and others said they thought making something tangible was a good idea, but then discussion started as to whether and if this should start a precedent for the following three senior classes, and to whether or not it was right for students who would, in fact, not be there to dictate what physical items should be in the new school.

- o Chloe (12<sup>th</sup>) pointed out that lots of HB "history" is now kept in the vault and questioned whether they just wanted to make something that would be put away. On the other hand, was it their place to dictate what should be on display in the new building? Should they be determining some kind of boundaries for the next three classes?

- o Eleanor suggested that photos be taken of each year's paintings, names, etc., and be put together into a physical memento, and Bill suggested maybe making some kind of stone paintings to serve as a welcoming path - made by students who "paved the way."

- o Paul suggested some kind of podium could be put up in the new building with a book of pictures, and said that remembering names was important, but Brad said that a joke that had been made earlier about leaving a "mixed tape" might, in fact, be a very good idea.

- o Christine (12<sup>th</sup>) also indicated that it was not a good idea for those present (primarily seniors) to dictate parameters for the future, and Emma agreed that it was important for seniors to do what they have always

done, here and now, and not worry about the future. Lizzie (12<sup>th</sup>) added that the seniors should make their quotes count - "make them weird!" but that they should not try to strong arm their way into the new school.

- o Tom pointed out that although many promises have been made to document the walls in some way that will be visible in the new school, it won't be the same because the students' hands won't have done the work themselves. It is why an original Van Gogh sells for millions - his hands painted it. A replica isn't the same thing and isn't considered valuable. For that reason he thought the idea of a flag, and he pointed out that a Sharpie lets you write small and get a lot in small space, would be a good precedent. It would serve as a welcome, especially to new students, and show them right from the start that HB was a different kind of place.

- o Eleanor advised the seniors to come to some kind of decision that they felt comfortable with, and then to let it go and trust us to not forget them.

- o Cecilia added that the alumni wall at Yorktown was a special part of the school. She said that history was important and needed to be captured and preserved.

- o Olivia (12<sup>th</sup>) thought it important to set a precedent for the future graduating classes and said it should be further considered and discussed by seniors this week so that a firm motion could be made next week. She thought reaching a consensus that we can agree on and that others will carry on is important.

- o Dave said he thought the flag idea was a good place to start but said he still anticipates some kind of large electronic wall, something along the idea of what was in the Harry Potter movies. He pointed out, however, that when the walls were first painted at HB, they were not intended as something permanent, but rather something to be photographed for the yearbook. History comes about as it comes about, not always by plan.

- o Frank [who had returned a while earlier] said he liked the idea of flags or paving stones, but he agreed that we shouldn't make presumptions about future classes' decisions.

No motion about the topic was made, and it was agreed that it would be discussed again at a later date.  
Meeting adjourned.

Chair: Margaret Gorman

Co-Chair: Erin Lammie

Secretary: Jacob Hall